

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of a meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 11th September, 2014 at 6.30 p.m. at The Haybridge Restaurant, Telford College of Arts & Technology, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PRESENT:

Councillors R.K. Austin, S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, F. Bould, S.P. Burrell, E.C. Carter, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, C. Elliott, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, T. Hope, M. Hosken, M. Ion (Speaker), A.S. Jhawar, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. MacKenzie, A.D. McClements, A.A. Meredith, J.C. Minor, C.P.R. Mollett, L.A. Murray, R.A. Overton (Deputy Leader), F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), R.G. Scammell, R.J. Sloan (Deputy Speaker), C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling and D.R.W. White.

In the absence of the Mayor the Deputy Mayor opened the meeting

14. TRIBUTE TO COUNCILLOR DAVE DAVIES

The Speaker requested that a minutes silence be held for the late Councillor Dave Davies following his recent passing. Councillor K.S. Sahota led the tributes to Councillor Davies. A number of councillors also went on to pay tribute to Councillor Davies who had been committed to, and had served the people of Telford & Wrekin well and who had borne his illness with dignity and great courage.

15. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17th July 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Deputy Mayor.

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors R. Evans, I. Fletcher, J. Greenaway, J. Loveridge, C. Mason, W. McClements, J. Seymour and M. Smith

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors V Fletcher, J. Minor and D. White declared an interest on the Motion in regard to the NHS as members of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee. Councillors Fletcher, Minor and White did not speak on this item or take part in the vote but remained in the room.

18. LEADER'S REPORT & ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Leader's Report

The Leader reported on the Southwater Development which had contributed to above average growth in the local economy. 800 new jobs had been created in the

Borough over the last few months. Superfast broadband would be available to 96% of houses in the Borough. The Leader welcomed news of proposed funding, which should be confirmed by Christmas, for a major link road connecting the M54, M6 and M6 Toll road. Work was continuing to tackle youth unemployment in the Borough. Jobsfair had been organised within Telford Town Centre to promote the seasonal jobs that were available. TCAT had recently opened its £3.5m automotive engineering academy whilst Harper Adams College had been short listed in the annual Times Higher Education Awards. The Pride in the Community team continued to work hard in the Borough whilst Community Pride funding applications were due to be assessed shortly.

Following the Leader's announcements Councillor C Elliott and Councillor L Murray left the meeting.

19. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor A Jhawar, Deputy Mayor, reported on a number of engagements that he had attended since the last meeting of the Council.

20. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The following public question had been received under Council Procedure Rules 7.11 and 7.12.

1. The following question had been submitted by Mr G Kershaw to Councillor K.S. Sahota, the Leader of the Council:

"What are the advantages and disadvantages to the people of the Borough if the Council achieves "City Status" for the Borough?"

The Leader replied that the Council had no intention of applying for City Status.

2. Mr R D Felton asked the following question of Councillor Charles Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns

"Why are we allowing the sale of farm land for housing when there is a shortage of agricultural land for growing crops? There are people wanting land for growing crops, as advertised in the newspapers"

Councillor Smith replied that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) required the Council to take in to account different types of land in order to meet the housing needs and land supply and national growth. It was suggested that this question was referred to the Government who determined Policy.

21. CABINET DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Members received the report on the Cabinet decisions made since the last meeting of the Council.

Councillor V Fletcher referring to item 2.1.11 of the Cabinet report, the dedication of bridleways and footpaths paid tribute to the Environmental Team and welcomed the report. She asked if it could be noted that there were problems regarding the cutting back of hedges and maintaining footpaths and asked what the Council's plans were for the subsequent maintenance of these bridleways and footpaths. Councillor E Clare, Cabinet Member for Leisure Services & Culture responded that there would be difficult choices to be made due to funding, but where requests for repairs were received, efforts to accommodate these would be made.

Councillor E Carter referring to item 2.1.5 of the Cabinet report, the Telford and Wrekin Superfast Broadband Programme welcomed the report and suggested that the Council work jointly with Shropshire to ensure that the rural areas were not overlooked.

Councillor A Eade referring to item 2.1.8 of the Cabinet report, AFC Telford – Amendments to Legal Agreements, asked Councillor S Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, if the original leases with AFC Telford had been faulty and asked for a full explanation regarding the defects and who was responsible?

Councillor Davies noted that the leases had been finalised under the previous Council administration. During the previous few days New College, Telford and Wrekin Council and AFC Telford had agreed a new Lease which would take effect from the 30th September 2014.

22. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET

a) Property and Housing Investment Programme

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment and skills presented the report on the Property & Housing Investment Programme.

This programme would deliver 425 new homes and raise the bar of acceptable rental properties. This would enable the Council to utilise brown field and stalled sites to stimulate economic growth and regeneration and create a number of jobs and apprenticeships during the construction and operational phases of the programme. Although the proposals were to address the housing need within the Borough and to create regeneration, any revenue income received from the proposals would be invested into the protection of essential front line services. As the asset would appreciate over the project life, this would lead to a significant capital receipt should the asset be disposed of and by Year 5 it was expected to have added a value of £68m to the asset portfolio.

Some of the properties would be commercially rented. The Council were borrowing an estimated £32m but the properties would not be solely rented to the social housing sector.

Councillor N Dugmore asked Councillor Davies to confirm that the Apartments in Southwater would be private rental and enquired as to where the associated car parking would be situated. Councillor Dugmore also asked if the Council Tax

income would remain the same for the next 30 years. Councillor S Davies replied that the apartments would be at market rent and that car parking would be addressed and included in a future report to council. The model used in the report had not made an assumption that Council Tax would increase.

Councillor A Mackenzie commented that the Council would lead the way and become a quality landlord in a quality market. Councillor Davies added that the Council would become part of the Quality Accreditation Scheme for Private Landlords.

Councillor A Eade raised concerns regarding the project and the £7m capital assets, noting that this was something that the private sector could be undertaking.

Councillor S Bentley asked about the social housing element and if the properties would be offered as right to buy. He also enquired why the model had changed. Councillor Davies replied that market rent and social housing would be offered but the right to buy scheme did not apply.

Following the debate a recorded vote was requested and voting was as follows:

For:(29)

Councillors K. Austin, K.T. Blundell, F.M. Bould, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, A.A. Mackenzie, A.D. McClements, J.C. Minor, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W Reynolds, S. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling, D.R.W. White

Against: (13)

Councillors S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, V.A. Fletcher, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell,

Absent: (2)

Councillors C.B.A. Elliott and L.A. Murray.

It was

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the investment of Council held land valued at £6.776m to facilitate the housing and commercial developments set out in the report, which includes part disposal of the Madeley Court site (as shown in the appendix to the report) be approved;**

- (b) prudential borrowing of up to £52m to fund the investment in housing and commercial developments, as set out in the report, be approved;**
- (c) the necessary changes to the capital programme and revenue budget to account for the housing and commercial developments as detailed within the report be approved**

b) Financial Monitoring 2014/15

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Employment and Skills presented the report on the 2014/15 Financial Monitoring which provided an update on the progress relating to the capital programme.

Following a debate a recorded vote was requested and voting was as follows:

For:(29)

Councillors K. Austin, K.T. Blundell, F.M. Bould, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, G.M. Green, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, A.A. Mackenzie, A.D. McClements, J.C. Minor, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W Reynolds, S. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling, D.R.W. White.

Against: (13)

Councillors S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, V.A. Fletcher, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell,

Absent: (2)

Councillors C.B.A. Elliott and L.A. Murray

It was

RESOLVED– that the new allocations and slippage detailed in the report, along with the funding changes to the capital programme, be approved

c) Youth Justice Plan 2014/15

Councillor P. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families presented a report on the Youth Justice Plan. The Plan set out how youth justice services across West Mercia were structured and funded. Key actions, service delivery risks and improvements were also identified within the plan.

RESOLVED – that the Youth Justice Plan 2014/15 be approved.

d) Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Update

Councillor Kuldip Sahota, Leader of the Council gave an update on the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

On 7th July the Government had announced that the LEP had secured £75.3m from the Government's Single Local Growth Fund to support a series of infrastructure investment projects which would accelerate delivery of new jobs and homes. This figure included £10.4m in 2015/16 and £12.3m for 2016/17 of confirmed funding and a provisional award of £41.9m for projects starting in 2016 and beyond. This was in addition to the £10.7m that the Government had previously committed as part of the Local Growth Deal funding for the area.

It was anticipated that Telford and Wrekin would receive £18.8m investment over the next two years together with £5.6m of public/private sector matched investment. This included £13.9m confirmed funding for the Telford Growth Package which would accelerate delivery of employment land at Hortonwood and open up a number of housing sites.

Included on the provisional list of funding award was £3.6m for the Telford Eastern Gateway which would support the delivery of the flagship T54 employment site and £1.3m to relocate the bus station in Telford Town Centre.

The Government had made a commitment to explore the potential for sharing land receipts from the sale of agreed HCA assets in Telford.

Part of agreeing the Growth Deal involved the Government asking the LEP to put in place robust and collaborative governance arrangements to ensure democratic accountability for expenditure and delivery of the agreed programme. It was proposed that a Joint Committee be set up which included the Leaders of 3 Local authorities forming the Marches LEP to exercise the necessary executive functions.

Councillor N Dugmore asked with regard to the £1.3m to relocate the bus station had this decision already been taken and what would happen to the £1.3m if not used for this purpose? Councillor Sahota replied that the funding was from the LEP and this matter was open to consultation.

Councillor Sahota replied to Councillor Dugmore that with regard to the £1.3 from the LEP that there were no plans yet whilst the consultation was still ongoing.

Councillor E Carter commented that he hoped the LEP was successful. It was currently very difficult for people with physical disabilities to get to the bus station and asked if there was anything that could be done in the interim period?

Councillor Sahota replied to Councillor Carter that the design of the bus station would be undertaken with the plans but these had not been finalised.

Following a debate it was

RESOLVED – that the Growth Deal Funding from the Marches LEP be approved, and that it be applied to deliver the projects for which the funding has been allocated.

23. ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT AND AWARDS

Councillor D White presented the Annual Scrutiny Report.

Telford and Wrekin's Scrutiny function had been recognised nationally and had been shortlisted under 2 areas.

Scrutiny Chairman, Councillor D White announced the winners of the Good Scrutiny Award for 2013/14. This was to be shared by both Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee.

Councillors K Guy and S Reynolds collected the award on behalf of the Committees

24. MINUTES OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Council noted the resolved minutes of the following Boards and Committees:

Audit Committee	30 th June 2014
Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee	29 th April 2014
Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee	12 th May 2014
Licensing Committee	9 th July 2014
Personnel Committee	26 th June 2014
Planning Committee	2 nd July, 23 rd July and 13 August 2014
Scrutiny Management Board	16 th May 2014
Standards Committee	8 th July 2014

25. QUESTIONS

The following Questions were asked in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7:

1 Councillor S Burrell asked Councillor P Watling

"Noting the tragic case of abuse in Rotherham, could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services provide this Council and the Community with reassurance that no similar circumstances exist in the Borough?"

Councillor Watling provided reassurance that the Borough were doing everything possible to combat such activities and threats.

2 Councillor S Burrell asked Councillor P Watling

“Could the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services provide us with the number of Primary School places required in the Borough to satisfy demand caused by speculative developments and targets set by Shaping Places and explain how he will fund them?”

Councillor Watling explained this was subject to a consultation document and that it was not yet known which sites would be developed.

In response, Councillor Burrell asked how Councillor Watling proposed to create the additional 3200 secondary school places required to support increased development in the Borough in order to avert a looming crisis in secondary education provision. Councillor Watling believed this was scaremongering and that there were enough school places.

Councillor R Picken left the meeting before the next question was raised.

3 Councillor G Reynolds asked Councillor S Davies

“Can the cabinet member for Employment and skills update the council on efforts to reduce youth unemployment in our borough?”

Councillor Davies provided an update on the work being done to reduce Youth Unemployment.

Councillor Reynolds asked if match funding was available to the Council to tackle unemployment?

Councillor Davies explained that he had written to the Minister numerous times but had not received a response. A motion would be brought to Council to write to the Government to match fund £1.4m.

4 Councillor A Eade asked Councillor C Smith

“Can you confirm, that unlike the previous Labour Administration, this Council has no plans to build on the Town Park’s Arena?”

Councillor Smith replied that there were no plans to building on the Town Park.

Councillor A Eade believed this to be incorrect but Councillor C Smith reassured Members that there would be no building on the Town Park.

Prior to debate of the next item Councillor G Green left the meeting.

26. NOTICES OF MOTION

- a) Councillor R A Overton moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“This Council notes with great concern proposals that would see one Accident and Emergency Centre for Telford, Shropshire and Mid-Wales becoming “ambulance only” with so called walk-in patients diverted to an Urgent Care Centre (UCC).

Telford & Wrekin Council again calls for a full 24 Hour Accident and Emergency Service at our Princess Royal Hospital and urges the Secretary of State to intervene in this process that is bringing so much uncertainty to our residents”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor R J Sloan.

Following a debate it was

RESOLVED – that the motion be unanimously agreed.

b) Councillor N A Dugmore moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“This Council notes the success of Shropshire Council in identifying 5.47 years of future Housing land supply which will help them resist speculative development that is currently blighting the Borough of Telford & Wrekin.

This Council also notes with concern that, despite 3 years in control, the current Labour Administration have failed to identify a similar land supply and calls on the Council Leader to explain to the community the reasons for this abject failure to protect the Borough from out of control building development”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor A Eade

Following a debate a recorded vote was requested and voting was as follows:

For: (13)

Councillors S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, N.A. Dugmore, A.J. Eade, V.A. Fletcher, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, A.A. Meredith, C.R.P. Mollett, R.G. Scammell,

Against: (24)

Councillors K. Austin, F.M. Bould, E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, K.R. Guy, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhavar, A.A. Mackenzie, A.D. McClements, J.C. Minor, R.A. Overton, J. Pinter, G.C.W Reynolds, S. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, B.J. Thompson, C.R. Turley, P.R. Watling, D.R.W. White

Abstentions: (3)

K.T. Blundell, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson

Absent: (4)

Councillors C.B.A. Elliott, G.M. Green, L.A. Murray, F.R. Picken,

It was

RESOLVED – that the motion be defeated.

The meeting ended at 8.52pm.

Mayor:

Date:

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday 11th September 2014 at 6.15p.m. at The Haybridge Restaurant, Telford College of Arts & Technology, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

13. HONORARY FREEMAN OF THE BOROUGH

The Special Meeting of the Council had been convened specifically for the purpose of admitting Mr Mickey Bushell MBE as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough, he being a person of distinction who was considered to have rendered eminent service to Telford & Wrekin.

His admittance as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough was proposed by Councillor K. Sahota and seconded by Councillor A. McClements. Members paid tribute to Mr. Bushell's achievements.

Councillors Sahota and McClements were honoured and privileged to be able to provide Mr. Bushell with the recognition he richly deserved. A number of Members congratulated Mr. Bushell on his achievements.

It was unanimously

RESOLVED – that Mr. Mickey Bushell be admitted as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin

MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS
1 September 2014 – 16 November 2014

September	1	M	Official Opening of the Fallow Field, Hadley Park East, Telford
	2	M	Telford & Wrekin Policing Area Commendation & Awards Ceremony at the Reynolds Suite, Holiday Inn, Telford
	4	M	University of Wolverhampton Business School Graduation Ceremony at The Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton
		M	Royal Air Force Shawbury Autumn Reception, Officers' Mess, RAF Shawbury
		DM	Telford & Wrekin Policing Area Cadets Passing Out Parade at the Reynolds Suite, Holiday Inn, Telford
	5	M	Mayor's Charity Launch at Castle Farm Community Centre, Hadley, Telford
	7	DM	The Wren's Nest Charity Fun Day Event at The Wren's Nest, Ketley, Telford
	8	M	Asda Living Community Charity Meeting at Asda Living, Wrekin Retail Park, Wellington
	9	M	Viessmann 25 th Anniversary Event at Viessmann Limited, Hortonwood 30, Telford
	10	M	Universal Infants Free School Meals Launch Photoshoot at Donnington Wood Infants School, Baldwin Webb Avenue, Telford
	11	M	South Staffordshire & Shropshire Healthcare NHS Trust AGM at the Learning Centre, St George's Hospital, Stafford
		DM	Learning Scheme for the Teaching of RE in Primary Schools Launch, Schools Multicultural Service Base, Hollinswood Primary School

B

- M** Royal Air Force Cosford Annual Reception, 3 Hangar, Airfield Site, Royal Air Force Museum, Cosford
- 12 M** Official Opening of the Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council War Exhibition of Information, Artefacts & Memorabilia at Castle Farm Community Centre, Hadley
- M** The Chancellor's Graduation Dinner at Millennium City Building, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton
- 13 DM** Nuneaton & District Junior Swimming League Annual Finals at Wolverhampton Central Baths, Wolverhampton
- M** Official Opening of the Sensory Gardens, Chelsea Gardens, Telford Town Park
- M** Sutton Hill & Woodside Parish Licensing Service of The Reverend Linda Cronin at Sutton Hill Church, Southgate, Sutton Hill
- 14 M** Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council's Commemoration Service of the Centenary of WW1 at Castle Farm Community Centre, Hadley
- M** Battle of Britain Service at St George's Parish Church, Church Street, St Georges
- 19 DM** Harper Adams University Graduation Ceremony at Harper Adams university, Newport
- 20 DM** World Heritage Festival 2014 at Ironbridge Gorge
- 22 DM** Senior Citizens Forum at Dawley Christian Centre, Dawley
- 23 DM** Nando's Telford Dry Run at Nando's Telford
- 24 DM** Telford After Care Team Recovery Conference & Awards Ceremony at The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford

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- 25 DM** Butters John Bee Corporate Evening at Butters John Bee, Unit 4 Southwater Square
- 26 DM** Macmillan Coffee Morning at Addenbrooke House/Darby House
- DM** Telford and Wrekin Foster Carers Macmillan Coffee Morning at The Ramada Hotel, Telford
- DM** Working Together in Telford and Wrekin at Oakengates Theatre, Telford
- DM** Telford Employability Skills Solutions Retail Presentation Awards at Telford College of Arts and Technology, Wellington
- 27 DM** The Nine Men of Madeley Community Play at St Michaels Church, Madeley, Telford
- DM** Chairman's Charity Bollywood Evening at Perton Civic Centre, Perton
- 28 DM** Telford & Wrekin Policing Area Open Day at Malinsgate Police Station, Telford
- DM** The Nine Men of Madeley Commemoration Service at St Michael's Church, Madeley
- 29 DM** Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust AGM at The Holiday Inn, Telford
- October**
- 3 M** Strategic Briefing Event at Southwater One, Telford
- 5 M** Eric the Dwarf Radio Comic Play at The Hive, Shrewsbury
- 6 M** Hadley 50 Senior Citizen's Club at Hadley United Services Club, Hadley
- 7 M** The Institute of Revenues Rating & Valuation Conference at Telford International Centre, Telford

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- 8 M** Official Opening of Premier Inn, Telford
- M** The Institute of Revenues Rating & Valuation Awards Dinner at Telford International Centre, Telford
- 10 M** Co-operative Funeral Service Managers Association Conference at Telford Hotel & Golf Resort, Great Hay Drive, Sutton Heights
- DM** 100th Engineering Heritage Award Presentation at The Museum of Iron, Coach Road, Coalbrookdale
- M** Chairman of Shropshire Council's Civic Heads Dinner at Davenport House, Worfield Nr Bridgnorth
- 11 M** Wellington Town Council Civic Reception at The Studio, Graham Building Wrekin College, Wellington
- 12 M** Mayor of Wem's Civic Service at St Peter & St Paul's Church, High Street, Wem
- 18 M** Public Access Defibrillator Presentation at the Visitors Centre, Telford Town Park
- M** Wrekin Lions Club 12th Charter Dinner at The Whitehouse Hotel, Watling Street, Wellington
- 19 M** Whitchurch Town Council Civic Service at St John's Church, Whitchurch
- 21 M** Filtermist International Ltd Ground Breaking Ceremony at Telford 54 Site, Nedge Hill, Telford
- 22 M** Official Opening of The John Scott Gallery at Jackfield Tile Museum, Jackfield
- DM** Telford & The Wrekin Citizens Advice Bureaux AGM at the Belmont Community Hall, Wellington
- 23 M** Dedication Service of Midcounties Co-operative Funeralcare Home at Limes Walk, Oakengates

B

- 24 M** Jayne Sargent Foundation Autumn Ball at The Mill, Madeley Court Hotel, Telford
- 29 M** TADLOP Performance of Anything Goes at The Place, Oakengates, Telford
- DM** The Harold Abraham's Memorial Evening at St Georges Recreation Club, St Georges
- 31 M** The Shropshire Golf Centre Marquee Launch Night at The Shropshire Golf Centre, Muxton, Telford
- November**
- 1 M** Shropshire Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at Shrewsbury Abbey, Shrewsbury
- DM** The Clifton Autumn Film Festival – First Showing of The Lunchbox at Belmont Community Hall, Wellington
- 4 M** Thomson holiday Superstore Re-Opening at Unit 6, Telford Forge Retail Park
- 6 DM** Official Opening of the Automotive Engineering Centre at Telford College of Arts & Technology, Haybridge Road, Wellington
- Official Opening of The Community Christmas Tree Appeal at BHS Telford, The Border, Telford Shopping Centre
- 7 M** Wrekin & Telford Singers Remembrance Service at Christ Church, Wellington
- 8 M** St Georges Parish Church Autumn Fair at St Georges Sports & Social Club, St Georges
- DM** ASA Synchronised Swimming Masters Championships at Thomas Telford School, Telford
- 9 M** Festival of Remembrance at The Place, Oakengates
- 10 M** Senior Citizen's Forum Meeting at Dawley Christian Centre, Dawley

B

- M** Home-Start Telford & Wrekin AGM at The Glebe Centre, Wellington
- M** Telford Police, Partners & Community Forum Meeting at Malinsgate Police Station, Telford
- 11** **DM** Short Wood Primary School Y6 Remembrance Assembly at Short Wood Primary School, Wellington
- M** Armistice Day Service at the Remembrance Memorial Telford Town Park
- M** Short Wood Primary Poppy Memorial Visit at Short Wood Primary School, Wellington
- DM** IFST Jubilee Lecture at Harper Adams University, Newport, Telford
- 12** **M** TLC VIP Event at AFC Telford united, Wellington
- 14** **M** Wrockwardine Wood CE Junior School Official Library Opening at Wrockwardine Wood Junior School, Trench, Telford
- 15** **M** Brigade Formation Ceremony & Reception at Venning Barracks Donnington, Telford
- M** Donnington Bonfire at Broadoaks Field, Donnington, Telford

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 27th November 2014

REPORT OF CABINET – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

MATTERS DETERMINED BY THE CABINET

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report sets out those matters determined by the Cabinet at its meetings on 18th September, 16th October and 13th November 2014.

2.0 CABINET BUSINESS

Matters that have been determined by Cabinet are listed below:

2.1 18th September 2014

- K 2.1.1 Solar Farm Update
- K 2.1.2 Regeneration of Hollinswood Centre
- K 2.1.3 Day Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities
- K 2.1.4 Award of the Design & Build Contract for the Lawley Village Primary School, Lawley
- K 2.1.5 School Place Planning: Revision of Children & Family Services Policy on seeking Developer Contributions relating to Educational Establishments
- K 2.1.6 Extension to the Gypsy & Traveller Site at Lodge Road, Donnington Wood
- NK 2.1.7 Tackling Youth Unemployment – Progress to Date

2.2 16th October 2014

- K 2.2.1 Financial Monitoring 2014/15
- K/PE 2.2.2 Land at Station Road, Newport – Update and Alternative Development
- K 2.2.3 Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan: Consideration of Examiner's Recommendations and proposed modifications prior to referendum
- NK 2.2.4 Care Act

2.3 13th November 2014

- K 2.3.1 Homelessness Strategy
- K 2.3.2 Revised School Funding Formula 2015/16
- K 2.3.3 Award of Network Services, Telephony, Contact Centre and Associated Support Contract
- NK/C 2.3.4 Community Pride Fund – Grant Allocation
- NK 2.3.5 Local Crisis and Local Resettlement Assistance Policy
- NK 2.3.6 Grant for Provision of Short Term Community Loans
- K 2.3.7 Disposal of Land at Allscott

Key

- K = Key Decisions
- NK = Non-Key Decisions
- E = Exempt Items
- PE = Part Exempt Item
- C = Council

REPORT HEADING	DELEGATION GRANTED TO	DETAIL OF DELEGATION GRANTED
Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan: Consideration of Examiner's Recommendations and Proposed Modifications Prior to Referendum	Managing Director (and any other officer authorised in writing by him)	To exercise all relevant powers and duties for undertaking all necessary arrangements for the Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan (Referendum Version) to proceed to referendum on the question of whether Telford & Wrekin Council should use the Plan to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Development Plan area.
Care Act 2014	Director: Health, Wellbeing & Care	In consultation with the Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care, to agree new Adult Social Care policies resulting from the Care Act.
Award of Network Services, Telephony, Contact Centre and Associated Support Contract	Assistant Director: Customer Services Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services	In consultation with the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Libraries & Transport, to award to Capita ICT Services the Network Services, Telephony, Contact Centre and Associated Support Contract. To agree and execute all necessary documentation, including the affixing of the common seal of the Council to contractual documents as appropriate.
Community Pride Fund – Grant Allocation	Managing Director	In consultation with the Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, to re-allocate any grant funding that has not been spent within the timescales for an approved scheme, based on the principle that the money is allocated to the next highest prioritised project on the list from the appropriate funding pot.
Grants for Provision of Short-Term Community Loans	Assistant Director: Customer Services	In consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise to approve the detail of an ethical short-term loans scheme and oversee its implementation.

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 18 SEPTEMBER 2014
COUNCIL – 27 NOVEMBER 2014

AWARD OF THE DESIGN & BUILD CONTRACT FOR THE LAWLEY VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL, LAWLEY

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: EDUCATION & CORPORATE PARENTING

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report seeks approval to enter into a land acquisition and to award a Single School Design & Build (D&B) contract to Shepherd Construction for the Lawley Village Primary Academy, Lawley.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families be authorised to award the Single School D&B contract to Shepherd Construction Limited (SCL) for the Lawley Village Primary School and to finalise and agree all related contract and property related documents including the Development Agreement and contracts with the relevant Academy and landowners for various land acquisitions, exchanges, leases, licences, joint use agreements and any other ancillary related agreements/documentation.

2.2 That the Assistant Director of Law, Democracy & People Services be authorised to agree and execute all necessary documentation. This authorisation to include delegation to the Assistant Director of Law, Democracy and People Services to affix the common seal of the Council to contractual documentation as, in the opinion of the Assistant Director of Law, Democracy & People Services, is appropriate under article 14.06 of the Constitution.

2.3 That it be recommended to Council that a capital approval and estimate for £4.5m in respect of the Lawley Village Primary School scheme be approved.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

IMPACT ASSESSMENT AT A GLANCE

COMMUNITY IMPACT¹?	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	Children & Young People – to consult and involve all stakeholders with a vested interest in children’s education and safety Children & Young People - supports strategic priority for developing learning communities across the Borough.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Children and Families living within the Wards served by the proposed school.
COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE?	The contract is programmed to be awarded in November 2014 and the school facilities will open in January 2016. .	
FINANCIAL (VALUE FOR MONEY) IMPACT?	Yes	The anticipated cost for delivering the scheme is within the funding approval contained within the Council’s Capital Programme. The phasing of the Section 106 payments will require the Council to manage the cash flow implications of the project through the use of short term borrowing. The revenue implications associated with this borrowing have not been factored into the Councils current budget strategies. Any slippage identified in the Education Capital Programme could be reallocated to the Lawley scheme to reduce the borrowing requirement. Further detail is provided in Section 7.
LEGAL IMPACT?	Yes	Detail provided in Section 5.

OTHER RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES ?	Yes	Detail provided in Section 6.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS?	Yes	The creation of this new primary school will have the most impact on the ward within which it is located, Lawley and Overdale. However, there is potentially Borough wide impact due to parental preference in choosing which schools pupils attend.

4. SUMMARY

4.1 Background. Following a significant amount of housing growth in the Lawley area over the past decade, a large number of additional school-aged children have been generated. Local demographics have meant that secondary school aged pupils have been able to be accommodated within existing schools and the needs for the future are being addressed through the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. However, the continuing pace of development within Lawley means that current primary schools will not be sufficient to accommodate the expected growth and it was for this reason that Cabinet gave their approval to establish a new primary school in Lawley at the Cabinet Meeting held on 27th June 2013.

4.2 Procurement. In July 2012, Shepherd Construction Limited (SCL) were appointed as the Selected Panel Member (SPM) chosen to design and build the sample school from Council's phase 2 of their BSF programme. The procurement followed the Education Funding Agency (EFA) process for selection from the National Academies Framework. The initial contract was for the construction of the sample school, Ercall Wood Technology College, but the framework also allowed for the Council to appoint Shepherd Construction to undertake further schemes if they were included within the Future Schools Agreement that was executed at the same time as the Single School Design & Build Contract. A new primary school at Lawley was included within this Future Schools Agreement.

4.3 Land Acquisition. The proposed freehold site for the school is in the process of being transferred to the Council under the terms of an agreement made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the sum of £1. The land has always been set aside for the development of educational facilities and will include new restrictive covenants preventing the property being sold for any other purpose than educational and community use. The timing for completion of the land acquisition is programmed for September 2014. Cabinet approval providing delegated authority for the land acquisition was included in the report taken on 3rd November 2003, Cabinet Minute CB104 refers.

4.4 Programme for the appointment of the Academy Sponsor. The tender document was published on 23rd May 2014 and closed on 27th June 2014. Following an interview process with the applicants, the preferred sponsor for Lawley Village Primary School is The Schools' Co-operative Society who we are currently working with on other Multi Academy Trust schools such as the Telford Co-operative Academy, Phoenix Academy and Lakeside Academy. We have written to the Secretary of State and are currently awaiting endorsement of this decision which we are hopeful of receiving in October 2014.

Once the decision has been endorsed by the Secretary of State, a Development Agreement, including a 125 year freehold lease of the site to the Academy Sponsor as per DfE guidance, and Community Use Agreement will be entered into between the Council and the Sponsor that sets out the obligations of the Council and the Sponsor. For the duration of the construction through Practical Completion and Defects Liability, the Council will manage the contract with Shepherd Construction on behalf of the Academy Sponsor. Upon issue of a certificate of defects completion, the contract will be novated to the Academy and and the 125 year freehold lease will be entered into.

4.5 Contract Sum and Funding Arrangements. The contract will be fixed price, lump sum at £4.1m. The funding allocation is ring fenced to deliver the project as planned. No alterations to the contract with any adverse cost implications will be agreed with the contractor or the end user, which will therefore reduce the risk of an overspend on the project. £3.6m of funding will be paid through Section 106 Agreement between the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) and the Council, with funding to be released as follows:

- a) £1.0m on the transfer of the site to the Council – September 2014
- b) £1.0m within 12 months of the above date (a) – September 2015
- c) £0.4m on completion of the school – September 2015
- d) £1.0m within 12 months of date b) – September 2016
- e) £0.2m by September 2018

The remainder will be provided from existing Council capital funding which was approved in the 27th June 2013 Cabinet Report.

4.6 Programme for the Academy Build. Programmed dates for the Academy build are as follows:

- Planning Application being considered by Planning Committee 13th August 2014
- Cabinet Meeting for approval to award the contract to SCL 18th September 2014
- Complete the land Acquisition from the HCA October 2014
- Contract Derogations to be approved by the EFA October 2014
- Sign the Design & Building Contract with SCL November 2014
- Academy Sponsor confirmed by the SoS October / November 2014
- Start on Site December 2014
- Sign the Development Agreement with the Academy Sponsor November 2014
- School Open January 2016

4.7 Stakeholder Consultation. Design meetings have been held over the last 3 months involving key specialists such as architectural, educational, ICT, technical and finance. We have also held a public consultation event in Lawley and numerous consultation meetings with other stakeholder groups such as the Parish Council, the Local Planning Authority, highways, HCA, the Lawley Development Group and other local primary school heads. Once appointed, the new Academy Sponsor will be involved throughout the construction phase and have continuing input into the design and fit out solutions that have yet to be finalised.

5.0 LEGAL COMMENT

5.1 The Design & Build Contract has been drawn up in accordance with the EFA Framework Agreement and has been developed in accordance with the Council's project specific requirements by the Council's project team in consultation with external Legal Advisors, Ward Hadaway.

5.2 The award of the Design & Build Contract to Shepherd Construction is subject to full planning permission being granted. In addition, the award of the Design & Build Contract is subject to approval of derogations by the EFA. While the EFA will not provide any funding for the project and the Council may have expected a lighter touch regime than for the BSF funded projects, EFA have confirmed that they will require to formally approve the contract documentation as the contract is to be awarded under the EFA Framework. As the Academy sponsor will not be in place until October, the Development Agreement to be entered into with the Academy sponsor will be completed after the Design & Build contract has been completed and EFA will need to confirm they are satisfied with this approach

5.3 The signing of the contract is targeted for October 2014. In awarding the Design & Build Contract the Council must continue to ensure that there is compliance with procurement legislation and the financial and contract procedure rules contained within the Council's constitution at Part 4, Sections 6 and 7 respectively. A close working relationship with the EFA will also be required to ensure that the contract derogations are reviewed and approved accordingly. These areas will need to be continuously reviewed and those who are granted delegated authority in paragraph 2.1 of the report will require updates and information to ensure that these risks are addressed and that informed decisions can be made. If delegated authority is allowed by the Cabinet, the delegated decision making set out in paragraph 2 should be formally recorded.

5.4 Legal Documents. The main documents to complete and execute are:

- The Single School Design and Build Contract (between the Council and Shepherd Construction)
- A Parent Company Guarantee from the contractor's parent company (between the Council, Shepherd Construction Ltd and its parent company)
- A Development Agreement (between the Council and the new Academy Sponsor), which will include a freehold lease of the site to the Academy Sponsor for 125 years
- A Community Use Agreement (between the Council and the new Academy Sponsor)
- A land purchase contract with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)
- Land Transfer from the HCA to the Council
- Licence for the Site Compound

6.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

6.1 Access Road. There is a requirement by the Council's Highways department that an access road is designed and implemented prior to occupation of the new school. The responsibility for funding and establishing this road lies with the HCA via the Lawley Village Development Group. However, until developers are in place on the adjacent sites, the funding for the access road is not in place. The Council has therefore agreed that the S106 Agreement can be varied in order that an amount equivalent to the cost of the road, £200,000, can be a final phased payment payable in September 2018, payable in any event and whether developers are secured or not. . The existing S106 Agreement will therefore be subject to a Deed of Variation in order to reflect the new phased payment arrangements as set out in paragraph 4.5. The contract for the land acquisition from the HCA will include a step-in right for the Council to construct the access road in the event that the Lawley Village Development Group have not commenced the works for completion before January 2016 when the school is due to open.

6.2 Academy Sponsor. The process for formally approving our choice of official Sponsor to the Academy now lies with the Secretary of State. We understand that this usually takes approximately 2-3 months but there are potential issues given the recent Cabinet reshuffle and new appointment to the SoS post. Additionally, if our decision is not approved, a Sponsor could be appointed on our behalf. There are risks associated with agreeing the terms of the Development Agreement with whoever is selected and potential programme risks if the decision is delayed beyond this time.

6.3 EFA. There is a further risk to the delivery of the Academy for January 2016 if the EFA confirm that they are not satisfied that the Development Agreement can be entered into retrospectively i.e. after the Design and Build contract has been executed

6.4 Funding – Government Grant. The capital grant funding is allocated from future years grant allocations which are yet to be confirmed. In the unlikely event these future allocations reduce substantially a significant proportion of the grant received could be allocated against this scheme therefore impacting on the Councils ability to deliver other projects.

6.5 Funding – Section 106 contributions. Under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement, the financial contributions will be indexed linked to the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS)

Tender Price Index. There is the potential that the financial contributions could be greater than anticipated, which current modelling has indicated. However, if there is a downturn in the economy in the future periods under consideration, September 2014 to September 2016, there is a risk that the indices could drop resulting in an under payment. It is anticipated that any additional financial contribution received from the Section 106 Agreement would displace grant funding as included in the assumed project affordability (see Table 1).

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A total funding allocation of £4.5m for the delivery of the project has been secured through Section 106 contributions, £3.6m, and capital grant funding, £0.9m, from the Department of Education (DfE) as approved in the 27th June 2013 Cabinet Report. The affordability for the delivery of the project is set out in Table 1 below.
- 7.2 The indicative contract sum, as included in Table 1, for the design and build contract is based on Shepherd Construction Ltd's Contractor's Proposals and will be finalised in line with the agreed pre-contract programme for the Academy Build as included at 4.6 above.
- 7.3 The phasing of the Section 106 contributions will necessitate the need for short-term borrowing to manage the expected cash flow implications associated with the delivery of the scheme. The anticipated revenue implications associated with the borrowing is as follows:
- 2014/15 - £13,902
 - 2015/16 - £63,344
 - 2016/17 - £52,341
 - 2017/18 - £12,144
 - 2018/19 - £6,489

These implications will need to be factored into the Council's latest medium term budget strategy.

- 7.4 The Education capital programme will continue to be monitored throughout the financial periods covered above to identify any slippage which could be reallocated to the Lawley scheme in order to mitigate the short term borrowing requirement.

Table 1 – Affordability of the project

	£000	£000	£000
Funding			
Section 106 contribution	(3,600)		
Education Capital Grant	(900)		
Total Funding		(4,500)	
Estimated expenditure			
Indicative contract sum	4,096		
Fees and survey's	285		
ICT hardware	84		
Academy Set Up	35		
Total estimated expenditure		4,500	
Affordability shortfall / (surplus)			0

8.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- Cabinet 24th November 2008 - Planning of School Places: Campus Telford & Wrekin. Minute CB94 refers.
- Cabinet 6th April 2009 - Campus Telford & Wrekin: Additional Post-16 Provision, Trust School Status, BSF Procurement Approval. Minute CB182 refers.
- Cabinet 15th September 2009 – Planning of School Places: Campus Telford & Wrekin – Part 2. Minute CB60 refers.
- Cabinet 23rd March 2010 – Borough Towns Initiative Sports & Learning Community – Final Business Case and Award of Contracts relating to BSF and Abraham Darby Sports & Learning Community. Minute CB181 refers.
- Cabinet 11th January 2011 – School Organisation – Borough Towns Initiative – Sports and Learning Community Update. Minute CB109 refers.
- Cabinet 22nd September 2011 – Planning of School Places – Secondary School Provision. Minute CB45 refers.
- Cabinet 26th January 2012 – Ercall Wood Land Acquisition and Disposal. Minute CB-92 refers.
- Cabinet 29th March 2012 – Building Schools for the Future – Contractors Framework Procurement Approval. Minute CB-123 refers.
- Cabinet 27th June 2013 – Proposal to establish new Primary School in Lawley. Minute CB-15 refers.

9. WARD IMPLICATIONS - There are implications for the following wards:

Ward	Member
Lawley and Overdale	Cllr Jayne Greenaway and Cllr Roy Picken

Report prepared by Kathy Swallow, Service Delivery Manager: School Organisation Services Tel: 01952 380905

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

**CABINET - 18 SEPTEMBER 2014
COUNCIL - 27 NOVEMBER 2014**

EXTENSION TO THE GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITE AT LODGE ROAD, DONNINGTON WOOD

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: DEVELOPMENT, BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: CLLR CHARLES SMITH

PART A – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 On 25 July 2013, Cabinet approved:
- The acquisition of land from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) to facilitate the extension of the existing permanent gypsy and traveller site at Lodge Road, Donnington Wood
 - The acquisition of a site from HCA at Snedshill for the creation of a temporary transit site to help tackle the number of illegal encampments in the Borough.
 - The submission of an application for external traveller funding from the HCA to facilitate the extension of the Lodge Road site. On 19 July 2013, confirmation was received that £1.75m of grant funding had been awarded.
- 1.2 Since then officers have been developing the scheme for the extension to the Lodge Road site but abnormal costs of development have arisen as a direct result of the poor quality ground conditions as well as the stringent requirements placed on the specification of the accommodation provided, which is a condition of the HCA funding agreement.
- 1.3 Despite considerable work being undertaken to reduce costs through modifications to the design, dividing work packages into groundwork and modular build, value engineering and competitive tendering, the scheme remains circa £775k over budget.
- 1.4 This report sets out proposals to meet this budget shortfall and outlines the potential implications of not delivering the extension to the Lodge Road site.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Cabinet recommend to Council that short term Prudential Borrowing of £775,000 as detailed in this report be approved.**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet recommend to Council that the capital receipt realised from the sale of land at Snedshill for employment purposes is used to repay the short term borrowing as detailed in this report.**
- 2.3 **That the award of contracts to the preferred contractors be approved, subject to commitments and spend being retained within existing approvals pending consideration of the recommendations above by Full Council.**

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	The proposals within this report directly contribute towards the following priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and supporting our vulnerable children and adults • Ensuring that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained • Regenerating those neighbourhoods in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing • Protecting and creating jobs as part of a Business Supporting, Business Winning Council.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	The report will ensure that the council meets its statutory duty to manage and accommodate gypsies and travellers
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	Award Enabling Works Contract: Immediately Award Main Contract: 18 September 2014 Complete Works: April 2015	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	Proposals detailed within this report recommend temporary prudential borrowing of £775,000 for a period of 5 years until the capital receipt from the sale of the Snedshill site for employment purposes is realised. The revenue cost of this temporary borrowing will be offset against the additional New Homes Bonus and Council Tax income which will be received from the new units at Lodge Road, as shown at 4.10. For clarity, the additional rental income from both the Snedshill and Lodge Road sites is earmarked to offset the borrowing costs associated with the purchase of the Snedshill site as detailed within the Cabinet report on the 25 th July 2013. As detailed within this report, should approval not be given to this temporary borrowing the Authority will forego HCA grant funding of £1.75m, and costs incurred to date of £60,000 will be abortive and will become a pressure on the revenue budget. In addition, it is estimated that potential costs of £20,000 per annum may be incurred in managing illegal encampments should sufficient permanent facilities not be available within the Borough. JAC 280814
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The Council has a duty to provide gypsy and traveller sites within the Borough in accordance with S225 of the Housing Act 2004. The proposed extension seeks to fulfil this duty.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	Failure to approve this funding may mean that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCA funding would be lost. The likelihood of successfully securing funding for gypsy and traveller sites in future rounds is limited due to the changing nature of the bidding process. As such the full costs of providing alternative accommodation would need to be met by the Council. • The Council would be unable to meet its statutory duty to manage and accommodate gypsies and travellers • The gypsy and traveller family currently occupying the Snedshill site, and due to be relocated to the Lodge Road site, would become effectively “homeless” when the planning permission on the Snedshill site expires. • The number of illegal encampments would increase with

		<p>associated financial and reputational implications.</p> <p>Other risks associated with this proposals are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The £800k receipt associated with the Snedshill site will not be realised.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	The Lodge Road extension site is within the Muxton ward.

PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 In July 2013, Cabinet approved the acquisition of 3 acres of land off Lodge Road, Donnington Wood to facilitate the extension of the existing permanent gypsy and traveller site to accommodate a further 12 units. The extension to the site was considered essential to ensure that the council is able to fulfil its statutory duty towards a gypsy and traveller family within the Borough who have residential rights here, but are currently being accommodated on a transit site at Snedshill.
- 4.2 The transit site at Snedshill was created following the acquisition of 31.7 acres of land from the HCA in 2013. The land has temporary planning permission for a transit site and on expiry of the planning permission the council will look to market part of the site for development. An alternative transit site is currently being identified to replace the Snedshill provision.
- 4.3 In July 2013, Cabinet also approved the submission of a funding bid to HCA for the upgrade of existing accommodation for gypsy and travellers at Lodge Road as well as the extension and new provision. On 19 July 2013, the council received confirmation that their application for £1.75m of funding had been successful.
- 4.4 In February 2014 planning permission was secured for the extension to Lodge Road and since then officers have been working to develop the design to allow a tender process to proceed. The project consists of the following elements:
- Site clearance and groundworks on which the site will be extended
 - Installation of hardstanding in and around the site
 - Installation of 25 new amenity buildings and 1 communal building and play area. All buildings are fabricated pods, built off site to meet specification requirements.
 - Demolition of 13 existing amenity buildings.
- 4.5 Detailed costings prepared following cabinet approval identified that the cost of the scheme was likely to exceed the available budget with this being a result of:
- Ground investigation revealing poor quality ground conditions which added to the abnormal costs associated with the development.
 - The HCA funding agreement requiring the accommodation to be built to a higher than anticipated specification, on the basis that the HCA want to protect their long investment in the scheme.
- 4.6 In response to this the project team looked at a number of alternative site layouts as well as alternative sites to try and reduce costs. In addition, the project was developed as two discreet packages for groundworks and prefabricated pods as well as a single package to see if the former approach could drive out any further savings, accepting that these were distinct specialisms.

- 4.7 Whilst a tender process would have provided cost certainty, this was delayed because a commercial opportunity arose which had implications for the Lodge Road proposals, with a local company looking to expand operations on the land adjacent to the Lodge Road extension site. Despite a number of high level meetings with the company to explore this opportunity, the proposition did not proceed.
- 4.8 Following numerous attempts to reduce costs, the preferred package was tendered with tender returns confirming that costs were still circa £775k over budget, this being after a further £190k of saving have been agreed with the preferred contractor.
- 4.9 Failure to secure a deliverable scheme will mean that:
- The HCA funding will be lost. Funding needs to be spent by the end of March 2015 or it will be clawed back.
 - Costs incurred to date, amounting to £60,000 will be abortive.
 - The likelihood of securing future HCA funding will be significantly reduced as future funding rounds are more generic, with a reduced focus on gypsy and travellers meaning the Council will have to fund an accommodation solution in full.
 - The Council would be unable to meet its statutory duty to accommodate the gypsy and traveller family currently located on Snedshill.
 - We will see an increase in the number of illegal encampments within the borough with the associated costs and reputational damage. If the Council can not find alternative accommodation for the travellers currently located on the Snedshill site, before the planning permission expires in December 2015 then they will effectively become “homeless”. The lack of an available site for the travellers was the main reason for the number of illegal encampments in 2013. The number of illegal encampments has significantly reduced from on average 22 per year on Council land to almost nil since the Snedshill site was brought into use. Costs associated with these illegal encampments amounted to circa £20,000 per year in court fees, legal fees and clean up costs.
- 4.10 It is considered essential that the project proceeds and in response to this a possible funding solution has been identified which uses Council Tax and New Homes Bonus payable on the new units on Lodge Road to fund short term borrowing of £775k to bridge the budgetary shortfall. The borrowing will ultimately be repaid utilising the capital receipt from the sale of the Snedshill in 2019. This capital receipt is currently not accounted for in the Council’s budget strategy. The funding solution is summarised below:

	£
Total costs of borrowing for 5years (2014 to 2019)	134,280
Income from NHB - 6 years	-94,608
Income from council tax - 5 years *	-58,014
	-152,622
Net Position	-18,342

* Council tax income from the site will provide ongoing revenue to the Authority beyond the 5 year repayment period (subject to resetting of council tax base).

- 4.11 The report seeks approval to proceed with the award of contract to our preferred contractors, Fitzgerald and Rollalong, immediately following Cabinet approval and prior to Council approval on the basis that:
- Overall spend and commitments will not exceed the £1.75m budget envelope for which approval has already been granted.
 - The order to Rollalong is a standalone contract for pod units and can be contained within the existing £1.75m envelope
 - The contract placed with Fitzgerald will be phased to contain spend within the existing approval until the report for additional funding can be considered.

Report prepared by Kate Callis, Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment 01952 38459

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

**CABINET - 18 SEPTEMBER 2014
COUNCIL - 27 NOVEMBER 2014**

REGENERATION OF HOLLINSWOOD CENTRE

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: DEVELOPMENT, BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: CLLR SHAUN DAVIES

PART A – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1 On 9 January 2014, Cabinet approved a £1m investment in the regeneration of Hollinswood local centre. Since then, officers have been working with members, partners, residents and Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council to develop proposals and secure additional funding to supplement this investment and secure the delivery of a scheme which will transform this area. This report seeks approval for the regeneration proposals and the associated funding package.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet notes and approves the regeneration proposals set out in the report.

2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services & Employment and Skills, to submit an application for planning permission in respect of the Scheme.

2.3 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services & Employment and Skills, to:

2.3.1 Negotiate and finalise the terms for demolition, acquisition and disposal of land, buildings and third party interests required to deliver the Scheme;

2.3.2 Take all steps necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Scheme;

2.4 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to take all steps necessary to facilitate land assembly and otherwise to deliver the Scheme including the execution of all documents and any agreements required to give effect to recommendations in this report.

2.5 That Cabinet approves the capital expenditure as detailed within this report and the required adjustments to the capital budget and allocations.

2.6 That Cabinet recommends to Council that Prudential Borrowing of £200,000 be approved if the capital receipts funding as detailed in this report is not secured.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	The proposals within this report directly contribute towards the following priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and supporting our vulnerable children and adults • Ensuring that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained • Regenerating 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	The proposals contained within this report will impact on residents of Hollinswood, Adults with Learning Difficulties and businesses within Hollinswood
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	<p>Consultation and Design: August - October 2014</p> <p>Planning: October – December 2014</p> <p>Tender & Contractor Appointment: October - December 2014</p> <p>Start on site: January - February 2015</p> <p>Works complete: January 2016</p>	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The capital cost of the proposals is estimated at £2,405k which will be funded from existing capital programme approved allocations (£1,579k) and use of one off revenue reserves of £8k and capital receipts related to the proposed development of £718k. It is assumed that the Parish Council are able to identify funding to cover the costs associated with improvements to the community centre, currently estimated at £100k. Should all the capital receipts not be realised, then £200k of prudential funding is required to support the project. Full details are contained in Section 5 of this report.
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The Council has the power to acquire land as described in this report and also has the power to carry out the additional recommendations as described. All contracts awarded by the Council are subject to the Councils' Contract Procedure Rules and may also be subject to EU regulation. Should specific issues arise during the project legal advice will be given.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	Risks and opportunities associated with this proposal are highlighted within the body of the report.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	The proposal is within The Nedge Ward.

PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

Context

- 4.1 Hollinswood is located approximately 1km from Telford Town Centre, within the Nedge Ward. It is accessed via three Roads; Deercote, Downmead and Dale Acre Way which form the major perimeter. Three independent car parks serve the centre and a number of footpaths cross through and around the local centre.

- 4.2 The local centre comprises of a supermarket, three retail units (hot food takeaway, hairdresser's salon and pharmacy) with three flats situated above, a community centre, public house and doctor's surgery. The majority of facilities/services are owned and managed by Telford & Wrekin Council's Property Investment Portfolio (PIP). Two of the flats are privately owned as is the doctor's surgery. The Woodcutter Pub has recently been purchased by Telford & Wrekin Council as part of the proposed regeneration project. The first floor of the Community Centre is leased as a doctor's surgery and the ground floor is regularly hired by various community groups. The surrounding houses and flats are a mixture of privately rented, owner occupier and Wrekin Housing Trust leasehold properties. Appendix 1 shows the existing layout and land ownership.
- 4.3 Hollinswood Local Centre was constructed in the 1970's and consists of a rectangular shaped square of inward facing shops and community facilities. It is viewed by the local Parish as unattractive, outdated, unsafe, subject to vandalism, and is set back from the main roads and through routes. The Woodcutter Public House is also in a state of decline and some of its customers have contributed to the problems of the area. These factors discourage business and safe pedestrian thoroughfare. The physical environment of the centre makes it a focus for many of the social and community problems in the area with growing issues of crime and anti social behaviour. Photographs attached within Appendix 2 indicate the poor quality of the existing environment.
- 4.4 These concerns were evidenced in the 2011 'The Nedge Ward Profile' resident survey which collected views on the Borough and Ward as a place to live. The key issues from the survey were that:
- Resident's satisfaction about their local area was low, being ranked 21 out of 33 wards.
 - Only 50% of respondents felt the Council was making the area a better place to live.
- 4.5 In response to this, in January 2014, Cabinet approved a £1m investment in the regeneration of the local centre as part of the 'Pride in Your Community' programme which seeks to significantly improve residential and employment areas including district centres and borough towns. Over the past few months, officers have been working cooperatively with Hollinswood residents, public sector partners, and businesses to develop proposals which will deliver major improvements to the area and improve linkages to Telford Town Centre.

Regeneration Proposals

- 4.6 In this context, and drawing on the experience of recent regeneration schemes in other local centres within the borough where similar issues are experienced, regeneration proposals have been developed to reinvigorate the Hollinswood Local Centre, promote business opportunities, improve linkages to the Town Centre and enhance community facilities. The main components of the scheme include:
- Demolition of the existing pub, The Woodcutter
 - Demolition and replacement of the existing shops and residential units
 - Construction of a new Activity Hub for adults with learning difficulties
 - Enhancements to and extension of the community centre.
 - Residential development (optional)
 - Rationalisation of open space and parking, landscaping improvements and improved linkages to the Town Centre

These components are shown in plan in Appendix 3 and described in more detail below.

- 4.7 **Demolition of the Woodcutter Public House:** The Woodcutter Public House was recently purchased by the Council in a mortgagee sale to facilitate regeneration proposals. The tenant vacated the property at the end of August and planning approval has now been secured for demolition. Ecological surveys have revealed bat roosts and in order for them to relocate; the demolition has been programmed for November. Demolition will make way for the development of new shops and homes.
- 4.8 **Demolition of and replacement of existing shops and residential units:** The existing shops were built in the 1970s and are now tired and uninviting. There are 3 flats on the first floor, two of which are privately owned with the third being owned by Wrekin Housing Trust (WHT). The poor quality buildings are not befitting of a modern local centre and as such the proposals include for demolition of the shops and flats and the construction of a new two storey building on the site of the Woodcutter pub to provide new retail units and three new apartments above the supermarket. All tenants, both retail and residential, have confirmed they will look to relocate to the new building but it is critical that discussions are progressed with both owners and occupiers ahead of the wider consultation to ensure that those most directly affected by the proposals have an opportunity to hear about them as soon as possible. If residents do not want to move into the new flats they would be offered support through the re-housing process. Within the costings it is assumed that residential units are sold on a long lease to tenant of the supermarket. Costings also assume that retail units are fully fitted out to facilitate a seamless relocation of tenants.
- 4.9 **Activity Hub for ALD:** To complement the regeneration proposals the masterplan includes for the development of an Activity Hub which has been designed to cater for adults with learning difficulties. The Hub is designed to combine some of the services currently offered elsewhere such as The Bridges, Halesfield 22, Lakeside and The Severns and will add to the overall cohesion of the development. The inclusion of the building within the Hollinswood scheme will result in added reinvigoration and energy to the Town Centre. A separate report to cabinet outlines the business case behind this proposal.
- 4.10 **Enhancements to the Community Centre:** The existing Community Centre building is of similar architectural style to the surrounding residential area and shops being constructed of the same era. Condition surveys of the Centre have shown the building is in good health and has been maintained to a relatively high standard. Lighting upgrades were undertaken in 2003 and a lift was installed to provide disabled access to the first floor. A new boiler was also installed in 2012. Minor upgrades and some internal refurbishment works are proposed for the Community Centre. These works include renovation to the entrance and also the formation of additional storage and a meeting room internally. Some external revitalisation is also proposed in order for the building to blend with the new buildings. The Centre is leased by the Council to the Parish, and match funding will be sought from the Parish Council to support these works. Should the funding not be received, the project will be amended accordingly.
- 4.11 **Residential Development (option):** There is the option, subject to a more detailed feasibility, to include further residential development as shown in Appendix 3. This could deliver around seven two bedroom units close to the centre. It is likely that this would be delivered as part of a second phase if viability can be proven, and a further report will be brought to cabinet with an associated business case before this component of the development proceeds.
- 4.12 **Rationalisation of open space, parking and landscaping improvements:** The existing centre comprises of a series of disconnected open spaces and car parking. The proposals seek to rationalise this by creating a central parking area surrounded by new

development. High quality paving and planting will be introduced in key spaces, for example immediately outside of the community centre, to provide a focal point for community based activity and events.

- 4.13 The Council owns all land in the centre of Hollinswood that is required to enable the proposed re-development to take place, but does not own all assets involved. In addition there are long standing tenants in residence which are expected to relocate to the new flats above the new retail. However these negotiations are ongoing and as such delegated approval is sought to conclude negotiations with the landlord and tenants of these properties with a view to ideally relocating them within the new development.

Policy Context

- 4.14 The Central Telford Area Action Plan (CTAAP) 2011 provides a stimulus and guidance for new development in the town centre and surrounding areas of Central Park including Hollinswood. The spatial strategy seeks to change the way the town centre currently works and one of the key components of this plan is improving linkages to the Town Centre through regenerating Hollinswood and Malinslee. Two policies have been developed in order to support both the CTAAP and the spatial strategy which are consistent with regeneration proposed here:

- SA1 – The existing shopping area – Strategic Pedestrian/Cycle Link B from Hollinswood to the existing shopping area;
- HO1 - Improved links to the town centre; Improvements to green spaces for children and young people, as identified in the Local Play Strategy (Policy CT19);

- 4.15 The proposals are in accordance with the Vision for the Hollinswood Character Area which seeks to; “support the ongoing regeneration of the area and encourage measures to achieve greater connectivity to the town centre for local people, by securing better physical links to the town centre.” The aim is to develop a high quality, sustainable, predominately residential environment in Hollinswood, with associated improved community facilities. This will include enhancing open spaces and improving links to the Town Centre.

- 4.16 The Pride in Your Community programme focuses on aspects of the environment that are important to residents, such as roads, litter, trees and areas of open space. It is also aimed at improving areas where businesses are located to support new and existing businesses. The Hollinswood scheme has been developed to meet the aims and objectives of the ‘Pride’ initiatives.

Social Regeneration

- 4.17 There are a number of opportunities to improve outcomes for residents in Hollinswood through the proposed regeneration scheme. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010 indicates that the Hollinswood population live in an area ranked in the 10%-20% most deprived nationally, in terms of employment. Further, The Nedge has the worst youth female unemployment rate in the Borough of 41.1%. Though it is unlikely additional employment will be generated through this proposal, linkages to the Town Centre are to be improved, providing better access to emerging employment opportunities associated with Southwater and the extension of Telford Shopping Centre, both of which are expected to generate in excess of 2,000 new jobs. To coincide with the regeneration works it is proposed that additional community based support around employment and skills is introduced into the area in the form of a monthly Job Junction offering employability courses.

- 4.18 The Nedge Ward Profile 2011 identifies criminal damage and burglaries at rates which are higher than the Borough average. A primary aim of the regeneration is to 'open up' the Hollinswood Centre through the relocation of the retail area. This will create an open street scene with additional light which is intended to encourage consumer confidence and increase security. A CCTV upgrade will also provide greater surveillance and act as a deterrent.
- 4.19 Through the physical regeneration of Hollinswood local centre there is an opportunity to further build the capacity of the community. There is a high level of interest from the local Parish in improving the local area. Improvements to the community centre as well as introduction of the Activity Hub for ALD will provide an opportunity to further engage residents and to encourage greater involvement and ownership by the community in local resources. The physical regeneration work may also offer opportunities for employment and training for local people as it is likely local contractors will be involved in the build.

Community Engagement

- 4.20 To date, consultation has been predominantly with the affected tenants and the Parish Council. Wider community consultation will be undertaken during the first two weeks in September, with an open day held in the Community Centre on the 16th September. Consultation will also allow for the design to be fully developed through to a planning application in October. The scheme needs to fulfil the requirements and aspirations of the community as well as being commercially viable. It is therefore proposed that the engagement focus on refining the concept proposals and particularly:
- The detailed design, layout and enhancement of the new public realm and open space areas
 - Improving links between the Hollinswood centre and the town centre
 - Providing valued community assets
 - Maintaining a strong landscape structure which is characteristic of central Telford
 - Linking the proposal to the 'Pride in Your Community' investment initiative

Following Cabinet approval, the development team will continue to work closely with residents in order to deliver these improvements with an agreeable design. Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the principles of the wider Pride programme.

Draft Timetable

- 4.21 The development is proposed to take place in 3 phases.
- Phase 1 (October 2014): Demolish the Woodcutter public house to make way for retail development.
 - Phase 2 (February 2015 – November 2015): Construct new retail block (supermarket, pharmacy, hair salon and hot food take away) with three flats above, Activity Hub, Community Centre improvements and associated landscaping.
 - Phase 3 (November 2015 to January 2016): Retail demolition and formation of the new car park.

5. FINANCE COMMENT

- 5.1 The indicative capital cost and sources of funding for the regeneration proposals in Hollinswood are summarised in the table below. As detailed in the report, the scheme will be delivered in conjunction with the development of the Activity Hub for ALD, the costs and funding for which are contained in a separate Cabinet Report.

	£'000s
Capital Cost	
Acquisition/decant and disturbance	375
Construction (including fees)	1,930
Community Centre works	<u>100</u>
	2,405
Sources of Funding	
Approved Capital Programme	
• Pride in Your Community	1,000
• Use of funding from the existing capital programme	401
○ Hadley	178
○ Asset Management Plan	8
Hollinswood Retail – Sinking Fund	100
Contribution from Parish Council	225
Capital Receipts – sale of newly constructed flats	293
Capital Receipts – balance of ALD property rationalisation	<u>200</u>
Capital Receipts – Hadley Local Centre	2,405

- 5.2 The approved capital programme includes a surplus of £401k originally identified for the regeneration of Hadley Local Centre. Through scheme development and competitive tendering it has been possible to reduce the scheme costs and deliver the regeneration proposals whilst realising a budgetary saving. This funding forms part of the original funding package agreed with Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) and if the Council are to retain this money, the HCA require this surplus funding to be reinvested in regeneration elsewhere in the borough. The HCA have approved the reallocation to Hollinswood in principal but this is subject to formal approval at the Housing, Economy & Regeneration Board diarised for early October 2014. Furthermore, the Hadley Local Centre project could realise capital receipts of circa £200k, although this figure could be higher dependant upon negotiations. It is therefore recommended that these receipts are also reprioritised to this programme with any required adjustments reported though the monitoring process. Should the capital receipts not be realised then it is requested that prudential borrowing of an equal amount be approved to support the project.
- 5.3 The approved capital programme includes £178,000 monies identified for general works and surveys, it is recommended that this funding be reprioritised to support the Hollinswood project.
- 5.4 Match funding will be sought from the Parish Council to support the enhancements identified for the Community Centre. Should the match funding not be secured, then the scope of works will be amended accordingly.
- 5.5 The total capital cost of the scheme includes the purchase of the existing retail flats and the sale of the newly constructed flats. The capital receipts figure in the table above includes £225k in respect of the sale of these flats, and £293,000 from the sale of corporate assets associated with the ALD property rationalisation element of the project to support the provision of the Activity Hub.

- 5.6 The new retail units will be managed by the Council's Property Investment Portfolio, the income from which will be used to supplement the income targets from the existing retail units.
- 5.7 Financial support will be provided throughout the project, to ensure the capital costs remain fully funded from within existing resources. Non funded elements will be revised or withdrawn from the programme as required.

Report prepared by Chris Goulson, Property & Design Service Delivery Manager 01952 38302

Appendix 1 – Existing Environment & Land Ownership Plan



Appendix 2 - Hollinswood Local Centre: Existing Retail and Community Facilities



Appendix 3 – Hollinswood Local Centre: Concept Proposal

Hollinswood Regeneration
Masterplan



TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**COUNCIL – 27 NOVEMBER 2014****2014/15 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT AND UPDATE****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 The Financial Monitoring report to Cabinet on 16 October provided an update on progress relating to the capital programme. The report also highlighted some new capital allocations, virements, slippage and funding changes which require formal approval by Full Council.

1.2 Since the financial monitoring report a report was also taken to Cabinet on 13 November providing an update on the Community Pride Fund which is being delivered as part of the Pride in Your Community programme to support the physical, social and economic regeneration of the Borough. This report recommended that the original budget of £1m, which was funded from savings arising from the review of our approach to debt repayments (Minimum Revenue Provision, MRP) in 2013/14, is increased by a further £0.260m due to the significant response to the programme and the contribution some applications can make to delivering council priorities. The £0.260m will be funded from the delivery of additional in year savings in 2014/15, which includes the back-dated benefit arising from the second phase of MRP re-profiling work. The back-dated element of the first phase of this exercise totalled just under £5m and was prudently set aside to help cover debt charges on the Pride in Your Community programme.

1.3 SUMMARY

The Detailed approvals required by Council are:

Capital Virements	2014/15	Funding
	£	
Development, Business & Employment		
Property and Design Fees	(120,240.47)	Prudential
Town Centre Phase 1	150,240.47	Prudential
Accommodation	50,000.00	Prudential
Housing	(80,000.00)	Prudential
Total	0	

Capital New Allocations**Development, Business & Employment**

All Other School Schemes	997,443.95	External
Town Centre - Phase I	60,000.00	Revenue
Customer & People Services		

ICT	518,000.00	Revenue
Neighbourhood & Leisure Services		
Highways & Bridges Capital Mt	10,000.00	External
Integrated Transport	28,041.10	External
Highways Maintenance	122,304.00	Gov Grant
Highways Maintenance	420,486.00	Gov Grant

Total	2,156,275.05
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Capital Slippage

Education & Corporate Parenting

BSF	(4,870,982)	4,870,982	Gov Grant
BSF	(5,024,227)	5,024,227	Prudential
BSF	(3,150,929)	3,150,929	Cap Receipts
BSF	(43,000)	43,000	External Funding
BSF	(1,267,601)	1,267,601	Borrowing
BSF	333,333	(333,333)	Revenue

Development, Business & Employment

Housing	(110,000)	110,000	Cap Receipts
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Total	(14,133,406)	14,133,406
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Capital Programme Funding

£1.440m budgeted capital receipts, the majority of which may not be received this year but may slip into later years. The funding of the capital programme will be updated to reflect this.

Transfer to Community Pride Fund

£0.260m transfer to the Community Pride Fund funded from additional in year revenue savings arising from the second phase of MRP re-profiling work and delivered in 2014/15.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to approve the changes to the capital programme and the transfer to the Community Pride Fund shown in section 1 above.

3.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	Delivery of all priority objectives depend on the effective use of available resources.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
No		
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	The capital programme will be immediately updated to reflect the new approvals.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	Financial impacts arising from this report will be reflected in future financial monitoring reports and built in to the service and financial planning strategy for 2015/16 and

		beyond
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

- 27/02/14 – Full Council, Service & Financial Planning Strategy
- 24/07/14 – Cabinet, 2014/15 Financial Monitoring
- 11/09/14 – Full Council, Financial Monitoring & Update
- 16/10/14 – Cabinet, 2014/15 Financial Monitoring
- 13/11/14 – Cabinet, Community Pride Fund, Grant Allocation

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There is no additional information.

5.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

2014/15 Budget Strategy / Financial Ledger reports

Report Prepared by:

Ken Clarke, Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & I.G. (C.F.O.) – 01952 383100; Pauline Harris, Finance Manager – 01952 383701

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE 16th SEPTEMBER 2014

CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD & CORRUPTION POLICY – 2013/14 ANNUAL REPORT AND POLICY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 For the Audit Committee to:
- a) consider the 2013/14 Annual Report on Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption activity; and
 - b) agree an updated policy and to recommend its adoption by the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Audit Committee notes the 2013/14 Annual Report on Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption activity.
- 2.2 That the Audit Committee agrees the updated policy attached as Appendix B and recommend its adoption by the Council.

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Council is committed to high standards of Corporate Governance and has a set of effective procedures in place to support this. These procedures include the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy.
- 3.2 The terms of reference of the Audit Committee include:
“15. To approve the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy for adoption by the Council and to monitor its operation. The policy will be reviewed it at least once every two years.”
- 3.3 This report includes information in respect to the sixth annual report setting out the Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption activity for 2013/14 to enable the Audit Committee to monitor the policies operation. In addition attached as Appendix B is an updated policy for members to agree and recommend on for adoption by the Council.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1 Audit Committee 22nd March 2011 – Update of Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy 2011
Audit Committee 20th September 2011 – Annual Report 2010/11
Audit Committee 26th June 2012 – Annual Report 2011/12
Audit Committee 25th June 2013 – Annual Report 2012/13 and Policy Update

5. INFORMATION - ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

- 5.1 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy supports one of the key dimensions of good Corporate Governance – Standards of Conduct. The Council aims to ensure that all those associated with it maintain high standards of ethics and conduct in public life contributing to good Corporate Governance.

- 5.2 Nationally due to the economic climate there are indications from Police and Government statistics that fraudulent activity has and will continue to increase. Therefore it is important that the Council continues to maintain its vigilance in respect to Council services and the Community.
- 5.3 This report contains information for 2013/14 on counter fraud and investigation activities within Benefits, Internal Audit and Trading Standards, including Licensing. The Committee should note that the Councils procedures and controls are designed to minimise the opportunity for fraud and to highlight where possible fraudulent activity may have occurred.
- 5.4 Members and officers regularly receive information on their responsibilities in respect to the use of public money and the prevention and detection of fraud. They provide information for investigation by appropriately trained and experienced officers within the Council (and by the Police or other external party when required).

6. BENEFITS

- 6.1 The benefit caseload has decreased over the last 12 months, from 20,333 (live cases) at 25th March 2013 to 19,551 at 31st March 2014. The main reason for this reduction is the introduction of the government's Welfare Reforms (Social Sector Size Criteria) and Council Tax Support. They have resulted in reductions in benefit for some working age people and others being cancelled off benefit all together.
- 6.2 The Council has followed the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) lead in "securing the gateway". The DWP aim at 'getting it right, and keeping it right' i.e. ensuring only those properly entitled are granted and paid benefit. A telephone claim process is still in place and the vast majority of claims continue to be processed in this way. A telephone appointment is made within anyone making contact to make a new claim. A Benefit Assessment Officer takes all the necessary details and then an appointment is made for the claimant to see a Benefit Assessment Officer at the Council's First Point facility where the information they have given is checked against the relevant proof of income, identity and rent details. To this end the majority of new benefit claimants who make a claim direct to the Council are seen in person by a Benefit Officer. This ensures the best possible service for the customer as claims are processed whilst they wait and the Benefit Assessment Officer explains to the customer their responsibilities regarding reporting of changes in circumstance. Entitlement letters are given to the customer at the end of the interview and explained and checked with the customer to ensure accuracy.
- 6.3 Referrals to the Benefits Investigation team come from various sources. The table below show the sources, number and percentage of total.

Source	Number of Referrals	Percentage of Total
Anonymous letter	40	3.85
Anonymous telephone call	250	24.04
Member of staff	286	27.5
Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS)	15	1.44
DWP	99	9.52
Police	15	1.44
Landlord	29	2.79
Internet/email	169	16.25
Other Local Authority	13	1.25
National Fraud Initiative	121	11.63
Fraud drive	2	0.19
Other	1	0.10
Total Referrals	1,040	100

6.4 In the last six months of 2013/14 the Investigation Team commenced a project looking into Council Tax fraud and error including incorrectly claimed discounts and Council Tax Support. For those people who have delayed in reporting a change we have for the first time started to administer a civil penalty of £70. This project has been extended into 2014/15.

6.5 In March 2014 we began a two month "Put the Record Straight" amnesty giving people the opportunity to cancel any Council Tax discount which they were no longer entitled to and repay anything they owe without facing any further action. Any person found not to have reported a change after this period may face a criminal prosecution or fines of up to £1,000.

6.6 Benefits Data Matching

6.6.1 In 2013/14 there were 12 investigations closed which had been opened due to a Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) referral. Of these, 12 resulted in a positive outcome i.e. benefit was affected / fraud found.

6.6.2 The Investigation Team have also been completing matches identified through the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) 2012/13. In total 48 investigations have so far been completed, of which 3 resulted in a sanction (a further 37 resulted in the level of benefit paid being affected). The overpaid benefit for the cases which received a sanction total £5,562.13.

6.6.3 Unfortunately Benefit fraud is not just external to the Council. The Council undertakes internal checks in respect to monthly data matches with all new starters. This ensures all changes in circumstances have been declared. During the last year one person who was a Telford and Wrekin employee has accepted an administrative penalty following investigations into benefit fraud.

6.7 Cases Investigated

6.7.1 We use a risk based approach to ascertain which cases are investigated. In 2013/14 a total of 312 investigations were closed and of which 202 proved positive (benefit was affected in some way). Of this total, 70 cases received a formal sanction:

- Prosecutions – 36
- Administrative Penalties – 25
- Formal Cautions - 9

6.7.2 Although no credit is given, sanctions are also applied to partners/landlords/employers where it can be demonstrated that they were complicit in the fraud. As a result, 2 further people (partners) were prosecuted.

6.7.3 For the prosecutions fines of £1,015 were imposed and costs of £4,825 were awarded, please note that some of these are attributable to joint working with Department for Work and Pensions. Other sentences imposed by the courts in the last year include a suspended custodial sentence, community orders, curfews and unpaid work. In addition to recovery of the overpaid benefit amount anyone accepting a caution, administrative penalty or successful prosecution cases will have a loss of benefit sanction applied which means that any ongoing benefit entitlement is reduced for a period of four weeks.

6.7.4 Overpayments detected in the above sanction cases totalled £311,244.

6.8 Benefit Fraud Sanction & Prosecution Policy

6.8.1 The benefit fraud policy was rewritten and approved by Cabinet in January 2010. The refreshed policy was to give much clearer guidance to decision makers on a wider range of

factors that they should consider when deciding which sanction to apply to a fraud case, as well as streamlining the decision making process to speed up the time taken for sanction authorisation to be granted.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT

- 7.1 Internal Audit has an important role in the investigation of suspected internal fraud and assisting managers in ensuring they have appropriate systems and controls in place that are designed to prevent or reduce the opportunity for fraud.
- 7.2 Annually days are allocated within the audit plan to undertake proactive fraud work and work in areas where previous frauds have occurred. This work is informed by a Fraud Risk register¹. A summary of the Internal audit work undertaken during 2013/14 for fraud and corruption risk areas, proactive work and requests is attached as Appendix A for your information. For 2013/14 the planned proactive fraud days (including NFI work – see below) were 40 days with an actual of 10 days. The reduction was due to unplanned work and the loss of resources due to staff turnover. In addition where possible the proactive activities were included within other planned audits (see Appendix A).
- 7.3 In addition to proactive fraud work and continuous advice and guidance to managers, Internal Audit also has role to investigate potential irregular activities reported to them throughout the year. During 2013/14 although management requested areas to be reviewed due to restructures and new responsibilities no potential frauds were identified. The time taken for these reviews was 22 days. Changes to procedures and controls have been implemented as a result of these reviews and additional training and awareness provided to employees.
- ### **7.4 National Fraud Initiative (NFI)**
- 7.4.1 The Audit Commission's NFI exercise is part of Central Government's national recognition that taxpayers have a right to expect public bodies to put in place every possible measure to protect their money from fraud. The national public bodies included in this exercise are police authorities, local probation boards, fire and rescue authorities and all upper tier and districts councils.
- 7.4.2 The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide data to the Audit Commission for the prevention and detection of fraud as part of the NFI. NFI is an exercise that matches electronic data within and between audited bodies to prevent and detect fraud.
- 7.4.3 Investigation continued on the NFI matches provided to the council as part of the 2012/13 exercise (as previously reported). In total 1649 matches have been processed with a further 91 in the process of being investigated. In total £94,508.31 worth of fraud has been found.
- 7.4.4 In January 2014 the council provided council tax and electoral registration datasets to the Audit Commission as part of the council tax – single person discount data match. In total 1205 matches were identified and on a risk basis to date 395 records have been investigated with a further 16 in the process of being investigated. In total £2,876.33 worth of fraud has been found.
- 7.4.5 The full 2014/15 NFI exercise is due to commence from October 2014.

¹ This register was developed based on good practice, local internal intelligence and the West Midlands Fraud Group (this is a specialist fraud networking and training group of West Midlands metropolitan authorities and unitary authorities).

7.5 Training & Awareness

- 7.5.1 The Council ensures that both Members and Officers are aware of their responsibilities in respect to the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.
- 7.5.2 All new staff within Revenues & Benefits (R&B) (as part of their induction) receive Fraud Awareness training from the Corporate Training Team. In addition periodic refresher training is given to existing staff. Out of the fraud referrals received in 2013/14, 286 came from members of staff.
- 7.5.3 For officers there is the Code of Conduct for Employees which is included as part of induction and is available on the intranet. The principles of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Speak Up policies are included in induction for new employees.

7.6 Publicity

- 7.6.1 As per the policy publicity of cases is important as a deterrent. The Benefit Fraud Team and Trading Standards use Corporate Communications to issue press releases about upcoming notable cases. Often the press then follow up with the headlines about the action/fine. The press releases are also published on the Council's website.
- 7.6.2 Internally cases of note are included within the Revenues and Benefits weekly team brief notes and also included in the quarterly Service Area report. These are issued to all R&B staff.
- 7.6.3 Where allegations of internal frauds have been investigated and procedures and controls are changed the lessons learnt are shared across the Council through the staff news bulletins and in management meetings.

8. TRADING STANDARDS & LICENSING

- 8.1 The Trading Standards and Licensing services of the Council play a significant role in delivering the Council's response to business related fraud in the borough. The majority of the responses are based around statutory responsibilities refined to provide effective detection and countermeasures in respect to fraud. These services are not restricted as to whom its officers may investigate, and are constrained only by the limitations of the statute under which an investigation is being conducted. As such investigations may involve Council officers, Members, suppliers to the Council and the business activities of the Council itself.
- 8.2 Officers of these services have access to specific legal, procedural and operational training to enable effective discharge of their responsibilities.
- 8.3 Staff undertake extensive professional training and mentoring before being permitted to commence enforcement duties, and have access to a range of professional competency training facilities through CEnTSA (Central England Trading Standards Authorities) and the Institute of Licensing (IOL) and their regional professional networks.

8.4 Anti Fraud responsibilities

- 8.4.1 Specific and identifiable responsibilities falling to Trading Standards and Licensing within the Public Protection Service Delivery Unit, to combat fraud in the community include:

For the Licensing Service:

- **Street trader consents**
Prevention and detection of the illegal and highly lucrative transfer of street trader consents ('burger wars')
- **Taxi licensing**
Ensuring the correct vehicle, correctly insured and driven by the licensed driver.
Ensuring that licences are granted to people who have the right to work in the UK.
- **National Insurance Fraud Network.**
Partnership working to detect and report vehicle accident patterns.
- **Scrap metal dealers licensing.**
Joint working with police to detect illegal trading in stolen vehicles through scrap metal dealers.
- **National Fraud Initiative.**
Provision of information for the purposes of detection of benefit and other related frauds.
- **Intelligence Data System.**
New data system linked to DVLA for the detection of driving licence frauds.
- **Gambling Act enforcement**
Gaming establishments, registration of gaming machines, enforcement of 'amusement machines licensing duty certificates' in respect of the avoidance of taxation payments.
- **Money Laundering.**
Taxis, private hire vehicles, gaming machines, as a means of converting large quantities of cash.
- **Street Collections, Charity collections.**
Identification, detection and enforcement of fraudulent collections

For the Trading Standards Service:

8.4.2 Trading Standards has responsibility for enforcing a wide range of legislation that supports the authority's anti fraud responsibilities, and could be considered under the following broad headings:

- **Intellectual Property crime**
Copyright, Trade marks
- **Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading legislation**
Wide ranging legislation to keep pace with constantly changing fraudulent practices. This legislation covers a wide range of goods and services including houses purchases, animals, vehicles, food & drink and all personal and professional services
- **Consumer Credit**
Credit, finance agreements, misleading advertising
- **Cattle identification legislation**
To prevent fraudulent transfer to limit disease spread.
- **Weights and Measures**
Misrepresentation of quantity of goods supplied.
- **Fraud Act**
This legislation is applicable to all the above legislative areas. The act allows Trading Standards to take action against serious criminality and persistent offenders to achieve the appropriate fines and sentences where necessary.

8.4.3 Trading Standards receives intelligence about rogue trader activities in Telford and deal with complaints about fraudsters that specifically target vulnerable and older people, carrying out

unnecessary or misrepresent home improvement work and as a result defraud them out of thousands of pounds. This area of fraud remains a priority for Trading Standards for 2014/15.

- 8.4.4 The team also aims to educate residents, other members of the community, such as carers and voluntary groups who come in to contact with more vulnerable consumers, by raising awareness of rogue traders and making consumers better able to distinguish the rogues from the reputable businesses.

8.5 Trading Standards Regional Initiatives

Scambusters

- 8.5.1 Dedicated Trading Standards officers working alongside officers from the Police, HM Revenue & Customs and other enforcement agencies. They work across local authority boundaries focusing on the hardest to tackle scams and rogue traders that set out to defraud people out of their money/assets.
- 8.5.2 This regional approach has demonstrated that targeted, proactive and intelligence led enforcement works. There has been much closer co-operation and data sharing between Trading Standards and other agencies, partly due to the level of criminality the teams have investigated.

Examples of the types of issues that have been targeted are:

- o Doorstep crime
- o Deceptive selling techniques
- o 'Cowboy' builders doing shoddy and unnecessary work
- o Large scale organised counterfeiting operations

8.6 Loan Shark Team

- 8.6.1 A loan shark is an unlicensed moneylender. Licensed moneylenders are regulated by the Competition Markets Authority (CMA) and must follow the CMA's codes of practice. Because they're not licensed, loan sharks operate outside the law. If you borrow from them it's likely you'll:
- o get a loan on very bad terms
 - o pay an extortionate rate of interest
 - o be harassed if you get behind with your repayments
 - o be pressured into borrowing more from them to repay one debt with another
- 8.6.2 The role of this team is to identify, investigate and if necessary prosecute loan sharks and to work with victims to secure a satisfactory financial outcome. It also has a proactive role to educate and raise awareness in local communities of the pitfalls of loans harks and promotes alternative sources of obtaining small loans and savings plans.

9. Challenges for 2014/15

- Reduced resources for the provision of Council services and therefore reduction in control and supervision and therefore potential increased opportunities for internal fraud
- Reduced resources for the provision of Council services, including Governance and therefore reduction in fraud awareness, investigation of data matches and opportunities for proactive work.
- Impact of the economic climate on the potential incidence of fraud

- The continuing impact of the government's welfare reform which has seen a reduction in Housing Benefit for many working age people which may result in some people not accurately reporting their circumstances.
- Localised Council Tax Support replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme with effect from April 2013. This poses a challenge as Council Tax Support is a discount and operates under different legislation to Housing Benefit. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) cannot prosecute this discount alongside DWP benefits.
- Introduction of Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS). SFIS will take over the responsibility for investigating Housing Benefit and all DWP fraud. SFIS are due to take over Telford & Wrekin Council's responsibility in June 2015. In the lead up to this date additional work will be required to deal with the migration of cases and staff. If staff do transfer then the Council will lose experienced investigation officers.

10. ANTI-FRAUD & CORRUPTION POLICY UPDATE

- 10.1 The current Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy was reviewed, updated and agreed by the Audit Committee on 25th June 2013 and was approved by Council on 11th July 2013. It was agreed at the June 2013 meeting that the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy would be reviewed annually to coincide with the annual report (unless urgent changes are required in between).
- 10.2 The updated Policy is attached as Appendix B for comment and agreement. There have been minimal changes to the policy to reflect organisational changes and to ensure consistency with the Constitution.

11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

AREA	COMMENTS
Equal Opportunities	The Anti-Fraud & Corruption policy operates within Equalities legislation and the Council's associated policies. Any investigations follow legal requirements and proper procedures to ensure that equality and diversity requirements are met.
Environmental Impact	None
Legal Implications	Regulatory and enforcement teams throughout the Council (including internal audit) have powers and responsibilities set out in statute and regulation to detect, investigate and take enforcement action in relation to fraud and corruption. Such roles and responsibilities also include information sharing which is referred to in this report. When undertaking these actions all relevant statutory requirements need to be adhered to.
Links with Corporate Priorities	The policy supports all Corporate Priorities and good Corporate Governance demonstrating the Council's desire to ensure sound conduct and ethical procedures for all those associated with the Council and service delivery. Monitoring the policy provides the opportunity to identify if there are any changes required or additional areas of activity.
Financial Implications	None as all current activity is met from within existing budgets.
Opportunities and Risks	Having a policy which sets out the Council's anti-fraud and corruption culture and associated procedures assists in the management of the risk of fraud and corruption against the Council.
Ward Implications	Borough wide implications.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy 2013

Speak Up Policy 2012

Benefits Counter Fraud and Sanctions Policy 2010

Audit Commission requirements for the National Fraud Initiative

Trading Standards & Licensing Legislation

Report prepared by Jenny Marriott – Audit & Information Governance SDM - 01952 383101; Becky Owen-Jones – Benefit Welfare and Assurance Group Manager – 01952 83881 & Anita Hunt – Trading Standards Team Manager – 01952 381998; Suzanne Fisher – Licensing & Support Team Manager

**INTERNAL AUDIT WORK UNDERTAKEN FOR FRAUD & CORRUPTION RISK AREAS,
PROACTIVE WORK AND REQUESTS 2013/14**

Work Area	Work undertaken
Cash collection	Annual cash collection audit Review of cash collection arrangements in respect to the Trolley Service, Gypsy & Traveller Sites and Training for Employment Now. Park & Ride
Catering	Schools cashless catering follow up Cafe Go
Procurement – Contract Monitoring	ICT contract monitoring Revenues & Benefits Contract monitoring
Procurement	Contract Life Cycle – Property & Design Park & Ride Contract
Training for Employment Now	Review of comforts fund and controls in place to manage the fund
Mobile Telephone	Query raised by ICT due to excessive use of a mobile telephone that had been transferred from an employee who had left the Authority
Moorfield School	Initial review to ascertain if there were any financial discrepancies which were not confirmed but a full audit was then undertaken.

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL - ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY 2014³

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council through this policy clearly demonstrates its zero tolerance commitment to dealing with fraud, bribery and corruption and will deal equally with perpetrators from inside (members¹ and employees²) and outside the Council.
- 1.2 The policy outlines measures designed to frustrate attempted fraud, bribes or corruption (defined in Appendix A) and the steps that will be taken if such action occurs. It is separated into four areas:-
1. Culture
 2. Prevention/Deterrence
 3. Detection and Investigation
 4. Training
- 1.3 The Council also recognises the high degree of external scrutiny of its affairs by a variety of external bodies. These bodies are important in highlighting any areas where improvements to anti-fraud, anti bribery and anti corruption activities can be made.

2. CULTURE

- 2.1 The Council's co-operative values include openness and honesty which supports the Council's commitment to zero tolerance in respect to fraud, bribery and corruption.
- 2.2 The prevention and detection of fraud, bribery or corruption and the protection of the public purse are responsibilities of everyone, both internal and external to the organisation. The anti-fraud, bribery and corruption culture and associated procedures assist the Council in its management of the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption against the Council and are an integral part of its governance framework.
- 2.3 The Council's members, employees, partners, volunteers and governors play an important role in creating and maintaining this culture. They are positively encouraged to raise concerns regarding fraud, bribery and corruption, regardless of seniority, rank or status, in the knowledge that such concerns will be investigated and wherever possible be treated in confidence³. Suppliers/contractors to the Council and the public also have roles to play in this process and should inform the Council if they feel that fraud, bribery or corruption may have occurred. Examples of types of concerns are listed in Annex 1.
- 2.4 The Council will deal firmly and take appropriate action against those who defraud the Council or who are corrupt. There is, of course, a need to ensure that any investigation process is not misused and, therefore, any abuse (such as employees/members raising malicious allegations) will also be dealt with appropriately.
- 2.5 When fraud, bribery or corruption has occurred due to a breakdown in the Council's systems or procedures, senior managers will ensure that appropriate improvements in systems of control are implemented within a reasonable timeframe to prevent a re-occurrence.

3. PREVENTION & DETERRENCE

3.1 MEMBERS

- 3.1.1 All members of the Council have a duty to the citizens of the Borough to protect the Council and public money from any acts of fraud, bribery or corruption. This is achieved through the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, compliance with the Code of Conduct for Members, the Council's

¹ The term "members" is used in the policy to include elected, co-opted and independent members.

² The term employees is used in the policy to include employees, temporary staff, volunteers, partners

³ The Council's Speak Up policy sets out how concerns can be raised (including anonymous information) and how they will be dealt with, including allegations in respect to fraud and corruption.

Constitution⁴, relevant legislation and any other protocols and procedures adopted by the Council.

3.2 EMPLOYEES

3.2.1 The Role of the Chief Financial Officer – one of the Assistant Directors⁵ has been designated the statutory responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer as defined by s151 ~~of the~~ Local Government Act 1972. These responsibilities are set out in Annex 2.

3.2.2 Employees and their managers are responsible for controls and ensuring that adequate systems of internal control exist within their areas of responsibility, that these controls operate effectively and that they test them regularly to confirm this. They should also operate so as to prevent and detect fraud and implement appropriate controls into new/developed systems and new controls into existing systems to reduce the risk of fraud occurring or recurring.

3.2.3 Managers at all levels are responsible for managing the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption through:

- a) Recruitment – following the Council's recruitment policies and procedures
- b) Appropriate induction and training in order for their staff to do their job
- c) Their adherence to and promotion of the Employee Code of Conduct
- d) Providing awareness of the Council's constitution, appropriate policies and procedures (key documents associated with this policy are listed in Annex 2)
- e) Regular reminders, updates and vigilance in respect to fraud, bribery & corruption
- f) Encouraging staff to raise concerns with them or through the Speak Up policy

3.3 MEMBERS & EMPLOYEES

3.3.1 Both members and employees must ensure that they avoid situations where there is a potential for a conflict of interest⁶. Such situations can arise particularly with planning and land issues, procurement (especially tendering), recruitment etc. Effective role separation is essential to ensure decisions made are based upon impartial advice to maintain public confidence in the Council's decision-making processes and avoid questions about improper disclosure of confidential information.

3.3.2 All members and officers are expected to fully co-operate with whoever is conducting fraud, bribery and corruption investigations, proactive checks or data matching exercises.

3.4 INTERNAL AUDIT

3.4.1 Internal Audit plays a vital preventative role in ensuring that systems and procedures are in place to prevent and deter fraud, bribery and corruption and has specific rights within the constitution (see Annex 2). Internal Audit investigates all employee cases of suspected financial irregularity, fraud, bribery or corruption⁷, except Benefit fraud investigations (see below), in accordance with agreed procedures. Internal Audit liaises with management to recommend changes in procedures to improve controls, reduce risks and prevent losses to the Authority.

3.5 BENEFITS INVESTIGATION TEAM

3.5.1 Benefits administration is recognised nationally as being complex and difficult to administer. This results in the scheme being prone to error and abuse. The Authority is committed to tackling poverty but it must also ensure that the administration of housing and council tax benefit is secure, fair and provides prompt help to those who need it. Equally, it must also be vigilant in tackling fraud and error to ensure value for taxpayers' money. The Revenues & Benefits Service

⁴ Including Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

⁵ Assistant Director Finance, Audit & Information Governance

⁶ Conflicts could also arise where employees have additional employment outside the Council but this is managed through the Private Works procedure.

⁷ Except where they are referred to the Police when they may leave it to the Police or assist, as appropriate

operates within legislation, government guidance and local procedures with the aim of improving the quality and accuracy of benefit determinations and to both prevent and reduce the incidence of fraud.

- 3.5.2 The Benefits Investigation Team is responsible for the investigation of welfare benefit fraud, often jointly with the Department for Works & Pensions (DWP), in accordance with legislation, agreed codes of conduct and a separate Council policy. In cases where employees and/or members are involved the team will work with Internal Audit, ~~People Services~~Human Resources, the Monitoring Officer and appropriate senior management to ensure that correct procedures are followed.

3.6 DATA MATCHING

- 3.6.1 The Council participates in all mandatory Data Matching exercises. In respect to Benefits there are also regular external exercises with HBMS (Housing Benefits Matching Service) and DWP. In addition internal data matching exercises are undertaken. All exercises adhere to Data Protection requirements.

3.7 EXTERNAL AUDIT

- 3.7.1 Independent External Audit is an essential safeguard of the stewardship of public money. This is currently carried out by suppliers appointed by the Audit Commission who operate through a Code of Practice that is designed to test (amongst other things) the adequacy of the Council's financial systems, the arrangements for preventing/limiting the opportunity for fraud and the arrangements for the detection of fraud, bribery and corruption. It is not the external auditors' function to prevent fraud and irregularities, but the integrity of public funds is at all times a matter of general concern. External auditors are always alert to the possibility of fraud and irregularity, and will act without undue delay if grounds for suspicion come to their notice. Where External Audit is required to undertake an investigation they will operate within legislation and their codes of conduct.

3.8 OTHER AGENCIES

- 3.8.1 Appropriate Council services have arranged (in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998) the exchange of information on national and local fraud, bribery and corruption activity with appropriate external agencies.

3.9 CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS AND THE PUBLIC

- 3.9.1 This policy, although primarily aimed at those within or associated with the Council, encourages contractors/suppliers and the public to assist in the Council's zero tolerance commitment to fraud, bribery and corruption.

3.10 PROSECUTION AND RECOMPENSE

- 3.10.1 To support this policy the Council has a Corporate Prosecution Policy which is complemented by the Benefit Fraud Sanction & Prosecution Policy. The corporate policy is designed to clarify and ensure consistency in the Council's action in specific cases and to deter others from committing offences against the Authority. The Benefit Fraud Sanction & Prosecution policy ensures that Benefits prosecutions are undertaken within the requirements of Benefits legislation.
- 3.10.2 In addition or instead of prosecution, the Council will seek to recover any money or assets fraudulently/corruptly obtained from the Council.

3.11 DISCIPLINARY OR OTHER ACTION

- 3.11.1 Theft, fraud, bribery and corruption are serious offences against the Authority and employees will face disciplinary action if there is evidence that they have been involved in these activities, including Benefit fraud. Disciplinary action will be taken in addition to, or instead of,

criminal proceedings depending on the circumstances of each individual case but in a consistent manner.

- 3.11.2 Members will face appropriate action under this policy if there is evidence that they have been involved in theft, fraud, bribery and corruption against the Authority. Action will be taken in addition to, or instead of criminal proceedings, depending on the circumstances of each individual case but in a consistent manner. If the matter is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct for Members then it will also be referred to the Standards Committee.

3.12 PUBLICITY

- 3.12.1 The Council's Corporate Communications Team will optimise the publicity opportunities associated with anti-fraud, anti bribery and anti corruption activity within the Council. Information will be publicised in respect to prosecutions and other appropriate cases as a deterrent.
- 3.12.2 Internally where the Council can learn from incidents the relevant points will be communicated to members and employees.
- 3.12.3 Any notifications received by the Council of possible regional/national frauds, scams or alerts will be communicated to employees and members, as appropriate.
- 3.13.4 All anti-fraud, anti bribery and anti corruption activities, including the update of this policy⁸, will be publicised in order to make employees, members and the public aware of the Council's commitment to taking action on fraud, bribery and corruption, when it occurs.

4. DETECTION AND INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 Internal Audit plays an important role in the detection of fraud. Included in their audit plan (informed by a fraud risk register) are specific fraud tests, spot checks and unannounced visits. However it is often the vigilance of employees, partners, volunteers, members, governors, suppliers/contractors and the public that aids detection.
- 4.2 All suspected fraud, bribery and corruption irregularities (except benefit fraud) are required to be reported (verbally or in writing) to the Audit & Information Governance Manager either by the person with whom the initial concern is raised or through the Council's Speak Up policy. (See paragraph 3.4.1).

5. AWARENESS AND TRAINING

- 5.1 The Council recognises that the continuing success of this policy and its general credibility will depend in part on the effectiveness of training and awareness for Members, employees and affected external parties. The principles of this policy are integrated into the officer and member's induction programme and incorporated in the Member Development programme. Specialist training for certain employees is provided by their service area due to their specific roles.
- 5.2 Regular awareness through corporate communication, staff news and Ollie will support the successful application of this policy. Full copies of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Speak Up policies are available on the intranet.

⁸ This policy will be reviewed annually and updated where necessary.

DEFINITIONS OF FRAUD, BRIBERY & CORRUPTION

Fraud is defined by the Audit Commission as:-

Fraud – *“the intentional distortion of financial statements or other records by persons internal or external to the authority which is carried out to conceal the misappropriation of assets or otherwise for gain”*.

In addition, fraud can also be defined as *“the intentional distortion of financial statements or other records by persons internal or external to the authority which is carried out to mislead or misrepresent”*.

The Fraud Act 2006 which came into effect on 15th January 2007 created a new general offence of fraud with three ways of committing it:

- Fraud by false representation
- Fraud by failing to disclose information
- Fraud by abuse of position

It also created new offences:

- Obtaining services dishonestly
- Possessing, making and supplying articles for use in frauds
- Fraudulent trading applicable to non-corporate traders.

Corruption is defined by the Audit Commission as:-

Corruption – *“the offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence the action of any person”*.

In addition, this policy also covers *“the failure to disclose an interest in order to gain financial or other pecuniary benefit.”*

Bribery is defined under the Act as:-

A bribe is a financial or other advantage that is offered or requested with the intention of inducing or rewarding the improper performance of a relevant function or activity, or with the knowledge or belief that the acceptance of such an advantage would constitute the improper performance of such a function or activity.

EXAMPLES OF THE TYPES CONCERNS that should be raised:

- * A criminal offence
- * A failure to comply with a statutory or legal obligation
- * Improper or unauthorised use of public or other official funds
- * A miscarriage of justice
- * Maladministration, misconduct or malpractice
- * Discriminatory behaviour
- * Endangering an individuals health and/or safety
- * Damage to the environment
- * Benefit Fraud
- * That offers or requests have been made in respect to a promise, gift, financial or other advantage to or from a person that results in improper performance of a decision or action
- * Deliberate concealment of any of the above

Roles and Responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in respect to Financial Affairs including Fraud & Corruption

Section 151 of the Local Government Act (1972) sets out that in every local authority in England & Wales should:

“make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs”.

Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1988 requires the Chief Financial Officer to report to the Council if the authority, one of its committees, the Leader and Cabinet Executive or one of its officers:

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- Has made – or is about to make – a decision which has or would result in unlawful expenditure;
- Has taken, or is about to take, an unlawful action which has or would result in a loss or deficiency to the authority; or
- Is about to make an unlawful entry in the Council's accounts.

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Section 114 of the LGFA 1988 also requires the Chief Financial Officer to nominate a properly qualified member of staff to deputise, should the Chief Financial Officer be unable to perform the duties under Section 114 personally.

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Under the Constitution the CFO responsibilities of proper administration encompasses all aspects of local authority financial management including:

- provision of financial advice for service delivery, strategic planning and policy making across the authority;
- provision of advice on the optimum use of available resources on the management of capital and revenue budgets;
- provision of financial management information;
- preparation of statutory and other accounts, associated grant claims and supporting records;
- provision of an effective internal audit function and assistance to management in providing safe and efficient financial arrangements;
- the proper exercise of a wide range of delegated powers both formal and informal;
- provision of effective financial management systems and procedures;
- provision of effective income collection and payments systems;
- advising on treasury, investment and cash-flow management;
- advising on the safe custody of assets and insurance; and
- The recognition of the fiduciary responsibility owed to local tax payers.

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- ~~Compliance with the statutory requirements for accounting and internal audit;~~
- ~~;~~
- ~~The responsibility for the proper administration and management of the Council's financial affairs and dealings;~~
- ~~The proper exercise of a wide range of delegated powers both formal and informal; and~~
- ~~—~~
- ~~The recognition of the fiduciary responsibility owed to local tax payers.~~

KEY COUNCIL DOCUMENTS THAT SUPPORT THIS POLICY

(This list contains examples but is not exhaustive)

- Constitution
- Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and associated detailed procedures
- Fraud Response Plan
- Employee Code of Conduct

- Health and Safety Policies
- Corporate Information Security Policy (which includes the E-mail and Internet Usage Policies and IT Strategy).
- Gifts and Hospitality Guidance
- Equalities policies
- Private Works Procedure

CONSTITUTION POWERS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNAL AUDIT

(Part 4 – Rules of Procedure: Section 6 – Financial Regulations paragraph 9.7)

9.7 The Chief Finance Officer's authorised Internal Audit representatives shall be empowered to:

- enter at all reasonable times any Council premises or land
- have access to all Council and partner records (includes business e-mails and internet records), documentation and correspondence relating to any financial and/or other transactions or other business of the Council, its employees or members, as considered necessary by the CFO, Monitoring Officer or Audit & Information Governance Manager.
- have access to records belonging to third parties such as contractors or partners when required
- require and receive such explanations as are regarded necessary concerning any matter under examination from any employee, member, partner or third party.
- require any employee or member of the Council or any partner/third party to account for cash, stores or any other Council property which is under his/her control or possession on behalf of the Council.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Audit Committee held on Tuesday, 16th September 2014 at 6.00 pm in Meeting Room 7, Ground Floor, Darby House, Telford

PRESENT: Councillors R Sloan (Chair), K Austin, C Mason, S A W Reynolds,
W L Tomlinson

Officers: R Partington (Managing Director), K Clarke (Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance), A Astley (Assistant Director: Customer Services), J Marriott (Audit & Information Governance Manager), P Harris (Finance Manager), B Morris (Finance Team Leader), J Power (Delivery & Planning Manager), L Higgins (Benefit Service Delivery Manager) and J Clarke (Democratic Services Support Officer).

IN ATTENDANCE:

A Bunting – KPMG
I Pennington – KPMG

The Chair paid tribute to the late Cllr D Davies who had been the first Chair of the Audit Committee following the change in Administration and for all of his hard work which had set the Audit Committee on a good course.

AUC-17 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 30th June 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

AUC-18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr I T W Fletcher

AUC-19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

AUC-20 REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE 2013/14

I Pennington gave a brief overview of the current position regarding the Council's accounts.

The accounts were almost complete with some minor tidying up work to be undertaken. They were a weighty document and there had been a huge effort on the part of the Finance Team during the detailed process and with all the necessary disclosures. I Pennington thanked the Finance Team for their hard work and support which he had found very useful being a reasonably new Member to the KPMG Telford Team.

No major adjustments or discrepancies had been found and all the basic numbers were agreed.

It was hoped that once Members had considered both the report and the accounts that the relevant paperwork would be signed off by the Chair during the meeting. KPMG would anticipate being able to issue an unqualified conclusion for both the audit and the Value For Money audit.

KPMG would be unable to issue a Certificate of Completion at present due to two outstanding items:

- Completion of the Whole of Government Accounts
- A question from a Member of the Public

These items were currently being dealt with and once they had been completed the audit would be closed.

A question arose regarding the deadline for issuing the Certificate of Completion and it was confirmed that this did not affect the signing of the Opinion

A Bunting gave a brief overview of the risks identified in respect to the audit which had been identified in the planning of the audit and reported to the Audit Committee in January 2014.

KPMG were happy in principle that the Council were complying with the Code on the changes in policies with regard to borrowing costs and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This had now been closed off.

With regard to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), this was a complex issue and KPMG had worked with the Pension Scheme, the Actuary and with the Council and this had now been closed off.

The Value For Money risks had looked at the Council's saving plans and had noted that the plan was in place, it was regularly monitored and it was being delivered. However, the challenges would be ongoing and this would roll on.

KPMG had looked at new projects and contracts in respect of income generation and had also reviewed the feasibility studies of two projects:

- Solar Farm
- New Homes Project

KPMG were satisfied that the costs had come in on budget at present but they had not considered any profits that may be made.

Regarding key risks, there had been a consistent improvement year on year with the quality of the accounts and working papers. There was one area, however, which could be improved being in relation to debtor and creditor working papers. This mainly involved the generation of reports and the Finance Team were continuing to work with KPMG to find a solution that more closely met the audit testing requirements. This would then improve the efficiency of the 2014/15 audit.

A question was raised regarding the determination, validity and expenses incurred with regard to the public questions and how it would be shown on the accounts. This would be dealt with by a separate letter to the elector and would be copied to all members the Audit Committee.

A discussion took place including:

- Single Status
 - Equality
 - Strategic Risk Register
 - Timeline
 - Working with Trade Unions
 - Restructuring

AUC-21 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

P Harris presented the Statement of Accounts 2013/14 which informed members of the outcome of the Audit.

Members of the Audit Committee had attended at a training session on the Accounts prior to the Committee Meeting.

It was proposed that the 106 page document, together with a three page summary would be produced. This would be in a more understandable format and, as per the accounting regulations, these documents would be published on the Council's website, together with the Certified Draft Statement, for public inspection.

The Audit Committee had been granted delegated authority to approve the accounts. There had been no financial adjustments this year although the report needed some presentational changes.

The Audit had gone well and there was a good working relationship between KPMG and the Council.

Members congratulated the work which had been undertaken which was a testament to the staff. It was requested that the Managing Director send a form of thank you to all relevant members of staff for their hard work.

RESOLVED – that

- a) the 2013/14 Statement of Accounts be approved;**
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director Finance, Audit & Information Governance to make any presentational changes required to the Statement of Accounts prior to publication; and**
- c) the updated (for presentational changes) Annual Governance Statement be approved.**

AUC-22 AUDIT COMMISSION FRAUD SURVEY RESULTS 2013

A Bunting presented a report on Protecting the Public Purse Fraud Briefing.

This was a survey that had been undertaken by the Audit Commission and the data related to 2012/13.

The national picture captured at that time showed that there were 107,000 total cases detected with a value of £178m (excluding social housing fraud).

This report showed that Telford and Wrekin Council came in at the lower end of the benchmark for cases of fraud being reported which was on the good side of the scale.

The fraud drivers were:

- Opportunity
- Rationalisation
- Pressure

The Council needed to ensure that they continued to have controls in place to prevent fraud as there would be further cuts.

A question was raised with regard to the amount of money the Council had recovered through fraud case. It was suggested that the figures were produced and circulated to members of the Committee.

L Higgins gave a response to the findings and tabled a presentation.

The Benefit Fraud Investigation Team had provided information for the report which used the DWP very narrow definition that fraud must be proved – “beyond reasonable doubt” to have been committed prior to inclusion in the figures.

If there was evidence to prove that a fraud had been beyond reasonable doubt the following action would take place:

- Legal action
- Sanction
- Caution

If the Council was to use a wider definition of fraud it would be able to include other significant amounts of savings or values that had been achieved. As an example, in addition to the 91 cases that had been reported to the Audit Commission, a further 95 cases had led to a reduction of benefit being paid.

With a much broader scope for anti-fraud prevention work this would mean significantly more work.

There had been many thousands of cases identified as a mistake or couldn't be proven to have been done on purpose. As these cases are identified the issues were recorded and loopholes closed, where possible, in order to prevent further cases.

The Council was pro-active with their work and from this year the Fraud Team would report all of the work that they undertook including that of single person discount, council tax support scheme and non-domestic rates.

A discussion took place on the gateway to claiming benefits which included:

- Face-to-face contacts
- Ease of process
- Customer service appointments
- Levels of security
- Annual benefits reviews

A Astley discussed the Crisis Support Line which had been set up. The Team asked claimants probing questions to ascertain if there was a genuine level of need and if it could not be proved that it was an essential need then the claim was rejected and no money would be provided. The staff were very well trained and this had greatly reduced the support that had been given out

A Bunting had recently been working within the Benefits Team and had seen evidence of the staff asking questions and challenging the claimants.

L Higgins explained to the Audit Committee that from June 2015 the DWP would be taking over the Housing Benefit Fraud work which meant that any investigations would only be done by the DWP. The Council's Fraud Team were concerned that currently the Council Tax fraud and Housing Benefits fraud work was undertaken as a joint exercise and that the DWP would not be investigating Council Tax fraud and that the direct link may be lost.

A Astley reported to the Audit Committee that she would be putting forward a business case for the Council to retain some fraud functionality as an invest to save venture in order to keep the level of expertise in the Council and to reduce any risk to the Council in respect to Council Tax fraud. It was hoped that subject to the business case that the current staff may be retained.

AUC-23 CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD & CORRUPTION POLICY 2013/14 ANNUAL REPORT AND POLICY UPDATE

J Marriott presented a report on the Council Corporate Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy and the annual report for 2013/14.

The report contained information from 2013/14 on counter fraud and investigation activities within benefits, Internal Audit and Trading Standards which also included Licensing. The Council's procedures and controls have been designed to minimise any opportunity for fraud to take place and to highlight, where possible, any fraudulent activity that may have occurred. Other areas of fraud had been highlighted by referrals, data matching and overpayments detected. The overpayments that had been detected during the sanction cases in 2013/14 had amounted to £311,244.

A proactive amount of work was undertaken by the staff to prevent cases of fraud and the Council has a statutory responsibility to provide data to the Audit Commission for the prevention and detection of fraud. A full National Fraud Investigation exercise was due to commence from October 2014.

The Council ensure that both Members and Officers are made aware of their responsibilities in respect of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy. All new staff within Revenues and Benefits received Fraud and Awareness Training from the Corporate Training Team and ongoing training was provided to existing staff. During 2013/14 286 fraud referrals came from members of staff.

The Trading Standard and Licensing Services played a significant role in the Council's statutory responsibilities to business related fraud. This helped to improve the local situation of residents. Regional initiatives were also undertaken.

One of the main challenges for 2014/15 would be the reduction in control and supervision of the fraud cases being investigated by the DWP.

The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy was reviewed in 2013 and the Committee agreed that the Policy would be reviewed annually to coincide with the annual report. The suggested amendments to the Policy could be found at Appendix B to the report and highlighted minimal changes to policy to reflect organisational changes and to ensure consistency with the Constitution.

A discussion took place including:

- Loan sharks and legal loan sharks
- Referrals

RESOLVED - that

- a) the 2013/14 Annual Report on Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption Activity be noted;
- b) the updated Policy be agreed; and
- c) the updated Policy be recommended for adoption by the Council.

AUC-24 **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK PERFORMANCE 1ST APRIL 2013 TO 31ST MARCH 2014**

A Astley presented the Customer Feedback Performance report from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014.

The key points were:

- 17% increase in compliments
- 9% reduction in complaints

This was against a backdrop of £53m in savings.

There had been a significant reduction in the number of complaints partly or fully upheld which had reduced from 66% in the previous year to 54% during the reporting period.

The highest level of complaints had been received by:

- Neighbourhood & Leisure Services
- Customer Services

Appendix A to the report listed the top 10 areas of complaints that were investigated at Stage 1. The top two areas were Refuse and Kerbside with 283 complaints and Council Tax & Benefits with 195 complaints.

The majority of the complaints received by Council Tax Benefits coincided with the going live of the new welfare reforms and high numbers of the complaints were not upheld.

A Astley suggested that she circulate the full report to the members of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee were pleased to note that 87% of the Stage 1 complaints were responded to within 15 working days against a target of 83%.

Adults & Children's Statutory Complaints differed to that of corporate complaints with their response to complaints being

- Adults – 42 days
- Children – 17 days

This area needed to improve and the figures were currently being monitored on a 2 weekly basis. Copies of the reports were circulated to the Senior Management Team and to the Assistant Directors.

MP enquiries over the reporting period had been received as follows:

- David Wright - 152
- Mark Pritchard - 35
- Others - 13

Of the enquiries received by 31st March 2014 the Council had responded to 67% within the target of 10 working days and 82% within 15 working days. It was hoped that these figures could be improved.

There had been a considerable drop in Parish enquiries from 1,538 to 752 during the reporting period. Parish Environmental Teams (PET) had been placed in the local areas and this seemed to be a success.

Freedom of Information requests had increased by 25% and 1076 had been received during 2013/14. Requests responded to within the 20 working days was 95%.

There had been no cases of maladministration reported to the Ombudsman during 2013/14.

A discussion took place including:

- PETs
- Quarterly monitoring to prevent a drop in performance
- Refuse & Kerbside complaints
- Report It App

It was suggested that A Astley produce statistics regarding the use of the Report It App and it was also requested that Members use the app as much as possible to highlight areas of concern in their ward areas.

AUC-25 REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER – JUNE 2014

J Power presented a report on the review of the Strategic Risk Register which was undertaken in June 2014.

The Council needed to keep the Strategic Risk Register under constant review in order to reflect the changes affecting the Council, its risks and the effectiveness of the controls implemented to manage these risks. The risks were designed to be clear and strategic in nature.

The Register included:

- Governance Framework
- Business Continuity Plans
- Budget Strategy
- Information Governance Strategy

The Council had been extremely driven in responding to reductions in the Government's Grant and land slippage within the Gorge.

The Register gave details of actions and controls in place to manage the risks identified and the Lead Director.

The risks within the Strategic Risk Register were not prioritised but were strategic in focus. The Register was a live document and would be taken back before Cabinet in October 2014.

There were some existing strategic risks being managed through appropriate significant projects ie Single Status. Others were listed at the end of the report.

A discussion took place including:

- Housing Investment Programme
- Better Care Fund
- Safeguarding of Children and Adults
- Licensing of Taxis

RESOLVED – that the Strategic Risk Register be noted.

AUC-26 PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON COUNCILLORS WHO TRADED WITH THE COUNCIL DURING 2013/14

The Audit & Information Governance Manager presented a report on the publication of information on Councillors who traded with the Council during 2013/14.

The information was collected as part of the 2013/14 final accounts process and this report represented information for 2013/14.

The Information would be reported to Council following the Audit Committee meeting.

RESOLVED – that

- a) the Audit Committee note that the report would be published on the Council's website; and**
- b) the report be noted.**

AUC-27 AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

J Marriott presented the Annual Report on the work of the Audit Committee which included the Council's governance and assurance arrangements. This included work on:

- raising awareness on good governance (including risk management)

- demonstrating the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting
- reinforcing the importance and independence of the internal and external audit
- providing additional assurance through a process of independent and objective reviews by a cross-party group of elected Members who could and did challenge Cabinet Members and Senior Officers

A summary of the business conducted by the Committee during the reporting period could be found at Appendix A to the report.

There had been a reduction in numbers of meetings of the Audit Committee to 3 per year as part of the Council's continuing wider savings and efficiency programme. This did not appear to have affected the effectiveness of the Committee but had resulted in comprehensive agendas. There was the opportunity to call additional meetings if Members required them between the scheduled meetings in June, September and January.

A discussion took place including:

- Risk Register
- Effective Audit Team
- Cuts
- Encourage Staff to ask for help

RESOLVED – that the Annual Report 2013/14 be noted.

**AUC-28 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE QUARTER ONE 2014/15 AND PUBLIC SECTOR
INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS INFORMATION GOVERNANCE UPDATE
AND INFORMATION GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

J Marriott presented the Internal Audit Quarter One report together with the Internal Audit Standards update and the Information Governance Framework.

The report updated Members on the work of Internal Audit during April-June 2014 and the implementation of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) Action Plan. The report also provided information on the work of Information Governance (IG) and the Council's Information Governance Framework.

The new structure within Audit and Information Governance (IG) Team had become effective on 1st April 2014. There was still currently one vacancy despite two external adverts to recruit a fixed term Auditor post until 2016. The Team were currently looking at options including the use of the framework contract.

The Internal Audit Team had been able to provide Madeley Town Council with an Internal Audit Service at short notice and had now secured this additional work for the next 3 years (2014/15 – 2016/17) which had in turn generated additional income.

The following appendices were attached to the Report:

- Appendix A – List of final report issued in quarter one together with grading
- Appendix B – List of all work undertaken for quarter one for a period of 1 day or more
- Appendix C – Previous graded reports January 2012-March 2014 with their current status

- Appendix D – Summary of the amber reports issued in quarter one

There were 13 reports issued in quarter one. All areas were below their budgeted amount of time, this mainly being due to well-prepared schools.

There were 4 Amber reports issued during quarter one and management actions to implement the recommendations had been agreed and Internal Audit had planned follow up work or this was already in progress. Internal Audit were confident that management would implement the remaining recommendations to provide the appropriate assurance to improve the grading.

Three areas had required the service of Internal Audit over 10 days and these were:

- Advice and Consultancy
- Adult Social Care – Financial Process Review
- Shared Lives - (now transferred to A Astley's area)

J Marriott highlighted the amber reports which remained amber being:

- Abacus System & Concerns – back to Audit Committee January 2015
- Transport Post Implementation Review – slow progress on follow up due to supplier issues
- Moorfield School – had now moved from Red to Amber. There was a new Headteacher in place and it was expected that there would be further progress.

Follow ups were in progress.

Attached at Appendix E to the report was the updated position of the PSIAS Action Plan. The Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP) had been delayed slightly due to the restructure and work for the ASS. There was now a new deadline of 31 October 2014. Action 13 on Appendix E had been transferred to the Team Leader due to staff vacancies.

In respect of Information Governance, there had been 399 Freedom of Information requests between April and July. There had been an 89% response rate within the 20 working days against the benchmark of 80%. There had been 22 Subject Access Requests and 100% had been responded to within the 40 calendar day deadline. Responses had been provided together with additional information where required. There had been one complaint to the ICO which had been a premature complaint and one that had been carried forward from the previous year.

There had not been any major data breaches during the reporting period and therefore no reports to the ICO. However, there had been 20 minor data breaches which were self-reported by officers and had resulted in further improvements to the Council's robust systems. Five formal complaints had been received but these had been resolved satisfactorily.

Appendix F to the report gave a picture of the Information Governance Framework and showed the IG Code of Practice that was in place. This had also been put on "Ollie" the Council's on-line learning tool to be shared by the staff.

A discussion took place including:

- MIS – concerns and contingency plans
- ICT – storage and deletion of e-mails

RESOLVED – that

- a) the Internal Audit Update for quarter one be noted;
- b) the progress on the implementation of the PSIAS action plan be noted;
- c) the work of the Information Governance Team from April-July 2014 be noted;
and
- d) the Council's Information Governance Framework be noted.

AUC-29 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

AUC-30 CAPITAL RECEIPTS UPDATE

The Service Delivery Manager for Regeneration and Investment gave a verbal update on capital receipts.

The disposals of assets were at different stages:

- Sold and funds received
- Completion
- Sold Subject to Contract
- Currently being advertised for sale
- Seeking Planning Permission

A schedule for disposal of assets had been drawn up covering 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. This schedule was subject to further change in response to market trends and was regularly reviewed. As additional sites were identified for disposal they were added to the disposal programme but the overall income target was maintained to reduce reliance on any one receipt. There appeared to be an improvement in market conditions which it was hoped would be reflected in values and the timeliness of disposals. Regular monthly meetings took place to look at timing for the disposal of assets noting that there were instances where an earlier disposal for a lower capital receipt was favourable in some circumstances.

A discussion took place including:

- Treasury Management
- Shaping Places land allocations
- Improving Market Conditions

The meeting ended at 7.48 p.m.

Chairman:

Date:

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 1st September 2014 at 6.30pm in Meeting Room 3, Darby House, Telford, TF3 4JA.

PRESENT: Cllrs. K. Guy, J. Pinter, R. Scammell, C. Turley and Co-optees S. Ali, A. Atkinson and S. Rayner.

Attending: Prof. Ian Oakes, Higher Education champion on the Marches and Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton; Cllr. S. Davies, Cabinet Member Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills; K. Callis, Assistant Director Development, Business and Employment; S. Marston, Skill Service Delivery Manager; S. Jones, Scrutiny Officer; F. Bottrill, Scrutiny Group Specialist.

CYPSC-1 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 29th April 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CYPSC-2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. G. Green, A. Mackenzie and co-optees R. Aveley.

CYPSC-3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CYPSC-4 THE MARCHES LEP SKILLS PLAN

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded members that this was the final meeting in the review of Youth Unemployment before the committee agreed its recommendations.

He welcomed Professor Ian Oakes to the meeting. Prof. Oakes had been invited as the Higher Education Champion on the Marches LEP Board, and Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Wolverhampton, to present the Marches LEP 2013-2015 Skills Plan with particular reference to Youth Unemployment in Telford and Wrekin.

Prof. Oakes gave a presentation which highlighted the following points:

- The background to the establishment and operation of the Skills Board as a sub-group of the Marches LEP Board and the process for formulating and funding

the development of the Skills Plan. Businesses, HE, FE and LAs are represented on the Skills Board; Sue Marston represents Telford & Wrekin. The Skills Plan is published on the website and is a live document reviewed and updated every 12 months.

- A number of evidence bases had been considered and tested to understand the issues. Evidence showed the nature of employment was changing from operational roles to professional/higher skilled roles and the forecast was for an increased demand for degree level qualifications and decreased need for unqualified workers while the area profile showed there were insufficient people with high qualifications and too many with low qualifications.
- The Marches has a very large number of small businesses - micro and self-employed – and overall Marches businesses train a lower proportion of staff than the national average. Skills gaps had been identified in defence, security, advanced manufacturing and tourism.
- The Skills Plan sets out 4 priorities and sub-actions to address issues identified:
 - Delivering the skills required for business growth
This included developing higher qualifications, improving take-up of training, plugging skills gaps, addressing issues with leadership and management.
 - Supporting enterprise and access to jobs
This included improving transport links to improve access to employment.
 - Realising the potential of young people
Key actions were tackling NEETs, increasing the number of apprenticeships and developing more work experience opportunities for young people.
 - Developing a shared responsibility for skills through effective partnerships
This was about developing a better structure to link the demand side (businesses) with the supply side (providers).
- The Skills Plan was finalised as the last round of EU structural funding was coming to an end and the next round will take effect from 2015. The principle was to put the co-ordination and communication structures in place ready to tackle the issues and to use the Skills Plan to inform the preparation of the ESIF (European Structural and Investment Fund) document by setting out the business case for how £97m notional ERDF and ESF funding would be allocated. EU funds will start to flow from 2015 and the Plan means the LEP is well prepared for how and where the money will be spent.
- The Skills Plan also influenced the Marches Strategic Economic Plan which supported the bid for Local Growth Fund – which Telford and Wrekin did well from - by identifying where money would be spent, so it has already been used to influence strategic priorities to attract funding.
- The Plan covers the Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin authority areas. The skills needs are different in each area.
- In Telford and Wrekin, all age unemployment had peaked in April 2009 but had fallen to 2,600 and % of working age population unemployment had fallen from 4.6% in April 2009 to 2.4% in July 2014 which was good news although the rate was still marginally higher than the national average. There were proportionately more male claimants than women.
- In Telford and Wrekin the youth (18-24) claimant count rate between 2010 and 2014 had peaked in February 2012 at 1,675 and had halved to 775 in July 2014 which was good although the % rate was still higher than the England average.

Men made up 64% of the cohort, and women 36%. The decline was most rapid over the last 12 months, but the rate of decline was slower for young people unemployed for 6 months or more so there were proportionately more long-term unemployed young people in July 2014 than there were in July 2011.

- NEETs were a real problem in Telford and Wrekin, with the rate substantially higher than the regional average and above the rates in the other Marches authority areas. The Telford and Wrekin NEET (16-18) population was estimated to have risen from 420 to 490 between 2012 and 2013.
- In March 2014 proportionately fewer 16-17 year olds in Telford and Wrekin were engaged in education or training than in England as a whole, but more were undertaking work-based learning outside an apprenticeship than the England average.
- In terms of employing young people, 20% of businesses in Telford and Wrekin had an apprentice in 2013; 25% said they would be interested in getting involved but there are a lot of small businesses who don't have the capacity to spend time working out how to provide an apprenticeship opportunity.
- 16 year old school leavers were less attractive first time entrants than 17 or 18 year old school or college leavers or graduates because they are less well prepared for work and this was reflected in the higher number of 18+ apprenticeships than 16+.
- In conclusion, there were 4 key challenges for Telford and Wrekin:
 - Longer term unemployed entering or re-entering the labour market
 - Two thirds of the long-term unemployed are young men unemployed 6 months or more
 - Proportionately fewer young people in full-time education, training or apprenticeships
 - 16 year olds are less well prepared for work.
- These issues will form part of the Skills Plan going forward. The LEP would be in receipt of substantial structural funds by late 2014-early 2015 and would work with the various partners to work up the actions in the Skills Action Plan in preparation.

Following the presentation members asked a number of questions:

- The Chair checked whether all the figures used were from the claimant count and Prof. Oakes confirmed they were from the month of August.
- Cllr. Turley asked about the implications of an "Out" vote in the eventuality of a referendum on EU membership. Prof. Oakes said if it happened it would be implemented over a long enough period of time such that it would not affect the forthcoming round of structural funding.
- The Chair asked whether the Skill Plan identified the need for a more direct connection between businesses and FE providers and whether the connections were strong enough. Prof. Oakes said there were connections but they were probably not strong enough. They wanted to avoid the scenario of training people for jobs that don't exist and part of the Plan is to develop a mechanism between businesses and FE providers so a pipeline can be developed for the future. For example JLR had invested heavily in i54 and expected a supply of

young people with the right skills but they needed to influence schools and colleges to develop the skills in advance and the model is not developed well enough at present. Businesses are keen to engage with schools, but the links are not good enough yet, and similarly schools want to engage with businesses to understand them and their needs. This is something the LEP will look into and there are a number of actions in the Action Plan.

- Mr. Austin said he was alarmed by the fact that the rate of people with a degree qualification in the LEP area was only half the national rate and felt this went to an issue with the aspirations of young people. He asked what the data was for Telford and Wrekin and whether they had thought about how to improve the aspirations of young people. Prof. Oakes said he did not have Telford and Wrekin figures to hand, but they had done initial work on identifying skills needs and one of the issues was that companies were importing people with higher skills to work in Telford during the week who went home at the weekend – the issue was attracting and retaining graduates who wanted to live in the borough. Graduates look for a certain lifestyle – social opportunities, entertainment and suitable housing – and at that time Telford did not have this sort of offer. Prof. Oakes said he was pleased that Telford & Wrekin has done so much to develop the town centre and housing offer and this would start to address the issue. Telford and Wrekin, Shropshire and Herefordshire are predominantly rural areas so they tend to attract older graduates in their 30s and 40s who want to settle down, but young graduates in their 20s want more of a city lifestyle. There needs to be a coherent strategy to ensure HE students study at home and are retained into their 20s and 30s.
- Cllr. Turley said he thought student loan repayments would mitigate against students affording houses and Prof. Oakes said that graduates do not start repaying student loans until they are earning over the threshold when they would impact on their ability to fund other elements of their lifestyle.
- The Chair asked whether the Cabinet member or officers present had any questions or wished to comment on any points. The Skills Manager said they had not waited until the next round of ESF funding but had already started a lot of initiatives to build up the evidence base to be able to tap into EU funding when it comes through. The Assistant Director concurred with Prof. Oakes comments about the need to develop labour market intelligence and brokerage. She said they already have high level intelligence but need to drill down to understand business needs better especially the small micro companies and there is more to do to look at trends. Cllr. Davies said that the Council shares all its information and data with the colleges but agreed there is an issue with the lead-in time. TCAT and New College had worked as quickly as possible for JLR but bureaucracy had got in the way. The Skills Manager said that the monthly economic profile was also shared with schools.
- The Chair asked Prof. Oakes if he felt there were any useful recommendations that scrutiny could make. Prof. Oakes said he felt that what worked best is having specific interventions to address local issues rather than having a generalist approach. He recognised that authorities want to work with local

providers and not with organisations outside the region and they have been demonstrating that when there is a specific issue and targeted intervention by a local provider, they have more success.

There were no further questions and the Chair thanked Prof. Oakes for attending the meeting and for his very informative presentation. Prof. Oakes placed on record his thanks to colleagues representing Telford & Wrekin on the Skills Board for their work and support and he left the meeting.

CYPSC-5 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT UPDATE

The Chair reminded members that the committee had requested a report on the latest youth unemployment figures and the costs and outcomes of the Job Junctions and Jobs Fair. The report had been circulated as Appendix C and he invited the Cabinet member and officers to highlight the key points.

Cllr. Davies made some opening remarks:

- He said it was important not to get lost in the numbers and to remember that every one is an individual person with individual needs.
- For the first time there was a Cabinet member and Assistant Director leading on employment and the figures showed that the work had paid dividends. One of the first things he had done was to move the skills team from the education service to economic development to give them a business focus and link the skills agenda to business needs.
- He thanked the scrutiny members for the report on the visits to the Job Junctions and reminded members that they were not the only answer and that other interventions were being developed for young people.

The Skills Manager then presented the key points in the report:

- The overall trend in unemployment was downwards. It was pleasing that the rate was falling more quickly in Telford and Wrekin than in other authority areas and more quickly than the regional and national averages. The latest figures were provided in the report.
- Over 4,000 people had attended the Jobs Fair which all exceeded expectations and there was very positive feedback. The sheer volume made it difficult to capture all the outcomes but of 171 vacancies promoted, 69 were known to have been filled from the Jobs Fair. Other outcomes were still being collected from employers who had attended the fair to promote their vacancies and who were continuing to recruit – Nandos was an example. Some young people had accessed education or training with the providers but data had not been collected. The fair had cost £19k which equated to a net cost of £287 per successful candidate. Lessons had been learnt for future event. Employers had said they

would pay to exhibit next year. Next year there would be a 2 day event, one day focussing on jobs and the other on careers information with Partnership for Careers involving the schools. There would be a competition to encourage young people to gather information about a range of career opportunities and there would be free transport so that no young people were disadvantaged. The Assistant Director said this tied into what Prof. Oakes had said about young people needing to choose careers that there are jobs in. There would also be a smaller recruitment event over 2 days in the shopping centre to promote Christmas retail jobs which could be a good first step onto the career ladder.

There was then a discussion about the Job Junctions:

- Cllr. Davies asked if the members would like to present the findings from the Job Junction visits before moving onto that section of the report. The Chair said that he had visited Woodside and had been very impressed. The staff were very helpful and there had been excellent feedback from other members about staff. Feedback on the venues was good. Some minor issues had been flagged up with tracking and monitoring, signage and there was some feedback from staff that the IT was letting them down but overall members were highly impressed and agreed that the Job Junctions were doing a good job.
- Cllr. Davies said that the number of Job Junction locations had doubled in a short space of time. He receives a monthly report from the Team Leader which flags up any issues. The Job Junctions were a big success because they were in non-traditional places but this had led to some IT problems which they had reacted to tackle quickly and had put contingencies in place in case of problems on the day.
- The Skills Manager said attendance was growing. They had attracted funding from some of the Parish Councils to do extra work. Some of the sessions were run by TCAT and they were trying to iron out any inconsistencies between services but they had less influence over the TCAT sessions. Some of the venues were quieter than others but this would be monitored and reviewed over time so that resources would be targeted at areas of need and demand.
- The Assistant Director said the attendance numbers were impressive and the number and frequency of visits was growing. The re-branding had been successful and it had helped to bring everything under the Job Box banner.
- Cllr. Davies said the Job Junctions had been doing amazing work but had been under the radar and lacking investment so they had invested in them and the investment had been doubled with partner contributions and the feedback was amazing.
- Mr. Atkinson said he thought it was important to look at things from the point of view of the young person because if they are confused they can drop out so we need to make the routes clearer and he congratulated the team on their work.

- Cllr. Scammell suggested that they should consider getting businesses to attend Job Junctions to meet people on the spot and follow through with them. Cllr. Davies said work-based training was already delivered in the Job Junctions. For example in Brookside they had run pre-recruitment training for a cleaning company looking for staff at all levels. The Job Junction staff had identified people who would be suitable and they had been trained up and had a guaranteed interview at the end of the training. 100% of the vacancies had been filled by people on the course. Some people use the Job Junctions to up-skill and they are not quite ready to speak to an employer - feedback is that the Job Junctions are good “incubators” which is welcome - so it could be an issue for customers if employers attended sessions but Cllr. Davies said he took the point. The Skills Manager said they were getting much better at working with employers and bringing things to a local level. If there were problems they would unpick them to see how it could be addressed and she gave an example of how they had worked with a local employer to make a small change to their recruitment process which meant people were able to pass the initial assessment.
- Mr. Atkinson asked if there was an App which may appeal to younger people more and Cllr. Davies said they were developing one. They also had a presence on Facebook and Twitter and traffic on social media and the website was increasing. The Skills Manager said the Job Junctions were not originally set up for young people so they had not promoted them specifically at young people. They had bought into Facebook to increase penetration into the younger age group but it was difficult to get them to come into a service and FutureFocus had found this difficult.
- The Chair asked if the Job Junctions were all branded under the Job Box brand now and Cllr. Davies said the important thing was for them to get on with the job and not to worry too much about the branding but they had been brought under the Job Box umbrella.

The Skills Manager continued the presentation:

- Job Box was the new brand for provision to support young people. Information about the other initiatives to support young people had been included in the report because the Job Junctions could not be considered in isolation.
- FutureFocus is the school careers service for age 13-19. There were about 6,000 young people in the borough. The NEETs are the most difficult group to engage. NEETs are a very diverse group and does not stay static – even if the numbers seem static young people come in and out all the time so for example recently 15 had left the group but another 14 had joined. They are young people with very individual needs. Mr. Atkinson agreed he did not like the term NEET because each young person has a different story – he wanted to know if FutureFocus staff have a caseload of young people who they telephone. The Skills Manager said since First Point had opened in Southwater, FutureFocus arrange to meet young people there and this had made a difference in the number of people turning up for appointments and was proving a successful venue.

- The Job Box Mentors were a new service for NEETs 20-24 to pick up the older age group without other targeted support. The Mentors had received a huge amount of training in guidance and teaching and their caseloads were now 2/3 full and growing quickly. They had already helped 24 people into jobs so were seeing good success. T-shirts had proved successful in making them recognisable so people were approaching them, including employers. They take referrals from Jobcentre Plus because some people need more than the Jobcentre provides.
- Turnaround is run by Telford & Wrekin staff funded with ESF funds through a consortium with other local authorities. Turnaround supports NEETs aged 14-18 (or to 25 with learning disabilities) and provides courses to re-engage them. Funding is awarded depending on how the young person progresses. Some of the courses are run internally and some are contracted out. The internal courses make a surplus which is being developed to enable the courses to run weekly and to offer places to care leavers or other vulnerable groups.
- The EAST team support people with learning disabilities - there are a lot on ESA - to help them into suitable employment for example jobs with repetitive tasks which may be appropriate.
- Education Business Links is a traded service for schools to find and set up work experience placements for pupils. They charge employers pay for the necessary work-place checks. The service operated across Shropshire and has built up a database of employers to work with.

The Chair thanked officers for the presentation and their excellent work and there was further discussion on a number of points:

- The Chair said when he had visited Woodside Job Junction a member of staff had said the Job Box Mentors' caseload was under capacity and he asked whether they could be used to help track Job Junction customers while their caseload built up. The Skills Manager said that business support staff do the tracking work and the Job Box Mentors need to concentrate on their caseloads and doing their job. Visitors to the Job Junctions have to be monitored to draw down the programme funding,
- Cllr. Davies made the point that there had been a lot of migration from JSA to ESA and a lot of the data used was based on the JSA claimant count which had shown an improvement and it was important not to be fooled by the statistics that things were getting better.
- Cllr. Davies said that the £1.4m investment made by the Council into tackling youth unemployment would come to an end, and as the government continues to cut local authority funding they needed to make the case to government that the investment was saving the government money and that the Council was not benefitting from any national funding. Jobcentre Plus and other contracted

providers benefit from DWP funding but the Council does not. He also said some of the Youth Unemployment pledges were slipping but they would all be delivered as soon as possible and if they weren't he would come back to the committee to explain why.

The Chair invited closing comments from the Cabinet member and officers and the Skills Manager said that members should read the case studies highlighted in the report because they give a flavour of the different kind of issues they are dealing with and the successes they have had. She emphasised the point that one size does not fit all and it is really important to understand what goes on under the data. The Assistant Director said the data has to be based on the number of visits and not the number of individuals as this is what is needed to plan resources, but the important thing was to look at the detail underneath the data.

The Chair thanked Cllr. Davies and the officers again and said he looked forward to presenting the committee's findings and recommendations to them and they left the meeting.

The Chair updated members about a meeting he had had with Paul Hinkins who chaired the Telford Business Board and was on the LEP Board and a number of other business boards and a Governor of TCAT. Mr Hinkins had provided a business view of the youth unemployment issues. He had raised issues about the connection between businesses and FE colleges, public sector agencies are poor at identifying and understanding business needs, the lack of awareness by SMEs and micro businesses about grants available to support training opportunities such as apprenticeships and the need for a brokerage service and these points could inform the scrutiny recommendations.

CYPSC-6 CHILDREN IN CARE PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

The Chair reminded members that the Dashboard had been circulated for information for members to raise any questions. Mr. Rayner said he had noted that the usage of agency social workers and the vacancy rate for social workers were behind target. He wanted to know why and whether it means the strategies put in place were not working and whether they were being reviewed.

It was agreed that a written response would be requested from the service and circulated to members for consideration.

CYPSC-7 CHAIR'S UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair said that the meeting concluded the review of Youth Unemployment and the committee now needed to consider the evidence and formulate recommendations. A date was agreed for a working group meeting to start drafting recommendations.

The Chair advised members that the secondment of the Scrutiny Officer from 22nd September until Jun would affect scrutiny resources and may impact on the agreed

schedule of work. The next meeting was scheduled for November to look at School Improvement and scope the review of health improvements for children and young people but there may be some slippage. The Scrutiny Group Specialist informed members that the Scrutiny management Board would be deciding the priorities across the committees at the meeting on 19th September and if members had strong feelings about what should be prioritised they should make this clear to the chair. Mr. Rayner said a priority was the work on school improvement and that he would like the unvalidated results presented in November. The Scrutiny Officer assured Mr. Rayner that the AD had confirmed the unvalidated results could be reported to the committee in November along with the other reports requested at or after the meeting on 29th April on School Improvement.

The meeting ended at 7.35pm.

Chairman:.....

Date:.....

CO-OPERATIVE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Minutes of a meeting of the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 19th August 2014 at 6.00pm in Meeting Room 3, Darby House, Lawn Central, Telford TF3 4JA.

PRESENT: Cllrs. A. McClements (Chair), N. Dugmore, N. England, J. Pinter, J. Thompson and co-opted member J. Ellis.

Also attending: Chris Jones, Advice Services Manager, Telford CAB; M. O'Dwyer, Preventative Advice Officer, Telford CAB; Cllr, S. Reynolds; S. Jones, Scrutiny Officer.

CCSC-10 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 12th May 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CCSC-11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. S. Bentley, M. Ion and K. Tomlinson

CCSC-12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CCSC-13 BENEFIT SANCTIONS

The Chair reminded members of the reasons for the committee's concern about benefit sanctions which had led to the issue being included in the work programme. A key concern had been about adults with learning disabilities having their benefit sanctioned because of communication issues. The CAB national submission to the Oakley independent inquiry into benefit sanctions and the government's response to the inquiry's recommendations had been circulated as Appendix B1 and B2.

The Chair welcomed Chris Jones the Advice Services Manager and Majella O'Dwyer the Preventative Advice Officer from Telford CAB to the meeting and thanked them for stepping in at short notice to replace Lyn Brayne the Service Director who had been called away on a family emergency. She invited them to give a sort overview of their roles at the CAB and to describe some of the issues relating to benefit sanctions seen by the CAB.

Ms. Jones said she had worked for the CAB for 10 years. As Advice Services

Manager she has both management and service delivery responsibilities so she is able to see things from a management and client perspective.

The welfare reforms have brought about a radical shakeup of the whole range of benefits and sanctions were only one element. Other examples were changes to the rules on eligibility of EU jobseekers to benefits and upcoming changes to bereavement benefits which would also reduce entitlements. The waiting time for JSA (Jobseekers Allowance) for new claimants would be increased from 3 days to 5 days next year. Weekly JSA is £72.40 for people 25 and over and £57.35 for people under 25.

Once a sanction is applied, benefit payments stop straightaway. The CAB were seeing clients who had no idea that their benefits had been stopped until they went to the bank and found they could not withdraw any money. Some of the clients were also affected by other welfare benefit changes such as the bedroom tax or had their housing benefit stopped at the same time. Once benefit has stopped it tends to lead to a spiral of debt. Sanctions affect single people without children most because families or people with children at least have other benefits such as child benefit or tax credits to fall back on.

Nationally, the CAB had seen a 64% increase in the number of clients presenting because of benefit sanctions over the last year. The norm was a 4 week sanction but the sanction could be up to 3 months or even longer.

Reasons for sanctions were failure to actively seek work, failure to turn up to sign-on or failure to attend interview. These formed part of the Claimant Commitment introduced in January which sets out what is expected of the claimant in return for their benefit. An example was given of where a person had not signed on for good reason and their benefit had been sanctioned leaving them without money for food over the Easter bank holiday weekend.

Members then asked questions and discussed a number of issues:

- Mr. Ellis said the case studies in the national CAB report seemed to have a common theme of sanctions being imposed because of human error then compounded by the inability to correct the error and he asked whether this was a fair assessment. Ms. Jones said one of the issues is that JCP is such a huge organisation and is driven by systems which make it very difficult to correct an error once it has happened. Appeals for mandatory reconsideration have to be made in writing. Decisions are taken by Mandatory Decision Makers who are not named and the claimant does not know who they are or where they are to be able to speak to them in person. This makes it difficult for the CAB to advocate on behalf of clients. Also, there is no set time limit on responding to mandatory reconsiderations. Ms. O'Dwyer said this was especially problematic for clients with learning disabilities, special needs or literacy issues. She gave an example of a client with literacy issues who had a 3 month sanction for failure to look for work. The client had requested a literacy course but had been refused because the course could not be funded because he was claiming JSA. She said that the

computer driven systems at JCP can affect vulnerable people.

- The Chair asked if the Communications Group set up by the government to review the communication of information about sanctions was having any effect. Ms. Jones said they had not seen any effect yet. The CAB has to call the contact centre at JCP to find out what is happening for clients. Staff in the contact centre only have limited information, for example the length of a sanction and the reason for it, and do not have detailed information such as mitigating circumstances which makes it very difficult to advocate on behalf of the client.
- There was a question about clients' awareness that a sanction has been applied. Ms. Jones said clients are provided with letters and documentation that a sanction may be or has been applied but they are not told personally by a JCP advisor. The expectations of what claimants have to do to receive benefit payments are set out in the Claimant Commitment but this is a very lengthy document and for people who have just been made redundant, benefits are a new culture and they do not always realise the significance of what they are signing. Ms. O'Dwyer explained that the Commitment had been introduced in January 2014 and was a lengthy document which the JCP advisor should go through with the client, but clients seem to be put under pressure to sign it quickly. Once the Commitment has been signed, the client can be sanctioned for breaking any part of it. She gave an example of a client with autism who had been sanctioned for breaking a commitment they had signed up to when their circumstances meant they were not able to fulfil the commitment. The client's father had contacted JCP but he said they did not seem to care, and they were unable to put it right quickly.
- The Chair asked if the national CAB report reflected the local picture. Ms. Jones said she thought it did. She gave an example of a highly qualified professional client who had been made redundant and told Jobcentre Plus that they only wanted to look for work in their chosen profession and because he failed to seek alternative employment had received a 12 month sanction.
- Cllr. Dugmore asked what the top 3 things that needed to be done to address issues were, and what could be done locally to address issues. Ms. Jones said she felt very strongly that no one organisation could tackle issues in isolation and that they can only be addressed by agencies working together in a genuine partnership. The CAB already works with the local authority, for example they call Revenues & Benefits to put a flag on the system to ensure that client entitlement to Housing benefit is not affected. This gives time to start to remedy the situation by helping the client make hardship payment applications or request mandatory reconsideration of the sanction decision. She said she would like to see agencies - LA, JCP, CAB etc. - working together to share best practice to give the client a good experience.

There was also a need for more innovative service delivery – one example was integrating JCP into First Point. Ms. O'Dwyer said they had held discussions with the Partnership Manager at JCP who was very receptive and willing to engage

but there were capacity issues and staff were under pressure to deliver targets. There had been negotiations with JCP about involvement in the Autism Hub but although they were willing they do not seem to have the capacity for sustained involvement.

Ms. O'Dwyer said the approach of JCP to partnership working needed to come from senior management level. If they could get buy-in from JCP there was an opportunity for Telford to become a champion of making the welfare reforms work better. It could make a huge difference, and would help save public money because problems caused by sanctions ultimately cost the taxpayer more.

Ms. Jones said they also needed more funding for vulnerable groups. It is difficult getting some clients in for appointments – they ring or text people but they don't always turn up. Some people have lost all motivation, or they have agoraphobia or some people do not have enough money for the bus fare to the CAB. For every client they see, they estimate there are another 2 or 3 vulnerable people who are hidden. The CAB carries out telephone interviews but they do not have the resources to offer home visits or to reach all the hidden clients.

Ms. Jones said that the JCP system is laborious and there needs to be a more rapid response. There needs to be a change of strategy at senior level to have an impact on the front line service delivered to customers.

- Cllr. Dugmore said that from what he had heard the process was driven by inflexible systems so making any changes takes a long time and is expensive. Ms. O'Dwyer said the welfare changes had required a lot of changes to the systems and said that if they had a focus group to identify how to deal with special circumstances they could save a lot of money. Ms. Jones said that the Preventative Advisor Officer, Ms. O'Dwyer, had done a huge amount of good work and some creative ways of getting the message out including message screens running in the CAB office and there was even a rap! But for vulnerable people it was not enough to give them a leaflet, they needed one-to-one support.
- The Chair asked what links they had with other partners and support provision. Ms. Jones said they used the Food Banks a lot. She was a Trustee of the Food Bank and the Council had funded an apprentice to support the Food Banks which was good. The Crisis Assistance was fantastic and the Council had done a great job but the on-line application system was difficult to use and crashed a lot. The Council did not accept telephone applications which made it more difficult for people with no access to IT. The Preventative Advisor Officer project was supported by National Lottery funding – there had been a slight decrease of 13.9% on sanction decisions from January 2013-January 2014 in Telford which could partly be a result of the impact of the project. The statistics do not take account of ESA sanctions.
- Cllr. Tompson asked which wards the Wellington Jobcentre Plus office covered but they did not know.

- Mr. Ellis said it sounded to him as though the approach and culture of Jobcentre Plus had changed from one of helping people to find work to one of punishing people for not finding work. He was very concerned that there was a lack of systemic democratic accountability (for example holding the Mandatory Decision Makers to account) and a lack of local accountability. He wanted to know whether this was a fault of the way the system operates or the way the system had been set up under the Welfare Reform Act. Ms. O'Dwyer said they could not speak for JCP but from the CAB's point of view they seemed to be a leaner and meaner organisation. Sanctions were one way of saving money. Mr. Ellis said the sanctions could create a debt history which ends up as a greater cost to the state. Ms. Jones said they can have a cyclic impact – the sanction may lead to non-payment of Council Tax, fines or court cases, or people go to Food Banks for supplies of food, toiletries or even clothes. Mobile phones have become essential items and some people pay for their phones before they buy food.
- Mr. Ellis said the committee had heard at the last meeting that the Council had seconded an officer from DWP and that they had made a difference. He suggested the committee should ask whether this was something the Council could afford to do further ahead so that DWP are working within the Council. The Scrutiny Officer explained that the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee had been told that the secondment had been to help the Council identify JSA claimants so they could be offered targeted support.
- Cllr. Dugmore asked if the CAB has a direct line to the local JCP office. Ms. Jones said that apart from HMRC, they did not have a direct line and had to go through the call centre. She suggested members should read the government's response to the Oakley Inquiry to find out more about the issues and the government's response to the recommendations. The CAB had asked clients for feedback on JCP and some of it had been very negative.
- Mr. Ellis referred to the minutes of the previous meeting and asked about the support that was available to sanctioned claimants. Ms. Jones explained that they can claim for Hardship Payments. JCP have forms for them to apply. Clients have to show why they are in hardship. If an award is granted they receive a proportion of their JSA. Awards seem to be paid to single people more frequently than families because they have no child tax credits to fall back on. Once the sanction has been made the first step is to support the client to make a hardship claim, until the sanction is lifted.
- Mr. Ellis asked if an appeal is successful whether the client has to repay hardship payments but was told they do not. Housing Benefit and Council Tax support are not cut when JSA is sanctioned but can be suspended initially. Housing Benefit is often paid directly to landlords which protect tenancies. Crisis Assistance is cashless so people get vouchers for gas/electricity or goods. Mr. Ellis suggested that the committee could recommend the Council invests in a post to support people to offset the cost of providing crisis assistance and the costs associated

with spiralling debt. Ms. O'Dwyer said she thought it was about more than individual posts and was more about bringing about a culture shift with JCP so that they engaged as an organisation in positive partnership working which would make a real difference. There was a need to work with the voluntary sector. JCP had been willing to engage with the Autism Hub but they may not have the capacity for involvement. There needs to be a culture shift and not just one or two posts getting involved.

- The Chair asked if there were cases of recurring sanctions. Ms. Jones said the CAB works with clients to explain what has happened and why they have had their benefit sanctioned but the problem is when people have learning disabilities like autism and they cannot read or write. The CAB does preventative work and work on financial capabilities such as money buddies, but clients like this can have their benefit sanctioned 2 or 3 times. Ms. O'Dwyer said that they also encourage clients to take someone with them when they discussing the Claimant Commitment with JCP so they do not sign up to things that they cannot do – the Claimant Commitment can be adjusted. Ms. Jones said that some clients can be verbally abusive and JCP make a note on the claim and use an office with a safety window to interview the client.
- Mr. Thompson wanted to know if any money had been saved from sanctions. Ms. Jones did not have that information available at the meeting but she thought that nationally any savings from the sanctions regime would have been outweighed by costs of the IT systems or costs to the public purse related to debt such as court costs for non-payment of bills or bailiffs costs – an initial instruction fee was £75 and enforcement costs £275. There were also wider societal effects such as mental and physical health issues which cost the NHS money. There was a discussion about the cyclical nature of debt and that debt can be linked to poor education or health which perpetuates the problems.
- There was a discussion about support for helping people into jobs and Ms. Jones suggested that JCP could offer their own staff work experience in local agencies such as the CAB or local authority and that there needed to be more joined up working and commitment.
- Cllr. Reynolds said she knew from her job at TCAT that the college could only offer funded training to someone on JSA if there was a guaranteed interview at the end of the training. Ms. Jones said that County Training delivers the mandatory work programme and clients have to attend job search from 9am-5pm and if they don't attend they can have their benefit sanctioned. The Chair asked if the CAB divert clients to the Job Junctions or Job Box Mentors and Ms. O'Dwyer said they did and that they had done a lot of training with Job Junction staff and the were excellent and really positive and this was a good example of effective partnership working. Mr. Ellis said the Oakengates Job Club is also doing a good job – it has been running for four years and there is one every Thursday and they use second hand computers and volunteer staff. Ms. Jones said that JCP had removed telephones from Jobcentres and had moved to being digital. They have some 0800 numbers for clients to use but JCP seem to see

their role as getting people off benefits and they refer clients to CAB for support rather than offer it themselves.

- The CAB officers highlighted some of the other changes happening to welfare benefits. There was a discussion about Universal Credit and the CAB staff and members expressed concerns about the possible implications in particular the fact that benefit would only be paid to one person in the household. The Chair asked for clarification about changes to bereavement benefit and was told that the lump sum appears to remain the same but the widows parent allowance, currently paid until children leave full time education, would only be paid for one year.

There were no further questions and Ms. Jones and Ms. Dwyer put on record their thanks to the Council for its continued support for the Food Banks and they left the meeting.

There was a discussion about further work and members agreed that they would like to discuss the issues arising at the meeting with JobCentre Plus and the authority. The Scrutiny Officer reminded members that there are no powers of scrutiny over Jobcentre Plus and they cannot be required to attend meetings but scrutiny could play a role in having a constructive dialogue. With regard to the mandatory work programme, the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee was currently reviewing provision for young unemployed people and had requested data from the prime work programme contractors Serco and ESG. This review was drawing to a close but members said they would be interested in seeing the draft CYP scrutiny report.

CCSC-14 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair referred to items in the committee's work programme. The withdrawal of Crisis Assistance was due to come to the committee in September. She had discussed the suggestion about community capacity building with Cllr, Shaun Davies and Richard Partington and they had suggested it would be useful for the committee to look at the barriers, access and incentives to volunteering. Mr. Ellis said that his interest in transport issues was not accurately recorded in the minutes of the previous meeting and that what he wanted to look at was the rationale for decisions about which bus routes the Council would subsidise. The Scrutiny Officer clarified that the Housing, Economy & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee was leading on this issue and members of the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee would be invited to take part in the meeting. Any scrutiny work would be arranged according to the timetable for the review of the transport arrangements and the Scrutiny Officer would check the timetable.

The Chair advised members that the Scrutiny Officer had been offered a secondment to the Co-operative & Commercial Delivery Team until June 2015 and this would affect scrutiny resources. The Scrutiny Management Board in September would review the work programme across all the committees and decide which

issues would be prioritised and there could be some slippage or changes to the committee's work programme.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm

Chairman:.....

Date:.....

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on Wednesday 24th September 2014 at 2.00pm in the Walker Room, Meeting Point House, and Telford TF3 3HS.

PRESENT: Dr M Innes (Vice-Chair) (Clinical Commissioning Group), Cllr P Watling (Telford and Wrekin Council) D Evans (Clinical Commissioning Group), Cllr E Clare (Telford and Wrekin Council), P Taylor (Telford and Wrekin Council), Cllr G Green (Telford and Wrekin Council), Cllr J Seymour (Telford and Wrekin Council), Liz Noakes (Telford and Wrekin Council), J Chaplin (Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin)

Also Present: K Ballinger, (Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin) C Jones (Assistant Director: Family, Cohesion & Commissioning), F Beck (Executive Director for Commissioning Telford & Wrekin CCG), M Bennett (Head of Commissioning for Integrated Care)

Officers: M Cumberbatch (Legal Services) J Power (Delivery and Planning Manager) and J Clarke (Democratic Services Officer).

HWB-01 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 12th March 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair subject to the following changes:

Page 7 – NHS Future Fit Programme Report the ninth paragraph should be changed from “A report ...” to “A public consultation document ...”.

Page 8 – NHS Future Fit Programme Report the fourth paragraph should be amended from “... but that this would not be good for everyone...” to “... but that this may not be good for everyone ...”.

HWB-02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R Overton (Chair) (Telford and Wrekin Council), Cllr A England (Telford and Wrekin Council), L Johnston (Telford and Wrekin Council), D Wickham (NHS England Shropshire and Staffordshire Area Team) and D Harrison (Clinical Commissioning Group).

HWB-03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

HWB-04 PUBLIC SPEAKING

No members of the public had registered to speak.

HWB-05 UPDATE FROM THE STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING GROUP

C Jones and F Beck presented a joint report on the work undertaken by the Strategic Commissioning Group and the Commissioning and Transformation Partnerships (CATPs).

The aim of the Strategic Commissioning Group was to ensure that the commissioning processes deliver performance improvements against the Health and Wellbeing Priorities by:

- Encouraging integrated working between local health, social care and public health commissioners

- Using the JSNA to systematically inform partners commissioning intentions
- Developing commissioning as a strategic function that uses system thinking and agreed commissioning models to understand the relationships between need, demand and outcomes for service users.

Commissioning and Transformation Partnerships (CATPs) were established with responsibility for ensuring delivery against the priority areas and were accountable to the Strategic Commissioning Group and provided regular updates on their progress focussing on commissioning activity against key Health and Wellbeing Board priorities.

Key partners were:

- Better Care Fund Programme Board
- Community Safety Partnership
- Living Well Board
- Children, Young People and Families Board

The Community Safety Partnership was responsible for the priority to reduce the misuse of alcohol and drugs and their priorities were:

- Overall crime be reduced in the Borough
- Anti-social behaviour be reduced and include environmental crime
- Greater community cohesion in the Borough
- Reduce the fear of crime and keep residents in Telford and Wrekin safe

Key DAAT Board headlines were:

- Staffing issues
- The retendering of Inpatient Detoxification Services (October 2014)
- Moving Forward event - key messages were being used to shape the future model for commissioning
- September was National Recovery Month

The Living Well Board has responsibilities for the Health and Wellbeing Priorities as follows:

- Reducing the numbers of people who smoke
- Reducing the numbers of adults and children with excess weight
- Improving emotional health and wellbeing.

Work was underway on establishing a Living Well Board and the focus of the work programme would be to co-ordinate and maximise collection action to promote positive wellbeing, healthy lifestyles and root causes of poor health.

A meeting of the Board would be held on 22nd October 2014, which would be the first official meeting, although some workshops had already taken place with key stakeholders.

The Children, Young People and Families Board was responsible for the Health and Wellbeing Priority

- Reduce Teenage Pregnancy

A SEND Local Offer had been developed and was published on the 1st September.

The Early Health Offer and Strategy Action Plan was another priority of the Children, Young People & Families Board. This used a whole system approach with a strong focus on prevention and was encapsulated into one document to identify any gaps in service. Action plans to close these gaps would be drawn up. It was hoped that this may ease emotional health dependency on CAMHS.

Appendix 1 to the Report was the Disabled Children's Charter Update. Work had been undertaken on the Charter which was largely based on SEND.

A TACT Workshop had been undertaken in regard to Alcohol abuse and it had found that people who had previously been in detox where back were they started and it was hoped that through the procedures in place in Telford that this would be avoided, although there was still more work to do. Further details on performance would be reported over time following the joining up of priorities and by working smartly to improve the outcomes and cut costs.

The report was welcomed by the Board and it was noted that this was a work in progress which needed to be flexible so that health and wellbeing of local people was met.

A discussion took place including:

- The positive journey of the Children, Young People & Families Board
- Ensuring that the Health and Wellbeing Priorities were not lost sight of
- Living Well Board highlighted "Stoptober" which started shortly to try and increase the numbers of quitters
- Care Act Workshop – SEND legislation principles underpinned both the Care Act and SEND as well as Health and Social Care and Children and Adult Services
- Synergies gained from joined up commissioning ie support planning
- Working with Clients for creative solutions which would mean better experiences and outcomes for the Client and would reduce costs
- The availability of "Demonstrator" Funds for pilot schemes - this was currently being explored
- Using JSNA for commissioning intentions made sure that the needs analysis informed the priorities before taking the plans forward
- Educating all teenagers around teenage pregnancy with education programmes in Schools
- Universal services for all teenagers

RESOLVED – that

- a) the Board acknowledged the recent progress on HWB priorities made through the Commissioning and Transformation Partnerships (CATPs); and**
- b) the Disabled Children's Charter Update Report be noted.**

HWB-06 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD STRATEGY OUTCOME MEASURES: PERFORMANCE 2013/14

J Power presented a report on the strategy outcome performance measures for 2013/14.

It was brought to the Board's attention that this was the last time that the report would appear in this format as the report was being developed to firmly embed the information against the

Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy Outcome Measures. The Strategic Commissioning Group would drive performance although the end of year report 2013/14 showed both progress and challenges against the outcome measures.

The report highlighted that against each of the priorities the Health and Wellbeing Strategy identified a series of outcomes measures in order to track progress and movement. HWB priorities focussed on issues that were challenging. Many of these measures were slow moving, due to there being a relatively small number of cases (population based) to show any real statistical change.

The Board expressed disappointment that the report would no longer be produced in this format as they found it very useful as they could see, at a glance, areas that needed more investigation.

A discussion took place including:

- Suicides – emotional health and wellbeing key priority
- Self-harm admission rates being higher than average – this needed further detailed information
- Smoking in pregnancy rates – 6th worst in country
- New smoking cessation service
- CCG continued to put smoking in pregnancy as a key issue – Whole system approach required ie low birth weight babies and not breastfeeding. The need for primary and secondary care to work together
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing being a pan agency approach as inter-partnership working was much more effective

It was highlighted that there were some contradictory indicators regarding the misuse of alcohol and drugs and improving the care and quality of life. It was explained to the Board that there were random fluctuations regarding the direction of travel on some areas depending on the indicator but it was good that the Board looked at the report in detail and highlighted these areas. It was suggested that the priorities could be looked at over several years in order to highlight if there were any trends. It was important to understand the driver and causation ie suicide rates – bullying/cyber bullying and see what impact these negative outcomes produced.

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin, from their prospective, found this report very informative.

D Evans highlighted the recent coverage in the press relating to the 1 year survival rates for cancers in which Telford and Wrekin had been listed in the 10 worst performers. The CCG were meeting with McMillan during the forthcoming weeks in order to see what lessons could be learnt and how things could be improved ie

- Early diagnosis
- Information
- Signs and symptoms
- Good access to diagnostic testing

These were all recognised as major contributing factors.

A report would be brought back to the Board at a later date.

RESOLVED – that suicides be highlighted as an area that had unacceptable progress and improvement. Detailed analysis by the CATPs be undertaken and report back to the Board.

HWB-07 THE BETTER CARE FUND HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION

M Bennett, C Jones, and F Beck gave a brief update on the Better Care Fund Health & Social Care Integration.

Following the Health and Wellbeing Board's approval to the draft plan for submission in February 2014 a Better Care Commissioning and Transformation Group which reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board had now been set up. The Plan had been fairly well received although nationally there had been some issues. There was a lot of work to be undertaken with the early implementation of a robust system.

The Health and Wellbeing Board needed to re-submit the plan by the 19th September 2014 and although national conditions remained unchanged the following key changes needed to be demonstrated within the revised Better Care Fund (BCF):

- A more detailed case for change and plan of action must be set out
- A more detailed analysis or risk (including mitigation) and risk sharing agreement must be defined and included in our resubmission
- The plan must demonstrate an alignment with other NHS and Council plans
- Each plan proposal must be described in more detail
- We must detail protection being given to social care services through BCF
- We must show evidence of engagement with stakeholders
- We must show how we have involved providers
- Specific requirement to show how we will reduce admissions by 3.5% with detailed modelling and phased activity assumptions to be included

The Department of Health had put in place a Better Care Task Force. This Task Force had introduced and taken a number of temperature checks in order to assess progress.

The amended plan must be signed off by the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Chief Accountable Officer of the CCG and the Chief Executive of the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust.

Following the revisions needed to the initial plan, the project team were currently making the updates. The updated plan would be shared with the Board as soon as possible, once the plan had been approved for submission.

A formal review meeting was undertaken to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the plan and work through the submission and feed in any extra information where necessary. A Step Change engagement workshop had taken place with the acute hospitals and a phased plan had been drawn up to improve the detail on the pilot and build on the work developing through the community capacity. This was one of the few areas working at this stage during 2014, most other areas were only in the planning stages.

D Evans confirmed that there had been no failing on the initial submission but that nationally further assurance was sought on the level of affordability of the BCF.

A discussion took place including:

- The amount of work being undertaken behind the scenes
- Concerns around the risks and contingency around the representation of the SaTH on the Programme Management Board
- The importance of SaTH being involved – some progress had been made and there was now some representation on the Programme Management Board
- Hospital Wards being manned by agency staff and by working with partners the reduction in costs
- Investment in preventable care
- Switching around of hospital beds from acute to non-acute
- Unsustainable health system which needed to change
- BCF taking service development to a different level
- Integration of Services to improve patient experience
- One size approach did not fit all
- Reporting back in a way that the public can understand
- Communication being a key point during discussion with clinicians/public/patients and carers

D Evans asked if there could be an amendment made to the fourth bullet point in the recommendation due to the change of his Title. This would now read:

“delegate power to the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board, in consultation with the Accountable Officer (CCG), to approve any further minor amendments or minor additions to the BCF plan as required by both the National Audit and Cabinet Office”

The recommendation subject to the amendment proposed by D Evans was proposed by P Watling and seconded by G Green.

RESOLVED – that:

- a) the revised requirements to put in place a Better Care Fund be noted;**
- b) the BCF plan (submitted to NHS England on 19th September 2014) be approved;**
- c) delegated power to the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board to sign any further documentation relating to the revised BCF plan document, that may be required, be approved; and**
- d) delegated power to the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board, in consultation with the Accountable Officer (CCG), to approve any further minor amendments or minor additions to the BCF plan as required by both the National Audit and Cabinet Office, be approved.**

HWB-08 HEALTHWATCH TELFORD AND WREKIN ANNUAL REPORT

J Chaplin informed the Board that this was a report for the first year of Healthwatch as it had started from scratch last year.

K Ballinger reported to the Board that 1st April 2013 to 30th March 2014 had been the formulative year of Healthwatch. K Ballinger had joined in May 2013 and the report formed a snapshot of the year but did not tell the complete story.

From April to August they had received outcomes for the uptake of the sexual health services which had flagged up significant issues. A formalised project plan had been drawn up to engage with the public to see what could be done and make the services as good as they could be.

During the first 4-5 months Healthwatch had spoken to approximately 3,000 people by:

- Arranging engagement events
- Attending at Parish Council meetings
- Coracle Regatta in Ironbridge
- TParty and TLive

They were trying to find different ways to engage and gain a larger picture of what mattered and the engagement would continue throughout the Borough in a rolling activity which included:

- Talking to groups in Asda Donnington
- Attending at Supermarkets in Newport
- Visiting groups

They had also visited the Terence Higgins Trust, spoken to the Afro-Caribbean community and with young people.

Leaflets advertising the website had been distributed at the Lions event in Wellington and people were asked to post their comments on the website.

Key areas were:

- CAMHS and Autism
- Mental Health Service In-patient experiences
- Sexual Health Services
- Access to GP Appointments – the local area had over 400 more patients per GP than other areas

Healthwatch sit on the Primary Care Joint Commissioning Board and representing the people of Telford and Wrekin on matters such as:

- FutureFit
- BCF
- Information Sharing Meetings with social Care

There had been 6 enter and view visits but capacity was an issue with volunteers.

Healthwatch were committed to making things as good as they could for the people of Telford and Wrekin.

A discussion took place including:

- Simplifying medical terms into language the public could understand ie Phlebotomy into blood tests
- Healthwatch Board of Directors
- Youth Healthwatch

- Sexual Health Work and working with young people
- The relationship between Healthwatch locally and Healthwatch England
- Sharing of information through the health network
- Escalation of national issues to NHS England

RESOLVED – that both the report and the full annual report be received and noted.

HWB-09 NHS FUTUREFIT PROGRAMME REPORT

D Evans updated the Board on the FutureFit Programme and the Programme Management Board.

The Programme Management Board had met on the 17th September 2014 and the evaluation panel drew up a set of 8 scenarios on the possible ways that acute services could be provided in the future. The information was tabled at the meeting as follows:

1	Do Minimum - Provider & Commissioner efficiency strategies implemented but no major service change. Existing dual site acute services (including A&E).		Four community hospitals and MIUs providing services as currently.
2	EC with UCC & LPC at RSH; *	DTC with UCC & LPC at PRH;	Two to five further UCCs ideally co-located with LPCs & CUs
3	EC with UCC & LPC at PRH;	DTC with UCC & LPC at RSH;	
4	EC with UCC at new site; *	DTC with UCC & LPC at PRH; UCC & LPC at RSH;	
5	EC with UCC at new site; *	DTC with UCC & LPC at RSH; UCC & LPC at PRH;	
6	EC & DTC with UCC & LPC at RSH; *	UCC & LPC at PRH;	
7	EC & DTC with UCC & LPC at PRH;	UCC & LPC at RSH;	
8	EC & UCC with DTC at new site; *	UCC & LPC at PRH & RSH;	
* the potential to locate consultant-led obstetrics either at the Emergency Centre or at PRH should be considered as a variant to these options.			

Key

DTC	=	Diagnostic & Treatment Centre
EC	=	Emergency Centre
LPC	=	Local Planned Care Facilities
RSH	=	Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
PRH	=	Princess Royal Hospital

There were variations with regard to maternity services and the Programme Board had not set fixed points in the programme. There were differing views on the co-location of obstetrics with the emergency care centres.

There had been four recent engagement events at:

- Oswestry
- Newport
- Newtown
- Ludlow

All of the information that had been received from these events had been taken on board. A feasibility study report and further work on the scenarios would take place in order to make a shortlist of the 8 scenarios.

A workforce workstream had been created and the clinical model had been broadly accepted. This work had just begun and once the shortlist had been drawn up then the evaluation panel make a decision.

Further engagement and public consultation sessions would take place on the short list had been drawn up but this would not be until after the Elections in 2015 as this timescale would be unrealistic.

A question was raised as to whether it would be an option to move the mother and baby unit from Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) after millions of pounds had been spent and it had only just been opened in September. D Evans replied that there would be no fixed point as that could appear in some people's eyes that the process had already been determined. There was a potential that this could be moved and there would be an open approach when determining the options shortlisted.

A further questions was raised regarding the cost implications of moving the mother and baby unit. D Evans explained that there was a lot of work to be undertaken in determining the options but it was possible that the cancer unit or the maternity unit may be moved.

A discussion took place including:

- Community Hospitals in Shropshire but none in Telford and Wrekin
- Model of Care for both the rural and urban areas
- The need for FutureFit and not current fit
- Young people to design the services for the future

The Board asked why they had not been told about the 8 options prior to the meeting as these had been available since 17th September. The Board would have found it useful to have seen these options prior to the meeting. D Evans confirmed that he would take the comments back to the Programme Management Board.

Following a question regarding the location of the engagement event in Newport, D Evans confirmed that there would be two further events to be held in the centre of Telford and another in Shrewsbury. The engagement event in Telford would be held on the 15th November.

D Evans informed the Board that there would be a FutureFit 2 document. This would deal with care closer to home and how to provide the community with resources and services for patients that were the right care at the right time in the right place.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

HWB-10 SHROPSHIRE/TELFORD AND WREKIN CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP 5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

D Evans reported that there was a requirement for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to collectively produce a 5 year strategic commissioning plan in conjunction with our key commissioning partner which, for Telford, is Shropshire CCG.

The plan would run for 5 years from 2014/15 to 2018/19 and described the system vision. This had been developed in consultation with main provider organisations.

This would feed into a larger footprint. Staffordshire had 1 plan into which 5 CCGs had signed up to.

There were 3 components:

- BCF
- FutureFit
- Modernisation of Mental Health Service

In relation to the modernisation of the mental health service there had been the closure of the old victorian Shelton Hospital and the creation of the new Redwood Centre which was closer to home. There were two different scenarios to consider being operational and strategic.

Concerns were raised regarding the changes to the Mental Health Service. The changes regarding the Redwood Centre were to be accompanied by a much greater service which had not materialised. D Evans confirmed that they would be revisiting the assumptions to ensure the outcomes were being met. This was a starting point and SaTH were co-operating with the Mental Health Foundation to ensure there requirements were being put right.

Physical Health and Social Care need a much bigger piece of work to pull it all back together.

The FutureFit 2 Strategy was broadly in line with FutureFit and involved the work around patients and primary care and would begin to look at integrated services such as integrated care needs and mental health care needs. There were concerns around the current provision of the counselling services and prevention work.

Board Members raised concerns regarding Page 9 of the Draft Strategic Plan around two site working. This was something that they were not happy to sign if the Board were not in agreement.

A question was raised as to why the HWB needed to sign the document. D Evans replied that this was a requirement of NHS England.

Board Members suggested that there needed to be a legal discussion around the signing of the document.

D Evans commented that this document had been put forward by 2 CCGs and that it was in regard to the strategic role of Health and Wellbeing Boards nationally. A group of clinicians had concluded that it was unsustainable to continue with the 2 sites that were currently in place.

Board Members expressed their disagreement with the clinicians and suggested that if they signed the document they would be agreeing to 1 site. It was suggested that legal advice be taken before the Board accepted the document.

M Cumberbatch advised that the Board needed to decide whether they wanted to sign the plan, the significance of not signing it, or whether they just wanted to put forward their comments on the plan.

M Cumberbatch stated that as this was a CCG report the legal issues could be reviewed and then the document could be brought back to a future meeting when the Board could be advised as to the legal requirements and the consequences of providing a signatory to the plan.

Members were concerned that they would not be able to sign the document as it stood as there were issues in the document that the Council did not agree with.

Board Members raised the fact that Shropshire had not signed up to the document.

It was suggested that the report could be noted with the exception to the references to 1 site.

P Taylor suggested that legal advice was taken to clarify who actually needed to sign the document as there appeared to be reference to the Head of Adult Social Care. The Board needed to know if it was an officer of the Council or members of the Health and Wellbeing Board who needed to sign as the Board was made up of a range of organisations. He also felt that it was difficult to express the strategic plan in the whole Shropshire context as the document was a footprint for Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin.

Further concerns were raised regarding the document as it seemed to be arguing against a 2 site future and it was felt that there was a strong need to protect services in Telford and Wrekin and how these discussions affected the position going forward.

It was suggested by Board Members that the document would not be endorsed at this time but that it be deferred for further clarity of information until the December meeting.

The NHS England Area Team were not in attendance so the Board could not seek a response to clarify matters during the meeting.

D Evans accepted and understood the Board Members' views. However, the plan would be reviewed in the future by the CCG and NHS England who co-commission primary care. Two site working would not mean that someone who lost an A&E would have nothing to replace it that was not what was being proposed. Local Service provision for most urgent care would be provided with 1 centre for life-threatening care only. Evidence around outcomes had suggested that mortality rates had improved in a 1 site scenario. Heart attack and stroke mortality rates as well as paediatric mortality had improved having the emergency life-threatening centres. Urgent care would still be delivered in both Shrewsbury and Telford and Wrekin by emergency care centres.

Following the debate it was suggested that there be an amendment to the recommendation. P Watling proposed that the recommendation read "the 5 year plan brought back to the December meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board following legal advice". This was seconded by E Clare.

RESOLVED – that the 5 year plan be brought back to the December meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board following legal advice.

HWB-11 CCG QUALITY PREMIUM 2014/15

D Evans presented the CCG Quality Premium 2014/15 report.

The quality premium paid to CCGs in 2015/16 would reflect the quality of the health services commissioned by them during 2014/15. The payment was based on six measures that covered a combination of national and local priorities. These were:

- Reducing potential years of life lost through causes considered amenable to healthcare and addressing locally agreed priorities for reducing premature mortality (15% of quality premium);
- Improving access to psychological therapies (15% of quality premium);
- Reducing avoidable emergency admissions (25% of quality premium);
- Addressing issues identified in the 2013/14 Friends and Family Test (FFT), supporting roll out of FFT in 2014/15 and showing improvement in a locally selected patient experience indicator (15% of quality premium);
- Improving the reporting of medication-related safety incidents based on a locally selected measure (15% of quality premium);
- A further local measure that should be based on local priorities such as those identified in joint health and wellbeing strategies (15% of quality premium).

The CCG end of year projections were considered to be over ambitious and these had been refined slightly.

The Impact of Action was to reduce the potential years of life lost through causes considered amenable to healthcare and addressing locally agreed priorities for reducing premature mortality, which included improving equity of access to psychological therapies.

There were several projects which would contribute toward the successful admissions avoidance programme which included the Better Care Fund (BCF) and the Urgent Care Centres. There would also be more focus on the friends and family test.

It was asked if a further report could be brought regarding the action plan compared against the quality premium outcome as there was currently no detailed plan.

RESOLVED – that the quality premium targets for Telford and Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) as set out in Section 3 of the report be agreed.

HWB-12 PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT BRIEFING

L Noakes gave the Board a briefing regarding the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.

The Health and Wellbeing Board had a legal duty to publish a revised Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments (PNA) by 1st April 2015. Prior to the sign-off a period of public consultation needed to take place, which was expected to be at the end of November 2014.

The PNA was part of the wider Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and would be used to make decisions on services which were provided by the local community pharmacies. In addition, the PNA would also be used by NHS England to decide if and where new pharmacies were needed.

A report would be brought back to the Board in March 2015.

RESOLVED – that the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) refresh process be endorsed.

The meeting ended at 4.22pm

Chairman:

Date:

DRAFT

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 3 September 2014 at 6.00pm in the Telford Suite at Shropshire College Hotel School Ltd (The Telford Whitehouse), Watling Street, Wellington, Telford TF1 2NJ

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chairman), N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, K R Guy, A S Jhavar, A A Meredith, L A Murray, B J Thompson (as substitute for J Loveridge) and C R Turley.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A J Eade (for planning application TWC/2014/0348)

PC-025 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13 August 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-026 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor J Loveridge

PC-027 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

PC-028 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/0348, the Development Management Service Delivery Manager advised the Committee that the applicants wished to undertake further work on the application and a deferral was, therefore, sought.

RESOLVED – that determination of planning application TWC/2014/0348 be deferred.

PC-029 SITE VISITS

None.

PC-030 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report.

(a) TWC/2013/1028 - Land adjacent Mill Cottage, Mill Lane, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire

This was a full application seeking approval for the erection of four dwellings. The scheme originally comprised five units but in response to officer concerns as to the density of the scheme, and lack of a presence of the dwellings sitting at the rear of

the site on the street scene, this had been reduced. The proposed units would be 3-bed open market properties with individual parking, front and rear gardens. Councillor M G Ion, Ward Member, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee.

Mr J Stevenson, the applicant's agent, addressed the Committee in support of the application, noting the extent of the garden land, pedestrianisation of the bridge over the railway resulting in Mill Lane serving a reduced number of properties, sustainability and proximity to local amenities, and local and national policy.

The Planning Officer noted that the principle of development at this site had already been established and drew attention to aspects of the report relating to sustainability, housing land supply, design and density, access and replacement trees. The Planning Officer also provided a verbal update regarding revision to the position of windows at Plot 1 to protect the privacy of neighbouring properties.

Members sought clarification regarding absence of public vehicular access in relation to the restricted byway and the Legal Advisor informed Members that the developer would need to rely on a private vehicular right of access. In response to questioning, the Planning Officer also advised that proposed conditions sought mitigation works to Mill Lane. Members were satisfied that the application was in accordance with policy.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2013/1028 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

(b) TWC/2014/0360 - Land at Heath Hill/Balls Hill, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire

This was a full planning application seeking residential development comprising 10 no. 3 bedroomed houses, 8 no. 2 bedroomed apartments and 4 no. 1 bedroomed apartments with associated highway alterations.

Ms J Bleach, the applicant's agent, addressed the Committee in support of the application in terms of highway improvements, improved privacy and separation distances for neighbours, access, appearance and design, planning obligations secured through Section 106 Agreement, viability and lack of affordable housing, replacement trees, development on brownfield land and sustainability.

The Planning Officer highlighted aspects of the report relating to sustainability and proximity to Dawley district centre, housing land supply, viability, scale, mass and design, local context, planning contributions to replace the loss of a bowling green, and replacement of protected trees.

Members sought clarification of the location of replacement bowling provision and the Planning Officer advised that pitch provision was subject to ongoing discussion between Sport England and the Council's Leisure Service. Concerns were also raised regarding highway safety, the proposed Traffic Regulation Order and parking provision. The Planning Officer advised that improvements to Balls Hill and Heath

Hill were sought by way of condition, Traffic Regulation Orders normally encompassed any yellow lining necessary and the Highways Officer was satisfied with the dimensions of the garages which would be subject to a condition to prevent conversion. Noting that the principle of development had already been established at this brownfield site, the design was in keeping with the character of the area and that the development was sustainable, the majority of Members supported the application.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0360 the Development Management Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to:

- (a) the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement that includes the provision of:
 - (i) £50,000 towards a replacement bowling facility
 - (ii) £34,947 towards primary education
 - (iii) £3,000 towards the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order on Balls Hill and Heath Hill within the vicinity of the development
 - (iv) Planning monitoring contribution
- (b) the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

PC-031 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 2014

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy and People Services seeking confirmation of a provisional Tree Preservation Order (TPO) in relation to a Veteran Oak to the South of St Michaels Church, Waters Upton, Telford, Shropshire. The report detailed an objection received from the owner of the property who felt that the TPO had been inappropriately made as a reaction to the felling of nearby diseased sycamore trees. A letter in response from the Tree and Woodlands Officer was also included.

The Legal Advisor outlined the process and the Tree and Woodland Officer explained the background to the making of the Provisional Order in response to a planning enquiry to ensure that the Veteran Oak was paid due diligence during the planning process. The Legal Advisor advised Members that the focus in this case should be on amenity and noted that the objection received did not address this particular issue.

Members noted the comments of the objector and balanced this against the opinion of the Council's Tree and Woodlands Officer. Members unanimously concluded that the tree was worth preserving for its visual amenity.

RESOLVED – that the Borough of Telford & Wrekin (Oak tree to the South of; St Michaels Church, Waters Upton, Telford, Shropshire) Tree Preservation Order 2014 be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 6.34pm.

Chairman:

Date:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 24 September 2014 at 6.00pm in the Telford Suite at Shropshire College Hotel School Ltd (The Telford Whitehouse), Watling Street, Wellington, Telford TF1 2NJ

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chairman), N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, A S Jhavar, A A Meredith, L A Murray, B J Thompson (as substitute for J Loveridge) and C R Turley.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A J Eade (for planning application TWC/2014/0273)

PC-032 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 3 September 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-033 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors K R Guy and J Loveridge

PC-034 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/0699, Councillor B J Thompson commented that he was a member of Wrockwardine Wood and Trench Parish Council but, as he had not taken part in any previous discussion regarding the application, he would not be withdrawing from the meeting for that item.

PC-035 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

None.

PC-036 SITE VISITS

None.

PC-037 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report.

- (a) TWC/2014/0273 - Land adjacent The Barns, Church Aston, Newport, Shropshire

This was an outline application for the erection of 26 dwellings with associated access, infrastructure and accommodation works. All other matters were reserved for further application. Councillor A J Eade, Ward Member, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee.

Councillor Eade addressed the Committee in terms of a lack of five year deliverable housing land supply, development of greenfield land, and the impact on the village. He noted the applicant had addressed the fears of local residents regarding over-development by reducing the number of proposed units and added that if Members were minded to support the application he would seek consultation with the Parish Council regarding the proposed off-site play area and welcome the contribution towards off-site affordable housing provision.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr A Williams, spoke in support of the application commenting upon all parties' constructive approach to the application and highlighting the amendments which had been made to the original submission. He noted that the principle of development had been established, contributions for affordable housing provision and recreation were offered, hedges would be retained and that there was no objection from Parks and Open Spaces, Highways, Drainage or the Tree Officer. He noted the presumption in favour of sustainable development embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and also the low density, high quality nature of the proposals. He also commented that small developments were normally more quickly commenced and delivered than their larger counterparts and that interest in the scheme had already been established.

The Planning Officer commented on the national five year deliverable land supply issue, sustainability in relation to the NPPF and drew attention to aspects of the report detailing access and highways, amended layout and S106 contributions. She concluded with clarification of the recommendation relating to the S106 contribution for off-site affordable housing.

In response to questioning, the Planning Officer went on to clarify that design and access statements would not normally be submitted as part of reserved matters applications, hence the Urban Designer's comments were limited in regard to character analysis this has been addressed by imposing a condition for more information to accompany any subsequent reserved matters application to address the character of the area; it was usual practice to consult with the Parish Council regarding recreation facilities; the principle of development was informally established during the pre-application advice stage but this was caveated as an officer opinion only pending the Committee's decision; the position with regard to off-site affordable housing contributions was fully set out in the report and contributions would be sought from Section 106 obligations.

On being put to the vote, it was by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0273 the Development Management Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to:

- (a) the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement that includes the provision of:
 - (i) A sum of £459,000 in lieu of 35% on-site affordable housing provision in the Newport and/or Church Aston area

- (ii) **A contribution of £84,611 towards education facilities in the vicinity of area**
 - (iii) **A contribution of £600 per 2 bed unit (and above) towards off-site play and recreation (totalling £15,600)**
 - (iv) **A contribution of £800 per unit towards Highways Infrastructure improvements to the A518 within the Newport Area (totalling £20,800)**
 - (v) **Planning monitoring contribution of 5% of total sum (totalling £6050)**
- (b) **the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager).**
- (b) TWC/2014/0687 - Land North of Dunelm, Rodington Heath, Telford, Shropshire

This was an outline application for the erection of 6 dwellings with associated access on land to the north of 'Dunelm' in Rodington Heath. All other matters (including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) were reserved for further application.

Councillor D Johnson, on behalf of Rodington Parish Council, spoke to oppose the proposals in term of development in the rural area, housing need and sustainability. He referred to other plans for housing in the area, including one at pre-application stage for 14 homes and the Council's Shaping Places local plan. He referred to the lack of facilities in the area and poor public transport links.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr S Jones, addressed the Committee in support of the application noting the lack of technical objection and the proposed affordable homes. He noted that small schemes could be quickly delivered and pointed to the low density of the proposals, highway benefits, local employment opportunities and policy compliance.

The Planning Officer drew attention to aspects of the report relating to the presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the NPPF, access and the removal of the hedgerow to improve visibility splays, drainage and Section 106 obligations.

Some Members expressed concerns regarding non-compliance with the NPPF in terms of sustainability, particularly due to the lack of local amenities, and the enforceability of proposals to allocate affordable housing to people with a local connection. Conversely, other Members acknowledged the need for housing in the rural area.

The Legal Advisor commented upon the successful implementation of agreed Local Lettings Plan mechanisms in other rural areas, and the support of the Council's Housing Officer in encouraging further use of the mechanism.

On being put to the vote, it was by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0687 the Development Management Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to:

- (a) the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement that includes the provision of:
 - (i) Provision of on-site affordable housing constituting 40% of total number of units (2 dwellings)
 - (ii) A contribution of £600 per 2 bed unit (and above) towards off-site play and recreation (totalling £3,600)
 - (iii) £3000 towards improvements to the 30mph Gateway Features when entering Rodington Heath
- (b) the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager).
- (c) TWC/2014/0699 - Land Adjacent to 1 Talbot Close, Wrockwardine Wood, Telford, Shropshire

This proposal sought full planning permission for the erection of two 3 bedroom detached dwellings and two 3 bedroom semi-detached dwellings to be built on land at the junction of Plough Road and Talbot Close.

Members were generally welcoming of the application which would improve the aesthetic of the area. Some concern was expressed regarding highway safety which the Planning Officer advised would be appropriately addressed by the Highways Officer through proposed traffic calming measures.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0699 the Development Management Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement for financial contributions of £6,500 towards implementing a Traffic Calming Feature on Plough Road to the West of the Plough Road and Talbot Close Junction; and further subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 6.47pm

Chairman:

Date:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 15 October 2014 at 6.00pm in the Walker Room, Meeting Point House, Town Centre, Telford

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chairman), N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, K R Guy, A S Jhavar, J Loveridge, L A Murray and C R Turley.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors R K Austin (for planning applications TWC/2014/0756 and TWC/2014/0758), R T Kiernan (for planning application TWC/2014/0484) and J Pinter (for planning application TWC/2014/0673).

PC-038 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 24 September 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-039 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor A A Meredith

PC-040 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With regard to planning application reference TWC/2010/0828, Councillor E J Greenaway commented that she was a member of Lawley Steering Group but that she would not be withdrawing from the meeting for that item.

With regard to planning application references TWC/2014/0756 and TWC/2014/0758, Councillor L A Murray commented that he was a member of Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council but he had expressed no prior view and he would not be withdrawing from the meeting for either item.

Councillor C R Turley commented that he was a member of Great Dawley Town Council but he had not taken part in any prior discussions with regard to planning application reference TWC/2014/0673 and, in the circumstances, he would not be withdrawing from the meeting for that item.

PC-041 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

None.

PC-042 SITE VISITS

RESOLVED – that site visits take place in respect of the following planning applications on Wednesday, 5 November 2014:-

- 3.00pm – TWC/2014/0272: Erection of 12no. dwellings; Ivydale, High Street, Coalport, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7HZ; and
- 3.30pm (approx) – TWC/2014/0883 – Felling of a Yew Tree; 25 Weavers Rise, Ketley Bank, Telford, Shropshire, TF2 0EX

PC-043 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report and the supplementary information tabled at the meeting regarding planning applications TWC/2014/0484 and TWC/2014/0758.

(a) TWC/2010/0828 - Land at Ironstone, Lawley, Telford, Shropshire

This was an application to vary the existing S106 agreement for Lawley Sustainable Urban Extension relating to the Lawley School and community facilities (Facilities Building). The variation sought to amend key dates, which in turn would alter when education payment instalments were paid to the Council. The changes would aid cash flow for the provision of the school and facilitate the construction of the access road ahead of the proposed hotel/restaurant. The proposed variation did not change the total contribution figure (£3,600,000). Members unanimously supported the proposed variation.

RESOLVED – That with respect to planning application TWC/2010/0828 the Section 106 Agreement be varied as follows with any other legal wording changes necessary to make the s106 agreement legally binding:-

- (a) amend definition of “Facilities Construction Date” to read 31 January 2016;**
- (b) amend land transfer date to read “no later than 31 December 2014”;**
- (c) amend Schedule 3 to allow the School Expansion Sum to be paid in 2 instalments - £400,000 paid on completion of the school (by 31 January 2016) and second instalment of £200,000 within 24 months of the first instalment (ie by January 2018); and**
- (d) amend the definition of “the Facilities Land” site area 2.153 hectares.**

(b) TWC/2014/0484 - Land West of The Cedars, Rodington, Telford, Shropshire

This was an outline application which sought planning permission for the erection of up to 14 dwellings with associated access comprising a new junction on land to the west of The Cedars, Rodington. All other matters including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale were reserved for later approval.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which detailed further information received since preparation of the main report relating to an additional representation received and clarification on issues relating to highways, drainage, ecology and density.

Cllr R T Kiernan, one of the Borough Ward Members for Wrockwardine, spoke to oppose the application on the grounds of its speculative nature, precedent setting, housing need identified by the parish survey, local planning policy, development of greenfield land, detrimental impact on neighbouring properties, loss of native hedge,

ecology, drainage, highways and sustainability. Cllr Kiernan considered that Members would benefit from making a site visit.

Mr J Tennant, a local resident, spoke in opposition to the application on the grounds that the impact of other recently granted planning applications in the vicinity was unknown, contrary to national and local planning policy, sustainability in terms of limited public transport and capacity for school places, light pollution, lack of car parking, design, scale and location, detrimental impact on neighbours and the defence of any appeal in light of recent cases within the Shropshire area.

Mr S Thomas of Berrys, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application which was located in a sustainable settlement with access to a major road network and would contribute to local affordable housing needs. He also commented on design and layout, safety of access and the proposed package of conditions to mitigate concerns regarding run-off, foul water and ecology together with agreed financial contributions.

The Planning Officer pointed to aspects of the report dealing with the authority's lack of a deliverable five year housing land supply, the three strands to sustainability set out in the National Planning Policy against which this application had been judged, affordable housing, access, drainage, layout and character, ecology and planning obligations. She also noted speakers' concerns regarding the development of greenfield land but noted that no sequential test nor any obligation to require building on brownfield land in the first instance existed.

Members expressed concern that the principle of development at the site appeared to have been agreed prior to consideration by Planning Committee and were advised that this was an informal opinion given by the Planning Team in accordance with its remit to give pre-application advice. Concern was also expressed that the close of consultation fell prior to the consultation period for the Shaping Places Local Plan. The Assistant Director: Planning Specialist also reiterated the many roles of the Planning Team and commented that the process of developing the Local Plan could not interfere with the timetable for consideration and determination of planning applications. Following comments on the position of Shropshire Council with regard to the 5 year deliverable housing land supply, the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist noted that the revised methodology used to reach the supply figures would also provide an adequate supply in Telford and Wrekin, however, the formula was being challenged by a group of developers. This Council was investigating options for a more robust approach as the methodology used by Shropshire Council was vulnerable until tested.

During the ensuing debate, converse views were expressed. Some members focussed on a lack of sustainability, pointing to insufficient facilities and infrastructure in the village and others considered that the application was acceptable in principle but that further work was required with regard to scale, layout and design. A site visit was proposed but not seconded.

On being put to the vote, it was by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0484 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant outline planning permission subject to:-

- (a) the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement relating to:
 - (i) Provision of on-site affordable housing constituting 40% of total number of units;
 - (ii) A contribution of £600 per 2 bed unit (and above) towards off-site play and recreation;
 - (iii) A contribution of up to £25,300 (£1,807 per unit) towards primary school provision;
- (b) the conditions set out in the update report (with authority to finalise and impose additional conditions to be delegated to Development Management Service Delivery Manager); and
- (c) any future reserved matters applications to be determined by the Planning Committee
- (c) TWC/2014/0673 - Land rear of 2 Church Walk, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire

This full planning application sought permission for the erection of a detached bungalow following the demolition of 6 garages currently on site at land to the rear of Church Walk in Dawley. Councillor J Pinter, one of the Borough Ward Members for Dawley Magna, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee.

Councillor Pinter addressed the Committee in terms of parking, highways and personal safety. She highlighted residents' understanding that when the land was sold it was with the proviso that the existing terms of agreement regarding garages and access would remain unchanged. She noted that if the existing car parking provisions ceased, due to the lack of alternative off-road parking, there would be a dramatic impact on all roads in the vicinity. She also noted that the footpath at the rear of the proposals did not benefit from street lighting and could be a magnet for anti-social behaviour.

Mr D Stack of Chevin Homes, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. He noted that the site was underdeveloped brownfield private land in an established residential location. He noted the proposed provision of 5 parking spaces in response to the previous appeal decision, that the footpath would be retained and formalised, there would be no loss of privacy to neighbours and that a more pleasant environment would result.

The Planning Officer reminded Members of the previous appeal decision based on loss of parking and loss of community facility, with loss of community facility alone being an insufficient reason to refuse planning permission. The application before the Committee sought to address the issue of parking provision.

In response to questions, the Planning Officer advised that no garages were shown on the block plan and that there was no current formal right of access across the private land and that this application sought to formalise the situation. The Assistant Director: Planning Specialist stated the landowner's power to close the land to public access at any time and that whilst there was no obligation to provide parking for residents in the locality, parking could be available on a contractual basis. Members asked whether any street lighting would be provided and the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist advised that it would be inappropriate to impose any conditions without prior investigation about the adoption of lighting with the appropriate Council Officers. The Legal Advisor advised that it would be helpful to provide flexibility to use either a condition or planning obligation to preserve the communality of the parking and it was also agreed that any current rights of way would be verified. Members noted the benefits that would be garnered from the proposal and were unanimously in support.

RESOLVED – officers were requested to seek to verify what rights of way existed over the site and that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0673 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report and further subject to either a condition or a planning obligation to ensure that off-road communal parking facilities are made available on-site in perpetuity.

(d) TWC/2014/0756 - Land adjacent 1-3 Castle Lane, Hadley, Telford, Shropshire

This application sought approval of Reserved Matters following the grant of outline planning permission, TWC/2011/1039 for the erection of 3 houses with on-site parking. This application sought permission for matters reserved which included access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping. Councillor R K Austin, one of the Borough Ward Members for Hadley and Leegomery, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee.

Councillor Austin addressed the Committee regarding the concerns of local residents about parking provision and access to Lidl food store.

The Planning Officer drew attention to aspects of the report relating to highways, layout, scale, landscaping and drainage.

Members noted that parking was an issue in the area and that the Council's highways Engineer had assessed the scheme and requested minor amendments regarding on-site parking for plot 14. It was, therefore, considered that subject to satisfactory receipt of amendments in this regard, the proposals could be supported and it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0756 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant reserved matters consent subject to the receipt of satisfactory amendments to the siting of on-site parking for plot 14 and further subject to the conditions as set out in the report together with any further conditions as the Development

Management Service Delivery Manager may consider appropriate in response to any amendments to the siting of on-site parking for plot 14.

- (e) TWC/2014/0758 - Land fronting Haybridge Road shops, Haybridge Road, Hadley, Telford, Shropshire

This was a part-retrospective proposal for the erection of a piece of public art in celebration of local firm, GKN Sankey. The artwork consisted of a metal wheel with a diameter of 1.03m, a thickness of 0.55m and standing a maximum of 1.48m in height. The proposed site was a strip of grass separating the highway from the car park of a small shopping precinct. A supporting concrete plinth had already been installed. No loss of trees or alterations to parking, access or street furniture was necessary. Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which reported the receipt of supportive consultation responses and a supporting 324 signature petition.

Councillor A Twyford, representing Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council spoke to oppose the application on the grounds of highway safety and design. The Parish Council did not object to the erection of a monument to either GKN Sankey or Jayden-Lee Mclvor, the child who had tragically lost his life after being knocked down by a vehicle on the nearby pedestrian crossing in 2013, but considered that this site was an inappropriate location.

Councillor R K Austin, one of the Borough Ward Members for Hadley and Leegomery congratulated the applicant on receiving the Shropshire Star's People's Champion Award, noting that the community spirit she embodied was reflected in this application. He did not consider that the monument was large enough to cause a hazard and felt that the tribute was appropriate following the removal of the GKN Sankey monument from Hadley District Centre during the scheme of regeneration.

The views of the Parish Council were echoed by Mr R Plenderleith, a Parish Councillor who spoke in his personal capacity.

Mrs S Fikeis spoke on behalf of the applicant. She provided a life-sized model of the proposed monument and paid tribute to the extensive work of the applicant in bringing the local community together. She also acknowledged the esteem with which GKN Sankey was held in the community and noted the popularity of the proposals among local people. She argued that the artwork would be no more distracting than advertising hoarding routinely erected at roundabouts and that there was no hard evidence that it would cause a hazard.

The Planning Officer noted that the main issues for consideration by the Committee were design and siting. She explained that the chosen colour was reportedly the favourite of Jayden-Lee Mclvor and whilst the Highways Officer had initially expressed concerns regarding the bright yellow hue, in view of the site and proposed angle of the monument it was subsequently deemed that this was an insufficient reason for refusal. She drew attention to significant local support, as set out in the

update report, and considered that the design reflected local business and was in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Committee considered points raised by speakers and information provided by the Planning Officers in conjunction with the report. Members welcomed the initiative of the applicant. It was noted that similar concerns regarding safety had been raised in other comparable local circumstances, but such fears had not come to fruition. A Member suggested a compromise to delay the erection of the artwork to coincide with the installation of speed cameras but this was not deemed necessary. Members did not consider that the artwork represented a hazard and opined that the issue of safety related to poor driving and speeding. Members unanimously supported the proposal.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0758 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

(f) TWC/2014/0762 - 22 Priestland Terrace, Furnace Lane, Trench, Telford, Shropshire, TF2 7JJ

This was a part-retrospective proposal for change of use of open space to private garden land and creation of a new access with dropped kerb and associated driveway. Wrockwardine Wood and Trench Parish Council had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee. The Parish Council had been unable to send a representative to speak. Members considered that the proposals offered an improvement to the street scene and, on being put the vote, it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0762 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

NB. The Committee were disappointed that the Parish Council had been unable to send a representative to speak to the call-in request on planning application TWC/2014/0762 and the Chair agreed that a reminder of the Committee's expectations in this regard should be sent to all Town and Parish Councils.

The meeting ended at 7.38pm

Chairman:

Date:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 5 November 2014 at 6.00pm in the Telford Suite at Shropshire College Hotel School Ltd (The Telford Whitehouse Hotel), Watling Street, Wellington, Telford TF1 2NJ

PRESENT: Councillors J C Minor (Chairman), N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, A S Jhawar, J Loveridge, L A Murray, B J Thompson (as substitute for K R Guy) and C R Turley.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A J Eade (for planning application TWC/2014/0348).

PC-044 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 October 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-045 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors K R Guy and A A Meredith

PC-046 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With regard to planning application TWC/2014/0883, Councillor A S Jhawar commented that he was the borough ward member but he had not engaged in any prior discussions and would not be withdrawing from the meeting for that item.

Councillor L A Murray indicated that he was one of the borough ward members for Hadley and Leegomery but he had not taken part in any previous discussions regarding planning application TWC/2014/0765, and would not be withdrawing from the meeting for that item.

Councillor C R Turley commented on his position as the Local Authority's representative on both the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and Severn Gorge Countryside Trust but he had not taken part in any discussions with regard to planning application TWC/2014/0272 and he would not withdraw from the meeting for that item.

PC-047 DEFERRED/WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

None.

PC-048 SITE VISITS

None.

PC-049 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION

Members had received a schedule of planning applications to be determined by the Committee and fully considered each report and the supplementary information tabled at the meeting regarding planning applications TWC/2014/0272, TWC/2014/0765 and TWC/2014/0883.

- (a) TWC/2014/0272 - Ivydale, High Street, Coalport, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7HZ

This application sought full planning permission for the erection of 12 dwellings with associated garaging, new vehicular access, parking and private amenity space. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out an additional consultation response received in support and outlined the developer's offer of a potential private pedestrian access point as presented in a revised site plan and street scene. Members had undertaken a site visit earlier in the afternoon prior to the meeting. An update to the report was tabled setting out a further consultation response received and proposals to provide a private pedestrian access point.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr A Williams, addressed the Committee in support of the application in terms of compliance with local policies, land stability, access and turning head, arboriculture, ecology, flood risk and drainage, extensive consultation and subsequent refinement of the proposals, employment opportunities for local tradesmen and the likelihood of early commencement.

The Planning Officer advised that the proposals were in accordance with policy and drew attention to aspects of the report relating to amended plans reducing the density of the proposals, land stability, highways, impact on trees and impact on heritage assets. Upon request, he reiterated the position with regard to the proposed footpath access point as presented in the revised site plan and streetscene tabled with the update report. He noted that a gate was already in existence which, subject to agreement with the Council as neighbouring landowner, could potentially be re-positioned to provide a pedestrian route from the western end of the site through to the Silkin Way and High Street, thereby avoiding the bridge and improving highway safety. In response to further questions, the Planning Officer advised that a site for recreational facilities had not been identified and that financial contributions resulting from this development were likely to be combined with other available monies to provide facilities in the vicinity but not on-site. The Committee were also advised that the National Planning Policy Framework was clear that the onus was on the developer/landowner to ensure a safe development; a Stability Declaration Form had been submitted and proposed conditions required the submission of detailed information with regard to stability.

Upon being put to the vote, Members unanimously supported the application.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0272 the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the applicants/landowners entering into a Section 106 Agreement for a financial contribution of £600 per 2 bed unit (and above) towards off-site play and recreation and further subject to the

conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and reasons for approval to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

(b) TWC/2014/0348 - Littlehales Manor Farm, Lilleshall, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 9AN

This proposal, for the erection of 4 poultry houses, heating building with associated vehicular access, ancillary equipment and landscaping, had been amended since being deferred on 3 September 2014 to allow the applicant time to engage in further discussions. The amendments comprised removal of the biomass heating element which was replaced by a ground source heat pump system resulting in a reduction in the height of the shed and a new access to the site.

The Committee noted that Councillor L Hardy (Chetwynd Aston and Woodcote Parish Council) had registered to speak but due to delayed travel plans he was not present.

Councillor A J Eade, the Borough Ward Member for Church Aston and Lilleshall, spoke in support of the application, commending the applicant for his efforts to resolve concerns with the original application and welcomed the amendments which had been made. He supported the comments of Chetwynd Aston and Woodcote Parish Council regarding access and welcomed the proposed financial contribution towards the upgrade of Pitchcroft Lane.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr S Jones, addressed the Committee in support of the application. He noted the applicant family had a long history of farming on the site and that significant revisions had been made to address planning officers' concerns with the original submission regarding highways, noise and odour. He noted the lack of technical objection to the amended application and pointed out that a contract had been secured with a poultry processor but this would be withdrawn if building did not commence in the near future triggering huge abortive costs to the applicant.

The Planning Officer reminded Members' that originally this application had been recommended for refusal, but following discussions and subject to agreement with the Highways Officer, the amendments submitted were considered satisfactory. She welcomed financial contributions towards the upgrade of Pitchcroft Lane but noted that these were offered voluntarily in the form of a mitigation agreement between the applicant and the Parish Council and would not form a Section 106 planning obligation. In response to questioning, the Planning Officer clarified that hedgerows along the proposed access would require maintenance to preserve visibility splays.

Members unanimously welcomed the amended access and improved plans which they considered sufficiently mitigated against noise and odour.

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0348, subject to satisfactory agreement on highways issues, the Development Management Service Delivery Manager be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in the report (with authority to finalise conditions and

reasons for approval to be delegated to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager).

- (c) TWC/2014/0765 - 1-3 Castle Lane, Hadley, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 6RD

This was a full planning application seeking permission for the demolition of an existing dwelling and garaging off Castle Lane in Hadley and the construction of a block of 11 flats including a private car parking area to the rear. Councillor R K Austin, one of the Borough Ward Members for Hadley and Leegomery, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee. The Chairman noted that Councillor Austin was unable to attend the meeting and advised the Committee that Councillor Austin had indicated that he was not opposed to the development and merely wanted to see good car parking facilities to accompany it.

The Planning Officer advised that issues regarding lighting had been raised but that proposed condition 10 addressed these through the submission of a lighting plan. Some Members had recently had cause to visit the vicinity and noted yellow lining and the availability of a car park for Lidl customers. The Planning Officer provided other members with views of the site.

Upon being put to the vote, it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED – that with respect to planning application TWC/2014/0765 planning permission be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the update report tabled at the meeting.

- (d) TWC/2014/0883 - 25 Weavers Rise, Ketley Bank, Telford, Shropshire, TF2 0EX

This application sought consent to fell a Yew Tree, situated in the grounds of 25 Weavers Rise, which was the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Councillor H Rhodes, one of the Borough Ward Members for Ketley and Oakengates, had requested that the application be determined by the Planning Committee. Unfortunately, Councillor Rhodes was unable to attend the meeting. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out Oakengates Town Council's support to fell the tree due to the great volumes of berries produced which were poisonous. Members had undertaken a site visit earlier in the afternoon prior to the meeting.

Councillor S Reynolds, representing Oakengates Town Council, spoke in support of the application, noting that the application had been made due to problems encountered during the fruiting season impacting on the use and safety of the surrounding garden area. He did not believe that the specimen could be suitably pruned as suggested by the Arboricultural Officer and noted that the applicant was willing to plant a less intrusive, child and pet-friendly replacement.

During the course of the debate, the applicant sought to speak but as he had not previously registered in accordance with policy, the request was declined.

The Planning Officer advised that the proposed felling of the tree was considered unacceptable due to its amenity value within the estate. There was no arboricultural justification for the felling nor was there a highway or public safety issue. Therefore, the loss of the tree would conflict with local and national planning policies.

Members expressed converse views regarding the proposals and sought opinion from the arboricultural officer who noted the existence of the tree on the 1882 historic map, placing the tree at approximately 150 years old. The felling of a nearby Sycamore tree in recent years had increased the prominence of the Yew and enhanced its amenity value. No applications to maintain the tree had been made since the Tree Preservation Order was made in 1990 and there were mitigation measures available to the applicant in terms of light pruning whilst the tree was in flower which would inhibit the tree's natural fruiting cycle. Maintenance was the responsibility of the owner.

The Assistant Director: Planning Specialist reiterated the Planning Officer's view and the availability of mitigation opportunities. He indicated that, if Members were minded to refuse the application, they may wish to indicate a maintenance management plan could be considered. Members considered that this was the most appropriate course of action and on being put to the vote it was, by a majority:-

RESOLVED – that consent application TWC/2014/0883 be refused as the proposed felling of the Yew tree cannot be justified. The tree provides significant amenity value and contributes to the character of the area and its removal would be significantly detrimental to the immediate environment. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to policy CS12 and CS15 of the LDF core strategy and 'saved' policy OL11 and UD2 of the Wrekin Local Plan and guidance within the NPPF.

NB Members were minded to allow consideration of a maintenance management plan but this did not form part of the decision.

The meeting ended at 6.52pm.

Chairman:

Date:

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on Friday, 19th September 2014 at 10.30 pm in Meeting Room 7, Darby House, Telford

PRESENT: Cllrs. D. White (Chair), A. McClements, C. Turley

IN ATTENDANCE: R. Partington, Managing Director, Telford & Wrekin Council, F. Bottrill, Scrutiny Group Specialist.

SMB-1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Scrutiny Management Board held on the 16th May 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

SMB-2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. V. Fletcher, C. Mollett, S. Reynolds

SMB-3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

SMB-4 STRATEGIC VISION FOR THE COUNCIL

The Chair welcomed the Council's Managing Director and asked him to set out the strategic vision for the Council. He also asked him to respond to the reports in the press about the 1 million budget deficit.

The Managing Director said that the media reports on the Council's budget were inaccurate and that the Council's budget had been agreed and this set out the savings of 22 million to be made over 2 years. The budget papers clearly set out that there was 1 million still to be identified. This will be managed as part of the budget process and is not a 'black hole'.

He set out the key issues for the Council as:

Finances – the grant cuts will be larger and longer than initially announced and there is an ongoing impact of inflation, both general and specific.

Supply and Demand Issues – the demand for adult social care continues to increase. He gave the example of care for the elderly mentally ill where there is a shortage of places which pushed up the cost of this care NHS Continuing Healthcare funding was not yet close to national averages but there has been some improvement in this but not enough as yet. Benefit Sanctions are also an

issue.

Service Pressures – Highway maintenance is increased by the wet summers and colder winters. Residents' expectation of environmental services is high, there are pressures on safeguarding and cohesion services, and youth unemployment is higher than the national average. Employee costs – employees have experienced a real terms 19% pay cut through the national pay freeze over the past 5 years and job security and opportunities for career advancement have reduced. Staff have left the organisation which means that succession planning is important and work continues on Single Status.

The Managing Director set out the overall budget position - up to 2016 there will have been over £70m of savings made since 2009. There will be difficult decisions after 2016. Between 2016-18 another £20 million + will have to be cut.

The Managing Director explained how the Council had made savings between 2010 and 2014:

- 1151 posts have been cut
- 658 posts have been made redundant (607 voluntary redundancies and 51 compulsory redundancies)
- 50% reduction in senior managers
- More than £20 million saved in salaries
- Staff are redeployed where possible – there have been 2000 posts redeployed
- £7million back office function (40% reduction)
- Rationalising buildings – 33% reduction, saving £2m pa
- Procurement – this is improving across the board e.g. adult and children's services, waste and highways

He set out further work that will improve the Council's additional financial position:

- New housing will generate income through Council Tax of £1.5 million
- NHB (New Homes Bonus) will bring in £3.4m in income
- £3.1 million from new or expanding businesses in the Borough in Business Rates.

He outlined the priorities agreed by the Council and gave examples of how these were being delivered.

The Managing Director said Telford is seen as an example of good practice and had been the only English Council invited to the Welsh Local Government Association event to outline its strategy for dealing with Government cuts.

He set out some of the themes that the Council must consider are when developing the strategy:

- Reviewing, reimagining, reinventing & reorganising

- Challenging and changing the way we do things
- Reducing our dependency on Government grants
- Focusing on 'upstream solutions' to manage and reduce demand for services

This work is underpinned by:

- Our Co-operative Council ethos
- Modern Practices -
 - Employees (terms/Conditions/Ethos)
 - Ways of working (mobile/home/cloud)
 - Making every contact count
 - Communicating & engaging

The Board discussed a number of issues with the Managing Director including:

- The need for the Council to reduce dependency on Government Grants beyond 2016. A question was asked about the level of service the Council will be able to provide. The Board was informed that the budget strategy for 2015/16 is relatively straightforward. But 2016/17 will be more difficult as another £10-12 million savings will be needed and further savings will be required on 2017/18. Integration with the NHS offers opportunities to improve services.
- The need to maintain morale of staff and if the Managing Director would continue to meet with staff. The Board were informed that more meetings with staff are planned.
- Concern was expressed regarding the cuts in Adult Services, particularly that there was no appeals process for people whose care had been reduced and that savings targets should not be set and then cuts made to meet the target. The Board were informed that Adult Social Care savings across the Country have been between 12-20%. Adult Care Service in Telford and Wrekin will make the savings needed over 2 years. The management of the service has changed. The review by Capita found that the service in Telford and Wrekin was old fashioned. It was recognised that the costs for Adult Social Care increase every year. The Board was informed that on average an older person is in the care system for 2 years. A significant cost pressures for Adult Services comes from young people who are leaving children's services which has a different legal framework.
- The need to ensure that support is provided to families at an early stage to prevent increased costs to Children's Services e.g. though Special Education Needs Tribunals brought by families.
- The Shared Lives Scheme was commended but it was commented that if a person needs care some of the Disability Living Allowance goes towards the costs of care. However the individual keeps the Disability Living Allowance under the Shared Care scheme. The Managing Director said he would follow this up.
- The benefit of special guardianship was discussed.
- The Managing Director said that the distinction between statutory and non-statutory services is not necessarily a helpful one when making savings. Services can be delivered in different ways and it should be

about priorities. The Council must change and constantly challenge itself ensuring there are better contracts, better negotiations, leading and creating markets. The review of children's services found 80 front doors which is inefficient. Family Connect streamlines that and children's safeguarding is part of this. First Point for business is not a statutory service but supports local businesses and attracts business to Telford which is good for the area and the Council. There may be opportunities to share services where there is a good fit. Joint work being developed with the NHS through the Better Care Fund. Town and Parish Councils work jointly on the Parish Environmental Teams where enquiries have halved. Children and Adult Services have a national and regional procurement frameworks and West Mercia Energy saved the Council money.

- The solar farm will make £4.4 million profit. In this year it will be £20k profit, with £160k in a full year.
- The Board commended the work undertaken to ensure that the Council is business focussed. The Board was informed that that the business approach is based on co-operative public service values. There are a lot of examples where the Council already manage businesses e.g. the Council already trades with schools. As the business approach is developed there may be opportunities to employ more people.
- There is no limit to the amount the Council can borrow as long as it is done prudently. It is important that growth in Telford is planned so that it remains an attractive place to live and work.
- The Council's treasury management has been a success.
- The need to communicate effectively and use the website and digital media. The importance of managing 'upstream' services e.g. the work that Scrutiny had done to develop the befriending service for older people. The Council must encourage people to access Council services in the most efficient way e.g. getting information through the website, paying by direct debit and using the Everyday Telford App. There have been 2,400 downloads of the App, 1450 registrations and 5,257 reports using the App. It was explained that communication and engagement with the public should not rely on one method. 'Your Voice' goes to 70,000 homes and the Citizen's Panel reported that the Insight magazine is the main way that people get information about the Council and that the Shropshire Star is second. The Board recognised the importance of line communication but it was noted that personal interaction is also important. There was a request for Members training on social media.
- The importance of recognising the work of volunteers and Council staff. E.g. ensuring that the issues identified by Street Champions are picked up.
- The importance of the work of the Crisis Network and the Foodbank was highlighted. The work of staff is recognised through the Managing Director Commendation and the flexi deal and online training.
- The best pieces of Scrutiny Work had been carried out along side the service to develop policy. Scrutiny should have a sharper focus. and as the capacity of the organisation gets thinner scrutiny can help find improvements. It will be difficult to hold on to the current Scrutiny resource.

The actions from this discussion were:

- The Managing Director would follow up the issue of Disability Living Allowance and the Shared Lives Programme
- The Managing Director would continue the programme of meetings with staff
- Follow up on request for social media training for Members.

SMB-5 SCRUTINY OF 2015/16 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Scrutiny Group Specialist presented the report and asked the Board to consider the principles for budget scrutiny set out in Section 4 of the report and the options set out in Section 5 of the report. The Board agreed with the principles but did not decide on the process as this will be determined by the Budget and Finance Scrutiny Committee after the administration and any alternative budget proposals have been presented to a meeting of the Scrutiny Assembly.

It was agreed that the Scrutiny Group Specialist will contact Group Leaders and the relevant officers to request detail of the timescales for the publication of the budget proposals.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the scrutiny of the budget proposals will be carried out inline with the principles set out in the report
- b) That following a presentation of the administration and alternative proposals at the same meeting of the Scrutiny Assembly the Budget and Finance Scrutiny Committee will meet to agree further Scrutiny of the proposals.

SMB – 6 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16

The Scrutiny Group Specialist presented the report. Members recognised the need to review the work programme due to the temporary reduction in Scrutiny Support. The Scrutiny Group Specialist informed the Board that it was likely that interviews for the vacant post will take place in mid October.

RESOLVED:

Priority issues for the Scrutiny Work Programme:

Joint HOSC

Supporting the work of the Joint HOSC Chairs

Joint HOSC meetings to consider Future Fit 1 proposals and progress of Future Fit 2

Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny of Adult Care Budgets and Savings (Joint with Budget and Finance)

The Review of the Alcohol Strategy

Co-operative and Community Scrutiny Committee
Review of Benefit Sanctions

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Review of Youth Unemployment
Committee Meeting on 4th November - School Improvement , Children in Care
Dashboard , Parents taking children out of school

Scrutiny Management Board
Meeting 14th November - Telford Housing Options, Housing Allocations Policy

Budget and Finance Scrutiny Committee
Planning the process for scrutiny of the 2015/16 budget proposals

Supporting the Lead Scrutiny Members as Chair of the West Midlands Scrutiny
Network

SMB- 7 CHAIR'S UPDATES

This item was cancelled due to a lack of time.

The meeting ended at 1.15pm.

Chairman:

Date: