

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 20th February, 2014 at 5.00 p.m. at the AFC Telford Learning Centre, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 26th FEBRUARY, 2014

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 3rd MARCH, 2014)

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors A.J. Eade (Conservative Group Leader), W.L. Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader) and S.A.W. Reynolds (Chair – Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee)

CB-86 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-87 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

CB-88 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CB-89 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2013/14

Key Decision identified as **Financial Monitoring 2013/14** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 21 January 2014.

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

Strong financial management continued, including early and effective action to identify further in-year savings of £2.5m. Revenue spending was now projected to be underspent by £0.80m at year end. This underspend, together with the unused part of the Council's budget contingency, would be used to supplement the Invest to Save and Severance funds at year end – in order to support the delivery of further savings in 2014/15. Therefore, the overall revenue position was positive and, if maintained, would put the Council in a

good a position as possible to face the further unprecedented levels of cuts in grants that would be made by Government next year.

There were still a number of significant pressures on the budget, including the cost of Children in Care placements (overspend of £2.1m); the cost of Adult Care and Support services (combined projected overspend of £4.4m); transport costs in Family & Cohesion and Adult Care & Support (overspend of £0.3m); increased use of Rapid Response Highways gangs (cost of £0.2m); and an income shortfall of £0.3m relating to Lifelong Learning. Projected variances of over £0.100m for individual service delivery units were detailed in the report. There were benefits from active treasury management of £1.1m, savings of £0.4m arising from general waste and recycling services, and a benefit of £0.3m arising from recovery of benefit overpayments.

The capital programme totalled £99m, which included slippage from 2012/13 and approvals to date. Spend was currently standing at 43%. Funding for the programme included a significant amount of capital receipts anticipated to be delivered over the medium term. As previously reported, a contingency plan was being developed should some of the receipts not be forthcoming. The total value of receipts expected in 2013/14 was £5.4m.

Collection levels for Council Tax, NNDR and Sales Ledger debt were behind the targets set for the year, although in terms of Council Tax it was difficult to anticipate the final out-turn because there were now more people spreading payments over a twelve month period.

Councillor A.R.H. England, Cabinet Member: Adult Care & Support, reported that, following intensive discussions, there was now some measure of agreement with the Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on the issue of funding for Continuing Health Care. Not all the issues had been resolved, but it did give a basis for moving forward together on joint funding (via the Better Care Fund) and joint working for health and social care services. The Council would also work jointly with the CCG to support them in delivering savings.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that it be noted that the 2013/14 revenue spend is currently projecting to be within budget at year end, and that the proposed use of the contingency, as detailed at paragraph 5.1 of the report, be approved;**
- (b) that the position in relation to capital spend and receipts be noted;**
- (c) that the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger be noted.**

Key Decision identified as **Service & Financial Planning 2014/15 – 2015/16** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 21 January 2014.

Recommendation to Council- not subject to Call-In

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented a series of reports of the Managing Director, the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance (Chief Financial Officer) and the Assistant Directors for Development, Business & Housing and for Neighbourhood & Leisure Services. The reports, detailing the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators, formed the Council's overall Medium Term Service & Financial Planning framework, and identified the service priorities and budget for 2014/15 as well as savings proposals to be delivered over the next two years, and a medium term capital programme. He thanked Officers for preparing the budget against a backdrop of such financial constraint, and thanked the consultation team and all those people who had taken part in the budget consultation exercise.

The Overview and Revenue Budget report set out the pressures facing the Council, including projected grant cuts of around £52.9m in real terms over the last five years, further reductions in spend of £22m over the next two years to meet further cuts in Government grants, reduced income from having a relatively low council tax, increasing numbers of older people needing adult care services and the loss from "grant damping" of £1.6m per annum.

Following the publication of its draft budget proposals in early January, and a one month consultation period, Cabinet had confirmed its key budget strategy proposals for 2014/15 as:

- Freezing Council Tax for the next two years – as agreed as part of its Strategy by Cabinet on 14 November 2013;
- Winning and supporting jobs and investment;
- Minimising cuts to priority services for vulnerable adults and children as far as possible, against a backdrop of unprecedented cuts in government funding, through generating income from growth in the Borough and from selling surplus assets;
- Investing in Safeguarding Children from harm and neglect, including the creation of an additional budget of £1.2m to be drawn down as required to meet demand;
- Investing in facilities for disabled people - to help people to remain living independent lives in their own homes rather than moving into residential care;
- Investing in communities – some one-off investments of £8m capital funding and £1.6m revenue funding over two years could be proposed as a result of the planned early delivery of ongoing savings and effective treasury management. This would fund environmental and infrastructure improvements and help to ensure that the Borough was an attractive place for people that wanted to come to live and locate businesses;

- Investing in roads – a commitment to a programme of £2m per annum to maintain the road network for the next 3 years over and above the funding allocated by Government for this purpose;
- Tackling youth unemployment - £1.3m of revenue funding over two years to deliver a range of pledges and actions to tackle youth unemployment;
- Destination Telford – an investment of £0.1m to promote Telford as a place to visit, live, work and invest in.

Attached to the report were a number of appendices, including savings proposals, a Safeguarding and Early Help Cost Improvement Plan, Impact Assessments of the savings proposals, the Capital Investment Programme, and details of Reserves and Balances.

Following publication of the Cabinet's budget proposals in January 2014, there had been extensive consultation via a wide range of media and settings to involve local people and allow them to express their views. This included an open public meeting at The Place @ Oakengates attended by 46 people. In total, 4,186 contacts were involved with the consultation programme, and the full findings/responses were appended to the report. Among the key results, were broad support for the Council's plans to encourage jobs, growth and protection of services, as well as support for the Council's campaign for a Fair Deal for government funding. A key part of the budget was to bring growth and jobs into the Borough to mitigate against the failure of national Government to generate economic growth, and the continued investment in the Southwater redevelopment, the building of new schools as part of the BSF programme, and the land stability work in the Ironbridge Gorge were highlighted.

Since the draft budget proposals were approved for consultation, the Government had issued the final settlement for 2014/15. The net impact resulted in a gain of £0.01m for the Council, which would be transferred to the inflation provision. For 2014/15 the CCG had confirmed funding of £2.73m would be made available to the Council to support existing care commitments, which was an increase to the funding available in the current financial year.

The forecast budget gap of £11.428m for 2014/15 was highlighted, and that, with 90% of the Council's budget spent on Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Neighbourhood & Leisure Services, it was inevitable that savings in these areas would be needed as a result of the cuts in Government funding. The Council had worked hard to protect Adult Social Care, but in order to deal with a current in-year overspend of over £4m, and to make a contribution to the overall cuts that the Council needed to make, a total of £10.5m savings would need to be found from Care & Support budgets by 2015/16.

In terms of council tax, the consultation on the budget strategy had indicated a high level of support for the proposal to accept the council tax freeze grants for the coming two years, given the Government's change in approach in base-lining them..

An equality impact analysis of the overall impact of the budget was appended to the report, along with environmental and economic impact assessments.

The Council's Chief Financial Officer was required to give a view on the robustness of the Council's financial strategy, including the use of balances, and this was appended to the report. This had concluded that the Council was pursuing a sound financial strategy in the context of the most difficult financial position it had ever faced.

The report on the Capital Programme presented the Council's Capital Strategy for 2013/14 – 2015/16 and later years and a capital programme of £247.189m that included the proposed investments contained in the overall budget strategy. Details of the major projects and investments to be resourced were annexed to the report. It also set out the Council's Asset Management Plan and planned building maintenance programme, particularly focusing on 2014/15, and the three year Highways and Transport capital investment programme.

The report on the Treasury Management Strategy detailed the Treasury Strategy to be adopted for 2014/15. The Strategy was set within the parameters of the latest guidance and accounting standards. It was expected the Council would borrow up to £1.0m in 2014/15 based on the current capital programme, and would adopt a flexible approach to borrowing. The borrowing might increase if the Council proceeded with planned large commercial projects. Where possible, maturing investments would be used to reduce the level of additional borrowing, and investment periods would be lengthened for new investments in order to achieve higher interest rates within acceptable risk parameters. The report also provided an update on the treasury management activities during 2013/14. The weighted average return on internal investments at the end of December 2013 was 3.31% compared to a benchmark return for the period of 0.42%. The report also included the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, which was now being calculated on an annuity basis, which would provide savings over a number of years following the backdating of adjustments.

The report on Prudential Indicators sought approval of the prudential indicators for 2014/15 to 2016/17 required under the Prudential Code of Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

Recommendations by Cabinet would be considered at full Council on 27th February 2014 as full Council was responsible for setting the overall revenue and capital budget framework. At that meeting full Council would also set the Council Tax for 2014/15.

The Chairman of the Budget & Finance Scrutiny Committee, Cllr S.A.W. Reynolds, presented the comments of the Committee on the budget proposals. The Committee acknowledged the difficult decisions facing the Council in the climate of reduced grant funding. The main focus of the Committee's work had been on the adult social care budget, as the potential impact of funding reductions on vulnerable adults made this a key risk. It was noted that the costs of service provision in this area were above

regional/national averages, and the Committee's report set out a number of comments and recommendations in relation to this. The Committee welcomed a number of the proposals within the budget strategy, including the proposed investment for tackling youth unemployment, an additional draw-down contingency for safeguarding, and the investment in Destination Telford. The Committee had no real concerns about the budget consultation exercise.

Councillor A.R.H. England, Cabinet Member: Adult Care & Support, thanked the Scrutiny Committee for their comments. He reported on the changes to the leadership team in Adult Social Care and the impact this was having in delivering savings and reducing costs that were high in comparison to national averages. The focus of the savings would be on driving down provider costs, efficiencies and service re-design, and reducing existing care packages where there had been historical over-prescription of support. The measures to reduce spending would be guided by the principle of seeking to protect care for the most vulnerable people in the community.

Councillor W.L. Tomlinson, Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader, was then invited to comment on the budget proposals. He welcomed the proposed freeze in Council Tax, and suggested that more should be done to make council tax payers aware of the ways available to help them manage their payments. He expressed concern at the potential impact of the proposed cuts in adult social care budgets, and felt that the £4.5m being earmarked for investments should instead be put into reserves and balances to help support and protect front line adult social care services.

Cllr A.J. Eade, Conservative Group Leader, was invited to comment on the Cabinet's budget proposals. He expressed reservations about the way the Council's budget consultation survey had been worded, and that there was no draw down budget for adult social care to provide a safety net. He did not think the savings in Adult Social Care budgets could be achieved without affecting front line services. In terms of investment in Highways Infrastructure, a much more significant investment was needed if real improvements were to be made to the Borough's road network. There was also concern at the potential impact of the cuts in bus subsidies. Reference was also made to the Administration's scheme to build houses for the private rental market, and when these proposals, and the associated borrowing costs, would become known.

During the ensuing debate, the Cabinet Member for Finance & Enterprise advised that further details of the housing scheme would be announced later in the year, and that the Council's capital borrowing was now focussed on projects that would provide an income stream and a profit for the Authority. The proposed areas for investment were as a direct result of the main priorities for spending that had been identified by the public. Reference was also made to the lack of response from Government Ministers to requests to match-fund the Council's proposed expenditure to tackle youth unemployment, and to invest some of the receipts from land sales in the Borough.

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL on 27th February 2014:

(i) Overview and Revenue Budget 2014/15 – 2015/16

- (a) that the base budget summarised by Service Delivery Unit in Appendix 9a be approved;**
- (b) that the feedback from consultation summarised in Appendix 5 and from scrutiny in Appendix 6 of the report be considered;**
- (c) that the freezing of council tax levels in 2014/15 and 2015/16 be approved;**
- (d) that the creation of a £1.2m draw-down budget held centrally to offset anticipated pressures in the Children’s safeguarding budget in 2014/15 be approved;**
- (e) that the 2014/15 net savings package of £14.133m detailed in Appendix 3, and the savings proposals set out in the appendix for future years, be approved;**
- (f) that the change in the methodology of calculating Minimum Revenue Provision, as set out in section 10.4 of the report, and the backdating of this change in approach to create a one-off provision to fund the debt charges associated with the ‘Pride in Your Community’ initiative, be approved;**
- (g) that the revenue investment of £1.608m over two years for the ‘Pride in Your Community’ initiative be approved;**
- (h) that the revenue investment of £1.305m over two years for a programme of initiatives to tackle youth unemployment be approved;**
- (i) that the revenue investment of £0.1m one-off funding for Destination Telford initiatives be approved;**
- (j) that the revenue investment of £0.03m ongoing to fund a doubling of the care leavers grant be approved;**
- (k) that the policy framework for Reserves and Balances outlined in Appendix 11 of the report be approved;**
- (l) that the revenue implications of the medium term capital programme for the period 2013/14 - 2016/17 set out in the Capital Programme report be noted;**
- (m) that the Impact Assessments contained in Appendices 4a to 4c of the report be noted;**

- (n) that the Safeguarding and Early Help Cost Improvement Plan contained in Appendix 2 of the report be approved;
- (o) that, as detailed in section 10.5 of the report, any final underspend at the end of 2013/14 be used to supplement the Invest to Save, Capacity and Severance Funds to support the delivery of ongoing savings;
- (p) that provisions be created during 2014/15 to fund the second year of the 'Pride in Your Community' and Youth Unemployment initiatives.

(ii) Capital Programme

- (a) that the Capital Programme and associated capital estimates for 2013/14 and 2014/15 – 2016/17, which incorporate the appended Capital Strategy, the Planned Building Maintenance Programme, the Asset Management Plan and the three year Highways & Transport capital investment programme, be approved;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment to deliver the planned programme of works within the Asset Management Plan, and to the Assistant Director: Neighbourhood & Leisure Services to deliver the Highways and Transport capital investment programme, in line with the approved budgets and including, following consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Members, changes or variations to schemes in these programmes that remain within overall approved budgets.

(iii) 2014/15 Treasury Strategy and Treasury Update

- (a) that the treasury management activities for the first half year be noted;
- (b) that the Treasury Management Policy Statement, as shown at Appendix A of the report, be noted;
- (c) that the Treasury Strategy, including the Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/15, together with the associated Treasury prudential indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, be approved.

(iv) Prudential Indicators

- (a) that the prudential indicators for 2014/15 to 2016/17, as set out in the report, be approved.

CB-91 PROCUREMENT INTENTIONS 2014/15

Non-Key Decision

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services, which set out proposed processes for procuring goods and services over the next 12-18 months.

Appended to the report was a Procurement Plan containing planned procurement activity which would or might lead to a formal tender process. These had been divided into Minor Contracts, where existing delegations to Officers existed, and Major Contracts, where previously individual reports requesting delegated authority to procure goods and service on behalf of the Council were needed. Approval of the delegations contained in the Plan would streamline the process and avoid the need for further reports seeking delegations for specific contracts.

In the longer term, it was hoped to include commissioning intentions to assist officers with their duty under the Social Value (Public Services) Act to inform and consult with the community before services are procured. Suppliers would also be encouraged to present their own Social Value Return on Investment.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the planned procurement, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, and the existing delegation to officers in respect of contracts identified as Minor contracts, be noted;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the appropriate Assistant Director, in consultation with the associated lead Cabinet Member, to progress and award the contracts identified as Major contracts in Appendix A of the report;**
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to affix the Council seal as appropriate.**

CB-92 SHROPSHIRE HILLS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB) - MANAGEMENT PLAN 2014 - 2019

Key Decision identified as **Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Management Plan 2014 - 2019** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 6 December 2013.

Councillor C.F. Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist, which sought approval for an updated version of the Management Plan produced by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership on behalf of Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council.

Part of the Shropshire Hills AONB included The Wrekin, and the Council had been working with partners to raise the profile of this part of the Borough in the Management Plan. The sub-area within the AONB was referred to in the Plan as the Wrekin Forest to recognise the links to the Wrekin Forest Partnership and their conservation management plan. The Plan set out a policy statement for the Wrekin Forest, as well as identifying priorities and key issues for the area. These included a more co-ordinated approach to the overall management of visitors and associated issues such as car parking, with scope to improve parking provision and visitor facilities which were sensitive to the location and had a viable business model. The Management Plan also set out the important relationship with the statutory planning process of both Local Authorities to support its policies. In relation to the Wrekin, the Plan made links to the Council's Shaping Places Local Plan process which was exploring mechanisms for the protection, promotion and management of the area.

The review of the AONB Management Plan had been subject to a public consultation exercise and formal observations from Natural England.

Members welcomed the revised Management Plan, and reference was made to the valuable conservation work undertaken in the Wrekin Forest area by Shropshire Wildlife Trust and the Wrekin Forest Volunteers, with the support of Ricoh.

RESOLVED – that the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019 be approved.

CB-93 DELEGATED POWERS TO ESTABLISH PRIMARY AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIPS AND AMENDMENT OF OTHER DELEGATED POWERS

Non-Key Decision

Councillor R.A. Overton, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Public Protection, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Health, Wellbeing & Public Protection, which sought approval for the delegation of authority to enter into Primary Authority Partnerships with business, and for specific delegated powers to public protection staff.

Primary Authority was a national scheme that allowed a business which traded across council boundaries to form a partnership with a single local authority. By means of Primary Authority, the Council could guide the way that other local authorities regulated the business, so that it was consistent and effective. This in turn gave businesses increased confidence that they were complying with legal requirements in relation to public protection. The scheme would enhance the Council's "business winning and supporting" priorities by offering an important support service to locally based business. It was proposed that 3 hours free advice was offered initially to each local business once the Partnership had been agreed by the Better Regulation Delivery Office – with a subsequent hourly charge on a cost recovery basis.

Due to new legislative requirements and changes in the job titles of posts, it was necessary to review the delegations given to Public Protection Officers to act on behalf of the Council. An updated list of delegations was appended to the report, which included the provisions of section 25 of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 in relation to Primary Authority Partnerships.

RESOLVED – that the scheme of additional delegations shown at Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

CB-94 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they may involve the disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CB-95 DEVELOPMENT OF A LOGISTICS HUB AT MoD DONNINGTON

Key Decision identified as **MoD Donnington Logistics Hub** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 21 January 2014.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment concerning proposals to support the bid for the MoD Donnington site to become the location for a National Defence Gateway.

The Council had been lobbying at various levels within the Ministry of Defence to demonstrate Telford's commitment and ability to deliver a logistics and storage hub. An extension to the Donnington base was a credible solution which could realise savings as well as ensuring continuity of military supplies to the front line. The report set out how the Council could take a more active role in the establishment of the Defence Gateway through funding, designing and building associated warehousing, and entering into a variety of freehold and leasehold solutions for land and buildings. The report also set out the financial implications of providing this support, which would be funded from the budgeted corporate contingency.

The Donnington site currently employed some 700 people, a large proportion of whom were associated with the current warehousing and distribution function of the site. If Telford was successful in being made the MoD's logistics centre for the UK, it would protect these existing jobs as well as being a major boost to the local economy and bringing more jobs into the Borough.

In response to questions about the MoD's procurement timetable, it was reported that initial bids had to be submitted BY 4 April 2014, with a likely decision on the preferred bidder due in Autumn 2014. Members expressed

their full support for the bid, and the proposed actions that would help to underpin it.

RESOLVED -

- (a) that the revenue expenditure being incurred, and the allocation of funding from the budgeted corporate contingency to fund this expenditure in 2013/14 as outlined at paragraph 4.4 of the report, be approved;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, to undertake negotiations with the bidders around a number of possible delivery options for development including fund, design, build and leaseback solutions, as outlined at paragraph 4.3 of the report;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to seal or sign any documents required to give effect to the proposals contained in the report.

CB-96 DISPOSAL OF LAND OFF A518, MUXTON

Key Decision identified as **Disposal of Land off A518, Muxton** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 21 January 2014.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment concerning proposals to dispose of surplus land in Muxton.

The report detailed a site owned by the Council to the north of Muxton, directly off the A518 and adjacent to the development boundary of Telford. The site was identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as being suitable and available for development. The Council had been approached by adjacent land owners, who were looking to bring forward planning applications for residential development, and the report set out options for the Council to work in partnership with these parties to deliver a scheme which would involve the eventual disposal of the Council's freehold interests in the land. The report also set out the financial implications of the proposals, and the likely net capital receipt that would be generated.

RESOLVED -

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, to negotiate and enter into all necessary agreements with adjoining land owners as detailed within the report;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the

Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, to negotiate and dispose of the freehold interests in corporately held land as detailed in the report;

- (c) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to seal or sign any documents required to give effect to the resolutions above.**

The meeting ended at 6.24 pm.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

**Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services
Date: 26 February 2014**

Signed:

Date:

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 27th MARCH 2014

TELFORD and WREKIN DRUG and ALCOHOL STRATEGY 2014/15 – 2016/17

REPORT OF CONSULTANT IN PUBLIC HEALTH

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR RICHARD OVERTON

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

This report provides an overview of the drug and alcohol strategy for Telford and Wrekin 2014/16 – 2016/17. The strategy sets out our intentions to work with our partners to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and/or drug misuse in our communities. The strategy contributes to the Cooperative Council's priority to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities and the Health & Wellbeing Board's specific priority to reduce the number of people who misuse drugs and alcohol. There are clear links to other wider partnership and local strategies and our developing Early Help Offer.

A series of aims and objectives are proposed across the strategy framework to: reduce demand and risk, restrict supply and build recovery and reduce harm. Governance and monitoring arrangements for the implementation of the strategy are described.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to endorse and approve the Telford and Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2014/15 – 2016/17, noting the governance which is in place to manage the implementation and monitor the impact on outcomes and performance.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council priorities?	
	Yes	Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities. There are also wider links to other priorities
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of	

	<p>people?</p> <p>Yes The strategy has population-level objectives to reduce the risk and demand and restrict the supply of alcohol and drugs in our communities. The objectives to improve treatment, build recovery and reduce harm are aimed at more specific groups of people i.e. those with addiction and dependency problems and also harm caused drug and alcohol misuse which is hidden in families</p>
<p>TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE</p>	<p>Strategy approval process Health and Wellbeing Board 12th March 2014 Cabinet 27th March 2014 Community Safety Partnership 27th March 2014</p> <p>The Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Board will monitor the implementation of the action plan and the impact of the strategy through the performance and outcomes measures</p>
<p>FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT</p>	<p>Yes The Council's budget available in 2014/15 to support the drug and alcohol strategy is £2.710m. This accounts for 25% of the Public Health grant. Whilst savings of £277k have been reflected in this figure for 2014/15 this has been offset by a number of pressures which have arisen due to poor information available at transfer from the PCT. The net saving in this area for 2014/15 is £95k.</p>
<p>LEGAL ISSUES</p>	<p>Yes The strategy attached to this report contributes towards the Council meeting its duties to the improvement of public health as set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended).</p> <p>However, when the strategy is implemented it also needs to be compliant with the relevant statutory provisions and regulations. For example:</p> <p>The Statement of Licensing Policy is subject to the provisions, regulations and guidance from the Licensing Act 2003 (see page 18 of the attached strategy).</p> <p>The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended) is the main legislation used to control and classify drugs that are 'dangerous or otherwise harmful' when misused.</p>

		<p>The Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (as amended) allow for the lawful possession and supply of controlled (illegal) drugs for legitimate purposes</p> <p>The Government published its Alcohol Strategy on 23 March 2012 (Home Office) and its Reducing Harmful Drinking Policy (Department of Health) on 25 March 2013. The Reducing Drugs Misuse and Dependence Policy (DH and HO) was updated on 26 March 2013</p> <p>The Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013-16 was published under section 73B(1) of the NHS Act 2006 (inserted by section 31 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012) as a document that local authorities must have regard to in the exercise of the public health functions for which they became responsible on 1 April 2013 under the 2012 Act.</p> <p>Domain 2 Health Improvement includes outcomes for drugs and alcohol.</p> <p>The reviewed Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework 2014 / 2015 was published on 11 November 2013 and is the Department of Health's main tool for setting direction and strengthening transparency in adult social care.</p> <p>With the NHS Outcomes Framework, the frameworks provide shared priorities and the basis for integrated working locally and are due to become more aligned in due course.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes/ No	Improved partnership working at an operational and strategic level with the Police, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Probation Services, as part of the Community Safety Partnership is a key opportunity of this strategy
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	However, drug and alcohol misuse are most prevalent in our most deprived communities

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2014/15 – 2016/17 attached Appendix I

1. INFORMATION

1.1. Background

Key national headlines for the burden of alcohol and drug misuse:

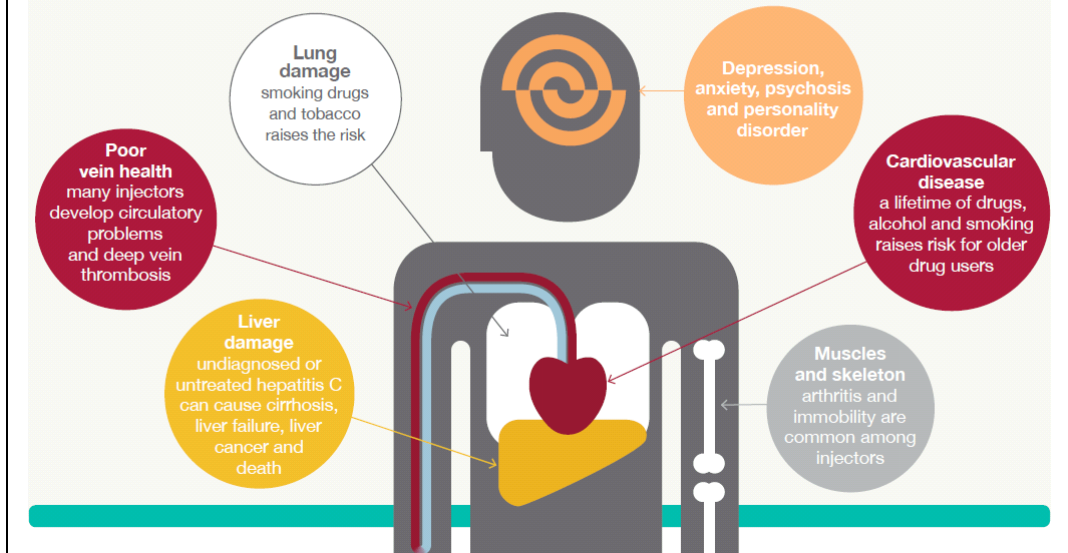
- Alcohol problems are widespread, nationally consumption per head more than doubled between the mid-1950s and the late 1990s
- Deaths from alcohol-related liver disease have doubled since 1980, whereas deaths from most other causes are reducing
- A quarter of all deaths among 16-24 year old men are related to alcohol
- Drug abuse is widespread but addiction, is concentrated in the most deprived communities, 40% of prisoners have used heroin
- Almost half of violent assaults involve alcohol
- Serious case reviews - 27% mention alcohol misuse and 20% mention drug misuse
- Road traffic fatalities - 16% of are associated with alcohol
- A typical heroin user spends around 2.5 times the average mortgage repayment per month on drugs
- The total cost to society of alcohol-related harm is an estimated £21bn per year, the drug misuse cost burden is estimated at £15.4bn, including the cost of crime, NHS and treatment costs, children in care etc.

1.2. Health impacts of drug and alcohol misuse





Drug misuse damages health



1.3. Why we need to invest and what needs to be done

Nationally, the evidence is clear that prevention and early intervention works and saves money. It is estimated that for every £1 spent on young people's drug and alcohol interventions brings a benefit of £5-£8.

Investing interventions for young people:

- Reduces local authority and NHS treatment costs
- Reduces the cost of crime in our communities
- Offers lifetime benefits in terms of education, employment and training
- Improves health outcomes in terms of: reduced hospital admissions and early deaths from heart disease, liver disease and cancer

Public Health England recommends the following key things which need to be done to reduce alcohol-related harm:

- Improve awareness of alcohol harms in young people and delay first use
- Make lower risk drinking for adults the norm and an easy choice to make
- Target those most at risk
- Respond to and reduce the harm to those who have developed problems

Public Health England recommends the following key things which need to be done to reduce drug-related harm:

- Encourage protective factors that support young people's resilience
- Provide packages of support – treatment, housing, employment, positive social networks – to help people recover and rebuild families and communities

- Treat the growing numbers of older drug users, many of whom have serious addiction and health problems
- Develop effective interventions for the harms of emerging drugs such as new psychoactive substances or so-called “legal highs”
- Help people who are addicted to medicines (i.e. prescription only and over the counter medicines)

1.4. Local context

- The Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol strategy makes a key contribution to the Council’s priority to *Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities*. Reducing harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse is one of the ten priorities of the Health & Wellbeing Board
- Strong partnership working is crucial to the success of the strategy and the Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Board, which is coordinated by the Council, is well supported by the Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Probation Service and other partners
- There are key links with wider partner strategies, for example the Warwickshire and West Mercia Police Drug and Alcohol Strategy and Central England Trading Standards Authorities (CEntSA) Control Strategy
- The strategy also has important links to other Council priorities and local partnership strategies, for example: the Community Safety Plan, and Homelessness Strategy

1.5. Overview of the local picture

1.5.1. Liver disease

- There are circa 30 early deaths (under 75 years) from liver disease every year. Over 90% are classified as preventable, for example those due alcoholic liver disease/cirrhosis, liver cancer and hepatitis infection
- During the past five years rates of early death from liver disease which is considered preventable were significantly higher than the England average
- Chronic liver disease accounts for 11% of the male inequalities gap in early death rates between our most affluent and most deprived communities and 6% of the inequalities gap for females

1.5.2. Problematic drug misuse

- There are an estimated 1,020 people are opiate or crack cocaine users or problematic drug users, currently circa 580 people are in treatment or known to local service or the Police and Probation services
- The most typical profile of clients in drug treatment client are white British men, aged over 35 years receiving treatment for opiate abuse
- Cannabis misuse is the most common reason young people seek treatment, and there is increasing trend of methedrone (MCAT) use locally

1.5.3. Alcohol consumption

- In terms of alcohol consumption it is estimated that:
 - 24,265 people (18.7% of adults) are binge drinkers (i.e. consume more than 8 units in one session for males and 6 units for females)
 - 33,997 people (26% of adults) are higher or increasing risk drinkers i.e. regularly drink more than 4 units daily (men) and 3 units daily (women)
 - 4,151 are dependent drinkers (i.e. those with sustained alcohol consumption above the weekly recommended guidelines means they will be experiencing some form of dependency)

1.5.4. Alcohol-related hospital admissions

- Approximately 440 people admitted to hospital each year with alcohol-specific conditions, which are as direct result of alcohol consumption, 68% of male and circa 56 are children and young people under 18 years
- The alcohol specific-hospital admission rates for both men and women are significantly better than the England average and rates are decreasing
- There are circa 3,370 hospital admissions due to alcohol-related conditions every year, these are conditions where alcohol is the cause in some, but not all cases e.g. heart diseases and various cancers.
- The rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions is better (lower) than the England average in but rates are increasing

1.5.5. Alcohol treatment

- In 2012/13 497 adults received local alcohol treatment services, key features include:
 - 46% of clients were unemployed and 10% of clients had a housing issue at the start of treatment
 - 19% clients also received drug treatment services
 - 13% of clients had an unrelated mental health issue

1.5.6. Alcohol-related crime

- In terms of alcohol attributable crime in 2011/12:
 - 1,072 recorded crimes attributable to alcohol
 - 760 violent crimes attributable to alcohol
 - 34 sexual crimes attributable to alcohol
 - The rate of sexual crime attributable to alcohol was significantly worse than the national average rate

1.6. Strategy development process

- The Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Strategy and action plan has been developed by a small core team of officers within from the Council's public health, adult commissioning and community safety teams

- Extensive engagement with stakeholders, as part of the strategy development, has shaped the process, including engagement with key partners from the DAAT Board, service providers, clinical leads and service users and supporters
- The strategy uses the three pillars of Government's National Drug Strategy 2010ⁱⁱⁱ - reducing demand, restricting supply and building recovery as a framework
- The strategy has a series of aims and objectives across the three strategic pillars. The associated action plan includes detailed actions with key performance and outcome indicators and professional leads specified
- The action plan covers: population-level prevention activities, targeted prevention work and harm reduction, transformation of specialist treatment and support for sustained recovery, including through mutual aid

1.7. Governance and next steps

- Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) will be responsible for coordinating implementation of the strategy and action plan and monitoring the impact on outcomes
- In governance terms the DAAT reports to Telford & Wrekin Community Safety Partnership. Progress on the plan, performance and outcomes will also be reported to the Health & Wellbeing Board as required

2. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

None

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report prepared by Helen Onions, Consultant in Public Health, Telephone: 01952 381028

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-strategy-2010--2>

ⁱⁱ The National Drug Strategy 2010 *Reducing demand, restricting supply, building recovery: supporting people to live a drug free life* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-review-of-the-drug-strategy-2010>

Telford and Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Strategy

2014/15 – 2016/17



Telford & Wrekin
COUNCIL



VERSION: DRAFT FOR CABINET 27.03.2014

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Thank you to all the stakeholders, partners, service users and volunteers who have contributed to the development of this strategy and action plan.

Foreword

The Telford and Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Strategy sets out the vision, aims and objectives to deliver against the Cooperative Council's priority to improve health and reduce inequalities and Health & Wellbeing Board's specific priority to reduce the number of people who misuse drugs and alcohol. The strategy identifies what we need to do to;

- **reduce the demand** for drugs and alcohol and **reduce the risk** amongst young people and adults by raising awareness and changing behaviour
- **restrict the supply** of drugs and alcohol and the effect on crime and community safety, through the criminal justice system, night time economy work, enforcement, trading standards and licensing
- **build recovery** through high-quality treatment and recovery services, with a crucial focus on support for recovery and aftercare and by **reducing harm** from blood-borne viruses and harm which can be hidden in families

It is clear we need to transform our services so they are responsive and based on sound evidence of local need. We recognise that we need to improve our understanding and use of data to ensure we have a flexible, intelligence-led response to our local challenges and to have a person-centred approach.

Ensuring value for money going forward is essential and we will review investment in the local programmes to demonstrate cost-effectiveness and also look at the wider investment made by partners who contribute to the agenda.

Our partners are critical to us in realising our vision, they are wide ranging and include core Community Safety partners such as the Police, the Probation Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner, service providers and numerous voluntary and third sector organisations. We need to collaborate with a broader range of partners too for example statutory and non statutory education providers. Efficient and effective strategic leadership and governance across the partnership will ensure joined-up planning, implementation and monitoring of the strategy. We recognise that monitoring our progress and improvement in outcomes will be key. Listening to our service users is fundamental to our success and the aftercare service is pivotal in ensuring ongoing meaningful engagement with people.

Telford and Wrekin Council is committed to working with partners to make a real difference by reducing risk and highlighting the harm that substance and alcohol misuse causes to young people, vulnerable adults and families who live with dependency problems in our communities. We need to make sure the right help is available to people when, where and if they need it and enable and empower people to seek the help they need and support them, through mutual aid wherever possible.

Our Vision

“Our vision is to reduce the harms caused by drug and/or alcohol misuse and make Telford and Wrekin a safer and healthier place where less substances (drugs and alcohol) are consumed and where our service providers and partners are confident and well-equipped to handle challenging patterns of behaviour supporting recovery and change.”

1. Background

The misuse of drugs and/or alcohol in our society undermines family and community life. Alcohol problems are widespread but drug addiction is concentrated. Problematic drug users have a dependency on a substance which negatively affects their lives and those around them. People dependent on drugs and/or alcohol can experience a range of emotional and physical health issues as well as social, financial, and legal problems as a result of their drug and/or alcohol misuse.

Substance misuse has a devastating and often a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable in our society. There can be wide negative social impacts as drug and alcohol misuse contributes dramatically to the volume of anti-social behaviour, acquisitive and violent crime, domestic abuse, road traffic accidents, unemployment, and homelessness.

For the children of families where substance misuse is prevalent, there maybe some degree of associated child neglect and emotional abuse. As drug misuse often involves complex situations, it requires integrated, joined-up solutions across a wide range of partner organisations including: the NHS, council services, police, probation, voluntary and community services.

Key national headlines on the burden of drug misuse:

- An estimated 1.2 million people are affected by drug addiction in their families, with 299,000 heroin and crack users in England and 40% of prisoners having used heroin.
- There are 1,600 drug-related deaths in England every year and deaths involving prescription medicines and ‘club drugs’ are rising
- 1 in 3 adults have taken drugs at some point during their lives, 1 in 20 adults use drugs frequently and 1 in 10 adults have used drugs recently
- The parents of between 250,000 - 350,000 UK children are problem drug users
- Parental drug use is a risk factor in 29% of all serious case reviews.
- Overall costs of drug misuse to society is £15.4 billion every year, including costs of crime, healthcare and looking after children who have been taken into care
- Cost of deaths related to drugs in 2011 equated to £2.4 billion
- A person addicted to drugs and not in treatments costs £26,074 per year in crime, drug misuse costs the NHS £488 million per year
-
- The annual cost of looking after the children of drug misusing parents is £42.5 million
- Every £1 spent on drug treatment saves £2.50 in costs to the NHS and Police

Source: Public Health England

2. National Strategy Context

2.1. The Government's National Drug Strategy

The Government's National Drug Strategy 2010¹ aims to reduce illicit and other harmful drug use, such as over the counter medicines or 'legal highs'. A key theme is a greater emphasis on recovery from dependence. The vision will be achieved through:

- **Reducing demand** by creating an environment where people who have never taken drugs continue to resist any pressures to do so. Helping divert them away from risky behaviours such as drug use, drug dependent adults committing crimes and breaking inter-generational cycles of dependence.
- **Restricting supply** through tackling drug trafficking and drug dealing. The police and other agencies disrupt the drugs trade by targeting activity along the entire supply chain, from organised crime groups that import drugs from source to the dealers that sell drugs in our communities. The emergence of new psychoactive substances (NPS), or so-called "legal highs"
- **Building recovery** in communities to support people who wish to tackle their dependency on drugs and/or alcohol and achieve lives free from drug and/or alcohol dependence. This requires a step change in drug treatment which promotes recovery through quick access to high quality, effective recovery-orientated treatment services including mutual aid.

2.2. The Government's Alcohol Strategy

The Government's Alcohol Strategy² sets out proposals to tackle binge drinking, reduce alcohol-related violence and reduce the numbers drinking to harmful levels. This is proposed via a combination of national and local actions. It was proposed that national action would focus on reducing the availability of cheap alcohol to reduce consumption through use of taxation, imposing a minimum unit price for alcohol and banning the sale of multi-buy alcohol discounting. However, this has not yet been implemented by the Government. Local action is expected through: support for population-based campaigns, the provision of dedicated funding for alcohol services and through greater power in the administering of licensed premises.

2.3. The Role of Public Health England (PHE)

From April 2013 the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, formerly in place to improve the availability, capacity and effectiveness of drug treatment, became part of Public Health England (PHE). PHE continue to ensure that drug and alcohol services in England deliver on both the public health and criminal justice agendas, reflecting the interests of the Department of Health, the NHS, public health, and the Home Office. PHE Centres provide support to local areas, through high quality information and intelligence, professional expertise, bespoke support and sharing evidence of best practice.

Public Health England recommends the following key things which need to be done to reduce alcohol-related harm:

- Improve awareness of alcohol harms in young people and delay first use
- Make lower risk drinking for adults the norm and an easy choice to make
- Target those most at risk
- Respond to and reduce the harm to those who have developed problems

Public Health England recommends the following key things which need to be done to reduce drug-related harm:

- Encourage protective factors that support young people's resilience
- Provide packages of support – treatment, housing, employment, positive social networks, to help people recover and rebuild families and communities
- Treat the growing numbers of older drug users, many of whom have serious addiction and health problems
- Provide information and advice on safer injecting practices and interventions to reduce injecting, testing for blood-borne viruses and vaccinations and care pathways for those infected
- Develop effective interventions for the harms of emerging drugs such as new psychoactive substances or so-called “legal highs”
- Help people who are addicted to medicines (i.e. prescription only and over the counter medicines)

2.4. Local Authority Public Health Responsibilities

From April 2013 local authorities received a ring-fenced Public Health Grant to undertake local public health activities, including alcohol and drug prevention and treatment services. Nationally, the substance misuse contribution of the overall Public Health Grant represents a third of the total budget.

3. Local strategy context

3.1. Strategy and partnership overview

This strategy has clear, strong links across the Telford & Wrekin Council priorities³. The Telford & Wrekin Health & Wellbeing Board, formally established in April 2013, aims to drive improvement in and closer working across health and care services. The Health & Wellbeing Strategy⁴ is in place to improve the health and wellbeing of our community and reduce inequalities. Reducing the numbers of people who misuse drugs and alcohol is one of the Board's ten priorities. This strategy will embed the Health & Wellbeing Board principles as follows:

- **Equity:** by reducing inequalities through targeting the hard to reach and by tackling hidden harm in families
- **Accessibility:** by increasing the numbers receiving treatment and support and improving communication and awareness of services across all stakeholders
- **Integration:** by joining up pathways across service providers and settings and strengthening our partnership work across the Community Safety Partnership with local registered social landlords and third sector organisations

- **Quality:** by reviewing our pathways to ensure they are evidence-based and in line with NICE and Public Health England guidance
- **Engagement:** by continuing to routinely involve service users through the Telford Aftercare Team, strengthening clinical engagement with our GPs and hospital services and a wider range of professionals
- **Financial sustainability:** by reviewing and benchmarking our investment and demonstrate cost effectiveness ensuring value for money
- **User satisfaction:** by involving and listening to our clients and users and their families through after care following treatment
- **Early intervention and prevention:** by comprehensively delivering the objectives and actions associated with the reducing risk and demand
- **Safeguarding:** by reviewing our policies and procedures in line with national guidelines and investigating and responding to hidden harm in families

3.2. Links with wider partnership and local strategies

Our strategy has key links with wider partnership and local strategies including:

- Warwickshire and West Mercia Police Drug and Alcohol Strategies
- Central England Trading Standards Authorities (CEnTSA) Control Strategy
- Community Safety Plan
- Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Plan
- Early Help Offer
- Homelessness Strategy
- Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Prevent and through care strategy

3.3. Telford and Wrekin Drugs and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Board

A cohesive partnership approach is essential to the successful delivery of our strategy. The Telford and Wrekin DAAT Board provides a platform for key stakeholders to discuss local issues and agree actions. Members of the Board comprise of various agencies and partners including: Public Health England, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, Police and Crime Commissioner, the Probation Service, the Clinical Commissioning Group and various service delivery areas within the local authority including: Family and Cohesion services, Safeguarding, Adult Care and Support, Public Health and Public Protection. There are key links with the leads and organisations who provide our local services, including: the Council's in-house Drug and Alcohol Service (DARs), Impact, Nacro and TACT - Telford Aftercare Team

4. The local picture of alcohol and drug misuse and harm

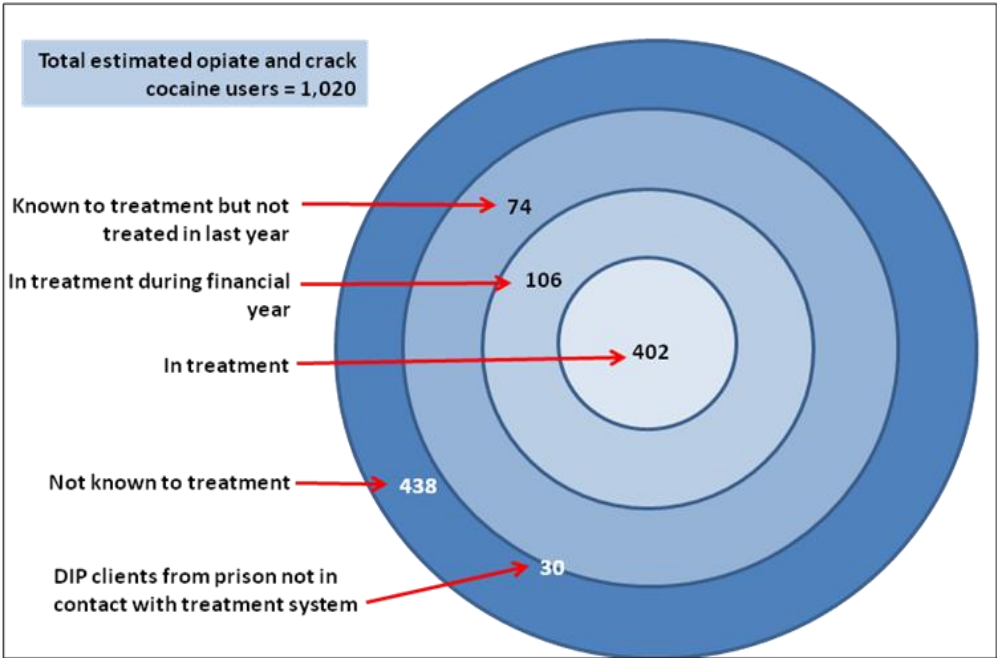
4.1. Opiate and Crack Cocaine use

Opiate and crack cocaine users are classified as problematic drug users given: the high dependency associated with these substances, the wider social and health impact of this type of dependency and the challenges linked with ensuring effective recovery in comparison with other substances.

The key headlines for opiate and crack cocaine use in Telford and Wrekin are as follows:

- National estimates⁵ suggest Telford and Wrekin has circa 1,020 opiate and crack cocaine users, the modelling includes a range estimating 911 users at the lower end with up to 1,080 users at the higher end
- Trends indicate that the numbers of opiate and crack cocaine users estimated in Telford and Wrekin increased from 943 in 2008/09 and 1,012 in 2009/10
- The estimated prevalence rate of opiate and crack cocaine use in Telford and Wrekin was 9.52 per 1,000 population which is not significantly different to the England average (8.67 per 1,000)
- Estimates of levels of engagement with the treatment system are shown Figure 1. At the end of March 2013 there were 402 opiate and crack cocaine users in treatment and a further 106 users had been treated⁶ during the year, 74 users were known to treatment services but did not engage in treatment.
- Almost half 49.8% (508) of the total heroin and crack using population locally were in effective treatment during 2012/13. Therefore an estimated 438 opiate and crack cocaine users (43%) were not known to local treatment services. NB This engagement level is in line with national treatment penetration figures.
- Thirty opiate and crack cocaine users who were in contact with the criminal justice drugs intervention programme (DIP) were not known to the treatment services
- In 2012/13 white men aged between 35-64 years with an opiate dependency and a history of injecting were the largest group of drug users accessing treatment
- A third (33%) of our opiate users have been in treatment for over 6 years in comparison to a national rate of 22%. In contrast 75% of non opiate users have been in treatment for under 1 year
- The main factors associated with preventing recovery include: mental health issues, unemployment (which is a dominating factor) and housing issues

Figure 1 Opiate and Crack Cocaine Drug Users in Telford and Wrekin (20012/13)



Source: National Drug Treatment Management System (NDTMS) Annual Report Bulls Eye Data report (2012/13)

4.2. Misuse of non-opiate drugs

- The highest rates of treatment for young people are for cannabis misuse (47% of all treatments for people under 25 years)
- There is an increasing trend of mephedrone (M-CAT) use with 97% of new clients over 18 years in 2012/13 who regularly use club drugs citing use
- In our local treatment system there has been a marked improvement in non-opiate completions
- In 2012/13 99 people with non-opiate drug misuse issues successfully completed treatment, 37% of clients abstained from cannabis, 60% clients abstained from crack and 89% clients abstained from amphetamines. Our abstinence rates for non-opiate use are better than the national averages

4.3. A picture of alcohol consumption and harm

- In Telford and Wrekin it is estimated that:
 - 24,265 people (18.7% of adults) are binge drinkers (i.e. consume more than 8 units per session for males and 6 units for females), this is similar to the national average of 19.8%
 - 33,997 people (26% of adults) are higher or increasing risk drinkers (i.e. regularly drinking more than 4 units per day for men and 3 units per day for women), this is similar to the national average of 27%
 - 4,151 are dependent drinkers (i.e. those with sustained alcohol consumption above the weekly recommended guidelines means they will be experiencing some form of dependency)
- In terms of hospital admissions:
 - Approximately 440 people admitted to hospital each year with alcohol-specific conditions, i.e. is their admission a direct result of alcohol consumption, 68% of these are males and circa 56 are children and young people under 18 years
 - In 2010/11 the alcohol specific-hospital admission rates for both men and women were significantly better than the national average for England
 - Trends for the five year period 2006/07 to 2010/11 indicate that admission rates for alcohol-specific conditions in both men and women decreased
 - There were circa 3,370 hospital admissions due to alcohol-related conditions in 2011/12. The rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions was better (lower) than the national average in 2010/11 and 2011/12
 - There was however a year-on-year increase in alcohol-related admissions between 2009/10 and 2011/12 increasing from 2,460 in 2009/10 to 3,370 in 2011/12

Key headlines for those receiving alcohol treatment services are:

- In 2012/13 497 adults received local alcohol treatment services, just over half (58%) were new treatment starters:
 - 40% were classed as high risk drinkers (i.e. consuming over 600 units per month), compared to 36% of alcohol treatment clients nationally

- 46% of clients were unemployed at the start of treatment (compared to 39% nationally)
- 19% clients also received drug treatment services (compared to 21% nationally)
- 10% of clients had a housing issue at the start of their treatment
- 13% of clients had an unrelated mental health issue (which is lower than the national average proportion of 21%)

4.4. The picture of hidden harm

Problem drug and/or alcohol misuse by parents and within families can cause serious harm to children and adults. Hidden harm usually refers to a group of drug or alcohol users who have parental responsibility where their problem drug use has potential effects on their children. In Telford and Wrekin it is widely acknowledged that parental problem drug and alcohol causes serious harm to children at every age from conception through to adulthood. This strategy also recognises that hidden harm relates to wider hidden populations within families such as older people, BME groups, carers, friends.

In 2007 an extensive piece of work was undertaken on hidden harm locally. Since then improvements have been made through collaboration between children's services and those statutory and voluntary agencies working with the parents. Assessments are done jointly and support plans for children and families, plans monitored and delivered through the use of Team Around the Child or Child Protection processes. During 2011/12 278 (42%) drug treatment service clients were recorded as living with children. Further work is needed to understand the current scope and scale of hidden harm in order to review how well we are meeting the needs of our most vulnerable and complex families.

4.5. A wider picture of risk and harm

Infections amongst People Who Inject Drugs

People who inject drugs (PWID) are vulnerable to a wide range of bacterial and viral infections that can result in illness and death. The key messages nationally⁷ are:

- Needle and syringe sharing is lower than a decade ago however one in seven of people who inject psychoactive drugs continue to share needles and syringes.
- Infections remain common: 49% of people who inject psychoactive drugs have been infected with Hepatitis C; around one in every 100 has HIV; and almost one-third report having a recent symptom of an injecting site bacterial infection. Hepatitis B infection among people who inject psychoactive drugs has declined, probably reflecting the increase in the uptake of the hepatitis B vaccine.
- People who inject image and performance enhancing drugs anabolic steroids and melanotan are at greater risk of HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C infection than previously thought.
- There has been a recent increase in the injection of amphetamines and amphetamine-type drugs, such as, mephedrone. Although these are much less commonly injected than opiates, crack-cocaine, or image and performance enhancing drugs, there is evidence that there is a higher level of infection risk.

To minimise the harm from injecting drug use, changes in the patterns of use that increase infection risk need to be detected and responded to promptly. The continued monitoring of injecting drug use is therefore important. Key facts and figures for injecting drug use in Telford and Wrekin are:

- An estimated 361 people inject drugs (the lower estimate is 257 and the upper estimate is 454 people)
- In 2012/13 376 treatment service clients were recorded as current injectors, which equates to 21% of the total drug treatment population and a further 604 clients (34%) reported previous injecting.
- It is estimated that 41% of people who currently inject drugs and 24% of those who have injected in the past are infected with the Hepatitis C Virus
- The proportion of drug users in treatment who are injecting in Telford and Wrekin is 41%, which is higher than the national (34%) average
- Approximately 60% of those accessing treatment service in Telford & Wrekin have a hepatitis C test
- Further work is needed to increase the number of clients taking up screening and vaccinations for blood borne viruses and treatment where required

Addiction to prescription only and over the counter medicine

Education is required at a population-level about the potential of becoming addicted to drugs that can be bought over the counter or provided on prescription. The most commonly abused medications are stimulants, prescription analgesics, cough/cold medications and tranquillisers. All of these drugs can lead to addiction and particularly leave adolescents vulnerable due to the alcohol content in them. Other prescription drugs, which are commonly misused are laxatives and pain relievers such as ibuprofen and co-codamol.

Abuse of over-the-counter or prescription drugs can lead to physical and mental dependence. While most people use prescription drugs properly, doctors, pharmacists and manufacturers have stated that a significant number of people will still misuse over-the-counter and prescription drugs. There is also a need to educate people about the issues around the use of drugs in sport, which are often used to enhance performance and it is widely accepted as unethical practice.

Dual Diagnosis

Dual diagnosis is used to describe people who have co-existing mental health and substance misuse problems, which can be due to: a primary mental health problem precipitating and leading to an episode of substance misuse and/or an increase in the use of illicit substances which has an effect on the service user's mental health. It is well recognised that these individuals have significantly poorer treatment outcomes and are most likely to experience: poor compliance with medication regimes and disengagement from services, increased rates of inpatient admission, homelessness, social exclusion, offending behaviour and an increased rate of suicide.

Key facts and figures nationally for dual diagnosis include the following:

- Substance misuse affects around one third to a half of people with severe mental health problems, with alcohol misuse being the most common form of misuse
- Where drug misuse occurs it often co-exists with alcohol misuse

- Community Mental Health Teams typically report that 8-15% of clients have dual diagnosis problems
- Prisons have a high prevalence of drug dependency and dual diagnosis.

5. Our local programmes and services

5.1. Population-level prevention programmes

NHS Health Check alcohol screening and brief interventions

NHS Health Check is a risk assessment and management programme for people aged 40-74 years. It aims prevent or delay the onset of diabetes, heart and kidney disease and stroke. Local Authorities now have responsibility for the programme as part of their public health duties. The checks now include an assessment which specifically looks at the level of risk associated with alcohol consumption, through the Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT). Where appropriate individuals are given brief advice to reduce their risk of alcohol-related harm. Referrals to alcohol services are offered to those individuals where necessary.

The Health Check provides a unique opportunity to discuss alcohol consumption in the context of general energy intake highlighting the links with risks of obesity, diabetes and liver disease and provide tailored meaningful advice. The programme is a one stop shop to address all lifestyle risk factors in a holistic way. Therefore it is ideally placed to address the risks of alcohol consumption in a structured format to support the prevention agenda and this strategy.

Since April 1st 2013 2,971 people in Telford and Wrekin have received a health check at their GP surgery which included an assessment using an appropriate AUDIT tool. Access to data is being improved to determine numbers of people falling into at risk groups, those receiving brief interventions and onward referrals.

5.2. Targeted prevention and treatment services

In Telford and Wrekin drug and alcohol services are based on the national Models of Care for Drug Users⁸ best practice commissioning framework. The framework is designed to ensure that all treatment and interventions are combined to form a local system which meets the needs of the population, including the following key elements: a four-tiered model of commissioning, local screening and assessment drug and alcohol services systems, care planning and coordination of care at the heart of structured drug treatment, development of integrated care pathways. (See Figure 2 for local service mapping and overview).

Currently a third of our service users accessing structured treatment are seen within GP shared care practices. This goes some way to accommodate the geographically disparate access need in Telford and Wrekin and somewhat fulfils requirements to provide care in the community but this needs to be extended.

There is also a wider range of targeted support available within the Borough for vulnerable people and those at risk, such as: teenage parents, those with emerging mental health problems, families with an existing alcohol problem, children in care and those on the brink of care. All these services and assets, which include: the Family Intervention Team, Youth Offending Service and Children & Families Locality

Services, are being drawn together to form a comprehensive Early Help Offer which will contribute significantly to delivery of this strategy.

5.3. Service user engagement and Mutual Aid

The new national emphasis on recovery recognises that good quality aftercare and support is fundamental in making any recovery journey a success. This needs to include a wide range of support including: access to housing, education, training, employment and the learning of life skills all help people in recovery to establish and maintain independence and abstinence.

Service user consultation and engagement is critical to gain an understanding of the experience of service user's within the treatment and recovery system. Enhancing the involvement of family and carers, including in the shaping and delivery of treatment and support will ensure we meet local need.

The Telford Aftercare Team has been instrumental in setting up the service user forum, running service user group and facilitating SMART Recovery Groups. In addition to this other mutual aid groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous are accessible locally. This group is represented by a lead at a number of forums and meetings, including the DAAT Board and the Treatment Group meetings. Service user, carer, family and friends involvement should form an integral part to strategic planning and service design. TACT have supported and influenced the development of this strategy throughout the process. Client feedback indicate the positive effect TACT has on clients.....

"I wish there had been services like TACT before"

"Services in Telford are second to none"

"It's excellent because it worked for me"

"I enjoy the fact that we get to have our say in the service user group"

Client feedback indicate the positive effect services have had on local carers and family members.....

"It has helped me understand why alcohol has such an effect and helped family member realise they have a problem."

"The session was very helpful with the advice I was given on how to help the addict."

"This is a fantastic service. I wish I had heard about it sooner."

"This service has made me more confident and resilient. It has made me feel less alone and helped me to not blame myself for my husband's alcohol addiction."

"Thank you so much for all the help you have given me. Seeing you has helped me see I am worth it"

"Thankful I've been given the opportunity to see how I can help myself."

5.4. Criminal Justice and Youth Justice Systems: Drug Intervention Programme, Integrated Offender Management and Liaison and Diversion

Effective partnership working with criminal justice stakeholders is fundamental given the shared goals and incentives to reduce reoffending and make our communities safer. There is strong evidence within offender groups of co-morbidity, chaotic lifestyles and complex needs, with high rates of substance misuse and mental ill-health. Unemployment, poor housing, family breakdown and substance misuse are common determinants of reoffending. Joint innovative initiatives, with a holistic approach to improving the health and wellbeing of people within the criminal justice system, has the potential to bring about health improvements among offenders and their families.

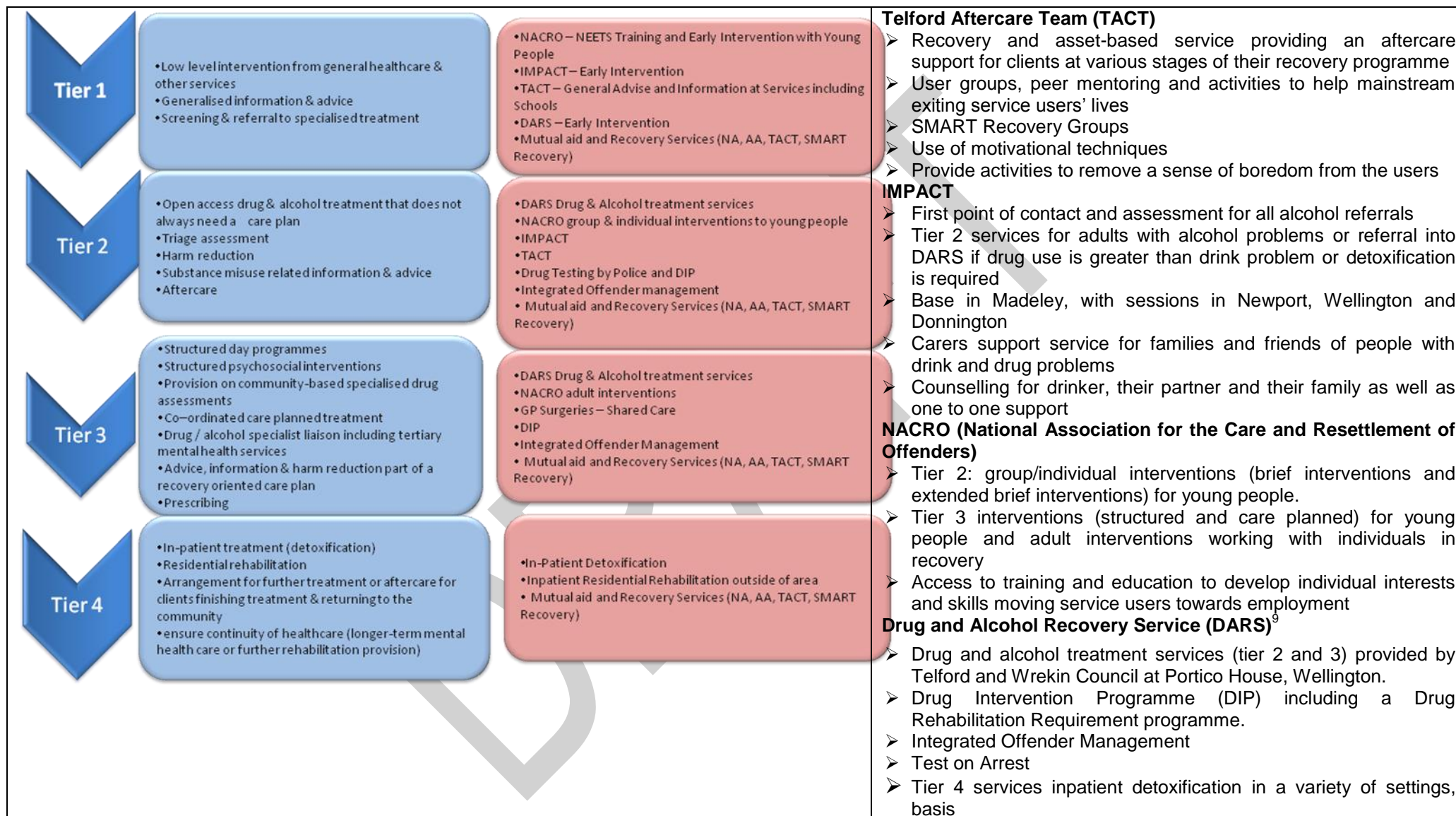
Within the new rehabilitation structure many will be managed through community rehabilitation, however some will be high risk and managed by the National Probation Service through MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements). There is a need to focus on integrated offender management and ensure a robust Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) pathway for all drug using offenders in the criminal justice system. Close local working already takes place between probation and Police services and drug and alcohol treatment services, through joint contract reviews. This enhances criminal justice initiatives such as Drug Rehabilitation Requirement Orders.

The national operating model for Liaison and Diversion aims to ensure people of all ages in contact with the youth justice and criminal justice systems are screened and where appropriate assessed or referred for assessment, so that those with mental health problems, substance misuse problems and other vulnerabilities are identified as soon as possible in the justice pathway. Information gained from assessments will then be shared with relevant justice agencies to enable key decision makers to make more informed decisions on diversion, charging, case management, reasonable adjustments and sentencing. Where individuals are referred to services outside the justice system, relevant information should be shared with those service providers.

5.5. Wider support: Housing, employment and training

Housing, employment and training are all integral components within the recovery journey of service users. Clients are more likely to relapse if they become homeless or are not accommodated in safe accommodation. Considerable work has been undertaken with housing providers to overcome some of the difficulties that can occur with this potentially difficult to accommodate client group. Through both service providers partners and voluntary and third sector groups meaningful and relevant pathways are in development to enable the client journey into all of these imperative elements to be as accessible and successful as possible.

Figure 2 Telford & Wrekin drug and alcohol service mapping



6. Our strategy framework

6.1. Introduction to our approach

The Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol strategy and action plan has been developed by a core group working to the DAAT Board through extensive engagement with stakeholders, including service providers and clinical leads, service users and supporters, through:

- a PHE-facilitated professional stakeholder event in October 2013
- a workshop with key partners to undertake the national PHE stocktake self assessment for alcohol in February 2014
- close working with TACT – the Telford After Care Team throughout

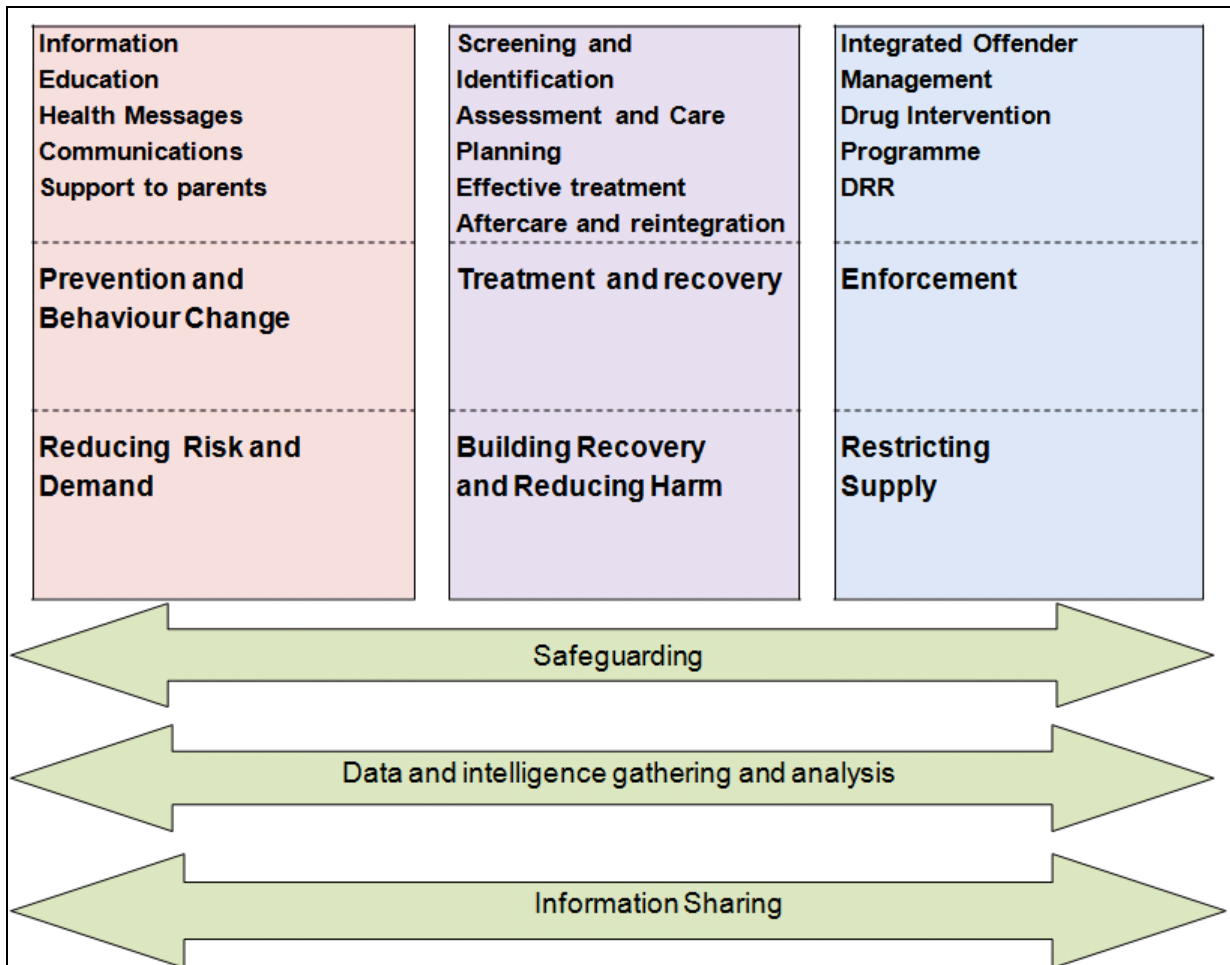
6.2. What our stakeholders have told us

We have ensured that the views of our stakeholders have informed the development of the strategy and action plan and we will continue to review and reflect stakeholder feedback. A summary of what we have heard so far and how we are responding....

- More detailed data was asked for, we have incorporated the latest JSNA intelligence into this strategy and in the action plan we will work with services to more consistently record data
- Better information sharing was a recurring theme and we have ensured this as underpins the strategy
- Linking and communicating with other strategies was requested we have tried through the wider partnership working to reflect this
- A an easy to read meaningful strategy was another recurring theme
- Clearer less confusing pathways needed , this is included in the action plan
- Better communication across borders with the possibility of joint commissioning was mentioned this is also reflected within actions
- Both improvement of triage services and exit strategies were mentioned , this is part of the action plan with appropriate responsibility and measurable outcomes
- People asked how will we know we have made a difference , the action plan will include measurable and accountable outcomes
- The possibility of client journey mapping was raised, consideration of the effectiveness of this and the best process to take it forward will be considered within the action plan
- Drug Intervention Programme, power to test and reoffending were both themes and will be reflected in the plan

6.3. Strategy framework

The strategy uses the three pillars of Government’s National Drug Strategy 2010¹ - reducing demand, restricting supply and building recovery as a framework. A series of aims and objectives across the three strategic pillars have been agreed. The aims and objectives of the Warwickshire and West Mercia Police Drug and Alcohol Strategy have been adopted and directly incorporated into the strategy. The associated action plan includes detailed actions with specific key performance and outcome indicators and professional leads.



6.4. Governance and monitoring

Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Board will be responsible for coordinating implementation of the strategy and action plan and tracking the impact on outcomes. Operationally, the plan will be monitored and refreshed by the Community Safety Team,

The DAAT Board reports to Telford & Wrekin Community Safety Partnership. Progress on the plan, performance and outcomes will also be reported to the Health & Wellbeing Board as required. The actions from the Warwickshire and West Mercia Drug Strategy are monitored through the tactical plan which is reported into the DAAT Board.

Overarching Strategic and Commissioning: Aims and Objectives

Strategic and Commissioning
<p>Aims</p> <p><i>We will work with partners to ensure our approach to drug and alcohol misuse is intelligence-led and demonstrates value for money</i></p> <p><i>We will ensure the workforce across partners and professional groups are well trained to deliver the right support, interventions and treatment</i></p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ To improve our data collection, analyses and use of intelligence, making sure it is well publicised and shared with partners and directly used to shape services➤ To review and benchmark the investment in drug and alcohol programmes and determine the return on our investment➤ To further develop commissioning arrangements➤ To develop a workforce training programme for stakeholders
<p>Key strategy outcome indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Self reported measures of user satisfaction with services➤ Early death rates from liver disease➤ Hospital admission rates from alcohol-specific and alcohol-related conditions➤ Reduced perceptions of drug and or drug misuse or drug dealing as a problem

Reducing Risk and Demand: Aims and Objectives

Reducing Risk and Demand

Aims

We will reduce the demand for drugs and alcohol and the harm caused by these substances through effective awareness raising, prevention and education across all age groups

Objectives: Population-wide and targeted prevention

- To produce publicity, social media campaigns to raise awareness of risk taking behaviour
- To develop evidence-based education and prevention programmes for schools and colleges to:
 - delay their first use of alcohol and reduce consumption
 - raise awareness of the harm caused by the misuse of drugs and other substances i.e. solvents
- To use of the alcohol health check, as part of the wider health check programme for eligible 40-74 year olds to identify and manage risk
- To ensure we Make Every Contact Count by systematically delivering messages about the risk of drug and alcohol consumption across all our services including for example: children's centres, early years providers, Family Connect, school nursing, health visiting, midwifery community and voluntary sector providers
- To develop and deliver an evidence-based programme of brief interventions across and wide a range of settings, including alcohol treatment services, the NHS health check programme, in hospital, the Health Trainer and other services and settings
- To make effective use of hospital-based alcohol services
- To enhance skills, knowledge and information amongst the wider workforce through local training programmes
- To embed partnership working systematically across wider treatment system through the criminal justice system and Integrated Offender Management
- To ensure the Early Help offer includes embedded targeted support for young people and families most at risk of misuse of drugs and alcohol
- To effectively use the Drugs Intervention Programme (DIP) and Arrest Referral Workers for those who come into custody
- To shape services in response to emerging local trends, e.g. Legal Highs, Prescription Only Medicines and Over the Counter Medications

Key performance and outcome measures

- Prevalence rates for binge drinkers, higher or increasing risk drinkers and dependent drinkers
- Number of eligible people offered and receiving NHS Health Checks
- Number of people assessed as at risk and requiring alcohol brief interventions through NHS Health Checks
- Number of brief interventions delivered across all settings

Restricting Supply: Aims and Objectives

Restricting Supply

Aims

We will relentlessly pursue those who produce, supply and distribute drugs

We will use the Council's licensing and trading standards duties and powers to ensure that alcohol is sold responsibly

Objectives: Population-wide prevention and intelligence-led enforcement

- To make effective use the Council's licensing powers
- To use intelligence effectively and systematically across the partnership (for example A&E data) to reduce the availability of alcohol to children, tackle persistent sellers and to inform licensing decisions
- To identify and dismantle trafficking and dealer networks
- To identify and close drug manufacturing sites
- To identify and combat local drugs' markets
- To further develop the work of the night time economy partnership
- To undertake a review of the Council's Statement of licensing policy
- To work with housing providers to ensure corrective action is taken on the misuse of tenancies
- To effectively use intelligence Integrated Offender Management data
- To effectively use the Drugs Intervention Programme (DIP) and Arrest Referral Workers for those who come into custody

Key performance and outcome measures

- *Achieve a decrease in the serious acquisitive crime rate. Analysis indicates that this is strongly associated with drug related offending. (Source: Police performance figures) Number of arrests for production, supply and possession,*
- *Number and value of drug seizures*
- *Asset recovery - taking money away from criminals*
- *Number of convictions for drug offences or the number of years imprisonment given*
- *Number of drug warrants executed*
- *Number of referrals to drug workers*
- *Number of arrests that lead to diversionary activity such as rehabilitation or treatment*
- *Number of offenders under Integrated Offender Management (IOM) tested for drugs on arrest*
- *Reduction of the number of IOMs that test positive on repeat testing*

Building Recovery, Reducing Harm: Aims and Objectives

Building Recovery, Reducing Harm

Aims

“We will in partnership reduce the harm to those at risk and empower people who are addicted or dependant to recover, progressing them along a journey of sustainable improvement to their health, wellbeing and independence”

Objectives:

Transforming specialist treatment

- To review and enhance specialist treatment pathways, ensuring that they are evidence-based and in line with national guidance and best practice in order to:
 - Maintain and improve access to treatment and recovery
 - Deliver recovery services that support individuals on their treatment journey, recovery and progress within treatment
 - Achieve outcomes and successful completions
- To more fully understand and effectively respond to those people with dual diagnosis of substance misuse and mental health issues
- To ensure that all clients have a mutually-agreed care plan, setting out their treatment goals, including talking therapies to support behaviour change
- To reshape specialist treatment provision to work towards a primary care-based shared care model
- To ensure appropriate use of prescribed medicines (e.g. substitute prescribing, relapse prevention, detoxification)
- To review and define tier 4 treatment for detoxification and rehabilitation, residential and community rehabilitation provision

Supporting sustained recovery through Mutual Aid

- To improve access to mutual aid groups (e.g. TACT, AA, NA, SMART Recovery) and other positive social networks
- To further strengthen and develop service user engagement, aftercare and recovery services to strengthen and develop the mutual aid offer
- To ensure services comprehensively reflect stakeholder views (Service Users, Community, Partners, Service Providers)
- To ensure people in recovery are in stable accommodation
- To ensure networks and support is in place to support people into education, training or employment

Targeted prevention and harm reduction

- To improve access to the needle exchange programme, ensuring systematic advice and information is given to prevent infection and spread of blood-borne viruses
- To prevent avoidable overdose deaths
- To set a up a process to review drug-related deaths to provide key local intelligence to shape services
- To work with Telford & Wrekin CCG, GPs and local pharmacists to tackle misuse of over the counter and prescription only medicines

Building Recovery, Reducing Harm: Aims and Objectives (cont.)

Building Recovery, Reducing Harm (cont.)

Targeted prevention and harm reduction

- To improving testing, vaccination for blood-borne viruses ensuring subsequent engagement with treatment
- To establish the scope and scale of Hidden Harm and review how well we are meeting the needs of our most vulnerable and complex families

Key performance and outcome measures

- Achieve an increase in the number of adult drug users in effective treatment (a planned exit or at least 12 weeks retention in treatment) (NDTMS)
- Reduced perceptions of drug misuse or drug dealing as a problem (Source: Annual Residents' Survey)
- Increase the proportion of successful exits from the drug treatment system (NDTMS)
- Improve outcomes and reduce representation levels to treatment services by treatment matching, good care planning and support (Source: NDTMS/TOP/NTA)
- Improve the numbers of recovering drug users in stable accommodation and education, training and employment (TOP)
- Improve uptake by drug users of BBV testing, vaccinations and treatment for viral hepatitis (NDTMS & local data)
- Improve coverage of needle exchange services (local data)
- Ensure our substance misuse services deliver an open accessible and equitable service demonstrated by an equity audit cycle against the protected characteristics
- Increase the number of children and young people affected by parental substance misuse identified, assessed and receiving support
- Increase the referrals from criminal justice system into treatment and sustain for 12 weeks and more.

References

¹ The National Drug Strategy 2010 *Reducing demand, restricting supply, building recovery: supporting people to live a drug free life* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-strategy-2010--2>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-review-of-the-drug-strategy-2010>

² HM Government. The Government's Alcohol Strategy 2012
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224075/alcohol-strategy.pdf

³ Telford & Wrekin Council Plan and Priorities
http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/200009/performance/842/council_plan

⁴ Telford and Wrekin Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013/14 – 2015/16
http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/200190/health_and_wellbeing/1498/health_and_wellbeing_board_hwb

⁵ University of Glasgow modelling tool (NDTMS 2013).

⁶ Clients been retained in treatment for 12 weeks from their start date

⁷ Public Health England Shooting Up 11th annual report on infections amongst injecting drug users in November 2013 (http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1317140236856)

⁸ National Treatment Agency. Models of care for treatment of adult drug misusers.
http://www.nta.nhs.uk/uploads/nta_modelsofcare_update_2006_moc3.pdf

⁹ http://telford.mylifeportal.co.uk/drugs_and_alcohol.aspx

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 27 MARCH 2014

SUBMISSION OF MADELEY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: PLANNING SPECIALIST

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR CHARLES SMITH

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1 Madeley Town Council submitted their Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) with supporting documents to the Council in February 2014. Members are referred to the NDP and supporting documents (see paragraph 12 of this report). In response and in accordance with its statutory duties, Telford & Wrekin now has to complete a number of checks to ensure that all the procedural and other requirements have been met and commence the 6-week publicity period which allows written representations to be made.

1.2 Subject to Cabinet approval and, in liaison with Madeley Town Council, the Council will proceed with the appointment of an Independent Examiner.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet confirm in a Decision Statement that they are satisfied the Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the requirements of the Act and Regulations and to authorise the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist to undertake all necessary arrangements for the Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan to be processed in accordance with the relevant legislation through the Independent Examination stage

3.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	Co-operative Council: - Involving local people more in planning and running services - As a Council, supporting our community better and encouraging people to do more to help their own communities
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Neighbourhood Development Plans contribute to the local planning framework for future development within a designated area. Production of the Madeley NDP has involved the whole of the Madeley Parish community through consultation where people have had the opportunity to provide formal comments on policies which will affect the future development of their area. The 6-week publicising period will allow for representations to be made to the Independent Examiner and the referendum an opportunity for the whole Madeley Parish to vote on the plan prior to formal adoption.
TARGET	Subject to Cabinet approval, the Madeley NDP will proceed to examination, the findings of which will be reported to Cabinet for further consideration	

COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	prior to a referendum in the summer, the specific timescale of which will depend on the outcome of the examination and Cabinet's further considerations.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p>The costs associated with the introduction of Neighbourhood Plans, including the additional costs of designations, referendum and examinations have to be met by the Local Authority. Madeley received funding as a Frontrunner for neighbourhood planning and the balance of this funding is available to offset the costs incurred. In addition funding, up to a maximum of £30,000 is available from the DCLG if required to meet the costs incurred by the Local Authority.</p> <p>The appointment of the Independent Examiner by the Local Authority will comply with procurement requirements and will be funded from the available DCLG grant.</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	<p>The Localism Act 2011 provided a framework for a new statutory regime to establish Neighbourhood Planning. Subsequent legislation has added more detail to that framework. The Town Council has had to fulfil its publication and consultation obligations under this legislation and the Borough Council as local planning authority has had to publicise the NDP. The Borough Council as Local Planning Authority ("the LPA") now has to consider a number of matters relating to the NDP to ensure compliance.</p> <p>The issues which the LPA now needs to consider and determine are set out in this report</p> <p>If the LPA finds that there has not been compliance, it must reject the NDP. If the LPA finds that there has been compliance, the NDP will be referred to an Independent Examiner for examination.</p> <p>After the Independent Examiner's report/recommendations have been completed, they will be presented to the LPA for consideration. This will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet where it will be decided whether, in the light of the Independent Examiner's report, the LPA is going to proceed to a referendum in respect of the NDP.</p> <p>Further legal points are raised later in this report</p>	
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	<p>The Authority has completed the required checks to ensure the Madeley NDP meets the necessary requirements for this stage of the process. However, subject to Cabinet approving the recommendation in this report, there will be an independent examination of the NDP and there is a risk that the Independent Examiner will recommend that the NDP should be modified or rejected. The recommendations of the Independent Examiner will be considered at a further meeting of Cabinet in due course.</p> <p>There is some potential risk associated with consistency of NDP policies with those contained in the emerging Shaping Places Local Plan, although Officer engagement with the Town Council will have helped to mitigate this. As part of their Conformity Statement, Madeley Town Council has also provided supporting information to demonstrate consistency of their NDP against the plans objectives as set out at Strategy & Options stage.</p> <p>Opportunities associated with the NDP include a strengthening of</p>	

		local engagement in the planning process and in the development of the Shaping Places Local Plan, including acceptance of proposed development in the area. A successful NDP will raise the profile of the Council locally and nationally.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS		Cuckoo Oak Ward: Cllr Alan Mackenzie & Cllr Derek White; Madeley Ward: Cllr Paul Watling & Cllr Gill Green; Woodside Ward: Cllr Kevin Guy & Cllr Rae Evans

4.0 PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4.1 Background

4.1.2 Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act (2011). It provides the opportunity for a Parish/Town Council or local forum to produce an NDP with the involvement of local people, helping to inform future planning decisions in their area.

4.1.3 In February 2011 Telford & Wrekin Council and Madeley Town Council successfully bid for them to become one of the government's Frontrunners in neighbourhood planning. The Madeley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was subsequently formed and has led development of the NDP through a number of key stages. Waters Upton, Ercall Magna and Newport Town & Parish Councils are also Frontrunners in the process of developing their plans. More recently, Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council were designated as a neighbourhood area outside of the Frontrunner scheme.

4.1.4 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Telford & Wrekin Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP's) at key stages in the process. Officers have been working closely with the Town Council regarding the NDP and Cabinet approved the designation of the neighbourhood plan area for Madeley on 18th October 2012. Subsequent to this, the Town Council has worked with its community to produce a NDP which has been subject to the required period of consultation.

4.1.5 Following this consultation, Madeley Town Council submitted their NDP on 11th February 2014 for Telford & Wrekin Council to complete the necessary checks and proceed to the next stages of publication, examination and referendum. The NDP, along with supporting documents are available at www.telford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

4.2 Legal compliance checking

4.2.1 Telford & Wrekin Council is required to consider a number of matters set out in the legislation and, if they are satisfied that the matters have been met or complied with, the NDP must be submitted for independent examination. The matters for consideration are as follows:

- Whether the NDP proposal is a repeat proposal – there are a number of provisions relating to this consideration. However, this is not a repeat proposal so these provisions are satisfied
- Whether Madeley Town Council is authorised to act - Madeley Town Council is a Parish Council and is proposing a NDP in respect of a Plan Area which consists of the whole of its administrative area and it is considered that it is authorised as required
- Whether there is another NDP proposal relating to the area – there is not, so this provision is satisfied

- Whether the NDP proposal and the documents and information accompanying it comply with the rules for submission to Telford & Wrekin Council as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) – The NDP proposal can properly be described as a Neighbourhood Development Plan. It has been submitted to the LPA in the prescribed form and is accompanied by other documents and information as prescribed. The proposal documents identify the area to which the NDP relates, include a compliant Consultation Statement and include a statement explaining how the proposed NDP meets the “basic conditions” as required by the legislation (see below). It is considered that the Town Council have complied with the requirements in these respects in that all these documents have been provided.

4.2.2 The Independent Examiner will be considering the following:

- Whether, having regard for national planning policy and guidance from the Secretary of State, it is appropriate that the NDP should be made
- Whether the NDP contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- Whether the NDP is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area of the Authority
- Whether the NDP is in breach and/or is otherwise compatible with EU obligations

4.2.3 When the NDP next comes before Cabinet, with the benefit of the Independent Examiner’s report/recommendations, these matters will be considered in detail.

4.2.4 Bearing in mind these tests, officers are satisfied that all the required documentation can now be submitted for the Independent Examination. With regard to EU obligations, a Screening Determination on the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 has been submitted. It concludes that an Environmental Assessment of the NDP is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. This determination was agreed by the relevant bodies including Natural England, The Environment Agency and English Heritage. Further, it is not considered that the NDP provisions are likely to have a significant effect on a European site, as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations 2010(d) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

4.2.5 Full details of how Madeley Town Council considers that they have demonstrated that they comply with these requirements are set out in their Basic Conditions Statement.

4.2.6 Other procedural requirements which have been met include the provision of a map identifying the Plan Area, a Consultation Statement and the actual NDP document. The Town Council has also provided a Historic Conservation Assessment and an Evidence Base Summary.

4.2.7 With regards to general conformity with the strategic policies for the Borough, this is covered in more detail in the following section.

4.3 Conformity check

4.3.1 In order to successfully progress through the Independent Examination, the key test of the NDP in terms of policy is whether or not the plan is in ‘general conformity’ with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan for the local area.

4.3.2 The Basic Conditions Statement (BCS) submitted by Madeley Town Council forms the basis of this determination. It identifies the main policies from the Core Strategy, Wrekin Local Plan, and the plan objectives of the emerging Shaping Places Local Plan (SPLP). An

assessment is then made in the statement as to how the NDP conforms to these policies. In general terms, Telford & Wrekin Council considers the statement to be comprehensive in coverage of the relevant policies and clearly sets out why the Town Council consider that the NDP supports the strategic policies of the higher tier plans.

- 4.3.3 A specific issue for the process of adopting a NDP for Madeley is to ensure that the policies and proposals within the plan are broadly consistent with the emerging SPLP. Alongside the BCS is the Evidence Base Summary. Again, in broad terms, it is clear from the summary document that the NDP has been informed by proportionate evidence similar to that being used to support the emerging SPLP, alongside other locally-specific available data.
- 4.3.4 Consequently, based on the comprehensive nature of the BCS, and the appropriate scope and nature of the evidence base used to underpin the NDP, Telford & Wrekin Council consider that the relevant requirements have been met for the NDP to be progressed on to the next stage and submitted for independent examination.

4.4 Publication

- 4.4.1 The Madeley NDP is being publicised for a 6 week period between 24th February and 8th April 2014 in accordance with Regulations “in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of the local community”. The NDP is available via Telford & Wrekin Council’s website www.telford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning and Madeley Town Council website www.madeleytowncouncil.gov.uk. A copy is available for viewing in the following places; Madeley Town Council, Madeley Library, Business & Planning First Point Wellington, First Point Telford. A notice was placed in the Telford Journal. All bodies referred to in Consultation Statement (February 2014) have been notified of the publication period, along with consultees on Telford & Wrekin Council’s Development Plan database.
- 4.4.2 Any representations submitted to Telford & Wrekin Council during this publicity period will be forwarded to the Independent Examiner to supplement the NDP which will be submitted in its current form.

4.5 Examination & Referendum

- 4.5.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the NDP will proceed to the next stage; examination. During the publication period an independent examiner will be appointed by Telford & Wrekin Council in agreement with Madeley Town Council. The Independent Examiner will check the contents of the plan, supporting documents and any written representations.
- 4.5.2 The outcome of the examination will be a report with recommendations, from the Independent Examiner to Telford & Wrekin Council for its consideration. The report will recommend that either the NDP should be submitted to a referendum, modified and then submitted to a referendum or that the NDP should be rejected.
- 4.5.3 If the NDP successfully progresses through Independent Examination and consideration by Cabinet, in accordance with Regulation 4 of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012, not fewer than 28 days (excluding weekends and bank holidays) before the date of the referendum, the Council must publish an Information Statement declaring when a referendum will be held and related details such as the question that will be asked. In accordance with Regulation 3, this question will ask whether voters agree to the use of the NDP to help decide planning applications in the Plan Area. If all proceeds smoothly, it is anticipated that the referendum could be held in the summer 2014.

4.5.4 If a majority of those voting (over 50%) are in favour, this is sufficient to require Telford & Wrekin Council to make the NDP after which it will be published on Telford & Wrekin Councils website.

4.6 Conclusion

4.6.1 As a frontrunner Madeley Town Council are the first in the Borough to progress to this stage, working closely with their community to produce a plan which reflects local views on future development in the Parish and policies which, subject to being adopted, will be taken into consideration in the decision making process.

4.6.2 Following submission of the NDP it is recommended that Cabinet confirm that they are satisfied that the legal requirements have been met and arrangements needed to proceed to subsequent stages of the process. A further report will be brought for Cabinet consideration following receipt of the Independent Examiners report and prior to undertaking the referendum.

5.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.1 Once adopted, the Madeley NDP will become part of the statutory planning framework for the borough. In accordance with the ethos of neighbourhood planning, the NDP is based on extensive community engagement and therefore a product of the community with policies reflecting their views. Therefore, whilst the policies will have been tested for general conformity with the existing Core Strategy and saved policies from the Wrekin Local Plan, it is not a legal requirement to test them to the same degree as these Development Plan's which were subject to an Examination in Public.

5.2 In accordance with legal requirements, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of relevant Development Plan's which, for the Madeley Parish, would include the NDP once it is adopted as well as the Core Strategy and saved policies from the Wrekin Local Plan. This is unless material considerations indicate otherwise, meaning the weight given to the NDP must be balanced with other considerations as part of the decision making process undertaken by Development Management.

5.3 Comments on the draft NDP were collated from the Development Management Team and submitted to Madeley Town Council as part of the formal consultations on the draft NDP. They are contained in the Consultation Statement which will be made available to the Independent Examiner. Their intention was to provide constructive support to the process and reduce potential risks associated with implementing the plan.

6.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 Application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area – Madeley (Cabinet, 18th October 2012)

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan – Examination version (Feb 2014)
Basic Conditions Statement (February 2014)
Consultation Statement (February 2014)
Regulation 14 Consultation (February 2014)
Historic Conservation Assessment (February 2014)
Evidence Base Summary (February 2014)
The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Regulation 9
Screening Determination - Madeley Neighbourhood Plan

Available at www.telford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

Report prepared by Rachel Taylor, Environment & Planning Policy Team Leader
Telephone: 01952 384220

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 27 MARCH 2014

DECLARATION OF DOTHILL LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: PLANNING SPECIALIST

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – COUNCILLOR CHARLES SMITH

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek cabinet approval for a new Local Nature Reserve (LNR), comprising an area of land surrounding a large lake at Dothill, Wellington (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 The proposal has been developed in liaison with the local community, the Wellington Conservation Area Working Group and will involve local volunteers carrying out small scale conservation tasks as part of the site management.
- 1.3 The selection, declaration and management of Local Nature Reserves is a function of local authorities. These sites play an important role in maintaining a healthy balance in spatial planning between the built environment and green infrastructure.
- 1.4 The site in question is referred to as the proposed Dothill LNR and is within Council ownership. It is considered to fulfil the requirements to become a formally designated site. The site:
- Is partially designated as a Local Wildlife Site;
 - Has an up to date management plan; and
 - Has a strong level of local involvement
- 1.5 Subject to approval, the next stage will be to progress the site further through the formal process with Natural England prior to final declaration.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

2.1 Approve the declaration of the Dothill Local Nature Reserve

2.2 Delegate authority to complete the declaration process to the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist following consultation with the Lead Cabinet member for Housing, Development and Borough Towns.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Designation of the LNR contributes to several priorities, including: -ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained -improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities Through the working group and Friends of Dothill, there is active community involvement
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	The LNR is a beneficial resource to people who live and visit the area and has parts which are accessible to all members of the community, including those with wheelchairs and pushchairs
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	May 2014 – Formal Consultation with Natural England July 2014 – Declaration of Local Nature Reserve	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	No	The designation of the land (as detailed in Appendix 1) as a Local Nature Reserve requires the Council to manage and maintain the land in accordance with a management plan. In order to avoid a financial pressure as a result of the designation, it has been agreed that the Council will continue to maintain the site at its current level. The site Management Committee will be responsible for securing third party funding for any additional works or site improvements, over and above the current maintenance regime. Should additional funding not be identified, the requirements under the site management plan will be amended accordingly. The land to be designated is in the ownership of the Council and the designation will offer protection from future development or inappropriate use. This may have an impact on future strategic options for asset use or disposal.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	The Council has power under the National parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to declare that land which it owns is to be managed as a nature reserve and the declaration stands as conclusive evidence that the land is being managed as such. There is a procedure that needs to be followed regarding the declaration and Legal Services will assist the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist as required regarding the process
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The Council is following the formal process for declaring a LNR as set out in guidance from Natural England, ensuring compliance with the requirements. In liaison with stakeholders, the potential impact of the LNR has also been taken into consideration and any adverse impacts addressed. The management plan provides a framework for ensuring the LNR is maintained appropriately and continues to meet the requirements of an LNR.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	The LNR is located in the following Wards who are represented on both the Working Group and Steering Group: Wrockwardine: Cllr Jacqui Seymour Dothill: Cllr Karen Tomlinson

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 This report sets out a proposal to declare a statutory Local Nature Reserve known as 'Dothill Local Nature Reserve.' This is in accordance with the provisions of Sections 19 and 21 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Subject to approval, the proposal will then need to receive a formal welcome from Natural England.
- 4.2 Declaration of the land as an LNR requires Telford & Wrekin Council to manage the land shown in Appendix 1 as a nature reserve and to protect it from inappropriate uses or development. Part of the site currently holds Local Wildlife Site status and so is already managed for conservation purposes.
- 4.3 Other parts of the site also have nature conservation value and a high level of community interest and involvement. This includes the Wellington Conservation Area Working Group, a subgroup of Wellington Town Council and more recently, the Dothill Open Space Steering Group. These groups have played a key role in developing the proposal in liaison with the local authority. Through active engagement with the community, local people are already getting involved in the management and protection of the site and a regular programme of volunteer work parties are being planned for summer and autumn 2014 with the support of Shropshire Wildlife Trust.
- 4.4 The proposed LNR is within the Council's ownership and meets the necessary criteria for selection, has an up to date management plan and has gained support from Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England.
- 4.5 As part of the declaration process, subject to Cabinet approval, a consultation document will be issued to Natural England to seek their formal 'Welcome' prior to completion of the declaration and the associated legal seal.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 5.1 Consultation with relevant stakeholders has taken place and the declaration of the site as an LNR has received support.
- 5.2 It was noted, however, that the original boundary of the proposed LNR included a number of sites identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). This assessment provides an indication of possible development sites and their suitability. In the case of the proposed Dothill LNR, all SHLAA sites within the boundary are owned by the Telford & Wrekin Council. Through close liaison with the Regeneration & Investment Team, it has been agreed to remove a number of the SHLAA sites located within the LNR, mainly due to the constraints associated with developing these areas and the benefits of protecting this area of valuable green space. It was however agreed to retain a SHLAA site on the periphery of the proposed LNR (SHLAA site reference 181) and the boundary of the LNR has been adjusted accordingly. If this site ever comes forward for future development, then the proximity to the LNR would be a material consideration and the need to demonstrate connectivity between the LNR and other green space would be taken into account.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

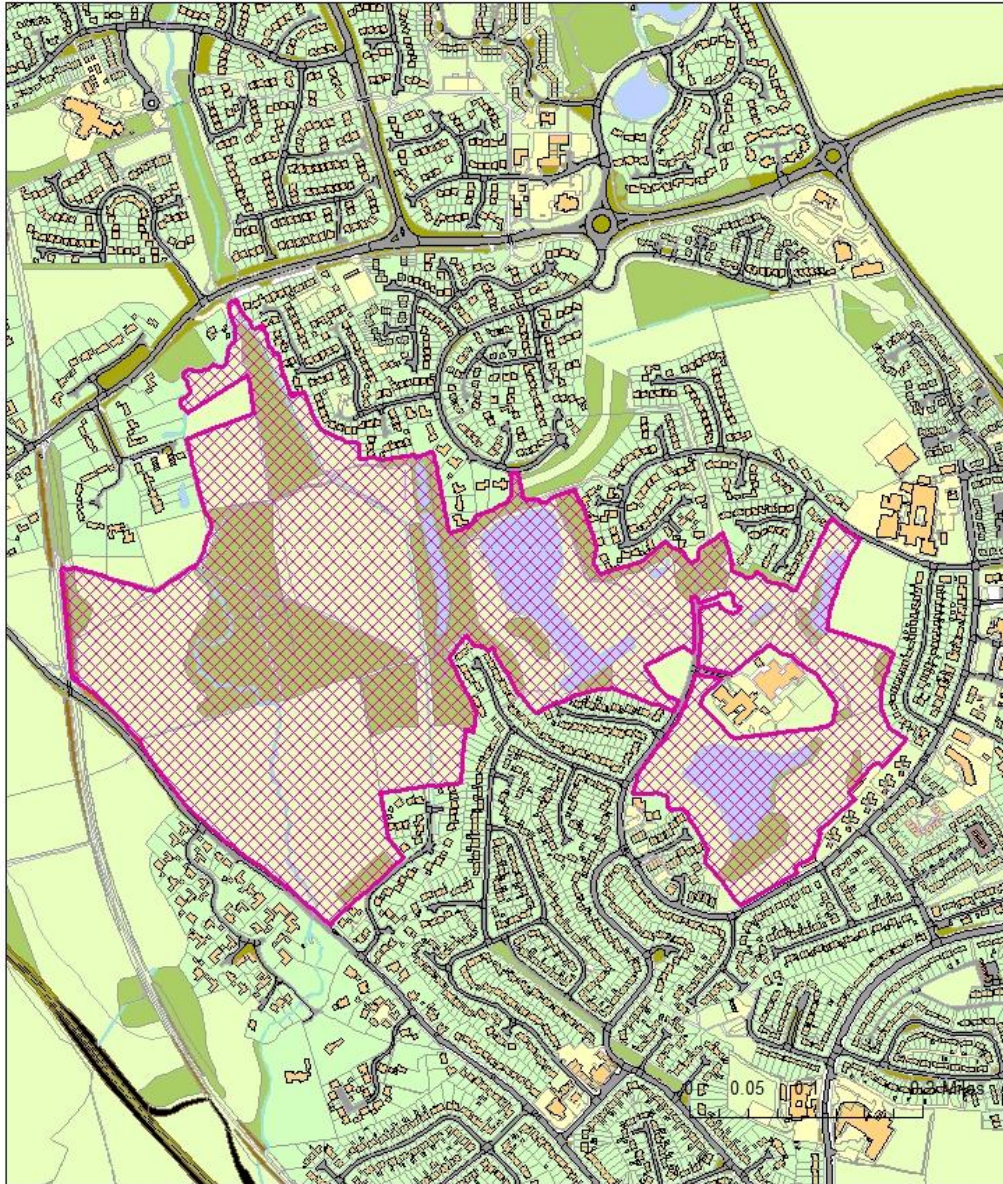
Cabinet report 12th February 2007: 'Declaration of Local Nature Reserves'

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Local Nature Reserves in England: A Guide to their Selection and Declaration Natural England, 2009
- 7.2 Local Nature Reserves: places for people and wildlife (English Nature)
- 7.3 Accessible natural greenspace in towns and cities: A review of appropriate size and distance criteria (English Nature Research Reports No. 153)

Report prepared by Fran Lancaster, Planning Ecologist, Telephone: 01952 384221

Appendix 1: Dothill Local Nature Reserve Boundary



Telford & Wrekin
COUNCIL

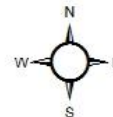
Business & Development Planning
Telford & Wrekin Council
Wellington Civic Offices
Telford
TF2 2FH

Title:
Dothill proposed Local Nature
Reserve Boundary

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Date 2014.

Date: 11 February 2014

Drawn By: Fran Lancaster



TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 27 MARCH 2014

PLANNING OF SCHOOL PLACES: REVIEW OF SEND PROVISION

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: EDUCATION AND CORPORATE PARENTING

LEAD CABINET MEMBER - CLLR PAUL WATLING

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

To seek Cabinet approval to consult stakeholders on the possibility of providing post 16 educational facilities for students with severe and profound learning difficulties on the site of the Telford College of Arts and Technology and alter the upper age range of pupils attending The Bridge School.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Assistant Director Education and Corporate Parenting be authorised to engage in formal consultation with key partners and stakeholders regarding the possible development of provision for post 16 learners with severe and profound special educational needs in partnership with the Telford College of Arts and Technology. There would also need to be consultation on the related proposal to alter the age range of The Bridge School so that it accepts pupils up to the age of 16 and ceases to make provision for 16 to 19 year olds.

2.2 That the Assistant Director Education and Corporate Parenting, in consultation with the lead Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, be given delegated responsibility to decide whether to progress the project following the formal consultation period.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	Children & Young People
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Children and Families living within the Wards served by the schools
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	Consultation on possible expansion of facilities at TCAT, and altering the age range catered for by The Bridge School with any changes agreed to take effect from September 2015.	

FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p>Post 16 high needs students are funded by a combination of Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Local Authority payments. The EFA pays the first £10,000 of funding whilst the Local Authority is responsible for top-up funding in addition to this. Local Authority payments are funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). At this stage it is not clear how the required top-up amount at TCAT provision would compare to that at the Bridge, which is currently either £9,000 per student or £15,000 per student. The amount depends upon which band the pupil is assigned to – pupils with higher needs and therefore more support are assigned to the higher band. However, the development of provision at TCAT will release accommodation at the Bridge which will then be available for a likely increase in the number of pre-16 students with high needs. This may help to avoid the placement of such students in more expensive out of area provision.</p> <p>It should be noted that the DfE's provision of funding to Local Authorities for high needs students is subject to continuing changes. The DfE have stated that from 2015/16 the High Needs Block of DSG will be based on actual numbers of pupils in high needs provisions, rather than being based on a combination of historical budgets and number of places as at present. As yet, it is not clear how this will compare to current funding levels.</p> <p>The grant of £1.8m made available via the Demographic Growth Fund was awarded to TCAT who are the accountable body for this funding.</p> <p>TD 27/2/14</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<p>On 28 January 2014 the Government published "School Organisation Maintained Schools: Guidance for proposers and decision-makers" The guidance was issued further to The School Organisation (Prescribed</p>

	<p>Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 which came into force on 28 January 2014 and provides information on the processes involved in making significant changes to maintained schools, establishing new provision and school closure.</p> <p>The guidance is relevant to all categories of maintained schools, unless explicitly stated.</p> <p>There are four stages to the statutory process in respect of significant changes: 1) Publication; 2) Representation (Formal Consultation); 3) Decision; 4) Implementation.</p> <p>The guidance advises that there is a strong expectation on schools and Local Authorities to consult interested parties in developing their proposal prior to Publication as part of their duty under public law to act rationally and take into account all relevant considerations.</p> <p>Departmental advice for local authorities and health partners about implementing the 0 to 25 Special Needs system from September 2014 was published on 9 December 2013.</p> <p>This advice sets out the changes being made to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) system and what organisations need to do to implement the system.</p> <p>Subject to receiving Royal Assent, from September 2014 Part 3 of The Children and Families Bill will place new statutory responsibilities on, and give new powers to, local authorities. Most importantly, local authorities will have to:</p>
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		<p>Work with health and social care colleagues jointly to commission services to deliver integrated support for children and young people with SEN aged 0-25.</p> <p>Consult children, young people and their parents, and cooperate with a range of local providers across education, health, social care and voluntary sector partners to deliver the new system, including post-16 education providers such as further education colleges and training providers.</p> <p>Work with local partners, parents and young people to co-produce and publish a local offer of SEN services and provision to assist young people in finding employment, obtaining accommodation and participating in society.</p> <p>Provide a coordinated education, health and care assessment for children and young people aged 0-25, and new Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans that will replace the two existing systems of SEN statements (in schools) and Learning Difficulty Assessments (in further education and training).</p> <p>Offer those with EHC plans the option of a personal budget.</p> <p>Consider the transition from children's to adult services and whether to use a new power to provide children's services to young people over 18 to smooth their transition</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The curriculum and behaviour management systems at any new provision for children with severe and profound learning difficulties

		would need to be appropriate and modelled on those being successfully used at the present time.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	The individual proposals would impact on the individual wards within which schools are located. However there is potentially Borough wide impact as families who have children with special educational needs live throughout the borough.

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

Currently The Bridge School serves pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties from the ages of 2 to 19 years. There has always been concern that the options available for students once they leave the school are limited and currently a relatively small proportion of this group go on to access further educational opportunities.

Accordingly, the Council's 14 to 19 team put forward a bid to the Demographic Growth Fund to expand the specialist provision available within the Telford College of Arts and Technology (TCAT) which is situated in Wellington. This bid was successful and has provided a sum of £1.8 million with which to expand provision for learners with complex needs and disabilities.

The proposal is to use the available funding to provide a specialist facility on the TCAT site to cater for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties in the 16 + age group. This will open up opportunities for a broader curriculum offer for this group, combining expertise provided by The Bridge School with specialist accommodation and access to wider facilities within TCAT.

It is hoped that this will also encourage an extension of the opportunities for learners with disabilities at TCAT for the 16 to 25 age group. This would integrate well with national legislation which will replace the current learning difficulty assessments with Education Health and Care plans expected to begin to come in to place from September 2014.

It is also thought that these changes will help to provide an improved transition to adult life for students within this group.

The proposal is to hold a formal consultation between 31st March and 12th May on these proposals. This allows a period of 6 weeks overall, with 4 weeks falling within school term time. This is compliant with the guidance issued by the Department for Education in January 2104. Parents of children at The Bridge School will all be consulted as will staff and other key partners and stakeholders.

The outcome of the consultation would then, if favourable, be known in time to allow a submission for planning permission and a building schedule that would enable the new facilities to be opened in September 2015.

It is not expected that the number of pupils attending The Bridge School will fall in the long term. The scale of housing development taking place within the borough means that the overall pupil population will increase and if the percentage of pupils needing the specialist educational facilities of The Bridge remains constant the number on roll will remain buoyant.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Discussions are continuing as part of an informal consultation process with TCAT and with parents and staff at The Bridge School. The preferred method of ensuring that the curriculum and behaviour management of any new provision is appropriate is to ensure close links with The Bridge, particularly in the initial set up period of the provision.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Not applicable.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 27th MARCH 2014

DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF / DISCOUNT FOR BUSINESS RATES AND COUNCIL TAX

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: CUSTOMER SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR BILL McCLEMENTS

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Local Government Finance Act of 2012 introduced changes in April 2013 to allow 49% of business rates to be retained locally by the Council, 1% by the Fire Authority, and 50% by the Government. Prior to April 2013, the Council billed and collected business rates on behalf of the Government.
- 1.2 The award of discretionary relief was introduced by the Local Government Finance Act of 1988 which permitted the award of a reduction in business rates in limited circumstances at the Billing Authority's discretion. Discretionary Relief Guidelines, introduced in 1988 and last updated in 2010 have been revisited and refreshed as a result of the changes to business rates and the requirement to ensure our current guidelines remain fit for purpose.
- 1.3 Despite the economic climate, which has seen rate relief cut by a number of other councils, we have taken a conscious decision to continue to support our local Charities and community groups who actively contribute to our community by continuing to provide them with rate relief in recognition of the excellent work that they do. The new guidelines also reflect the principles set out in the Council's Business & Development Charter to incentivise and support major business growth and inward investment within our Borough.
- 1.4 These revised guidelines have been written having an appreciation of the discounts, exemptions and reliefs currently available under the existing national legislation and now include the additional changes announced in the recent Autumn Budget Statement. The new reliefs become effective from April 2014 and bring in an estimated £500,000 additional support into our borough benefitting approximately 600 businesses based in Telford & Wrekin. The new reliefs include:-
- An increase in RPI inflation limited to 2%
 - £1,000 discount for all retail, pubs and cafes with rateable value below £50,000 for 2 years
 - A continuation of the doubling of small business rate relief until April 2015, and allowing businesses to keep their entitlement to small business rate relief for a year where they take on another property

- New occupiers of former retail premises which have been unoccupied for a year will receive a 50% discount for 18 months

1.5 The revised guidelines for granting of discretionary rate relief for businesses and awarding discretionary Council Tax Discounts are outlined in both Appendix 1 and 2 of this report. The report also seeks to gain approval for a revised appeals process for those dissatisfied with the outcome of our decision to grant or otherwise outlined in Section 8 of this report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the proposed refreshed guidelines for awarding discretionary Council Tax discount in prescribed circumstances be considered and approved as detailed at Appendix 1 to take effect from April 2014

2.2 That the refreshed guidelines for the granting of discretionary rate relief for businesses be considered and approved as detailed as Appendix 2 to take effect from April 2014.

2.3 That the refreshed process for appeals is approved where a ratepayer or taxpayer is dissatisfied with the decision made.

3.0 OVERVIEW

3.1 Increasing the total value of business rates delivered by supporting our existing businesses to grow and attracting new investment is key to the Council's budget strategy. As a business supporting, business winning Council we are committed to making investment in the Borough as easy and attractive as possible. These revised guidelines reflect the principles set out in the Council's Business & Development Charter and compliment the approach being taken to incentivising and supporting major business growth and inward investment.

3.2 In February 2013 the Council published a Business & Development Charter, cutting regulatory red tape and outlining the opportunities for investors arising from the Council's management of all major employment land assets across the Borough. Since these were put in place the Borough has seen a growing number of planning applications and approvals and a significant increase in sales of publically owned employment land to both investors coming in to the Borough and major expansions by existing companies. This has already delivered in excess of 165 new jobs with some 130 more in the pipeline and further new inquiries from within and outside the Borough. Alongside this the Council launched its free, tailored business support service which has already brought in over £400,000 in grant for local businesses, with Business Support Officers working on detailed propositions with over 100 companies at any one time. Through the Talking Business e newsletter, events and calls the Team are in touch with in excess of 2,500 business contacts and growing which is more than double the amount of contacts when compared to 6 months previously.

3.3 A recent survey of 2,000 local companies shows a high degree of business confidence with 49% of businesses projecting increasing turnover within the next 2-3 years

4.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council priorities?	
	Yes	Protect and create jobs as part of a “business supporting, business winning council.”
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	These proposals will have a positive impact on businesses including charitable organisations within the Borough.
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	<i>All existing awards to be reviewed by 31st March 2015</i>	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes/No	<p>The total discretionary relief awarded for Business Rates is £225k. The cost to the Council of this is £110k (49%). Of the total discretionary relief awarded £211k relates to charities.</p> <p>The revised guidelines will limit the award of charitable relief to a maximum of £2000 per organisation.</p> <p>Discretionary discounts awarded for Council Tax result in reduced council tax income for the Authority. The amount of discount currently awarded in respect of this financial year is approximately £2K, although a total of £3.3k has been awarded in previous years. It is not anticipated that the refreshed guidance will result in any major change to the level of discretionary relief awarded each year.</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<p>The Council can award discretionary Business Rate relief under the Local Government Finance Act 1988. The guidelines in respect of the same have been updated.</p> <p>Similarly The Council can award Council Tax discount in certain prescribed circumstances under the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The guidelines in respect of the same have been updated.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	£1,000 discount for all retail, pubs and cafes with rateable value below £50,000 for 2 years (included in the discretionary policy). It is estimated that there are approximately 600 businesses that may benefit from this discount which would result in £500,000 worth of discounts being awarded.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.0 INFORMATION

5.1 Council Tax

- 5.1.1 The Council has discretion to reduce the Council Tax charge for individual properties or classes of property, and thus allows Councils to introduce local discounts which are not already covered by the national discount and exemption scheme. The loss in Council Tax revenue as a result of the award of such a discount has to be met in full by the Council.
- 5.1.2 The proposed guidelines are a refresh of the existing guidelines which work well alongside the Council Tax Hardship Policy which provides support to taxpayers who are in financial difficulties.
- 5.1.3 The guidelines take into account the following factors:
- A vacation of a property due to an external environmental factor beyond the applicant's control i.e.: flood
 - Significant upheaval as a result of an environmental factor beyond the applicant's control
 - Other exceptional circumstances

5.2 Business Rates

- 5.2.1 Property valuations are undertaken by the Valuation Office and as such the Council has limited control over the setting of business rates. Under existing legislation the Council is able to retain 49% of business rates and business rates growth with 1% going to the Fire Authority and the remainder going to Central Government. The retention of a proportion of business rates locally is intended to encourage Local Authorities to support business growth and replaces grant formally paid directly to Council's to support services. Increasing business rates and their collection is therefore a key element of the Council's budget strategy.
- 5.2.2 We already offer a range of business rate relief and exemptions which are intended to support and incentivise business and protect and maintain services to the community. The proposed changes recognise the economic challenges facing business and the short term impact on productivity from expansion or relocation. The proposals also seek to focus the use of discretionary relief for the charitable and non profit sector for those businesses, who contribute directly to the Council's priorities and to their local community.
- 5.2.3 Relief for empty properties is mandatory for a maximum period of 3 months for non industrial premises, and 6 months for industrial premises. However, relief on partly empty properties, introduced by the Local Government Act 1988, S44a, is available at the Council's discretion. The revised guidelines continue to propose that assistance is awarded to businesses where there is a short term practical or financial difficulty associated with the occupation or vacation of the premises. This might include where a business is (re) locating or expanding and there is a

reduction in productivity or interruption to business due to the move or building/plant upgrade.

- 5.2.4 Hardship relief, introduced by the Local Government Finance Act of 1988, S49, is a discretionary power available to Councils to relieve short term hardship for a ratepayer. In considering applications the Council must have due regard for the interests of the Council Tax payers of the Authority including the costs to the community and the benefit or disadvantages of awarding Hardship Relief. The guidelines detail the information required to support an application. There must be evidence of hardship i.e.: a severe loss in trade (evidenced by business accounts) however the business must be viable and it must be of benefit to the Borough. This provides for individual discretion; each application being considered on it's own merits.
- 5.2.5 Registered charities are automatically entitled to 80% mandatory relief from their business rates as per national government regulations. Discretionary powers however were introduced by the Local Government Finance Act of 1988, S47. The previous guidelines for discretionary charitable relief (20% top up, or up to 100% purely discretionary relief) were generously applied within Telford and Wrekin to charitable and not for profit organisations throughout our Borough and will continue despite the challenging financial climate. The proposed guidelines consider applications favourably for organisations where the facilities provided by the organisation will allow the Council to invest in services elsewhere i.e.: the services that it provides enables the Council to divert resources that would have been used in this area into another service. We will also consider favourably where the organisation concerned makes a measurable contribution to the community, for example through training provided to members of the organisation or residents, creation of jobs or investment being made into the Borough.
- 5.2.6 49% of all discretionary relief is now funded by the Council. Under the current guidelines, the following are currently being awarded in respect of charitable rate relief:

<u>Current Award Category</u>	<u>No. Of Accounts</u>	<u>Amount of relief awarded</u>
Disadvantaged Groups	50	£73,120.40
Public Halls & Community Centres	35	£33,696.30
Credit Halls	3	£3,975.24
Culture	27	£92,643.61
Children and Young people	35	£18,665.76
Misc	2	£18,665.76
<u>Total</u>		<u>£225,071.31</u>

- 5.2.7 The revised guidelines will limit the award of charitable relief to some national charities who currently benefit from business rate relief limiting the award of relief to £2000 per organisation.

5.2.8 The Charitable Discretionary Relief scheme will not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties used for storage
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments

5.2.9 Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC's) are also entitled to 80% mandatory relief. An additional 20% is available in discretionary relief, as introduced by the Local Government Act of 2003, S64. The proposed guidelines will now take into account the following factors:

- Extent of membership within the Borough
- Extent of education / training provided
- The benefit of the CASC to the community
- Provision of facilities to others

5.2.10 Mandatory Rural Rate Relief of 50% is awarded to businesses within a defined rural settlement with a population of less than 3000. An additional 50% top up relief can be awarded in discretionary relief, as introduced by the Local Government Finance Act of 1988, S47.

6.0. Under the Localism Act, new powers have recently become available to local authorities to use discretionary relief in the following ways which will be fully reimbursed by the Government for 2014/15 and 2015/16:

- Properties with a rateable value under £50,000 which are used wholly or mainly as shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments will receive up to £1000 relief.
- Retail properties which have been empty for 12 months and become occupied will receive 18 months relief.
- Discretionary relief will also be fully reimbursed by the Government for newly built properties which remain empty for 18 months. This applies until September 2016.

7.0 Appeals

7.1 All unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter detailing the reasons why their application has not been successful. If the ratepayer is dissatisfied with this decision, they can appeal in writing. An appeal should be received in writing within 4 weeks of the date of the decision regarding the award or refusal of a discretionary relief. The appeal letter should detail the reasons for the appeal and also provide any additional supporting information which may assist the decision maker in support of the appeal. Requests for appeals will be considered against unsuccessful applications or against the level of discretionary rate relief awarded where a partial awarded has been granted.

7.2 Appeals will be dealt with by an Assistant Director, and the decision will be notified within 14 days of a decision being made.

7.3 Where the ratepayer or taxpayer remains dissatisfied with the decision, the appeal route is by way of judicial review.

7.4 Rates will remain payable as demanded whilst applications for relief are being considered.

8.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cabinet - NDR Discretionary relief – 11th February 2002

Cabinet – Council Tax Discretionary Discount and NDR Discretionary relief – 23rd March 2010

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Council Tax discretionary discount guidelines

Appendix 2: NDR discretionary relief guidelines

Report prepared by Sophie Lane, Revenues Service Delivery Manager. Telephone: 01952 383832

Appendix 1

DISCRETIONARY COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT POLICY 2014



Discretionary council tax discount

The Council has discretion to reduce or remit Council Tax for a particular case or classes of case that is not covered by statute set discounts or exemptions.

In what circumstances will a discount be awarded?

The Council should have defined criteria which will be taken into account when determining an application for discretionary discount. These guidelines seek to set criteria that the Council should take into account when considering applications for a reduction in the amount of Council Tax payable.

The council will consider the following in determining applications:-

- Whether the taxpayer has been forced to vacate or partially vacate the property due to serious damage caused by external environmental factors beyond their control
- Whether the taxpayer has suffered a significant degree of discomfort / inconvenience or upheaval as a result of the change caused by external environmental factors beyond their control.
- Whether the tax payer has experienced exceptional circumstances to be defined and considered on each individual basis

Where a property has been affected the following will be taken into account:

- The extent and nature of damage to the property
- The degree to which the property has been affected
- Whether the property has been vacated
- The type of property e.g. is it a main home, holiday home or second home

How will a decision be made?

Each case will be considered on its merits however the following criteria should be met for each case:

- The Council Tax payer's financial circumstances will be taken into account
- All entitlement to Council Tax Support, discounts and exemptions must be applied prior to consideration of an application.
- The Council must be satisfied that the Council Tax payer has taken all reasonable steps to resolve their situation prior to making the application.
- The Council's finances will allow for a reduction to be made.

Applications for discretionary discount must be made in writing from the tax payer, their advocate/appointee or a recognised third party acting on their behalf by completing a discretionary discount application form, and outlining the reasons why a discount should be awarded. The applicant should explain the impact of not awarding a discount.

The applicant should specify the amount of discount they wish to apply for being claimed.

Council Tax will remain payable as demanded whilst applications are being considered.

Amount of award

A maximum of 100% Council tax will be awarded.

Period of award

Awards of discretionary discount will be time limited for a maximum period of 12 months, or less if the property becomes fully habitable. The level of award can be altered following a review period or where there is a change in circumstances during the award period.

DRAFT

Appeals

All unsuccessful applications will receive a letter detailing the reasons why their application has not been successful. If the Council Tax payer is dissatisfied with this decision, they can appeal in writing to:

Revenues and Benefits

PO Box 249

Addenbrooke House

Telford

TF3 4LP

An appeal should be received in writing within 4 weeks of the date of the decision regarding the award or refusal of a discretionary relief. The appeal letter should state the reasons for the appeal and also provide any additional supporting information which may assist the decision maker in support of the appeal.

Appeals can be submitted against awards which have been refused or the level of discretionary rate relief awarded where a partial awarded has been granted.

Appeals will be dealt with by an Assistant Director and the decision will be notified to the appellant within 14 days of a decision being made.

Where the taxpayer remains dissatisfied with the decision, the appeal route is by way of judicial review.

Council tax remains payable whilst applications are being considered.

DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF POLICY 2014



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Introduction

Telford and Wrekin Council is committed to making 'doing business' in the Borough as easy as possible and recognises the challenges that businesses face whether at start up, through hardship or during expansion and relocation. These guidelines form part of the Council's wider business support programme. We also recognise the invaluable contribution that is made by voluntary, charitable and not-for-profit organisations in our community.

The Council has discretionary powers to award relief from the payment of Non Domestic rates. This policy is designed to provide guidance for Council Officers and ratepayers on the application of Discretionary Rate Relief. This policy will cover the following types of discretionary relief:

- Properties partly occupied for a temporary period
- Hardship relief
- Charitable rate relief
- Rate relief for not-for-profit organisations
- Relief for Community Amateur Sports Clubs CASC's
- Relief for rural businesses
- Discount for shops, pubs and restaurants
- Re-occupation relief
- New build empty properties

Each application for discretionary relief will be considered on its own merits, whilst having due consideration to this policy and national legislation, whilst ensuring that all applications are treated in a fair way, with no discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, race or gender. In determining the award, consideration in all cases will be given to the interests of the council taxpayers of the Borough. Awards will only be made where the benefits to the taxpayers outweigh the financial impact of the award, for example the business taking on apprentices or acting as an ambassador for the Borough to promote the area to their supply chain.

Format of applications

Applications for relief must be made on the Council's application form. Applications should be submitted with the supporting information that is requested. Any applications which are made without the supporting information will be subject to a decision being made solely on the information that is available at the time of the decision. Businesses needing support can contact the Council's Business Support Team on 01952 567589.

Timescales for the application to be considered

The Council will aim to make a decision within a maximum 4 weeks of the application and supporting information being received. Ratepayers are required to continue to pay Business Rates whilst their application or appeal is being considered. Failure to make payments will result in the Council pursuing collection via the usual recovery procedures which could result in Court action or attendance by the bailiffs.

Effective date of relief

Whilst awards for mandatory relief can be backdated for previous financial years, legislation permits discretionary relief to be awarded back to the start of the previous financial year where the application is submitted prior to the end of September in a relevant year.

It is the Council's policy that discretionary relief will only be awarded from the date of the application, or in the case of hardship, where the hardship occurred at that point in time. Only in the most exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to awarding relief for a prior period. The ratepayer must provide valid reasons for not having submitted their application at an earlier date.

Amount of relief

All amounts of relief awarded are subject to the state aid limits as defined by European legislation. Relief will not exceed €200,000 in any 3 year financial period.

The amount of relief will also be subject to the affordability of the budget available within the Council.

Costs of relief

The cost of awarding discretionary relief will be apportioned as follows:

- 50% will be funded by the government
- 49% will be funded by the Council
- 1% will be funded by the Fire Service

Decisions

Any decision regarding rate relief will be communicated to the Ratepayer in writing. Where the decision is a refusal of the award, reasons for the refusal will be provided in the letter.

Period of the award

Although there may be cases where the award of a relief will be for a shorter period, most awards will be given for a maximum of a 3 year period.

Review of the policy

A review of the policy will be undertaken on a periodic basis.

Discretionary relief for partly empty properties

There may be occasions where a property is only partly occupied for a short period of time. This may be due to a business moving in or relocating to a new property. In certain circumstances, the Council may use its discretion to award a part empty relief; also known as Section 44a (s.44A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988).

In these circumstances the Council may request that the Valuation Officer apportion the rateable value of the property between the occupied and unoccupied elements.

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Section 44A relief will be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Where the occupied and unoccupied parts of the property can be easily segregated
- Where there are short term practical or financial difficulties in either occupying or vacating the premises
- Where the business is relocating machinery
- Where there is a seasonal reason why part of the property is empty.

In all of the above cases, the period of part occupation must be for a temporary period only.

Rate relief will not be awarded where the partial occupation is due to the normal day to day operation of the business; i.e.: a warehouse which has recently had the despatch of a large order and has limited stock.

For the purposes of this policy, a period of up to 12 months will be considered to be temporary. Periods which exceed this time period will be treated as a permanent change and will not attract an award of S44A.

Relief will not be awarded where it appears to the Council that the reason that part of the property is empty for the purposes of applying for rate relief.

How will a decision be made?

Prior to an award being made, a visit to the premises will be made by a Council Officer to establish the exact area of the property that is empty. The application must be supported by a plan of the property which clearly marks the boundary of the empty and occupied parts. This plan will be given to the Valuation Officer to apportion the rateable value.

Further visits may be made to the property throughout the award to establish that the property is still partly empty.

Further applications for part empty relief will be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a change to the area of the property that is unoccupied
- Where the financial year comes to an end.

Part empty property relief will end if one of the following circumstances applies:

- The end of the financial year
- The end of the award
- Where part or all of the unoccupied parts become occupied
- Where the whole of the property becomes unoccupied
- Where liability for the property changes

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be dependant on the size of the empty space in the property.

Period of award

An award will apply for a 6 month period for industrial premises and 3 months for non industrial properties, unless it is ended by the changes in circumstance as listed above.

Hardship relief

Hardship relief will be awarded where the business is suffering from unexpected hardship which is outside of normal risks associated with the business. Reduction or remission of business rates on the grounds of hardship will only be awarded in exceptional circumstances.

Hardship relief is granted at the discretion of the Council which can reduce or remit the amount of business rates due, provided it is satisfied that:

- The ratepayer would sustain hardship if it did not do so; and
- It is reasonable for the Council to do so, having regard to the interests of its tax payers.

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

The following factors will be considered:

- The test of hardship need not be confined strictly to financial hardship; all relevant factors affecting the ability of a business to meet its liability for rates will be taken into account.
- The interests of council tax payers in the area may be wider than direct financial interests. For example, where the employment prospects in the area would be severely worsened by a company going out of business, or the amenities of an area might be reduced.
- Where the granting of relief would have an adverse effect on the financial interest of the taxpayers, the case for reduction or remission may still, on balance, outweigh the cost to the taxpayers.
- The ratepayer must provide evidence of hardship e.g.: a severe loss in trade, a marked decline in trade compared to corresponding periods in previous years.
- The business must be viable for the foreseeable future i.e.: a period of 3 years.
- Whether the business provides goods and services which are of great benefit to the borough or the neighbourhood in which it is located, such as the business taking on apprentices or trainees, providing guaranteed interviews to young people of the Borough, or acting as an ambassador for the Borough to promote the area to their supply chain.

A business will not be considered for Hardship Relief in the following circumstances:

- Where the business is profitable
- Where the business has experienced a minor loss in trade in comparison to the annual turnover of the business
- Where the drawings / remuneration of the Director(s) or proprietor are above a 'reasonable' amount.

- Where the business is new and hardship relief is being requested to fund the initial progression of the business
- Where the property is empty
- Where a similar facility is already being provided within the same locality, or within a reasonable distance.

Prior to the award being made, the business is expected to have taken appropriate action to mitigate or alleviate their hardship by:

- Speaking to the Council's Business Support Team and/or taking professional business advice
- Reviewing their pricing structure
- Re-negotiating with creditors, including the landlord regarding rent (where appropriate)
- Have a business plan in place to address the hardship

How will a decision be made?

An application for relief must be made by completing the Council's hardship rate relief application form. Applications must detail the following;

- An outline of the reasons why relief should be given
- The impact on the business of not awarding relief
- The amount of expenditure attributable to rates
- A suggestion of the amount of rate relief that is being claimed.
- Copies of the last 3 years financial accounts should be submitted with the application.

Amount of award

The award will be for up to 100% of the business rates.

Period of award

Awards will only be granted for short periods of time; usually up to a maximum of 6 months.

Discretionary relief for charitable organisations

Where the organisation is a registered charity, 80% mandatory relief must be awarded to the organisation when the property is occupied. The Council will consider awarding up to an additional 20% in discretionary top up relief.

The following factors must be met:

- Where the organisation occupies a charity shop, the shop should sell mainly donated goods, and the net proceeds of the sale of goods should be applied to the purpose of the charity.
- The property must be wholly or mainly used for the organisations charitable purposes.
- The organisation must benefit the local residents of the Borough by the services or facilities that it provides i.e.: the business taking on apprentices or trainees, providing guaranteed interviews to young people of the Borough, or acting as an ambassador for the Borough.

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Applications will be considered favourably where:

- The facilities provided by the organisation allow the Council to invest in services elsewhere i.e.: the services that it provides enables the Council to divert resources that would have been used in this area into another service.
- The organisation has a demonstrable or measureable impact of a beneficial nature on the local community which it serves i.e.; how many residents of the borough benefit from the charitable work of the organisation. The organisation is accessible to members of the community throughout the borough. The extent to which the service is used by the community will also be considered.
- Training or education is provided by the organisation to residents or members of the organisation.

Where at least one of the above criteria applies, applications will then be considered further based on the nature of the charity and its objectives. The following will be considered favourably where they are specifically mentioned as the main aim and objective of the organisation within its articles of association or memorandum:

- Where the aims and objectives are specifically in the interests of children and young people, or those beyond the age of retirement
- Charities concerned with homelessness
- Charities concerned with arts and culture
- Charities that provide independent money advice free of charge

- Charities which provide work experience opportunities or employment training for young people, the long term unemployed or those with disabilities
- Charities that run or maintain public halls / community centres
- Organisations specifically formed to support disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities, those with a terminal illness or drug or alcohol misuse

Relief will generally **not** be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties which are used for storage
- Properties which support overseas organisations
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments
- Religious, faith or ethically based groups

How will a decision be made?

The organisation will be expected to provide the following in support of their application:

- A copy of the articles of association / memorandum which clearly state the objects of the organisation; and
- A copy of the last 3 years certified financial accounts. The financial position of the organisation may be taken into account.

Amount of award

The award will be for a maximum of 20% of the total business rates payable, but will be limited per organisation to £2,000 per financial year

Period of award

Any award will last a maximum of 3 years.

Discretionary relief for non profit organisations

A not-for-profit organisation is one that is not established or conducted for profit, whose objectives are charitable, but the organisation is not registered as a charity.

Whilst a registered charity can apply for an additional 20% discretionary relief, voluntary organisations can apply for up to 100% discretionary relief.

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Applications will be considered favourably where:

- The facilities provided by the organisation allow the Council to invest in services elsewhere i.e.: the services that it provides enables the Council to divert resources that would have been used in this area into another service.
- The organisation has a demonstrable or measureable impact of a beneficial nature on the local community which it serves i.e.; how many residents of the borough benefit from the charitable work of the organisation.
- The organisation is accessible to members of the community throughout the district. The extent to which the service is used by the community will also be considered.
- Training or education is provided by the organisation to residents or members of the organisation.

Where at least one of the above criteria applies, applications will then be considered further based on the nature of the charity and its objectives. The following will be considered favourably where they are specifically mentioned as the main aim and objective of the organisation within its articles of association or memorandum :

- Where the aims and objectives are specifically in the interests of children and young people, or those beyond the age of retirement
- Organisations concerned with homelessness
- Organisations concerned with the arts and culture of the Borough
- Organisations that provide independent money advice free of charge
- Organisations which provide work experience opportunities or employment training for young people, the long term unemployed or those with disabilities.
- Organisations that run or maintain public halls / community centres.

The following criteria will be used:

1. **Membership** – is membership open to all sections of the community within the borough? Membership fees must not be at a level where they exclude the general community. Membership of the organisation should be mainly resident in the borough.

2. **Education** – the organisation will provide training, education or learning to its members. The organisation will be treated favourably where the training delivered supports and reduces the Council's need to do so.
3. **Direct benefit to local residents** – the organisation should directly benefit the needs of the local citizens within the Borough. The organisation must show how it benefits the residents of the area. Examples could include the creation of job opportunities within the area.
4. **Provision of facilities** – does the organisation provide facilities which would not otherwise be available in the local community?

Relief will generally not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties which are used for storage
- Properties which support overseas organisations
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments
- Religious, faith or ethically based groups

How will a decision be made?

The organisation will be expected to provide the following in support of their application:

- A copy of the articles of association / memorandum which clearly state the objects of the organisation; and
- A copy of the last 3 years certified financial accounts. The financial position of the organisation may be taken into account. The income of the business will be considered, and the proportion of business rates on total expenditure.

Amount of award

Relief will be granted at a maximum rate of 100% for these organisations, but will be limited to a maximum of £2,000 per organisation per year

Period of award

Any award will last up to a maximum of 3 years.

Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC's)

CASC's are entitled to 80% mandatory relief. The Council will consider awarding up to an additional 20% in discretionary top up relief.

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Consideration will be given to the following factors:

- Whether membership to the organisation is open to all citizens of the Borough, including concessions for vulnerable groups such as young people or pensioners.
- The number of members, including the percentage that are residents of the Borough
- What benefit the organisation brings to the residents of the Telford & Wrekin Borough

The following criteria will be used:

1. **Membership** – is membership open to all sections of the community within the borough? Membership fees must not be at a level where they exclude the general community. Membership of the organisation should be mainly resident in the borough.
2. **Education** – the organisation will provide training, education or learning to its members. The organisation will be treated favourably where the training delivered supports and enhances the Council's need to do so.
3. **Direct benefit to local residents** – the organisation should directly benefit the needs of the local citizens within the borough. The organisation must show how it benefits the residents of the area. Examples could include the creation of job opportunities within the area.
4. **Provision of facilities** – does the organisation provide facilities which would not otherwise be available in the local community?

Where an amateur sports club is neither a registered charity, nor a CASC, the organisation will be encouraged by the Council to submit an application for either HMRC for CASC status or to the Charity Commission for charitable status. Absence of these either status will not automatically prevent an award of up to 50% from being granted. The above criteria will be considered, along with the reasons why CASC status or charitable status has not been awarded.

How will a decision be made?

Information will need to be provided which details the financial circumstances of the Club. This will include:

- Financial accounts for the last 3 years; and

- Where the premises is a bar and the sale of drink or food is conducted in the Club, the percentage of takings attributable to this in the overall income of the Club
- Funding streams which the club has received or is due to receive.

Amount of award

The award will be up to a maximum of 20% of the total business rates payable.

Period of award

Any award will last for up to a maximum of 3 years.

Rural rate relief

Mandatory rural rate relief at a rate of 50% is awarded to properties within a defined rural settlement which has a population of less than 3000; this is the Council's rural settlement list which is published by the Council at the end of December each year. The rateable value (RV) of the property will be:

- For a qualifying sole food shop, general store or post office, the RV will not exceed £8,500
- For a qualifying sole petrol filling station or pub, the RV will not exceed £12,500.

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

- The RV of the property is below the limits as outlined above
- The property is used for the benefit of the local community
- The award of the relief is in the interests of the Council's taxpayers.

The following will be taken into consideration when deciding whether discretionary relief should be awarded:

- Whether the business employs a significant number of staff who are resident in the local community in which the business is located
- Whether there are any other suppliers of the service concerned which are easily accessible to residents within the rural settlement.

Awards for discretionary relief will be restricted to businesses with a net profit of less than £30,000 for the financial year that the application relates to.

How will a decision be made?

Applications will be determined no later than 30th September of the following financial year for which the relief is sought.

Every application must be accompanied by the latest trading accounts or equivalent / relevant documentation and evidence as to the proportion of expenditure attributable to rates. In determining the application, the Council will give some consideration to the financial viability of the business concerned, thereby having regard to the interests of the council tax payers in general. This will be balanced by the detrimental effect on the rural community should the business have to cease trading either as a direct or indirect result of not awarding relief.

Amount of award

The amount awarded will be up to 50% of the total business rates payable.

Period of award

An award will be made for up to a maximum period of 3 years.

Discount for shops, pubs and restaurants

The following discretionary discount will only be available for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years only as per national government legislation

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

The property must have a rateable value of £50,000 or less. The property must be wholly or mainly used for the purpose of a shop, restaurant, cafe or drinking establishment / pub.

Examples of properties which would qualify:

- Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licence, chemist, newsagent, hardware store, supermarkets etc)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops (such as carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
- Car / caravan show rooms, or second hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations
- Garden centres
- Art galleries
- Hair and beauty salons (such as hair dressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops)
- Show repairs or key cutting shops
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices
- Dry cleaners or laundrettes
- Domestic repair services (such as TV or computers repair)
- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- Dvd / video rental
- Tool hire or car hire
- Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Coffee shops
- Pubs or bars

The following examples would not qualify for the relief:

- Financial services (such as banks, building societies, cash points, bureau de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers)
- Other services (such as estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)

- Medical services (such as vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (such as solicitors, accountants, insurance agents / financial advisors, tutors)
- Post office sorting office
- A property which is not readily accessible to the visiting members of the public.

The above list is not exhaustive. Any properties which are used for other purposes will be considered on an individual basis by the Council.

How will a decision be made?

Each application will be considered on its own merits following receipt of a written application form.

Where any other types of relief are applicable to the property, these will be applied first. The relief will be applied against the net bill.

Amount of award

A maximum of £1000 will be awarded per property for each of the relevant financial years if the property is used for the purpose of a shop, restaurant or pub for the whole financial year.

Period of award

An award will be made for 2014/15 and 2015/16 only as per national government guidance.

Re-occupation relief

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

- The property has been unoccupied for a period of at least 12 months.
- The property is a retail unit

And the property becomes occupied.

How will a decision be made?

Each application will be considered on its own merits. Applications must be made in writing. The Council must be satisfied that the property has been empty for over 12 months and will be used as a retail unit.

Amount of award

The amount awarded will be up to 50%.

Period of award

An award will be made for up to a maximum period of 18 months. However this will only apply for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years as per Government legislation

New build empty property relief

In what circumstances will relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

- all newly built commercial property is completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. These properties will be exempt from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aids limits.

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be all unoccupied business properties which are wholly or mainly comprised of qualifying new structures.

How will a decision be made?

All applications will be considered on an individual basis. Each application must be made in writing.

Amount of award

An award up to 100% will be made.

Period of award

The award will be made for properties completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016 for the first 18 months following completion.

Appeals

All unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter detailing the reasons why their application has not been successful. If the ratepayer is dissatisfied with this decision, they can appeal in writing to:

Revenues and Benefits

PO Box 249

Addenbrooke House

Telford

TF3 4LP

An appeal should be received in writing within 4 weeks of the date of the decision regarding the award or refusal of a discretionary relief. The appeal letter should detail the reasons for the appeal and also provide any additional supporting information which may assist the decision maker in support of the appeal.

Requests for appeals will be considered against unsuccessful applications or against the level of discretionary rate relief awarded where a partial awarded has been granted.

Appeals will be dealt with by an Assistant Director, and the decision will be notified within 14 days of a decision being made.

Where the taxpayer remains dissatisfied with the decision, the appeal route is by way of judicial review.

Business rates remain payable as demanded whilst applications for relief are being considered.

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 27th March, 2014 at 5.00 p.m. at the AFC Telford Learning Centre, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 2nd APRIL, 2014

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 7th APRIL, 2014)

PRESENT: Councillors R.A. Overton (Deputy Leader and Chair for the meeting), E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, W.A.M. McClements, H. Rhodes, C.F. Smith and P.R. Watling

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

CB-97 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-98 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr K.S Sahota (Leader)

CB-99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CB-100 TELFORD & WREKIN DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY 2014/15 – 2016/17

Key Decision identified as **Telford & Wrekin Drug Strategy 2013-16** and **Telford & Wrekin Alcohol Strategy 2013-16** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 26 February 2014.

Councillor R.A. Overton, Cabinet Member: Public Health & Public Protection, presented the report of the Consultant in Public Health, which provided an overview of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy for Telford & Wrekin 2014/15-2016/17. A copy of the Strategy was appended to the report.

The Strategy set out the intention to work with partners to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and/or drug misuse in local communities, and would make a key contribution to the Council's priority to 'Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities'. It highlighted the national and local picture relating to drug misuse and alcohol consumption, and the impacts this had on hospital admissions, treatment services and crime rates.

The Strategy and associated Action Plan had been developed following extensive engagement with stakeholders and key partners. It used as a framework the three pillars of the Government's National Drug Strategy – reducing demand, restricting supply and building recovery in communities. For each of these areas, there was a series of aims and objectives with related key performance and outcome measures. An associated action plan included detailed actions covering targeted prevention work, transformation of specialist treatment, and support for sustained recovery. The Telford & Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Action Team would be responsible for co-ordinating implementation of the Strategy and action plan, and monitoring the impact on outcomes.

The Strategy had received cross-party support from the Health & Wellbeing Board, and Councillor H. Rhodes added that it had been welcomed by the Community Safety Partnership.

Cabinet Members welcomed the Strategy, and highlighted in particular the importance of prevention and early intervention. Investing in this work, particularly for young people, reduced local authority and NHS treatment costs, reduced the cost of crime in local communities and offered life-time benefits in terms of health, education and employment.

RESOLVED –

- (a) **that the Telford and Wrekin Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2014/15-2016/17 be endorsed and approved;**
- (b) **that the governance which is in place to manage the implementation of the Strategy, and monitor the impact on outcomes and performance, be noted.**

CB-101 SUBMISSION OF MADELEY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Key Decision identified as **Submission of Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 26 February 2014.

Councillor C.F. Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist regarding the submission of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) by Madeley Town Council, and the steps that now needed to be taken.

Since 2011, an NDP for Madeley had been in development led by a steering group and working with Officers from the Town and Borough Councils. Following designation of the Neighbourhood Plan Area in 2012, the Town Council had produced a NDP which had been subject to the required period of consultation. The final Plan and supporting documents were submitted to Telford & Wrekin Council on 11 February 2014. In response, and in accordance with statutory requirements, the Council had completed a number of checks to ensure that all the procedural and other requirements had been

met. These had concluded that the submission was compliant and that it was in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies of the adopted Development Plan for the local area. Therefore, based on the comprehensive nature of the Basic Conditions Statement, and the appropriate scope and nature of the evidence base used to underpin the NDP, it was considered that the relevant requirements had been met, and the NDP could be progressed on to the next stage and submitted for independent examination.

The NDP was currently subject to a 6 week publication period, and any representations received would be forwarded to an Independent Examiner (IE). The IE would be appointed by the Council in agreement with Madeley Town Council, and would check the contents of the Plan, supporting documents and written representations. The Examiner would then submit a report to Cabinet with a recommendation as to whether the NDP should be progressed to a referendum of electors in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Councillor P.R. Watling, as a local Ward Member, reported that a lot of work had gone into the development of this Plan, particularly with the input from Madeley Town Council and the local community. In response to a question regarding the status of a Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist advised that it would support the existing Core Strategy and saved policies from the adopted Wrekin Local Plan.

RESOLVED -

- (a) that a Decision Statement be issued to confirm that the Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and Regulations;**
- (b) that the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist be authorised to undertake all necessary arrangements for the Madeley Development Neighbourhood Plan to be processed in accordance with the relevant legislation through the Independent Examination stage.**

CB-102 DECLARATION OF DOTHILL LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Key Decision identified as **Declaration of Dothill Local Nature Reserve** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 26 February 2014.

Councillor C.F. Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist which sought approval for a new Local Nature Reserve (LNR) comprising an area of open space surrounding a lake and pools at Dothill, Wellington. A plan of the site was appended to the report.

The proposal had been developed in liaison with the local community, the Wellington Conservation Area Working Group and the Dothill Open Space Steering Group, and would involve local volunteers carrying out small scale conservation tasks as part of the site management. The site was within the Council's ownership and met the necessary criteria for selection as a LNR –

including an up-to-date management plan and support from Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England. Subject to approval, the next stage would be to progress the site further through the formal process with Natural England prior to final declaration. Designation would offer protection from future development or inappropriate use.

Members welcomed the involvement of the local community and volunteers in developing the proposal, which would help protect and conserve a valuable green space.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the declaration of Dothill Local Nature Reserve be approved;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Planning Specialist, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Housing Development & Borough Towns, to complete the declaration process.**

CB-103 PLANNING OF SCHOOL PLACES – REVIEW OF SEND PROVISION

Key Decision identified as **School Organisation – SEND provision review** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 26 February 2014.

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting, which sought approval to consult stakeholders on the possibility of providing post 16 educational facilities for students with severe and profound learning difficulties on the site of Telford College of Arts & Technology (TCAT), and alter the upper age range of pupils attending the Bridge School.

Currently, the Bridge School served pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties from the ages of 2 to 19 years. There was concern that the options available for students once they left the school were limited, with only a relatively small proportion of this group going on to access further educational opportunities. Accordingly, a bid had been submitted to the Demographic Growth Fund to expand the specialist provision available within TCAT. The bid was successful in providing £1.8m with which to expand provision to learners with complex needs and disabilities. The proposal was to use the funding to provide a specialist facility on the TCAT site for the 16+ age group. This would combine the expertise of the Bridge School with specialist accommodation and access to wider facilities within TCAT. It was not expected that the proposal would have any long term impact on the numbers of pupils attending Bridge School.

It was proposed to hold a formal consultation on the proposals over a six week period ending on 12 May 2014. Parents of children at Bridge School would all be consulted, as well as staff and other key partners and stakeholders.

The Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting added that, if the proposal went ahead, there was agreement for a senior Leader from Bridge School to be seconded to the new facilities at TCAT in order to provide continuity and reassurance for parents.

RESOLVED –

- (a) **that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting to engage in formal consultation with key partners and stakeholders regarding the possible development of provision for post 16 learners with severe and profound special educational needs in partnership with Telford College of Arts & Technology, with associated consultation on the related proposal to alter the age range of the Bridge School so that it accepts pupils up to the age of 16 and ceases to make provision for 16 to 19 year olds;**
- (b) **that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, to decide whether to progress the project following the formal consultation period.**

CB-104 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF/DISCOUNT FOR BUSINESS RATES AND COUNCIL TAX

Non-Key Decision

Councillor W.A.M McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Customer Services, which proposed refreshed guidelines for the awarding of discretionary Council tax discount and the granting of discretionary rate relief for businesses.

Following the changes introduced in April 2013 under which 49% of business rates were retained locally by the Council, the Discretionary Relief Guidelines (last updated in 2010) had been reviewed and refreshed to ensure that they remained fit for purpose. Despite the economic climate, which had seen many local authorities reducing rate relief, Telford & Wrekin had taken a conscious decision to continue to support local charities and groups who actively contributed to the community. The proposed new Guidelines for the granting of discretionary rate relief for businesses were appended to the report. They also reflected the Council's priority to incentivise and support major business growth and inward investment to the Borough. It was estimated that the new reliefs would bring in an estimated £500k additional support into the Borough benefitting approximately 600 businesses. The new reliefs included a £1000 discount for all retail, pubs and cafes with rateable value below £50,000 for 2 years, and a 50% discount for 18 months for new occupiers of former retail premises which had been unoccupied for a year.

The Council had the discretion to reduce the Council Tax charge for individual properties or classes of property. The guidelines for the award of any discounts had been refreshed, and were appended to the report. They took

account of factors such as vacation of a property due to flooding or some other natural disaster, significant upheaval as a result of an environmental factor beyond the applicant's control and other exceptional circumstances.

The report also set out a revised appeals process for those applicants dissatisfied with the outcome of a decision made in regard of an application for discretionary relief.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the refreshed guidelines for awarding discretionary Council Tax discount in prescribed circumstances, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved for implementation from April 2014;
- (b) that the refreshed guidelines for the granting of discretionary rate relief for businesses, as detailed at Appendix 2 of the report, be approved for implementation from April 2014;
- (c) that the refreshed process for appeals where a ratepayer or taxpayer is dissatisfied with the decision made be approved.

CB-105 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it may involve the disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CB-106 INCENTIVISING GROWTH – THE TELFORD ‘DEAL FOR BUSINESS’

Key Decision identified as **Supporting and Incentivising Business in Telford & Wrekin** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 17 October 2013.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment concerning proposals to provide financial incentives to both existing and prospective businesses linked to a commitment from business to invest directly in the Borough's growth and employment.

This was part of the Council's "Business Supporting, Business Winning" approach to making investment in the Borough as easy and attractive as possible. The report provided information on the terms of how agreements, or Deals, with businesses would be negotiated and brokered. The Deals would only be considered once all other avenues of support and external finance had been exhausted. In return for any incentives offered, the Council would expect the business to make a firm commitment to support the wider growth

and prosperity of the Borough – including measures to provide employment and training opportunities for young people in the Borough.

RESOLVED -

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Director: Development, Business & Customer Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise and the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance, to enter into agreements with businesses in line with the terms set out in the report;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to execute all necessary documentation required for the purposes of resolution (a) above, in accordance with the Constitution including if relevant the affixing of the Common Seal of the Council.

The meeting ended at 5.19 pm.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services
Date: 2 April 2014

Signed:

Date: