



Telford & Wrekin
C O U N C I L

Addenbrooke House Ironmasters Way Telford TF3 4NT

CABINET

Date **Thursday, 17 November 2016** Time **5.00pm**
Venue **Meeting Room G3, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT**

Enquiries Regarding this Agenda:

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Cabinet Members:

Councillor S Davies	Leader of the Council
Councillor R A Overton	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure & Health
Councillor L D Carter	Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services
Councillor E A Clare	Culture, Sports, Parks & Green Spaces
Councillor A R H England	Adult Social Care & Older People
Councillor A D McClements	Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services
Councillor G C W Reynolds	Education, Employment & Regeneration
Councillor H Rhodes	Public Protection, Safety & Enforcement
Councillor P R Watling	Children, Young People & Communities

Invitees

Councillor A J Eade	Conservative
Councillor W L Tomlinson	Liberal Democrat/Independent

AGENDA

	<u>Cabinet Member</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Apologies for Absence		
2. Declarations of Interest		
3. Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 October 2016.		Appendix A
KC 4. Ensuring Children are Fully Protected in Telford and Wrekin – Getting to Good	Cllr Paul Watling	Appendix B
K 5. Proposed Consultation on School Organisation Including the Re-Designation of Attendance Areas	Cllr Gilly Reynolds	Appendix C
K 6. Pride In Your High Street Update	Cllr Gilly Reynolds	Appendix D

Continued ...

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		<u>Key</u>	
K	Key Decision	C	Item reserved for Council
NK	Non-Key Decision	Orange	Exempt Item

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 17 November at 5.00pm at Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2016

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2016)

Present: Councillors S Davies (Leader and Chair), L D Carter, E A Clare, A R H England, A D McClements, R A Overton, G C W Reynolds, H Rhodes and P R Watling.

Also Present: Councillors A J Eade (Conservative Group Leader)

CB-043 Apologies for Absence

CB-044 Declarations of Interest

None.

CB-045 Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-046 Ensuring Children are Fully Protected in Telford and Wrekin – Getting to Good

Key Decision identified as Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 19 October 2016.

Reserved for Council

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Communities presented the report of the Director of Children's and Adult Services and Independent Chair of the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board.

The report was presented in response to the motion carried at the Full Council Meeting on 22 September 2016, that the Council:

- Present a comprehensive plan at the November Full Council Meeting demonstrating a clear commitment to the improvement of Children's Services and detail exactly how the Administration intends to raise all Children's Services in the Borough to a minimum standard of 'Good'.
- Present details of measures the current Administration will now introduce to ensure that vulnerable children in the Borough are fully protected in future

and precisely how it will tackle the serious problems currently facing the Borough.

A draft action plan in line with recommendations from the Ofsted Single Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers was appended to the report.

Councillor Watling reported that the Council had always had an organisational priority of protecting vulnerable children and adults within the Borough and it ensured that the right help and interventions were and continued to be provided at the right time for children and families. In working in partnership with other agencies, the Council ensured that children in the Borough were and continued to be fully protected. The relationships were enhanced and supported by the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB), which provided focussed and effective challenge to the Council and other agencies as well as supporting the Council in its improvement agenda. In the last year the Council had reviewed some key aspects of how children's services operated and implemented plans to improve services.

The report provided background on the Single Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers (SIF) arrangements. The Cabinet noted the major change in scope from previous inspection frameworks, as it covered the whole of children's social care plus a review of Local Safeguarding Children Board. Furthermore, the major change in timescale was acknowledged; previous one or two week inspections with notice had been replaced by month long inspections with 24 hours' notice.

Details of the national context were also provided; 2% (2) of the 116 Local Authorities inspected in England were judged to be 'outstanding', 25% (28) 'good', 49% (54) 'requires improvement' and 24% (26) 'inadequate'. Members were provided with the details of Telford & Wrekin Council's SIF, which took place between 13 June and 7 July 2016. A copy of the report published on 26 August 2016 was appended to the report.

Councillor Watling advised that the overall grading was that "Children's Services in Telford and Wrekin require improvement to be good". Out of the five judgement areas, two were found to be good already (adoption performance and experiences and progress of care leavers). This was the second best performance out of the nine West Midlands local authorities who had been inspected so far. The Cabinet was pleased to note that the inspection had recognised improvements in the quality of services and in the outcomes that children were achieving, commenting on strong leadership of the Director of Children's Services and the senior team, and the effective political backing and hands-on support of the Managing Director.

Councillor Watling went on to note that in the verbal feedback received from the inspection team, it was reported that significant improvements could be seen and that the Council should continue to do what it was doing to achieve consistently good services. Inspectors had found the Council to be self-aware, and the findings from the inspection reflected the strengths and areas for improvement identified in the 'Where We Are' self-assessment document. The Council had also received positive

feedback about the commitment and motivation of staff, and it had been acknowledged that staff felt supported by management at all levels.

In terms of the Council's response to tackling CSE and the role of partners, Ofsted had reported that work with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation was very strong and Members noted that there had been no recommendations to further improve the Council's work on CSE. It was acknowledged that the Council and the TWSCB already had an action plan in place to continue to improve the work in this area. examples of which were highlighted in the report had acknowledged that the Council had been a champion for tackling CSE, leadership had been provided to partner agencies and the work had been found to be well co-ordinated.

Areas for improvement had been identified by Ofsted; the 11 recommendations were set out in Appendix 2 to the report. Members noted the large reduction on the 34 recommendations from the previous inspection in 2012. Ofsted's recommendations provided for actions to achieve 'Good'.

The Cabinet noted that there had also been a review of the effectiveness of the TWSCB, which was judged to be 'good' and identified 5 recommendations for improvement, details of which were appended to the report.

Councillor Watling noted the clear commitment of the Cabinet, which had recently proposed that three additional posts be funded (1 Senior Social Worker and 2 CSE Practitioners). This would enable the team to have the capacity to proactively be involved in education and raising awareness of CSE with children, families and professionals within the Borough.

Councillor Watling reported that a copy of the first draft of the action plan was attached to the report but that, following a recent meeting with Ofsted, some further refinement would be required prior to submission of the final draft by 5 December. The plan highlighted that some additional resource would be required to achieve the necessary improvements which included some one off and ongoing costs as detailed within the plan.

Following a question received, Councillor Watling reported that refinement of the draft action plan was a normal part of process, the meeting with Ofsted had been positive and reinforced previous comments for the Council to keep doing what it was doing.

Councillor A J Eade requested a copy of the final written submission.

Cabinet particularly welcomed aspects of the report relating to the Council's work with others, noting the importance of work to smooth the transition to adulthood, with particular praise for officers. Cabinet also thanked the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Communities for his dedication and leadership. The Leader informed the Cabinet that he had recently been in discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the high prioritisation of Child Sex Offences.

RESOLVED that -

- a) the measures to ensure that children in the Borough are fully protected be endorsed;
- b) the power to approve the final action plan be delegated to the Director of Children's and Adult Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People;
- c) the cost of implementing the action plan (£255k) which will be met initially from a combination of service one offs and the Corporate contingency in 2016/17 and will be built into the budget for 2017/18 and ongoing be endorsed.

CB-047 Proposed Consultation on School Organisation Including the Re - Designation of Attendance Areas

Key Decision identified as School Organisation Plan in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 19 October 2016.

Councillor G C W Reynolds, Cabinet Member: Education, Employment and Regeneration presented the report of the Assistant Director: Education and Corporate Parenting which provided details on the school organisation and attendance area consultation, which was proposed to run from 2 December 2017 to 27 January 2018 in line with the statutory requirement for a 6 week term time period of school admissions consultation for academic year 2018/19.

Details on the current position with regard to designated attendance areas for the vast majority of maintained schools and academies were provided. It was reported that whilst these attendance areas did not prevent parents or carers from expressing preference for other schools it was widely accepted that the practice of allocating an attendance area, usually linked to the school's proximity to local housing, helped to determine a range of issues which provided an efficient service for allocating school places. The attendance areas had remained largely unchanged since 2008 and it was proposed that it was a logical time to re-consider this due to new schools built as part of BSF and also the recent upturn in new housing developments.

Details of the implications for primary, secondary and special schools were provided in the report. In particular it was noted that;

- due to potential pressure on places in Newport priority would be given for available places to residents of Newport and its surrounding villages and alternative places would be identified for Muxton pupils elsewhere within the Telford north area which was geographically closer than Newport.
- Telford Priory School would become the attendance area for Muxton residents.
- the Lawley area would become a shared attendance area between Ercall Wood and Telford Langley School.

Councillor G C W Reynolds emphasised that there were sufficient school places across the borough and that the reorganisation did not prevent parents from

exercising their preference for their child to attend an alternative school, but that it would not be incumbent upon the Council to provide home to school transport.

The Cabinet noted that prior to consultation; discussions would be undertaken with key organisations including:

- Specifically affected schools
- Academy sponsors potentially affected by the proposals
- Diocesan representatives affected by the proposals

During the ensuing debate, Members noted that parental preference would be maintained as a result of any changes and that the savings on home to school transport which could be generated by the proposals could be redirected within childrens' services. Discussion took place on the approach to Building School for the Future which had been adopted by the administration and the robustness of the Local Plan.

The Assistant Director: Education and Corporate Parenting was invited to explain the calculation of developer contributions by the School Organisation Team and he noted government legislation which meant that any new school builds had to be designated Free Schools. The EFA had subsequently announced that those areas of the country where the impact of rising populations was such that the Council could not discharge its duty to provide school places would be enabled to build Free Schools. However, this Council was not in a position to claim such support and he believed this was due to the successful planning of the School Organisation Team.

RESOLVED - that

- a) the information relating to the proposed consultation on the changes to attendance contained within this report be noted; and**
- b) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Education, Employment & Regeneration to take all required actions and exercise all the Council's relevant powers to enable consultation on agreed issues contained within the report to be undertaken during December 2016 and January 2017.**

CB-048 Pride In Your High Street Update

Key Decision identified as Pride in the High Street in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 19 October 2016.

Councillor G C W Reynolds, Cabinet Member: Education, Employment and Regeneration presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment, which provided Members with an update on the Pride in Your High Street (PIYHS) fund. The fund of £1m supported physical and social regeneration across our Borough High Streets; recognising the importance of thriving high streets and local centres to strengthen communities and local economies. The fund formed part of the Council's 'business winning and business supporting' agenda.

The Cabinet recalled that the Fund was launched in April 2015 and all nine eligible high streets and local centres submitted successful projects. Promoters had been notified about their successful applications in January 2016 and a number of great projects were now in delivery or had been completed, making a real difference to both the physical environment and vitality of the borough towns. It was clear already that Pride in Your High Street would have a lasting impact. Details of the projects were outlined in the report, including:

- the Newport the Food Frenzy, Carnival and Italian Market
- Social enterprise Wavelength opened 'The Forge' in Wellington
- Business support specialists Good2Great provided training to more than 50 businesses across 6 high streets, helping a wide range of businesses from florists to cafes, hardware shops and accountants.
- 10,000 attended the Oakengates Carnival and with PIYHS funding this would likely become an annual event.
- the Madeley a Band Concert, Queen's Birthday Tea Party and a Victorian fete, achieved the twin objectives of raising the profile of the Anstice and raising funds to pay for the refurbishment of the Ballroom floor.

It was report that at the close of the first bidding round there was an amount of unallocated funding and five high streets which had either experienced a lack of suitable applications, had received no applications for one or other of the elements of the fund or where projects were unable to proceed as a result of changes in circumstances, were each allocated a share of this funding. A second bidding round, open only to those five high streets (Wellington, Donnington, Oakengates, Newport and Dawley) with calls for projects led by the Parish and Town Councils in those areas had so far resulted in an additional eight successful projects supporting high street and local centre regeneration, with a project for Dawley to come forward for evaluation.

A number of physical regeneration projects from the first bidding round were still in delivery. The Council was supporting project sponsors to bring their projects forward as soon as possible, however where projects involve the design and commissioning of physical works, for example, it was likely that these would run beyond the original programme completion date of 31 March 2017. Given the investment being made by project sponsors including private and voluntary groups and the success of projects delivered to date it was proposed that flexibility be provided for extensions in the delivery period to be made, up to March 2018.

Members welcomed the report, particularly, noting the projects which had led to improvements in their own Ward areas and the links to well-being that could be made.

RESOLVED that -

- a) the success of the Pride In Your High Street programme to date be noted;**
- b) authority be delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Regeneration, to extend**

the deadline for expenditure of Pride in Your High Street grants beyond 31 March 2017; and

- c) the 31 March 2018 be noted as the final deadline for completion of projects and receipt of financial and outcome monitoring information from organisations.**

The meeting ended at 5.38pm

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning
Date: 23 November 2016

Signed:

Date:

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 13 October at 5.00pm at Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2016

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2016)

Present: Councillors S Davies (Leader and Chair), L D Carter, A D McClements, R A Overton, G C W Reynolds, H Rhodes and P R Watling.

Also Present: Councillors A J Eade (Conservative Group Leader), and W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/ Independent Group)

Announcements:

The Leader, Councillor S Davies noted the sad and untimely passing of Councillor Clive Mollett. He paid tribute to his services to the Council and extended sympathies to his family. Councillors A J Eade and W L Tomlinson echoed the tribute and also extended their sympathies.

The Leader expressed his concerns at the recent statement by Owen Paterson MP who had called for the authority to be abolished over its campaign to keep the threatened A&E department at the Princess Royal Hospital.

CB-033 Apologies for Absence

Councillors E A Clare, A R H England.

CB-034 Declarations of Interest

None.

CB-035 Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-036 2016/17 Financial Management Report

Key Decision identified as Financial Management Report in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 14 September August 2016.

Reserved for Council

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance and Human Resources (Chief Financial Officer).

It was reported that the net projected outturn position for 2016/17 was estimated to be within budget, after applying £3.2m available in central contingencies, pending any further commitments in the rest of the year; and after using the specific contingency of £2.5m earmarked in the 2016/17 budget strategy for Early Help & Support pressures and the one off service balances totalling £0.5m for Children's Safeguarding.

Members noted that this was an improvement on the previous report, which reflected the strength of the financial management despite the level of savings taken out of budgets in 2016/17 and previous years.

Despite the Government's commitment to a Four Year Grant Settlement, it was noted that the funding outlook for the medium term was still very uncertain due to the number of changes in the pipeline outside the Revenue Support Grant process. However, it had been anticipated that a further £15-20m savings would need to be identified by the end of 2019/20 on top of the £12m already identified for 2017/18.

It was reported that work was currently underway to develop a range of options for further savings which would feed into the budget strategy next year. It was agreed that it was inevitable that many of these new savings proposals were likely to have greater front line service impacts than the savings made to date which had focussed on driving down staffing levels and other costs and improving efficiency within the organisation.

Children's Safeguarding and Early Help & Support continued to be key areas of pressure that had cost improvement plans in place, monitored on a regular basis by senior managers and Cabinet Members, to reduce costs and deliver savings. Members noted the pressures in this area and that the impact would be significant in years to come; it was felt that up until now the availability of contingencies had diminished the impact. It was highlighted that although the impact of the Government's welfare reforms could not be demonstrated at this time, it was essential to continue the fair funding campaign, particularly as the Cabinet had made a commitment to pledge 90% of any funds received would go towards Children and Adult care services.

A number of variations from the approved budget were reported, including some beneficial variances. The key areas highlighted were:

- A benefit of £2.5m relating to Treasury Management activities - the majority of which related to benefits from low interest rates for short term borrowing and the current Treasury Management Strategy of keeping the majority of new borrowings very short term.
- A one off benefit of £0.6m following the final winding-up of Transforming Telford Ltd.
- Early Help & Support had projected an overspend of £3.7m, mainly relating to the cost of care packages. This was an improvement of over £0.3m compared to the position reported in July. A cost improvement plan was in place to deliver savings which should reduce this as the year progressed.
- Children's Safeguarding also continued to be a key pressure with an overspend of £2.8m, the majority relating to the cost of Children in Care

placements. A cost improvement plan was in place to review costs and the placement strategy.

It was noted that the capital programme totalled £92.3m which included all approvals since the budget was set. At the time of compiling the report projected spend was 93% of the budget allocation. Some new allocations, virements and slippage had been identified which would go to Full Council in November for formal approval.

Sales Ledger and Business Rates collection were ahead of the targets set. The level of outstanding Council Tax debt was slightly behind the target set for the year.

It was noted that there was a correction to recommendation 2.1 (i) in the Report; projected revenue spending was for 2016/17 and not 2015/16.

RESOLVED-

- a) to note the 2016/17 revenue spending was currently projected to be within budget and work continued with SMT to sustain this position;**
- b) that the position in relation to capital spend be noted and TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the new allocations, virements and slippage detailed in Appendix 3 of the Report be approved**
- c) that the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger be noted.**

CB-037 Youth Justice Plan 2016/17

Key Decision identified as Youth Justice Plan in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 14 September 2016.

Reserved for Council

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Communities presented the report of the Director of Children's and Adults Services, which provided Members with details of the annual youth justice plan, on behalf of Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council, Telford and Wrekin Council and Worcestershire County Council in accordance with the guidance "Youth Justice Plans: YJB Practice Note for Youth Offending Partnerships".

The Youth Justice Plan appended to the report set out how youth justice services across West Mercia were structured and funded and identified key actions to address identified risks to service delivery and improvement. The plan outlined the partnerships priorities for 2016/17 and provided commentary on the three national performance indicators for youth offending services. It was noted that:

- the rate of first time entrants to the youth justice system had increased in three of four local authority areas between 2014 and 2015, the reasons for this had been unclear. One of the priorities in 16/17 would be to investigate this and establish the reasons behind the increased rates. Members sought

clarification on the local authority areas and it was noted that Telford and Wrekin was one of the four local authorities in which there had been an increase; Herefordshire was the local authority where a slight decrease had been recorded. It was further clarified that overall the rate in West Mercia had increased against the national rate which has slightly reduced.

- in 2015/16 there was one custodial sentence in Telford equating to a rate of 0.06, this compared favourably to the West Mercia rate of 0.14 and the national rate of 0.37.
- the proportion of young people re-offending and the number of actual re-offences had decreased by -50% between 2010 and 2014; in the year ending June 2010 there were 370 offenders in the cohort and 337 re-offences compared to a cohort size of 140 with 168 re-offences in 2014.

The hosting arrangement for the service transferred to the Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner from 1st April 2016. As part of the governance structures Telford & Wrekin Council had delegated responsibility to oversee the implementation of the plan to the Community Safety partnership. This would support the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan by realigning local priorities with the Community Safety Plan and the Police and Crime Plan to reduce offending and reoffending. This would also work towards understanding behaviours related to offending that would manage demand on high cost services.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that–

- a) the Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 be approved approval and the West Mercia YOS responsibilities be endorsed; and**
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Community Safety Partnership to oversee the Implementation of the Youth Justice Plan.**

CB-038 Procurement Update Report

Key Decision identified as Procurement Update Report in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 14 September 2016.

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services presented the report of the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement and Commissioning, which provided Members with an update on the Council's Procurement Intentions Documents and progress with procurement and contract management. An additional appendix was circulated which showed detail of savings on service contracts. Members noted that the savings in the report and appendices did not show the significance of the savings that had been achieved by the Council to date and that were in the pipeline.

It was noted that council wide procurement continued to drive savings through robust competitive tendering and real time negotiation when brokering services. Savings derived from effective procurement had contributed to the Cost Improvement Plans in place across the council.

Savings secured in recent months included:

- £50k re-negotiating a block contract within adults services,
- £31k per annum reviewing a young person's long term care placement,
- £15k through a change of procurement route for an ICT Product,
- £7k on our new insurance contract,
- £7k per annum on our hygiene contract,
- £3k extra income through increased commission from vending machines.

An opportunity for further savings had been proposed for consideration through the trial of electronic signatures when issuing legal documents.

RESOLVED that -

- a) the procurement updates in the report be noted;**
- b) the Procurement Intentions Document (appended to the report) be noted and delegation to the appropriate officers (as per the Contract Procedure Rules) to progress new procurements through the tender process to contract award, be approved;**
- c) a waiver of the relevant Contract Procedure Rules to allow a pilot to trial the use of electronic signatures by the Procurement, Brokerage and Licensing Teams for a period of 3 months be approved.**

CB-039 West Mercia Energy Joint Agreement

Key Decision identified as West Mercia Energy (WME) Joint Agreement in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 14 September 2016.

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance and Human Resources which provided Members with details of the proposed update to the main agreement for West Mercia Energy (WME) between the constituent authorities, together with the related financial regulations, contract standing orders and scheme of delegation. A draft proposal had been agreed by Legal and Finance officers and would be ratified through each authority's cabinet process. Details of the changes were provided in Part B of the report. It was reported that the suggested governance changes would not impact on the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED

- a) that the discussions taking place between the owning Authorities; Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire Council, Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire Council be noted;**
- b) to note that current governance arrangements for WME may be amended in line with the report;**

- c) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources to finalise and execute amendments to the governance arrangements in Consultation with the Assistant Director of Governance, Procurement and Commissioning.

CB-040 Enterprise Telford – Driving Growth and Prosperity

**Non Key Decision
Reserved for Council**

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Council Finance, Partnerships & Commercial Services presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment which updated Members on the strategy for economic development that was launched in May 2016, progress to date and the proposal to increase the size of the Growth Fund by a further £30m, creating a Fund of £50m.

It was reported that over the last 3 years more than £150m of business investment in the borough and the creation or safeguarding of more than 2,000 jobs had been seen from the Council's business winning and business supporting approach. Members noted the key highlights, which included:

- the £83m investment by the Ministry of Defence into the logistics hub at Donnington;
- inward investment from major manufacturing businesses -
 - WZ (Moneta) Packaging,
 - The Recycling Group,
 - XYZ and
 - Filtermist who invested in Telford's flagship investment site, T54;
- significant expansions by existing Telford businesses-
 - BAE Systems,
 - Stadco,
 - Craemer and
 - Heinz.

In order to underpin the Enterprise Telford offer to business the Council had established a £20m Growth Fund which was being used to invest directly into land and property enabling local businesses to expand and draw in new investors. The investment fund was delivering new jobs and with £14.7m already committed to borough wide schemes, was set to deliver a gross income of £1.2m pa and a net income after borrowing of £400k pa - plus further income from growth in business rates. The investment was having an impact across the Borough and would enable the delivery of a further 1000 jobs.

The Fund had enabled the multi million pound investment by Magna International at T54, which would deliver in excess of 300 jobs and safeguarded more than 160 jobs in Newport following the Council's acquisition of the Audley Avenue Industrial Park.

Members noted that the first phase of Enterprise Telford had not only generated income, secured jobs and stimulated enterprise, benefitting all parts of the borough but importantly it was increasing the Council's asset base, which had been deficient historically. It also supported the Council's Strengthening Families strategy and created aspiration amongst young people in the borough. Tangible benefits could be demonstrated in the business and enterprise nationally and internationally attracted to the area and Members noted the positive feedback given by businesses reproduced in the report.

The proposal to increase the size of the Growth Fund by a further £30m would create a Fund of £50m. The potential gross return from the £50m Fund would be £3m pa - £1m pa net of borrowing, plus further growth in business rates which would help the Council to address the impact on frontline services from the ongoing reduction in Government grant. The Telford Growth Hub was the focus for engaging with investors and delivering wide ranging business support with hot desk facilities for start-ups. In less than 12 months the Hub had engaged with over 1500 people and 250 businesses had visited and used the facilities.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the success of the Council's business winning and business supporting approach and the opportunities being generated through the Enterprise Telford campaign be noted;**
- (b) that an increase of £30m in the Growth Fund, to facilitate the expansion of the PIP as set out in the report, be approved and authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment, in consultation with the Assistant Director: Finance & Human Resources and the Cabinet Lead for Council Finance, Partnerships and Commercial Services to consider and approve each business case for investment.**
- (c) TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the PIP be granted approval to undertake prudential borrowing to undertake the acquisition and disposal of PIP assets and/or investments in strategic infrastructure, following approval of the business cases as outlined in the report**
- d) TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the necessary changes to the capital programme and revenue budget to facilitate the ongoing rationalisation of the PIP and strategic investments as outlined in the report be approved**
- e) the continuation and extension of the Telford 'Deal for Business' be approved and authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment, in consultation with the Assistant Director: Finance & Human Resources and the Cabinet Member for Council Finance, Partnerships & Service Delivery, to enter into agreements with businesses in line with the terms set out in the Cabinet Report of 27th March 2014**

- f) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning to seal or sign any documents required to give effect to the recommendations contained in the report.

CB-041 Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) - Proposal for the creation of an independent Conservation Board

Non Key Decision

Cllr R A Overton, Cabinet Member: Housing, Leisure & Health presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment which provided Members with details on a proposal by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, of which TWC is a member, to move to a new structure based on the establishment of an independent Conservation Board. Endorsement had also been sought from Shropshire Council's Cabinet.

This independent structure would allow the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership to attract additional grant funding and to explore further opportunities to become financially sustainable in the long term. As an independent body it would also give the Partnership greater identity and potential to lobby for investment. A detailed business case had been prepared by the Partnership and was appended to the report.

Members noted that where the proposal was supported by both Councils and a recommendation was made to DEFRA to move to an independent structure - the AONB Partnership would run a wide ranging public engagement across the whole of the designated area to seek input from communities and businesses which were not currently engaged in the existing AONB Partnership. It was anticipated that this engagement, along with input from the two local authorities, the existing partnership and formal advice from DEFRA, would shape the vision and scope of the Conservation Board.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) support for the proposal to create a Conservation Board as a new structure for the management of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty be approved;**
- (b) it be approved that Telford & Wrekin Council write jointly with Shropshire Council to Defra, requesting that Defra draft the Parliamentary Order required under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act (2000) for the creation of a Conservation Board to manage the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;**
- (c) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment (and any officer authorised in writing by that Assistant Director) to exercise all of the Council's powers regarding the creation of a Conservation Board to manage the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**

CB-042 Highway Asset Management Policy & Strategy

Non Key Decision

Cllr A D McClements, Cabinet Member: Transport, Customer & Neighbourhood Services presented the report of the Assistant Director: Customer & Neighbourhood Services, which highlighted the vital role that the highway network; roads, footpaths, street lighting, bridges and other highway assets play in supporting the Borough's communities and businesses. It was noted that it was also the Borough's most expensive asset to maintain. In support of this the Council had developed a vision for the highway network, transforming the way the service was delivered. The highways vision for Telford & Wrekin was outlined in the report 'Keeping Telford Moving'.

The Cabinet Member reported on the Highway Asset Management Policy & Strategy that had been developed setting out the newly developed vision for highways in the Borough as well as the Council's approach to implementing asset management. The report sought approval of the Highway Asset Management Policy & Strategy appended to the report. Members noted that the Government's formula for allocating funding had changed and therefore the adoption of the policy and strategy would ensure the Council could maximise available highway maintenance funding.

The overarching aim of the vision 'Keeping Telford Moving' formed the basis of the Asset Management Policy and Strategy which linked corporate priorities with asset management principles. The document focused on 12 key asset management policy objectives along with a delivery strategy for each.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the Telford & Wrekin Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy and its supporting appendices be approved;**

- (b) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Customer & Neighbourhood Services (and any officer authorised in writing by that Assistant Director) to prepare documents and develop, agree, adopt and implement policies, strategies and capital programmes in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Asset Management Policy & Strategy and its Appendices.**

The meeting ended at 5.32pm

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning
Date: 19th October 2016

Signed:

Date:

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

**CABINET – 17 NOVEMBER 2016
COUNCIL – 24 NOVEMBER 2016**

**ENSURING CHILDREN ARE FULLY PROTECTED IN TELFORD AND WREKIN –
GETTING TO GOOD**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S & ADULT SERVICES AND INDEPENDENT
CHAIR OF THE TELFORD & WREKIN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR PAUL WATLING

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1. The report is in response to the following motions agreed at the Full Council Meeting on 22 September 2016, agenda item 11. That the Council:

- *Present a comprehensive plan at the November Full Council Meeting demonstrating a clear commitment to the improvement of Children's Services and detail exactly how the Administration intends to raise all Children's Services in the Borough to a minimum standard of 'Good'.*
- *Present details of measures the current Administration will now introduce to ensure that vulnerable children in the Borough are fully protected in future and precisely how it will tackle the serious problems currently facing the Borough.*

1.2. To present a draft action plan in line with recommendations from the Ofsted Single Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet:

- 2.1. Endorses the measures to ensure that children in the Borough are fully protected;
- 2.2. Delegates the power to approve the final action plan to the Director of Children's and Adult Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.
- 2.3. Endorses the cost of implementing the action plan (£255k) which will be met initially from a combination of service one offs and the Corporate contingency in 2016/17 and will be built into the budget for 2017/18 and ongoing.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council priorities?	
	Yes	Put our children and young people first. Protect and support our vulnerable children and adults
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Children Young people Parents of children and young people
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	As per attached action plan	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p>There are both one off and ongoing costs associated with the actions detailed within the plan shown in Appendix 3. Some capacity issues are being dealt with as part of the Business Support restructure process.</p> <p>The expected ongoing full year budget requirement to support the staffing requirements identified within the Ofsted Action Plan is £200k with one off costs, being met by the service, to support training and other initiatives being £55k. In 2016/17 any part year staffing costs will be funded from the Council's contingency which will be included within the Financial Management report going to Cabinet on 8th December 2016.</p> <p>The ongoing revenue requirement for future years has been reflected within the 2017/18 medium term budget strategy process.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>TAS 27.10.16</i></p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<p>The Ofsted inspection of the Council's children's services functions was carried out under Section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.</p> <p>The Ofsted written report from the inspection was provided to the Council and to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Under Section 137, the Council must prepare a written statement of the action which it proposes to take in the light of the report, and the period within which it</p>

		<p>proposes to take that action.</p> <p>Under Regulation 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007 the Council must publish the Ofsted report within 30 working days by sending a copy of the report to each of the partners specified in the Regulations and to at least one newspaper circulating in the area of the Council and to at least one radio station serving the area; and make a copy of the report available for inspection free of charge at the offices of the Council; and supply a copy of the report to a member of the public on demand on payment of a reasonable fee.</p> <p>Under Regulation 3 the Council must within 70 working days of receiving the report publish a written statement of action which it proposes to take in the light of the report (a “written statement”) by sending a copy of the written statement to the Chief Inspector, and the Secretary of State; sending a copy of the written statement to the partners to whom a copy of the report was sent by virtue of Regulation 2 making a copy of the written statement available for inspection free of charge at the offices of the Council; and supplying a copy of the written statement to a member of the public on demand on payment of a reasonable fee.</p> <p>In addition, Ofsted reviewed the Local Safeguarding Children Board under Section 15A of the Children Act 2004.</p> <p>Ofsted has provided a combined report under its powers to do so under Section 152 of Education and Inspections Act 2006. <i>KF 28.10.2016</i></p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	N/A
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	<i>Borough-wide impact</i>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

4.1 Background information

- 4.1.1 The Council has always had an organisational priority of protecting vulnerable children and adults within the Borough.
- 4.1.2 The Council ensures that it provides the right help and interventions at the right time for children and families through a variety of ways and with a culture of continuous learning and investment it strives to ensure that this is achieved in an effective and efficient manner.
- 4.1.3 The Council has, and continues to, work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that children in the Borough are fully protected. This relationship is enhanced and supported by the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB), which provides focussed and effective challenge to the Council and other agencies as well as supporting the Council in its improvement agenda.
- 4.1.4 In the last year the Council has reviewed some key aspects of how children's services operate and implemented plans to improve the services provided.

4.2 Single Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers (SIF) arrangements

- 4.2.1 The Single Inspection Framework (SIF) began in November 2013. This was a major change in scope from previous inspection frameworks, as it covers the whole of children's social care plus a review of Local Safeguarding Children Board. There was also a major change in focus, with inspections focussing on the child's journey and outcomes, and on practice rather than on processes. In addition, there was a major change in scale as the previous one or two week inspections with notice were replaced by month long inspections with 24 hours notice.
- 4.2.2 All SIFs were due to be completed within 3 years, but the timescale has been extended by a year to end December 2017.
- 4.2.3 A consultation ended on 09 September 2016 regarding the future of social care inspections, with proposals for a more proportionate inspection regime to be in place once all authorities have been inspected under the current framework.

4.3 National Context

- 4.3.1 116 of the 153 Local Authorities in England have been inspected under SIF and 110 of those reports have been published.
- 4.3.2 Of the 110, 2% (2) were judged to be 'outstanding', 25% (28) 'good', 49% (54) 'requires improvement' and 24% (26) 'inadequate'.

4.4 Telford & Wrekin SIF

- 4.4.1 The Telford & Wrekin Council's SIF took place between 13 June and 7 July 2016, and the report published on 26 August 2016 (a copy is provided in Appendix 1).

- 4.4.2 The overall grading was that *“Children’s Services in Telford and Wrekin require improvement to be good”*. Out of the five judgement areas, two were found to be good already (adoption performance and experiences and progress of care leavers). This is the second best performance out of the 9 West Midlands local authorities who have been inspected so far.
- 4.4.3 We were pleased that the inspection recognised the improvements we have made in the quality of services and in the outcomes that children are achieving, commenting that *“the director of children’s services and his senior team provide strong leadership, both within the local authority and across the partnership of agencies. They have made important improvements to the quality of services and to the outcomes that children achieve.”* There is also a clear recognition in the report that progress has been helped by *“effective political backing and the hands-on support of the managing director”*.
- 4.4.4 Verbal feedback received from the inspection team was that they could see that significant improvements had been made, and that the Council should *‘keep doing what you are doing’* to achieve consistently good services. They found the Council to be self aware, and the findings from the inspection reflected the strengths and areas for improvement identified in the ‘Where We Are’ self assessment document. The Council also received positive feedback about staff being committed and well motivated, and saying they feel well supported by management at all levels.
- 4.4.5 On 25 October 2016, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department recognised the improvements that had been made. The Under-Secretary cited the positive feedback from Ofsted and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) regarding the commitment and approach by Telford & Wrekin Council and West Mercia Police to CSE and improving outcomes for children who are at risk of harm.

4.5 Inspection Report

- 4.5.1 The feedback identified in the previous section is reflected in the executive summary of the Inspection Report, which clearly states that *“children and young people are kept safe by the work of the local authority”* and acknowledges the improvements the Council has made since the previous inspection in June 2012. The report states that *‘the DCS and senior leaders are focused and energetic. They largely know what improvements need to be made and understand what is happening on the front line. There are many plans in place to support these improvements across the entire service’*.
- 4.5.2 The Report also states that Family Connect provides *“an effective single point of contact and a swift response to risk”*, and that the thresholds for intervention *“are appropriate, well understood and well embedded in practice”*. They noted that *“as a consequence, there are very few contacts that result in no further action”*.
- 4.5.3 In terms of the Council’s response to tackling CSE and the role of partners, Ofsted reported that:
- *“Work with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation is very strong. The local authority has been a champion for tackling this issue. It provides leadership to partner agencies, with who this work is well co-ordinated. Work to protect children who go missing from home or care is thorough and improving.”*
 - *“There is a strong commitment from the local authority and its partners to tackle child sexual exploitation. A dedicated children abused through exploitation team provides good quality risk assessments, planning and interventions. Although relatively small, the team also reviews progress and updates plans effectively.”*

Consequently, young people receive comprehensive and well-coordinated services that make a positive difference.”

- 4.5.4 The Council’s approach to continuous improvement was recognised by Ofsted and reflected the learning from local case reviews, for example Child B Serious Case Review and the reviews completed following the successful ‘Operation Chalice’ response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- 4.5.5 As would be expected from an inspection, areas for improvement were also identified, alongside recommendations for action to be taken in order to achieve ‘Good’. One area was that of chronic risk¹, where inspectors found that “*chronic risks are not always identified or responded to as quickly and, as a result, some children experience delay in receiving help or coming into care*”. However, there is also an acknowledgement that the Council was already working to improve practice (this approach can be seen in the increases over the past year in the number of children in care and made subject to child protection plans).
- 4.5.6 Another area for improvement was identified as the quality of management oversight and scrutiny, including Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) scrutiny, and IRO caseloads were identified as significantly above statutory guidance (reflecting the rise in the number of CiC and children subject to child protection plans).
- 4.5.7 In terms of leadership and management, the key areas for improvement were the case direction and oversight of first line managers, particularly in cases where there are chronic risks, and insufficient scrutiny and drive from the Independent Reviewing Officer service.
- 4.5.8 The 11 recommendations are included in Appendix 2; this is a large reduction on the 34 recommendations from our previous inspection in 2012.
- 4.5.9 It should be noted that there were no recommendations made to further improve the Council’s work on CSE. However, the Council and the TWSCB already have an action plan in place to continue to improve the work in this area for example:
- Raising awareness to prevent CSE in educational establishments, agencies, and communities, and if identified, refer appropriately to Family Connect and the Police; and
 - Mapping the multi-agency support which is available for young people and victims as they journey through the CSE Pathway, including further improvements in support services including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS); and Sexual Health Services for victims, survivors and their families.
 - Engaging with the newly formed National [CSE Response Unit](#) if appropriate and to offer peer support to local authorities where CSE arrangements are not as strong as within this Borough.

4.6 Review of the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB)

- 4.6.1 At the same time as the SIF, there was a review of the effectiveness of the TWSCB, which was judged to be ‘good’ and identified 5 recommendations for improvement (please refer to Appendix 2 for full details).

¹ Chronic risks are those that last for a long time or are constantly recurring, such as risks from neglect, domestic abuse or where parents’ parenting ability is affected by alcohol or substance misuse or mental health issues.

- 4.6.2 The Report was particularly positive about the TWSCB's work at engaging with and listening to children. Team Safeguarding Voice[®] (children's safeguarding board in schools) has been in place since 2012 within Holmer Lake Primary School, and is in the process of being rolled out to all schools in the Borough, with 30 schools signed up so far. This method was highly commended by Edward Timpson, Minister for State for Vulnerable Children and Families in 2015 during a visit to the school. In 2016 the Ofsted inspectors also commended this approach and stated that the initiative "*is successfully raising awareness about safeguarding issues. It also provides a good process for consulting with young people, for example about the early help strategy and the recent review of child sexual exploitation*".
- 4.6.3 As highlighted in the Ofsted SIF Inspection Report (August 2016), the TWSCB's four thematic sub-groups continue to drive improvement in those areas; which includes CSE. The TWSCB and Telford & Wrekin Council is, and has been, actively working to reduce the risk of CSE to children and young people since 2009 and is supported by a comprehensive action plan which is monitored by the TWSCB (as noted in 4.5.9).

4.7 Next Steps

- 4.7.1 The Council is now required to develop a post inspection action plan and submit it to Ofsted by 05 December 2016. The Council will receive support from Ofsted in developing this at an improvement planning seminar to be held on 16 November 2016. A copy of the first draft of the action plan is attached at Appendix 3. The plan highlights that some additional resource will be required in order to achieve the necessary improvements, and these are covered in the financial impact section of this report.
- 4.7.2 Whilst welcoming the very positive comments from Ofsted regarding the work around CSE, the Council continues to support the work of the dedicated CSE Team by agreeing funding for 3 additional posts (1 Senior Social Worker and 2 CSE Practitioners). This will enable the team to have the capacity to proactively be involved in education and raising awareness of CSE with children, families and professionals within the Borough.
- 4.7.3 The Council's improvement plan will be monitored internally by the Senior Leadership Team but will also be monitored, scrutinised and challenged by Senior Management Team, the TWSCB, the Council's Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and by Ofsted through routine monitoring visit and annual reviews.

5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As noted above.

6 PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cabinet – 21 July 2016 – Agenda Item 4.0
Full Council – 22 September 2016 – Agenda Item 11.0

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Report prepared by Tilly Heigh, Service Delivery Manager: Service Improvement, 01952 380923 and Sarah Constable, Partnership and Planning Officer and TWSCB Interim Business Manager, 01952 380599.

Telford and Wrekin Council

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board¹

Inspection date: 13 June 2016 to 7 July 2016

Report published: 26 August 2016

Children's services in Telford and Wrekin require improvement to be good	
1. Children who need help and protection	Requires improvement
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires improvement
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
3. Leadership, management and governance	Requires improvement

¹ Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

Executive summary

The director of children's services (DCS) and his senior team have made some important improvements in the quality of services and in the outcomes that children are achieving. The appointments of the DCS and the assistant director for safeguarding, in January 2016 and September 2015 respectively, have been a particular catalyst for accelerating ongoing improvement work. This progress is helped by effective political backing and the hands-on support of the managing director. However, services are not consistently good. This is because some developments are too new to have made a significant difference, others are not yet in place and gaps remain in the consistency and quality of first-line management oversight and scrutiny.

Children and young people are kept safe by the work of the local authority. It acts quickly and effectively to protect them when they are at immediate risk of significant harm. However, although acute risks are identified and responded to swiftly, chronic risks are not always identified or responded to as quickly. As a result, some children experience delay in receiving help or coming into care. The local authority is aware of this and is working to improve practice. For example through its focus on identifying and tackling the impact of neglect on children and young people. However, a few children still enter care in an emergency, rather than in a planned way, even when these concerns are already known to the local authority.

The majority of social workers receive regular supervision and management oversight. When this is supported by the reflective 'pods' approach, the quality of supervision is generally good and has a sharp focus on the wishes and feelings of children. However, gaps remain in the quality and frequency of the supervision, case direction and oversight. Where such gaps exist, they lead to delays in progressing work and improving outcomes for some children. Social workers know children and young people well. They are committed to achieving positive outcomes for them. The local authority has worked hard to ensure that almost all social workers have manageable caseloads. It has increased workforce stability and reduced reliance on temporary agency staff. This means that social workers are able to visit children and young people regularly and build good relationships with them.

Performance management and quality assurance systems provide a largely accurate picture of performance. However, they are not being fully used to drive up standards. This is because measures being monitored are not always updated to reflect changing or new priorities and this work is not informed by feedback from children and their families. The independent reviewing officer (IRO) service is not providing enough scrutiny and drive in planning for children looked after and those subject to child protection plans. It does not have a clear overview of service performance. Caseloads in this service are significantly above statutory guidance. This reduces its effectiveness. Work to identify children and young people who are privately fostered and to assess their welfare is not fit for purpose.

The early help offer provides a broad range of services for children and families in

Telford and Wrekin. The multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), known as Family Connect, provides an effective single point of contact and a swift response to risk. Work with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation is very strong. The local authority has been a champion for tackling this issue. It provides leadership to partner agencies, with who this work is well-coordinated. Work to protect children who go missing from home or care is thorough and improving. However, return home interviews are not always carried out in good time.

The quality of assessments is variable. While those for children looked after are better, most are not good overall. Assessments usually include an account of children's past history but this is not always analysed effectively or used to determine future risk. The views of children, although recorded, are not always well used to understand their experience or to inform planning. The majority of plans lack sufficient clarity. They are not always clear about who is expected to do what and by when. This can be confusing for families and professionals, making it difficult to measure progress. Strategy meetings do not always include agencies, other than the police. This sometimes limits information available to inform decision-making. Children looked after are not always placed under the legal status that best ensures their welfare. Placements under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and placement with parents regulations are not always used appropriately or effectively. The local authority is reviewing its use of section 20 but this work is not complete. Advocacy is not used often enough to help children or young people to be more involved in meetings about them. The provision of independent visitors is limited.

As a corporate parent, the local authority is improving health and education outcomes and increasing placement stability for children looked after. However, it has not managed to recruit a sufficient number and range of foster carers to provide suitable placements for all the children who need them. Also, housing options for care leavers and homeless young people are not consistently meeting need. The local authority is working hard to address this deficit. It uses independent fostering agency placements to limit the negative impact of this shortfall, but more work needs to be done. The Children in Care Council, 'Voice', is effective. It engages well with, and listens to, children looked after. The DCS and lead member are regular attendees. A detailed and helpful 'pledge' document has been produced, with the help of 'Voice'. However, this is not used as well as it could be to help children and young people be aware of their rights and entitlements.

Children who could benefit from adoption are identified early, well matched and swiftly placed with adopters who receive good support. However, fostering to adopt is not currently used and this is a gap. Permanence planning is significantly weaker for those who achieve permanence through options other than adoption. This includes those in long-term foster care or who return to their birth families. Permanence is not routinely considered at children and young people's second looked after reviews.

Care leavers get good, timely support from skilled and experienced social workers and personal advisers. This helps them make successful transitions to adulthood.

Contents

Executive summary	2
The local authority	5
Information about this local authority area	5
Recommendations	7
Summary for children and young people	8
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	9
The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence	16
Leadership, management and governance	29
The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	35
Executive summary	35
Recommendations	36
Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board	36
Information about this inspection	41

The local authority

Information about this local authority area²

Previous Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates no children's homes.
- The previous inspection of the local authority's safeguarding arrangements was in August 2012. It was judged to be adequate.
- The previous inspection of the local authority's services for children looked after was in August 2012. It was judged to be adequate.

Local leadership

- The director of children's services (DCS) has been in post since January 2016.
- The DCS is also responsible for adult services.
- The chair of the LSCB has been in post since January 2013.

Children living in this area

- Approximately 39,010 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Telford and Wrekin. This is 23% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 23% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
 - in primary schools is 17% (the national average is 16%)
 - in secondary schools is 15% (the national average is 14%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 12% of all children living in the area, compared with 22% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian or Asian British and Mixed.
- The proportion of children and young people who speak English as an additional language:
 - in primary schools is 9% (the national average is 19%)
 - in secondary schools is 7% (the national average is 15%).

² The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data where this was available.

Child protection in this area

- At 31 March 2016, 1,266 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is an increase from 1,112 at 31 March 2015.
- At 31 March 2016, 190 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is an increase from 103 at 31 March 2015.
- At 31 March 2016, six children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is an increase from three at 31 March 2015.
- Since the last inspection, five serious incident notifications have been submitted to Ofsted and four serious case reviews have been completed or were ongoing at the time of the inspection.

Children looked after in this area

- At 31 March 2016, 299 children were being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 77 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 295 (75 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2015. Of this number:
 - 124 (or 42%) live outside the local authority area
 - 35 live in residential children's homes. Of this 35, 51% live outside the authority area
 - one lives in a residential special school³ outside the local authority area
 - 223 live with foster families. Of these, 39% live outside the authority area
 - 14 live with parents. Of this 14, 7% live outside the authority area
 - none are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
 - there have been 15 adoptions
 - 22 children became subject to special guardianship orders
 - 109 children ceased to be looked after. Of this 109, 5% subsequently returned to be looked after
 - eight young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
 - four young people ceased to be looked after and are now living in houses of multiple occupation.

³ These are residential special schools that look after children for 295 days or less per year.

Recommendations

1. Ensure that all social workers receive sufficiently regular and good quality supervision, oversight and direction from first-line managers to support consistently good practice.
2. Ensure that the IRO service provides sufficient scrutiny and drive to planning for children and young people. In particular, ensure that IRO's caseloads are in line with statutory guidance.
3. Develop further the effectiveness of performance management so that it is more responsive to new priorities as they emerge and takes into account feedback from children, young people and their families.
4. Support improved outcomes for children and young people by making sure that plans contain clear details, actions and timescales and are informed by timely assessments that contain clear analysis.
5. Ensure that an appropriate range of agencies are engaged and share information within child protection strategy discussions.
6. Improve work to identify children and young people who are privately fostered and assess their welfare, so that arrangements are fit for purpose and compliant with statutory guidance.
7. Ensure that return home interviews for children and young people who have been missing from home or care are all carried out in a timely manner.
8. Strengthen arrangements for supported and supervised contact, so that children looked after do not experience the cancellation of contact sessions due to a lack of resources.
9. Increase the availability of suitable housing, including emergency accommodation, for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and care leavers.
10. Strengthen and speed up permanence planning for those children and young people who achieve permanence through routes other than adoption.
11. Ensure that that the support of an advocate or independent visitor is available for all children and young people who could benefit from this.

Summary for children and young people

- Most children and young people in Telford and Wrekin receive the right sort of help from the council when they need it. Social workers act quickly when children and young people are at risk so that they are safe. There are lots of different services that give good support to families to help them get over their difficulties.
- There are some parts of the service that could do better. When problems are not as urgent, the council is sometimes too slow in sorting out the right help. The council is working hard to get better at this but need to improve more. Assessments and plans need to be clearer so that everyone knows what has to change to make things better.
- Children only come into care when they need to. For a few children, this could happen earlier so that plans are not rushed.
- Children and young people live in good-quality placements. Social workers know children and young people well. They are good at listening to their wishes and feelings. Most children and young people who are getting help from social workers make good progress and have their needs met.
- It would be better if there was more choice of foster carers, so that brothers and sisters can always stay together when they first come into care. Planning could also be better so that the right decisions are always made as quickly as they could be.
- When adoption is the best plan for children, social workers work hard to make sure this happens quickly. They are good at finding the right families and helping them through any difficult times.
- Young people leaving care, including those who have a disability, are well supported. They have good practical support from personal advisers, who assist with things like appointments, managing money and encouraging access to education or employment. The main area that the council needs to get better at is ensuring that all care leavers have suitable accommodation, including being able to stay with their foster carers.
- Managers are working hard to improve services. They are doing this in lots of ways, such as by making sure there are enough social workers and managers who want to work in Telford and Wrekin. They also listen to the views of children and young people through the Children in Care Council, 'Voice', and the care leavers 'First' group. There is more work to do but they know about it and have a plan to improve.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

Requires improvement

Summary

The local authority acts quickly and effectively to protect children and young people when they are at immediate risk of significant harm. However, although acute risks are identified and responded to swiftly, chronic risks are not always identified or responded to as quickly. As a result, some children experience delay in receiving help and support. Inconsistency in the quality and frequency of management oversight contributes to this delay. The MASH, known as Family Connect, provides an effective single point of contact and a swift response to risk. However, focusing too much on pace limits the quality and range of information available to inform initial decision making about a few children. For example, strategy meetings do not always involve key partners, such as health services.

Families are able to work with a broad range of early help services to improve outcomes for children. This is because early help in Telford and Wrekin is strong. Work with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation is good. It is well coordinated with partner agencies and this is improving outcomes for children.

The quality of most assessments still require improvement. Assessments usually include an account of children’s past history but this is rarely analysed effectively or used to determine future risk. The voices of children, although recorded, are not always well used to understand their experience or to inform planning. The majority of plans, whether early help, child in need or child protection, lack sufficient clarity. They are not always clear about who is expected to do what and by when. This can be confusing for families and professionals. It can make it difficult to measure progress. This variability in the quality of assessments and plans is particularly evident for children in need, some of whom have experienced unnecessary delays in progressing their plans. Advocacy is very rarely used to help children be more involved in meetings about them.

For some specific groups of vulnerable children, services require strengthening. Children who go missing do not always receive a timely return home interview. When these do take place, the quality is variable. The local authority has used bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds. Although only used for a very few young people, this is inappropriate. The process for securing longer-term housing has led to some vulnerable young people being placed in houses of multiple occupation without an adequate assessment of risk. Arrangements to ensure the welfare of privately fostered children are poor. The local authority is not currently meeting its statutory obligations for this vulnerable group.

Inspection findings

12. Family Connect provides an easily accessible single point of contact for all families and professionals seeking help and support. The service provides advice, guidance and access to both early help and statutory provision. This ensures that children and young people at immediate risk are quickly protected and that most children receive the right help at the right time. Thresholds are appropriate, well understood and well embedded in practice. As a consequence, there are very few contacts that result in no further action.
13. The early help offer is well supported by partner agencies. It offers a broad range of services and interventions to children and families. This leads to improved outcomes for children. The children and family locality service (CAFLs) provides help to coordinate universal and targeted services effectively. Early help teams are based in children's centres. This supports good partnership working and provides easy access for parents. It is further strengthened through local stakeholder groups.
14. The common assessment framework (CAF) is used with children and families in Telford and Wrekin, alongside a well embedded 'Team around the child' (TAC) approach. This helps prevent children's needs escalating to the point where statutory services are required. However, the quality of CAF assessments is not consistently good. Many lack clarity and are too focused on adult needs. This is particularly the case for those completed by agencies other than children's services. However, quality assurance arrangements are enabling managers to identify poorer assessments and target groups of professionals to improve quality. Effective step up and down arrangements are in place. These are supported through multi-agency meetings, with good communication and information sharing. This helps children and families receive a joined-up service.
15. Family Connect considers contacts effectively when more information is required to determine if statutory intervention is needed. The local authority sets itself an ambitious target of one day to deal with all contacts, including MASH checks and decision-making. As a result, children at immediate risk of significant harm are well protected through swift action. Multi-agency child enquiry (MACE) reports are used to request information from partners. In urgent situations, the expectation is that these are completed and returned within one hour. This ambitious target leads to a swift response to immediate risk. However, the pace limits the quality and range of information available to inform initial decision-making about a few children. This is particularly true for situations where needs and risks may not be acute but are complex and chronic. For example, strategy meetings take place very quickly. However, they routinely involve only social care and the police. Information is not consistently good quality. This narrow participation in strategy meetings and limited MACE information means that decisions are

not fully informed by information from professionals and partner agencies. Management capacity within Family Connect has not been enough to deal with the 32% increase in contacts over the last 12 months. As a result, decision-making on 28% of cases is currently taking longer than 24 hours. (Recommendation)

16. Locality assessment teams carry out child protection investigations. These are generally of a good quality. Children are seen quickly. Risk and protective factors are clearly identified. As a result, decisions about further action match children's level of need, whether this be a child protection conference, further assessment, or the provision of child in need or early help services. The emergency duty service is sufficiently staffed by experienced social workers. It provides an appropriate response to concerns that arise out of office hours. There are effective handover arrangements with daytime services.
17. The local authority has focused on improving the quality of assessments. The impact of this was seen in assessments reviewed by inspectors. Almost all assessments completed over the last six months contain chronologies and an account of children's histories. They include relevant information and involve absent fathers and wider family members. While this is positive progress, further improvement is needed for assessments to be good. This is because this information is not routinely analysed effectively or used to consider future risk. The voices of children are recorded, but are not always used to understand their experience or to inform planning. While the response to acute risk is swift and well-coordinated, chronic risk is neither identified nor responded to as quickly. The quality and frequency of the management oversight and direction are inconsistent. This contributes to the delay. For example, in the case of one family seen by inspectors, although the children were subject to a child protection plan, they continued to suffer a pattern of ongoing injuries as a result of neglect. Only after a case audit carried out by the local authority, as part of the inspection process, was this chronic pattern of harm identified and appropriate assertive legal action taken to protect the children. (Recommendation)
18. Good quality specialist parenting assessments, used within court proceedings and other complex family situations, are provided by a dedicated family assessment service. Evidence-based models underpin these assessments. They assess both parenting ability and capacity for change effectively. They provide a model of good practice for the wider service. Most children and family assessments are timely. However, there are delays in completing pre-birth assessments. This is because they begin at 20 weeks gestation, which limits the time to assess. These assessments frequently overlap with, rather than inform, child protection conferences and legal planning meetings. This not only causes delay in some cases, but also means that planning is not always properly informed by the assessment findings.

19. At the time of the inspection, 218 children were subject to a child protection plan. This is an increase from 190 at 31 March 2016. Decisions to make children and young people the subject of child protection plans are appropriate. The rise comes from an improved focus on identifying children who are suffering from chronic harm from problems such as neglect or the impact of domestic abuse. Child protection conferences are well chaired, with good attendance from partner agencies. Conferences use the 'child's lived experience' model. This 'RAG rates' risks, protective factors, and areas requiring further information. The model helps to identify key areas of risk. It helps children, young people and parents to more clearly understand the concerns raised. The '24-hour clock' process is also used to good effect in some conferences. It helps those present better understand children's day-to-day experiences. The increasing use of such evidence-based approaches within conferences is positive. They make conferences more child-centred and effective. However, advocacy is very rarely used to help children and young people be more involved in child protection conferences or other meetings about them. This is a significant omission. (Recommendation)
20. The majority of children are seen regularly and are seen alone. The frequency of visits is increased to reflect the needs of the child when their circumstances merit this. Parents value their relationships with social workers. They say that they feel listened to, have some influence over decisions and are able to access a wide variety of services. However, children's views, although recorded, are not sufficiently influencing plans.
21. The majority of plans, whether early help, child in need or child protection, lack sufficient clarity. Although child protection conferences identify risk effectively, this is not resulting in sharply focused child protection plans. Plans are not always clear about who is expected to do what and by when. This can be confusing for families and professionals and make it difficult to measure progress. The quality of assessments and plans varies, particularly for children in need. As a result, some of them have experienced unnecessary delays in progressing their plans. (Recommendation)
22. A broad range of services and interventions are available to children who are subject to child in need and child protection plans through CAFLS and cohesion services. In addition, the 'Changing Futures' pilot focuses on breaking the cycle of repeat pregnancies and removal of children where there have been previous serious safeguarding concerns. This relatively new and innovative programme is demonstrating its effectiveness, through parents reporting that they feel better able to care for children and in reduced repeat-pregnancy rates. The support provided by the project has also been a key factor in enabling one baby to stay with their mother. Disabled children benefit from personalised good quality, person-centred support plans. The plans are based on a comprehensive assessment of needs and enable them to access a broad range of services.

23. The local authority maintains an up-to-date list of children missing education (CME). There is a named CME officer. At the time of the inspection, there were 21 children missing education and 119 who were educated at home. Staff are tenacious and skilful in tracking CME. They keep a close eye on children's welfare and visit children at home when necessary. They liaise well with other agencies such as other local authorities, schools, professionals and families to share information. They carry out checks to establish the whereabouts of children and whether there have been any previous safeguarding concerns. Managers have good information and intelligence on CME. As a result, the whereabouts of children are known. Also, those without a school place receive good support. They are helped to secure a school place quickly. Staff provide very good support for children and families who choose to educate their children at home. They maintain good contact with the majority of families.
24. There is a strong commitment from the local authority and its partners to tackle child sexual exploitation. A dedicated children abused through exploitation (CATE) team provides good quality risk assessments, planning, and interventions. Although relatively small, the team also reviews progress and updates plans effectively. Consequently, young people receive comprehensive and well-coordinated services that make a positive difference. The team is made up of staff from the local authority, who work closely with a police child sexual exploitation team as a 'virtual' team using a joint service pathway. A tool has been developed to assess risk and protective factors in relation to child sexual exploitation. Inspectors found that the tool was consistently used to both assess risk and inform planning. Recently, sexual health services have been recommissioned to support young people to access support. This is a positive improvement that young people are benefiting from.
25. Extensive awareness-raising has been carried out. This includes presentations from the theatre group 'Loudmouth' to 60 professionals, and the introduction of the 'Something is not right' campaign. This work has not only included relevant childcare professionals and young people themselves, but also taxi drivers, colleges, all local hotels and food outlets. Awareness-raising has now extended to pharmacies. Good joint working with the police and licensing team has had a positive impact. This includes: identifying locations of concern, issuing abduction notices, disclosure in cases of concern, and a number of successful joint operations to disrupt and prosecute offenders. Protection for young people has improved through work with local street pastors and police cadets. They have provided support roles, such as the 'Big sister campaign' and the 'Slipper campaign'.
26. Family Connect reviews all missing children notifications to identify any other concerns in addition to being missing. Return home interview records are screened by the CATE team to identify any specific concerns relating to child sexual exploitation. This is a robust and effective process. However, not all

children receive a timely return home interview to understand their circumstances and any individual 'push or pull' factors. Local authority figures for May 2016 show that just over a quarter of children and young people waited for more than three working days to have an interview. (Recommendation)

27. Risks to children and young people from domestic abuse and high-risk adults are considered effectively in multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) meetings. Single point of contact arrangements are clear. They work well to collate and share information and actions relating to the safety of children. These are then recorded on children and young people's case notes so that they can be considered in other planning meetings, such as child protection conferences or child in need meetings. Inspectors saw evidence of solid multi-agency working to support and protect children who are affected by domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and substance misuse. However, a lack of voluntary perpetrator programmes limits agencies' abilities to tackle and reduce risk.
28. The local authority has strong multi-agency arrangements to protect young people at risk of radicalisation. The 'Channel' panel identifies individuals who are at risk. It assesses the nature and extent of risk. Support plans are developed to divert young people away from extremist behaviour. This area of work is mature, well-coordinated, and integrated into the broader offer of services for children. This ensures that children's wider welfare needs are considered alongside their specific needs arising from radicalisation. Particular examples of good practice in Telford and Wrekin include projects specifically to support parents in understanding extremist behaviour and work with local places of worship to support cross-culture and faith awareness raising. All schools have received 'workshop to raise awareness of Prevent' (WRAP) training. Termly training is held for new staff. However, service pathways are underdeveloped for children at risk of other specific forms of abuse, such as female genital mutilation and honour-based violence. The local authority is aware of this gap. It is currently working with the LSCB to address this.
29. Sixteen- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless are assessed by both housing services and children's services. The local authority is making appropriate decisions about which young people need to become looked after to secure their welfare and which young people can be supported as children in need. Mediation services are provided to help reunify young people with their families, where this is in their best interests. Although the local authority has emergency accommodation, this is not available out of hours. Although only used for relatively short periods of time, this has resulted in the local authority using bed and breakfast for three young people in the last 12 months. Although only used for a very few young people, this is not an acceptable option. The process for securing longer-

term housing is not young-person friendly. A small number of vulnerable young people have been placed in homes of multiple occupation (HMOs) without a good enough assessment of risk.

30. The local authority does not meet its statutory duties for privately fostered children and young people. The local authority cannot assure itself that privately fostered children are appropriately identified because of a lack of awareness-raising activity. The number of notifications has decreased from 34 in 2011–2012 to 13 in 2014–2015. Those children who are currently known to be privately fostered are not seen within statutory timescales. It is not clear where accountability for the line management of this service lies. This has resulted in a failure to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the service. This means that the local authority is not safeguarding these children's welfare effectively. (Recommendation)
31. The designated officer appropriately manages allegations against those in a position of trust. The officer provides advice and guidance to partner agencies. Position of trust meetings coordinate decision making effectively, with robust plans to protect children. Mechanisms to track the progress of individual cases are weak. The local authority is aware of this. Improved arrangements are planned but are not yet in place.

The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires improvement
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Summary

The local authority responds rapidly and effectively to immediate safeguarding concerns. However, when risks are chronic rather than acute, decisions to take children into care are sometimes slow. This means that a few children and young people remain in harmful situations longer than they should. The local authority is aware of this and is working hard to improve practice. Some children still enter care in an emergency, rather than in a planned way, even when concerns are already known.

Assessments are mostly good but are not always used to inform plans for children looked after. Plans are poor. They lack detail, clarity and timescales and, in a very few cases, are not completed. Planning for children looked after is not being driven effectively by review meetings. The IRO service does not provide enough challenge and oversight. The effectiveness of this service is limited by very high caseloads as well as the practice of changing care plans or other important decisions being made outside of reviews without informing the IROs. Children looked after are not always placed under the legal status that best meets their needs. Placements under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and placement with parents regulations are not always used appropriately or effectively. The local authority is reviewing their use but this work is not complete. Neither advocacy nor independent visitors are used often enough with those children looked after who could benefit from these services.

Social workers know children looked after well. They are committed to achieving positive outcomes for them. They visit them regularly and use effective direct work to understand their wishes and feelings. Consideration of diversity is also strong. This means that most children looked after benefit from relationships of trust with their social workers. Capable foster carers are providing good care for children looked after. Children say that they feel safe in their placements. The health needs of children looked after are well met and their educational needs increasingly so. Some good targeted support is in place, particularly for Year 11 pupils.

Sufficiency planning has not secured a broad enough range and number of foster carers to meet the needs of children looked after. The local authority recognises this. It is focused on increasing the range and number of placements available. It makes use of independent fostering agencies, particularly for harder to place children and young people to limit the negative impact of this shortfall. Children who could benefit from adoption are identified early, well matched and swiftly placed with adopters who receive good support. However, fostering to adopt is not currently used and this is a gap. Planning is less strong for those who achieve permanence through options other than adoption. This includes those in long-term foster care or who return to their birth families.

Care leavers receive timely support from skilled and experienced social workers and personal advisers. This helps them make successful transitions to adulthood.

Inspection findings

32. The number of children and young people looked after by the local authority has increased, from 293 at 31 March 2015, to 325 at the time of the inspection. Decisions to take children into care are appropriate for their levels of need and risk and are only taken when it is in their best interest. When there are clear and immediate risks to children and young people, the local authority responds rapidly and effectively to secure their safety.
33. When risks are chronic rather than acute, the identification of risk and decisions to take children into care are sometimes slow. This means that a few children and young people remain in harmful situations longer than they should and enter care in an emergency rather than in a planned manner. At the time of the inspection, five of the last 12 children to become looked after had done so as the result of a crisis that had needed the use of police powers of protection or the involvement of the emergency duty service. Some emergency situations are unpredictable. However, in too many cases seen by inspectors, the local authority already knew about the presenting issues that led to the crisis. Earlier action could have been taken if patterns of risk had been identified. The local authority knows that it needs to be better at dealing with such situations. This is reflected in its focus on improving responses to chronic neglect and in the rising number of children coming into care. While this is positive, the practice seen by inspectors shows that further improvement is required.
34. When serious concerns are identified and pre-proceedings work begun, it is usually done well. Thresholds for action are set at the right level. Assessments completed for the courts are mostly good and are getting better. The local authority has worked hard to improve the quality of court assessments, statements and reports. These documents are scrutinised by both team and senior managers before being passed to legal services for further review and filing with the court. This improvement has been noted by both Cafcass and the judiciary. Despite earlier delay in identifying patterns of risk and in progressing some children's cases to this point, most pre-proceedings work and court proceedings are progressed without significant delay. Legal planning meetings are used effectively to set the pace of work, to maintain oversight and to manage the progress of cases through the court. In most cases, potential carers are identified early for those children who cannot return to, or remain in, the care of their immediate families. However, this is not the case for all children. For a very few children, the local authority has still been looking for suitable carers at the point of the final hearing. When the plan is to place children with connected person carers, there have been frequent delays. These are caused by a lack of capacity to assess this type of carer. The local authority has recognised this shortcoming. It has recently added extra staff to the relevant team, although this is yet to have a significant impact.

35. When children or young people are accommodated voluntarily under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, this is often not well organised. Voluntary arrangements are not always appropriate to children's circumstances. Parents spoken with by inspectors were not always given enough information to make informed decisions. The agreement they were entering into was not explained clearly enough to them. This included parents who speak English as an additional language and situations where children were placed within the extended family. In such situations, this has led to confused decision making and unclear contact arrangements for children. For a few of these children, it has also led to delays in them securing a permanent home, either in care, or back with their families. The local authority is reviewing the appropriateness of planning for all those children placed under section 20. However, this work is not yet complete.
36. The local authority does very well at identifying children who could benefit from adoption early and swiftly matching them with adoptive carers. However, it does not move children into other permanent placement options so quickly. Plans for permanence are not routinely discussed at second reviews of children looked after and care planning meetings are not consistently taking place. Progress is very much dependent on the individual social worker. It has not been given any systemic urgency, either through the role of the IRO service or performance management arrangements. The local authority recognises this delay in securing permanence for children. It has created a permanence panel to improve decision-making, oversight and monitoring for all permanence planning from July 2016 onwards. It also plans to use this new process as part of its ongoing review of the situations of those children and young people looked after under section 20.
37. When children and young people return to the care of their families, this is not well managed. In all 10 of the children's cases selected for review by inspectors, none of them returned home as part of a planned move. Reunification processes lack both clarity about continuing risk and effective planning. This is true for those who have only spent very short periods of time in care and for those returning home after a longer period in care, who are subject to care orders and placement with parents regulations. For this latter group, regulations are neither being fully adhered to nor used effectively. Decision-making about these children is vague. Plans do not always reflect the ultimate aim, for example whether a care order should be revoked and when. Inspectors saw no case of a child or young person suffering significant harm as a result of this. However, children were placed in situations where risk was not fully understood and support insufficient to ensure a successful reunification in all cases. The new permanence panel will monitor this group of children from July 2016, with the aim of ensuring a tighter grip on planning. While this awareness on the part of the local authority is positive, the panel is yet to start its work. So, it has not had an impact on improving practice with, or outcomes for, this group of children and young people.

38. Sufficiency planning has not secured a broad enough range and number of foster carers to meet the needs of children looked after. For example, although the local authority appropriately assesses whether brothers and sisters should live together or apart, when larger sibling groups become looked after, and it is in their best interests to be placed together, some of these children have been placed with different foster carers due to a lack of suitable placements. The local authority recognises this gap in placement sufficiency. It has focused efforts on increasing the range and number of placements available. It is working particularly hard to recruit carers who can meet the needs of large brother and sister groups, older children, disabled children and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The local authority has committed extra, 'invest-to-save' money to help with recruitment and to improve support to foster carers, including out of hours. It is making up for its shortage of suitable placements by using independent fostering agencies. This limits the negative impact on children and young people.
39. Despite these concerns, the vast majority of children in the care of the local authority live in good quality placements. Committed carers provide a high standard of care and support to meet their individual needs. Foster carers provide stable short- and long-term placements. They also act as advocates for children and young people placed with them and communicate well with social workers. Children and young people told inspectors that they feel safe in their placements. Contact between children looked after and their family and friends is appropriately considered and promoted by the local authority. However, a lack of capacity within the contact team means that on a few occasions, contact is cancelled at short notice. This can be confusing and upsetting for children and young people. (Recommendation)
40. Foster carers receive regular visits from their support workers and a broad range of relevant training. A large majority of foster carers spoken to by inspectors said that the training they receive is helpful and high quality. Foster carers are more mixed in their views about how helpful their support workers are. While they all receive regular visits, some said that support for managing difficult situations is not readily available out of normal office hours. As a result, they had had to contact the emergency duty service or police as the only support option readily available at these times.
41. Social workers in Telford and Wrekin know the children and young people they are working with well. They are committed to ensuring positive outcomes for them. They visit children regularly and see them on their own. They also use a variety of tools and imaginative approaches to help draw out and understand their wishes and feelings. This means that most children looked after benefit from relationships of trust with their social workers. Inspectors saw evidence of social workers using this understanding to identify the right support for children looked after. This was not always reflected in written plans. Multi-agency meetings, such as looked after

reviews, personal education plan (PEP) meetings and placement stability meetings are well attended by partner agencies. Partner agencies also contribute well to assessments of children looked after. The exception to this is the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS), which is less well engaged. The local authority is aware of this gap in service provision. It is working closely with health partners to commission a new birth to 25 emotional health and well-being service. This is due to start in 2017. Currently, the local authority directly commissions and procures a range of therapeutic and emotional well-being services to meet the individual needs of children looked after. This is good practice.

42. Most assessments of children looked after are good. They are generally better than those completed earlier in the local authority's involvement with children and their families. They contain detailed information about children and their families, including children's histories. They clearly identify risk and protective factors. Analysis is stronger. The local authority has focused on ensuring that children looked after are re-assessed when their circumstances and needs change. This practice is now routine. However, inspectors found that assessments rarely inform planning. Often, assessments follow on from, rather than inform, significant decisions or events in children's lives, such as placement moves or decisions about contact.
43. Although not always reflected in plans or written assessments, social workers' casework with children looked after shows good consideration of their needs arising from such factors as ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation and disability. This understanding helps children to build trusting relationships with social workers. It is influencing the support provided to them. Inspectors saw some strong work with children looked after, including disabled children and young people, to help them understand the complexity of their family histories and its impact on their identity. Social workers involve other professionals and agencies in this work when it will benefit children looked after.
44. Written plans for children looked after are poor. They lack detail, clarity and timescales. They are not always informed by assessments and, in a very few cases, are not completed. This lack of detail and clarity is also present in the majority of records of the review meetings for children looked after. These meetings do not always take place within agreed timescales. Review meetings directly observed by inspectors were well chaired and the IRO's challenge and oversight of planning were evident. However, this challenge and oversight is not clearly shown in records of review meetings and there is little evidence of its impact in children's plans and care histories. Records of meetings are often produced late and show little evidence of challenge by IROs or of how the review is informing planning. Care plans and decisions are sometimes changed outside of review meetings and without informing IROs. As a result, children and young people have returned home, moved placements or had plans submitted to the courts without enough oversight

by IROs. IROs have caseloads substantially above statutory guidance. This significantly limits their ability to keep in touch with children looked after between reviews and to track the progress they are making.
(Recommendation)

45. Although inspectors saw some good individual examples of the effective use of advocacy to support children and young people and engage them in shaping the services that they receive, this service is not routinely considered or used for children looked after. Many children looked after who could benefit from advocacy are not being offered the service. Children looked after had the support of an advocate in just 33 reviews between June 2015 and June 2016. Similarly, not all children looked after who could benefit from an independent visitor have one and those that have said that they would like one are experiencing delay in being matched with a visitor.
(Recommendation)
46. The majority of children looked after are receiving support that helps them achieve good school attendance and make progress in their education. The virtual school team maintains good oversight of the progress of children looked after. It closely monitors those most at risk of not achieving. Effective work by the virtual head teacher and managers from children's social care has much improved the stability of education placements. When a child or young person has to move placement, managers liaise effectively to decide whether a change of school is in their best interest. As a result, fewer children looked after experience disruptions to their schooling. An increased proportion of children looked after attended a school judged good or better during the last academic year. When a school is judged less than good following inspection, managers carry out thorough risk assessments to decide whether a change of school is the best thing for individual children looked after.
47. The attainment of children looked after in Telford and Wrekin is broadly in line with children looked after nationally. However, the gap between the attainment of children looked after and their peers remains wide. Managers have provided targeted support this year to improve outcomes for children looked after and to close the attainment gap. For example, all those in Year 11 have received extra one-to-one support in English and mathematics. Young children have received one-to-one support to improve their reading skills.
48. An increasing proportion of children looked after have an up-to-date PEP. However, the quality of PEPs is too variable, with most requiring improvement to be good. PEP targets are not always specific enough about what children need to do to make progress and achieve well. Children's views are not always well recorded. Inspectors saw good use of the pupil premium to support children's progress, but generally, the use of the pupil premium was not specified clearly enough in PEPs. (Recommendation)

49. Children looked after who attend alternative provision and those who are on modified timetables receive good support. Bespoke programmes meet the individual needs and circumstances of children well. As a result, they improve their engagement and attendance at school and make progress. Very few children looked after go missing from school. At the time of the inspection, there were no children looked after without a school place. However, support for education for children and young people placed out of the area is inconsistent. In a minority of cases, the virtual school does not have enough information on those placed out of the area to enable them to plan and provide timely support.
50. The health needs of children looked after are well addressed. The vast majority of health assessments are completed within statutory timescales. Support provided to meet the health needs of children looked after is good and improving. This is largely due to good support offered by health visitors and specialist school nurses. For children looked after who are placed further away, health reports are less detailed or timely. However, when any concerns arise, these children looked after are supported well by the designated doctor and children looked after nurse.
51. Social workers and carers support children looked after to pursue a range of leisure activities. They ensure that children routinely have access to extra-curricular activities. Children and young people are also provided, through the work of the corporate parenting board, with opportunities for learning and development and to celebrate their successes.
52. The Children in Care Council, 'Voice', is effective. It engages well with, and listens to, children looked after. It also provides a positive venue for a broad range and age of children looked after to meet, socialise and exchange views. 'Voice' skilfully supports children looked after to give their views, take part in consultations and provide feedback on important issues. The lead member and DCS are regular attendees. They are well known to 'Voice' members, who say that they feel listened to by them.
53. The corporate parenting board is proud of the Children in Care pledge and the work completed to ensure that its redesign has captured the views of children and young people. The pledge contains an ambitious and highly relevant list of promises, touching on all areas of life for children looked after. It is a strong document. The local authority has worked hard to publicise the pledge. However, there is no monitoring or other system in place to see what difference the pledge has made in improving the lives of children looked after. Children looked after spoken to by inspectors were mostly aware of the pledge. However, none were familiar with the offer it contains or had considered using the pledge as a mechanism to access support or challenge any aspects of their support that they were unhappy about.

The graded judgement for adoption performance is that it is good

54. Adoption is considered for all children who are unable to return home and who may benefit from it. This includes older and harder-to-place children, such as those with brothers or sisters. Those children for whom adoption is the best route to permanence are identified at an early stage in care planning. There is appropriate urgency in care planning and decision-making to ensure that adoption plans are timely.
55. The managers of Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire joint adoption service have a clear understanding of effective adoption practice. Monthly management board meetings are used to analyse the adoption service's performance robustly. They focus on any problems or issues affecting the timeliness and quality of the work. Managers have a detailed knowledge both of children and adopters.
56. The progress of children requiring adoption is tracked effectively through the monthly referral and tracking meetings that monitor the progress of decisions through to care proceedings. This avoids unnecessary delay and ensures that placement options are continually monitored. The initial alert, through the referral process, ensures that the adoption team is fully informed of children who may benefit from adoption at an early stage. This ensures that the adoption team has the opportunity to consider not only those adopters already approved but also those being assessed, at a very early stage in the matching process.
57. The number of children in Telford and Wrekin benefiting from adoption increased from 20 in 2013–14 to 35 in 2014–15. Although numbers decreased to 15 in 2015–16, at the time of the inspection, three months into the year 2016–17, 20 children were identified for adoption. Of these, 14 children have either already progressed to an adoption order or are matched to adoptive families with planned dates for moving in with their adoptive families. Family finding is underway for the other six. This includes the assessment of three sets of existing foster carers who have expressed a wish to be the adoptive families for the children.
58. The most recently published adoption scorecard for 2012–15 shows that Telford and Wrekin has the best performance in England for timeliness against the scorecard indicators. For children being adopted, the average time between entering care and moving in with an adoptive family was 336 days. This is 151 days within the government threshold of 487 days. The time between receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match with an adoptive family is very quick, at 47 days. This is 74 days within the 121 day threshold. Eighty-five per cent of children waited less than 16 months to move in with their adoptive families. This is much better than national average of 47%. Although timeliness for seven children was

outside the threshold, there are good reasons why adoption took longer to achieve for these particular children. This strong adoption performance shows urgency and effective focus on making sure that children do not experience unnecessary delays in being placed with the right adoptive families.

59. Focused and effective family finding is carried out by a dedicated permanence coordinator. She is tenacious and proactive in pursuing choices and links for children through a variety of networks. The matching of children with Telford and Wrekin approved adopters is the first choice. It is achieved for almost all children. When this does not happen, it is usually for 'harder to place' children who are part of large sibling groups, older or have complex needs. In such cases, prompt referrals are made to the National Adoption Register, other links such as Adoption Focus and the local West Midlands adoption consortium. In 2014–15, successful matches included three sibling groups, made up of eight children. In 2015–16, this figure increased to 10 children, consisting of five sibling groups. In the current cohort of 20 children, two groups of brothers and sisters have been successfully matched, including a group of three.
60. Adoption performance for older children, those with complex needs and children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds is not as strong as for young children. The authority is very much aware of this. It is improving practice and performance in this area. The current cohort contains two children of mixed parentage, three over-fives and three with complex health needs.
61. There have been no pre-order adoption disruptions in the last two years and numbers of revocations are very low. This shows the commitment and effectiveness of family finding and of good matching and information sharing. Children are well prepared for their adoptive placements, with foster carers playing a key role. A dedicated, experienced social worker within the team undertakes pre-adoption work with children. 'Theraplay' work is being used effectively to prepare children for the transition to adoption. It is also being used well to help re-establish relationships between brothers and sisters and to increase their understanding of adoption and their place in their adoptive families. Good quality, child-focused, therapeutic life story work is used to sensitively understand and recount children's histories and their ongoing experiences.
62. There is a coherent recruitment strategy for adopters. It is based on predicted numbers, needs and profiles of children. The joint adoption service is working with an external agency on recruitment and marketing. This is to broaden both the range of potential adopters and awareness and interest in adoption. Prospective adopters are well informed through information sessions, which have been increased to two per month. Twenty-seven

adopters were approved in 2015–16. At the time of the inspection, seven adopters were at stage one of the process and 13 at stage two.

63. Adopters spoken to describe the recruitment, preparation and assessment process as thorough. They said it was stressful, sometimes intrusive and challenging but brought 'great rewards'. The recruitment process is strong, timely and child-centred. Pre-adoption reports include good exploration of the prospective adopters' strengths, reasons and commitment to adopt. While analysis is clear and supports recommendations, it is not always clear how social workers have used research when analysing the impact of the prospective adopters' living experiences. A few delays in progressing assessments were noted but these were for good reasons and not due to a lack of urgency by the service. The impact of delays has been minimal on both children and adopters.
64. The adoption panel is effective, providing rigour, scrutiny and challenge. The panel thoroughly considers recommendations for approvals, the quality of matching and fully explores the potential adopters' motivation to adopt. For example, in one case, panel members explored the adopters' understanding of identity and ethnicity. It considered the impact on non-white children of being placed with white carers in a predominantly white area and recommended further work with the adopters using research about identity. The agency decision maker makes timely decisions and, where necessary, requests further information to inform decisions. The panel chair is provided with information and kept up to date about children and adopters. However, there is no formal or agreed meeting framework between the adoption chair, the manager and the decision maker. This has the potential to delay the sharing of information and intelligence, and so slow the functioning of the adoption service.
65. Foster to adopt is at the early stage of development within the joint adoption service. There are two families going through the assessment process but no fostering to adopt placements have been made. This is a missed opportunity to provide continuity of care and promote early attachment for some young children with their prospective adopters.
66. The post-adoption service is strong. It is enhanced by having three therapists located within the team. They offer a range of therapeutic interventions and support to children and their adoptive families, including coaching and mentoring. They also work directly with children and their adoptive families to assist 'attachment repair'. This has been successful in developing relationships. The joint adoption service makes good use of the adoption support fund to commission specialist, psychotherapy and psychological support. In 2015–16, 14 children and 12 adoptive families received post-adoption support.

67. Adopters say that they receive good support from the joint adoption service. Some described the support as 'excellent' and added that they also got good quality post-adoption information. One adopter said 'I do not know what would have happened had we not received the support'. Some adopters said that they thought that post-adoption support should be further strengthened by targeting support at the period immediately after the order is made. Independent advice, support and counselling for birth parents and relatives is commissioned through a voluntary adoption agency. In 2014–15, 17 birth parents and relatives received support, including training. Ten birth parents accessed counselling services in 2014–15 and 10 in 2015–16. Three hundred and eighty-eight letterbox arrangements are in place. Both adoptive and birth families are supported to maintain these arrangements.

The graded judgement about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it is good

68. There is a well-considered system for allocating social workers and personal advisers to young people leaving care. Young people who are settled and doing well receive effective support from personal advisers. Young people with more complex needs receive help and support from allocated social workers. Personal advisers give them extra practical help.
69. Social workers and personal advisers maintain good contact with young people, including those who live outside the local authority area. They regularly see young people face-to-face and keep in touch by phone, email and text. This ensures that staff are alert to young people's circumstances and current needs.
70. Young people spoken to by inspectors value highly the practical support that personal advisers provide. This includes attending medical appointments with them, supporting them to budget more effectively and helping them access benefits.
71. Social workers and personal advisers have good oversight of young people's needs. They plan effectively to meet these. Nearly all young people have an up-to-date pathway plan and are well involved in developing their own plans for the future. Staff are aware of young people's anxieties and their changing needs. They are quick to adapt plans when young people's circumstances change.
72. Many care leavers achieve good outcomes. Those with more complex needs are well supported to take small steps in their transition to adulthood. This includes improving attendance at medical appointments and at therapy sessions. Social workers are persistent in their support for young people and stick with them through their ups and downs. They liaise well with other

agencies such as the family nurse partnership, probation and the police to ensure that the level of support that young people receive meets their needs and that they are safe.

73. Staff maintain good oversight of those care leavers who spend time in custody. They keep in touch with them regularly and plan effectively for their release, for example in maintaining young people's tenancies so that they have safe, secure and familiar accommodation on their release.
74. The small number of care leavers who are unaccompanied asylum seekers receive effective help. They are placed quickly in specialist accommodation with other young people from similar backgrounds and quickly settle into further education.
75. Well-coordinated work by personal advisers, social workers and advisers from 'Future Focus' with those who are not in education, training or employment is increasingly effective. Staff meet regularly to review those care leavers who are not making good progress. They plan new actions to help them secure a place in college or employment. As a result, the proportion of care leavers who secure an education, employment or training place is improving significantly.
76. There is a good range of courses and programmes that help care leavers to build their ability to seek and maintain education, employment and training places and to develop their skills, including for independent living. Alongside the initiative of individual social workers and personal advisers, this helps young people raise their aspirations and successfully take their next steps into adulthood. For example, one social worker visited art galleries with a young person. This further developed their interests and raised their aspirations. The summer arts programme also helps to motivate young people. It supports their personal and social development and helps them to achieve qualifications.
77. The 'Care Leavers First' group provides young people with good opportunities to meet regularly, develop friendships and have a say in matters that affect them. They have opportunities to learn about their rights and entitlements, such as housing. It helps them get extra support and guidance from staff.
78. There is effective and proactive planning for disabled young people. This ensures that young people's needs are known and that appropriate plans are made for their timely transition to adult services. As a result, young people live in suitable accommodation and pursue their next steps in education, employment or training successfully.
79. The financial support available to care leavers is good. The finance policy details what is available to young people. It includes their personal and

birthday allowances and the £2,000 grant available to set up their first home. There are good financial incentives available for employers to take on care leavers as apprentices and discretionary payments for care leavers to top up the apprenticeship wage. Despite this, a relatively small number of care leavers complete an apprenticeship programme. Similarly, the number of those attending university is low.

80. Young people are aware of the medical services available to them. Most are registered with a GP and dentist. A health passport has been introduced. Although not all young people are aware of it, most spoken to by inspectors said that they knew about their health history and how to access health services. Young people are supported effectively to gain important documents such as their birth or adoption certificates, driving licence, passport and national insurance number.
81. Most young people live in suitable accommodation that is safe and meets their needs well. Care leavers spoken to by inspectors felt safe where they lived. However, the range of accommodation available to young people is too narrow. For a small number of young people placed in HMOs, the local authority does not know what risks other residents living there may pose. Inspectors identified a small minority of cases where living in HMOs hindered young people's progress towards good outcomes. Bed and breakfast accommodation, while only used in exceptional circumstances, has been used for one young person over the last year. Too few care leavers, including those with more complex needs, benefit from arrangements to support them to remain with their foster carers beyond their 18th birthday. (Recommendation)

Leadership, management and governance

Requires improvement

Summary

The director of children’s services and his senior team provide strong leadership, both within the local authority and across the partnership of agencies. They have made important improvements to the quality of services and to the outcomes that children achieve. The relatively recent appointments of the DCS and the assistant director for safeguarding, in January 2016 and September 2015 respectively, have been a particular catalyst for accelerating ongoing improvement work. This progress has been helped by effective political backing and the hands-on support of the managing director. However, services received by children in Telford and Wrekin are not yet consistently good. This is because some developments are too new to have made a significant difference, others are not yet in place and gaps remain in the quality of first-line management oversight and scrutiny.

The local authority has championed work to tackle child sexual exploitation and provided leadership to partner agencies. It has worked well with the local safeguarding children board and other agencies to put in place a clear and effective strategic framework for this work. The development of the Family Connect service into a MASH has created an effective front door to services. Early help services are working increasingly well to prevent children needing statutory intervention.

As a corporate parent, the local authority is improving the health and education outcomes of children looked after, increasing placement stability and providing a good service for care leavers and children who could benefit from adoption. However, it has not managed to recruit a sufficient number and range of foster carers to provide suitable placements for all the children and young people who need them. Housing options for care leavers and homeless young people are not consistently meeting need.

Performance management and quality assurance systems provide a largely accurate picture of performance but are not being used fully effectively to drive up standards. This is because measures being monitored are not always updated to reflect changing or new priorities and this work is not informed by feedback from children and their families. The IRO service is not providing enough scrutiny and drive to planning for children and young people and does not have a clear overview of service performance. The effectiveness of this service is reduced by caseloads significantly above statutory guidance.

The local authority has worked hard to ensure that almost all social workers have manageable caseloads. It has increased workforce stability and reduced reliance on temporary agency staff. The majority of social workers receive regular supervision and management oversight of their work. However, gaps in the supervision and case direction received by a minority of social workers is leading to delays in progressing work to improve outcomes for some children.

Inspection findings

82. The local authority improvement plan for children's services in 2015–16 has not yet been fully implemented and inconsistencies remain in the quality of support offered to children and young people. The DCS and senior leaders are focused and energetic. They largely know what improvements need to be made and understand what is happening on the front line. There are many plans in place to support these improvements across the entire service. However, at the time of the inspection, these improvements had not been sufficiently realised to ensure consistently good services for children and young people. In particular, gaps remain in the quality of first-line management oversight and scrutiny and the work of the IRO service.
83. The local authority has focused on ensuring that the initial response to children is effective. Family Connect is providing a timely and appropriate response to children when their needs are first identified. The children abused through exploitation team (CATE) is delivering high-quality services to children who are at risk of, or have been subject to, children sexual exploitation. Improvements such as these are making a positive difference for children.
84. At a senior level, the managing director has taken an active role in monitoring the work of children's services, including undertaking monthly audits of children's case files. He has instigated effective action to address problems identified. In addition to regular meetings with the DCS, he meets every two months with the director, the assistant director responsible for safeguarding, the lead member for children and the independent chair of the local safeguarding children's board. As a result of these meetings, there is a cohesive approach to improvement and a financial commitment to protect frontline services. The managing director and lead member are very clear that there is a 'whole-council' commitment to ensuring that children and young people are effectively safeguarded. This proactive approach has resulted in a number of innovative projects. For example, the successful 'changing futures' programme aims to break the cycle of repeat removals of children from their birth parents.
85. The corporate parenting board has been effective in directing and driving change. For example, improving the completion of the strengths and difficulties questionnaire for children looked after has resulted in an increased understanding of their emotional health and well-being needs. A sports and leisure scheme, which encourages children and young people to use facilities for a free period, has also been introduced. The corporate parenting board is regularly attended by the lead member and representatives from children's services. However, some key partners only engage occasionally. This is resulting in opportunities to address wider issues

being neglected. For example, care leavers are not yet provided with priority housing.

86. The joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) focuses on the safeguarding and social care needs of children within three 'locality profile' documents. These documents contain a range of helpful information. However, there are gaps, particularly in relation to the 'toxic trio' of domestic abuse, parental drug, alcohol and substance abuse and parental mental ill-health. For example, no information is included about the number of adults receiving mental health or drug, alcohol or substance abuse services who are parents or have caring responsibilities. This limits the information available to agencies working together within the health and well-being board (H&WB) and early help partnership (EHP) to understand need, set priorities and commission services to address them.
87. Agencies are working well together within the H&WB and EHP. Although there is no shared multi-agency plan or set of agreed priorities for children's social care needs, against which services can be commissioned or progress measured, this is balanced by close working, a shared commitment to improve and a common understanding of the most important areas for improvement. This has driven the commissioning of a new birth to 25 emotional health and well-being service, to start in 2017. The EHP has recently scrutinised the draft service specification for the planned service. It ensured that it was altered to have a stronger and clearer focus on the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people.
88. The local authority's process for commissioning services is effective. This is because children's services managers and commissioners work closely together. They link commissioning and professional expertise. As a result, service specifications deliver services that are fit for purpose and address identified need. Parenting assessments and the 'changing futures' project are good examples of such well-focused services. This process is strong and underpinned by a clear local authority commissioning and sufficiency strategy. However, the lack of a shared multi-agency strategy or plan makes it more difficult to address gaps in service provision, such as the lack of a domestic abuse perpetrators programme.
89. Recent significant reductions in the length of care proceedings mean that more children in Telford and Wrekin who need a permanent home are getting this in a timely manner. However, there are still children who have not benefited from timely permanence planning. Despite being looked after for several years, some children are still not living in permanent homes. The local authority's fostering recruitment strategy is not meeting its target to ensure that it has enough carers with the right skills to meet the needs of children looked after, particularly those who are older or who have brothers and sisters who also need to be looked after. The local authority is not supporting enough children looked after to remain with their carers beyond

18. There are currently just six young people in staying-put arrangements. (Recommendation)
90. The IRO service, which is responsible both for child protection case conferences and children looked after reviews, is not fully effective in providing scrutiny and drive to planning for children. IROs are not routinely tracking the progress of children's plans between reviews or challenging areas of poor practice, such as agencies other than the local authority not providing written reports in advance of child protection conferences. The ability of the service to operate effectively has been, and continues to be, held back by several factors. The main cause is caseloads that are significantly in excess of written guidance, while staff sickness vacancies and inconsistent management of the service also play a part. (Recommendation)
91. Targeted work by the local authority has led to improved communication and joint working between children's services and schools in Telford and Wrekin. Schools are positive about the advice and support they receive in several areas. They appreciate the positive difference it has made. This includes work on children missing education and tackling child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. This positive relationship has led to schools being more ready to take on the role of lead professional in CAFs. Schools contribute well to CAFs. This is strengthening the early help offer to children. The virtual school is working well with schools. There is good information sharing and strong oversight of children looked after. As a result, the educational achievement of children looked after is starting to improve.
92. The local authority has made good progress in its work to combat child sexual exploitation. It has worked well with the TWSCB and partner agencies. Together, they have put in place a clear and effective strategic framework to tackle child sexual exploitation. Through this and other actions, the local authority has championed work in relation to this issue and provided leadership to the partnership. An 18-month overview and scrutiny committee review of the partnership response to child sexual exploitation has recently been completed. This shows the strong commitment to tackling this issue. The review has been valuable in developing a detailed understanding of the scale of the problem. It studied the range and effectiveness of services in place and what can be further improved. However, an unfortunate consequence of this rigorous focus on child sexual exploitation is that the committee has given little consideration to any other welfare and safeguarding needs of children.
93. The local authority has ensured that children who go missing are offered and receive return home interviews. However, it is not ensuring that these interviews are all carried out in a timely manner, nor has it made best use of intelligence from return home interviews to identify themes that could help improve services. The content of interviews has only very recently started to be collated and analysed to identify such themes. The identification of the

'pull' factors that lead young people to go missing has been a particular gap in the analysis of this information when it is considered alongside information about those who may be at risk of child sexual exploitation. (Recommendation)

94. The use of performance management and quality assurance processes to assess the impact and improve the quality of services for children requires further strengthening. While there is a strong focus on performance, the development of a performance culture is still work in progress across all areas of the service. For example, senior managers do not have a direct line of sight to some key aspects of frontline practice, such as the frequency and quality of supervision, and team managers are not consistently using performance information to support them in understanding their priorities. There is no standard mechanism to collate information on the views of children who have received services. There are some good individual examples of children being listened to, and consultation with children looked after and care leavers, through the 'Voice' and 'Care Leavers First' groups, is good. However, the lack of a formal mechanism for gathering feedback limits the local authority's ability to understand the quality of services. For example, the views of children who have made complaints, received advocacy services or had return home interviews are not aggregated to identify themes or set alongside performance data or information from audits to help develop a more rounded understanding of the quality and impact of services. Although inspectors saw positive outcomes being achieved for children, the local authority is not sufficiently evaluating the impact of early help provision. This limits its understanding of what is effective and why. This is a priority for the local authority and a pilot scheme is currently under development with the support of the TWSCB. (Recommendation)
95. Audits are increasingly well used to improve performance and most case audits are of good quality. During the last 12 months, a stronger emphasis has been placed on understanding and acting on messages from audits. This has resulted in changes such as improvements in the frequency of statutory visits and the completion of chronologies. However, while this is positive, the local authority audit tool does not provide a clear narrative of what 'good' looks like for individual judgements and follow-up audits are not routinely completed to check the impact of improvement actions. Building on previous improvements in the use of quality assurance information, a new quality assurance plan contains within it, a quality assurance framework and a quality assurance activity timeline covering all services within the year 2016-17. This is a strong document and a positive step but, as yet, the impact of this new way of working cannot be seen in practice.
96. The majority of social workers receive regular supervision and management oversight. When this is supported by the reflective 'pods' approach, the quality of case discussion is generally good and has a sharp focus on the wishes and feelings of children. However, gaps remain in the quality and

frequency of the supervision, case direction and oversight received by some social workers. Where such gaps exist, they lead to delays in progressing work and improving outcomes for some children. The quality and consistency of work with children and their families is a priority for the local authority, and in particular the quality of social work assessments and plans and the timeliness of responses to chronic neglect. This inconsistency in management oversight, combined with the limited effectiveness of the IRO service, is a significant factor preventing the local authority from achieving its aim of providing a consistently good service. (Recommendation)

97. A strong training and development package, alongside targeted advertising and specific funding for additional staffing, has enabled the local authority to reduce staff turnover. For this reason, there is an increased percentage of staff who are full-time and the borough has reduced its reliance on agency social workers. More staff means that most social workers in Telford and Wrekin have manageable caseloads. This means that social workers are more likely to be able to see children often enough to build relationships of trust with them. It has also supported the recruitment and retention of social workers.
98. Newly qualified social workers who are in their assessed first year of employment (ASYE) say that the quality of the training and support they receive is helping many of them decide to remain in Telford and Wrekin. All social workers spoken to by inspectors were positive about working for the authority. This was particularly the case for new staff who benefit from a structured three-week induction. Social workers speak highly of the support that they receive and of a very visible management team. The workforce strategy has recently been reviewed. It is now a whole-council strategy, which supports the local authority's 'being the change' principles. This new strategy focuses on core behaviours and culture. However, it is too new to have had a significant impact. The principal social worker is influencing the direction of this strategy by ensuring that the children's workforce is supported through career progression and training. The service has just completed its annual health check of social workers. While the initial messages from this are positive, it has not yet been published. The assistant director offers opportunities for staff to talk with her about practice through a communications group. This provides a mechanism for leaders to understand what is happening on the front line. The open discussion within meetings is well received by staff.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is good

Executive summary

The Telford and Wrekin safeguarding children board (TWSCB) is strong. Partner agencies work together effectively within the board. It has a strong independent chair who provides clear direction and effective challenge. Governance is strong. The independent chair also chairs the adult safeguarding board. This helps improve the join-up between services for adults and those for children. Effective links with the health and well-being board (H&WB) and early help partnership (EHP) help ensure that children are a priority across the key strategic partnerships. The board does not work with the family justice board (FJB). Plans are in place to address this gap.

The board plays a key role in driving and shaping developments such as the establishment of the MASH and implementation of 'Operation Encompass'. Partnership working to tackle child sexual exploitation is strong. The board is also driving the implementation of the Neglect and Children Harming Children strategies. The TWSCB annual report 2014–15 gives a comprehensive account of the board's activity, its achievements and priorities but lacks a similarly comprehensive analysis of the quality of services to safeguard children.

The board receives good quality performance information. However, the range of information is not broad enough to produce a fully integrated multi-agency data set. The board continues to work on this as a priority. The board receives information about children at risk of sexual exploitation and from going missing. It has recognised that it could also helpfully focus on other vulnerable groups, in particular children looked after. A robust multi-agency auditing programme is in place. The board also receives reports on the findings of single-agency audits, including those relating to early help. In addition to an effective peer-review process, the safeguarding questions asked in the Section 11 audit are regularly reviewed by the board.

The board evaluates the application of thresholds through regular audits. Its threshold document, 'The child's journey', provides helpful guidance but does not fully reflect current statutory guidance. Similarly, the generally comprehensive and accessible policies available via the TWSCB website include guidance but not clear service pathways for children and young people at risk of female genital mutilation, honour-based violence or forced marriage. A good range of training is provided by the board, and this is clearly shaped by the board's priorities.

The TSCB does well at engaging with and listening to children and young people. Its 'Team safeguarding voice' initiative has very successfully involved children in raising awareness about safeguarding issues. It is now in place in 30 schools.

Recommendations

99. Revise the Child's Journey threshold document to fully reflect current statutory guidance and to provide greater clarity about the distinction between children in need and those with additional needs and the thresholds for accommodation and court action.
100. Update the TWSCB procedures to include clear service pathways for children and young people at risk of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based violence.
101. Sharpen the board's focus on children looked after, particularly those living outside the local authority boundary and those involved in offending behaviour.
102. Establish links to, and work with, the local Family Justice Board.
103. Strengthen the analysis of the quality and impact of safeguarding services within the annual report 2015–16.

Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board

104. The TWSCB is well organised and effective. It has a clear structure that promotes the delivery both of its core business and its priorities. Membership is appropriate and includes three lay members. The lead member for children's services attends each meeting as an observer. Attendance is good. Partnership working is a strength and is characterised by trust and challenge. The board provides focused and effective challenge and leadership to agencies. This has resulted in a number of improvements. These include the roll out of 'Operation Encompass', which supports better information sharing about domestic abuse. This work has helped to shape the restructuring of early help services. A challenge log has recently been set up. This helps the board to ensure that challenge to agencies is followed up until necessary change is achieved.
105. All board members spoken to by inspectors expressed their confidence in the chair. He has a clear focus on improving outcomes for children. He has worked hard to ensure that this is reflected in the board's activity and that the board operates efficiently and effectively. He has regular meetings with individual board members, which enables each one to make a full contribution. He also meets with sub-group chairs on a quarterly basis.
106. Governance works well across the strategic partnerships. The chair meets regularly with the DCS and the managing director to help ensure these links. The chair attends the H&WB board on an annual basis to present the TWSCB annual report. He meets with key stakeholder groups, such as the clinical commissioning group, IROs and GPs. The board's business manager attends

the H&WB strategy delivery group and, after a challenge by the TWSCB, the health and well-being strategy has been revised to improve its focus on safeguarding children. The chair also chairs the adult safeguarding board. There are plans for the domestic abuse thematic sub-group to report on progress to both. This will ensure that improvement activity is aligned. There is an acknowledged gap in relation to links with the FJB. (Recommendation)

107. The TWSCB annual report 2014–15 provides a comprehensive account of the board’s roles and responsibilities, and its activity and achievements. It sets out the priorities for the coming year. However, analysis of the quality and impact of services to safeguard children and young people is not as rigorous as it should be, given the monitoring and scrutiny work that the board carries out. The report does not clearly reflect improvements in agencies, services and practice that have resulted from challenge by the board. (Recommendation)
108. The board has an agreed data set that includes statutory as well as local indicators developed to reflect its priorities. The quality performance and operations sub-group routinely receives updated performance data and analysis. Using this, it then agrees any necessary actions under the oversight of the board. This is a robust process. The police have been challenged to support the data that they provide with an analysis. The newly procured sexual health service has been asked to provide data about young people who attend its service. The board receives detailed information about children at risk of child sexual exploitation and from going missing. It has recognised that it could helpfully focus on some additional vulnerable groups. Children looked after, particularly those who live outside the local authority boundary or who are involved in offending, are a vulnerable group whose welfare has not received the same rigorous scrutiny. (Recommendation)
109. There is a robust multi-agency auditing framework in place. Three such audits are carried out each year. Audit topics are informed by the board’s priorities. The last three have been children at risk of sexual exploitation, children who harm children and children experiencing neglect. The audit process is independently chaired and the methodology is robust. Audits undertaken by partner agencies are also reported to the board. This includes regular reports about the quality of early help. A recent audit showed that when practitioners have had recent training, the quality of CAFs improved. This led to a board challenge to the early help partnership about the sufficiency of CAF training.
110. The TWSCB Section 11 audit of how agencies are complying with their statutory duty to safeguard children has been enhanced. Partners now report on service improvements informed by consultation with children. Schools are asked about how they have integrated safeguarding into the curriculum. This has significantly improved their engagement with this process. The outcome of the audit is subject to a very effective ongoing peer review process. This

involves testing the outcomes with managers and practitioners employed by the agencies concerned.

111. The board is an influential participant in planning services for children and young people. It also drives awareness-raising activity about important issues across the partnership and particularly in schools. These include domestic abuse, 'sexting' and child sexual exploitation. A safeguarding education group has recently been set up to ensure the continuing successful roll out of these initiatives across schools and further education settings.
112. The board has been influential in driving the implementation of the 'Neglect' strategy. This has involved the introduction of the 'child's lived experience' (CLE) model and the introduction of the graded care profile (GCP). Both of these evidence-based approaches support the identification and assessment of neglect. The TWSCB multi-agency audit of work with children suffering neglect showed positive outcomes for the children involved in the CLE pilot. This informed its roll out. A further evaluation of how well this model has been embedded in practice will be carried out in December 2016. The GCP will be subject to a similar evaluation when implemented.
113. Children who go missing or who are at risk of child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, honour-based violence or forced marriage fall within the remit of the child exploitation (CE) thematic sub-group. Partnership working to tackle child sexual exploitation is strong. The board has also provided recent multi-agency training about female genital mutilation. However, the board's online policies and procedures do not include clear up-to-date service pathways for children and young people at risk of female genital mutilation, honour-based violence or forced marriage, to ensure they are effectively identified, protected and supported.
(Recommendation)
114. The domestic abuse sub-group oversees an improving programme of awareness raising about domestic abuse and its impact. It has recently reviewed the sufficiency of victim support services. As a result, it has highlighted to agencies the lack of a voluntary perpetrator programme.
115. A thematic sub-group on children harming children has been created. This was based on learning from a MAPPA discretionary serious case review. The sub-group has led to improvements in the conduct of child protection strategy meetings and a review of the children harming children pathway. It is also involved in a project aimed at developing a strategic framework for dealing with harmful sexual behaviour between children. This framework was launched at a themed training event in May 2016. This is positive but implementation is at too early a stage to have had a significant impact.
116. The TWSCB learning and improvement framework and the training strategy are succinct, clear documents. They are both in line with the requirements of

'Working together to safeguard children' (2015). A wide-ranging and coordinated training programme is in place. This is informed by learning from a variety of sources, including local and national case reviews. It is targeted to reflect the board's priorities. A training group that reports to the partnership development sub-group has developed a post-training evaluation of impact on practice. This helpful development was only in the early days of its application at the time of the inspection. So, it had not had a significant impact on improving the quality and targeting of training. However, despite the board's 'One minute briefing' bulletins, ongoing training programme and themed training events, a few social workers spoken to did not have a clear knowledge either of the role of the TWSCB or of important learning from local serious case reviews (SCRs).

117. There is a well-functioning child death overview panel. This is a joint panel with Shropshire. Learning from child deaths, both locally and nationally, has led to training and public information campaigns about such issues as safer sleeping and suffocation from nappy sacks. Learning from perinatal deaths led directly to the establishment of a dedicated midwifery post to work with vulnerable mothers. A bereavement midwife and health visitor support families who have experienced a sudden infant death. An increase in suicides and self-harm has led to a suicide prevention strategy. This aims to improve the support available in schools and through GPs to vulnerable young people.
118. The safeguarding review and learning sub-group appropriately discharges its responsibilities regarding serious case reviews. Actions regarding the last two SCRs published are now almost complete. The partnership development sub-group oversees policies and procedures and keeps them under review. This is well managed through a joint contract with Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire local authorities. The content of the Telford and Wrekin threshold document, 'The child's journey', is generally clear and appropriate. It is a helpful guide for professionals making or handling a referral. However, it is not fully compliant with statutory guidance. This is due to a lack of sufficient clarity about the distinction between children in need and those in receipt of early help, and a small number of other omissions. The document lacks enough detail about the thresholds at which it is appropriate to accommodate a child under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 or to apply for a care order under Section.31. The document does not link clearly enough to guidance on child sexual exploitation, as expected by 'Working together 2015'. However, because the board evaluates the application of thresholds through regular audits, this lack of clarity has not negatively affected practice. Despite this, it is important that the document fully delivers the expectations of statutory guidance. (Recommendation)

Listening to children is a key board priority. The team safeguarding voice (TSV) initiative is now rolled out to 30 schools. This is successfully raising awareness about safeguarding issues. It also provides a good process for consulting with young people, for example about the early help strategy and

the recent review of child sexual exploitation. The annual 'Crucial crew' event shows the difference that TSV is making to the level of awareness that children who attend these schools have about a range of issues. This includes such issues as personal safety, child sexual exploitation, bullying and 'sexting'. The police cadets have worked actively with the board to improve the quality of its website. A police cadet leader is one of the board's three lay members. The annual 'Health watch' survey undertaken in secondary schools focused on young people's mental health. It is planned that next year's survey is enhanced to include specific questions relating to safeguarding.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This also includes children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the local authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the local authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of local authority functions and the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of eight of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one Social Care Regulatory Inspector from Ofsted.

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SIF Recommendations

1. Ensure that all social workers receive sufficiently regular and good quality supervision, oversight and direction from first-line managers to support consistently good practice.
2. Ensure that the IRO service provides sufficient scrutiny and drive to planning for children and young people. In particular, ensure that IRO's caseloads are in line with statutory guidance.
3. Develop further the effectiveness of performance management so that it is more responsive to new priorities as they emerge and take into account feedback from children, young people and their families.
4. Support improved outcomes for children and young people by making sure that plans contain clear details, actions and timescales and are informed by timely assessments that contain clear analysis.
5. Ensure that an appropriate range of agencies are engaged and share information within child protection strategy discussions.
6. Improve work to identify children and young people who are privately fostered and assess their welfare, so that arrangements are fit for purpose and compliant with statutory guidance.
7. Ensure that return home interviews for children and young people who have been missing from home or care are all carried out in a timely manner.
8. Strengthen arrangements for supported and supervised contact, so that children looked after do not experience the cancellation of contact sessions due to a lack of resources.
9. Increase the availability of suitable housing, including emergency accommodation, for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and care leavers.
10. Strengthen and accelerate permanence planning for those children and young people who achieve permanence through routes other than adoption.
11. Ensure that the support of an advocate or independent visitor is available for all children and young people who could benefit from this.

Review of LSCB Recommendations

1. Revise the Child's Journey threshold document to fully reflect current statutory guidance and to provide greater clarity about the distinction between children in need and those with additional needs and the thresholds for accommodation and court action.
2. Update the TWSCB procedures to include clear service pathways for children and young people at risk of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based violence.
3. Sharpen the board's focus on children looked after, particularly those living outside the local authority boundary and those involved in offending behaviour.
4. Establish links to, and work with, the local Family Justice Board.
5. Strengthen the analysis of the quality and impact of safeguarding services within the annual report 2015–16.



Telford & Wrekin

C O U N C I L

“Getting to Good”
Children and Family Services
Ofsted Improvement Plan
2016 - 17

Introduction

This improvement plan was developed in response to the recommendations from the Ofsted single inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (SIF), which took place between 13 June and 7 July 2016, with the report published on 26 August 2016.

The key judgements were:

Children's services in Telford and Wrekin require improvement to be good	
1. Children who need help and protection	Requires improvement
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires improvement
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
3. Leadership, management and governance	Requires improvement

We were pleased that the inspection recognised the improvements we have made in the quality of services and in the outcomes that children are achieving, and the important contribution made by having effective political backing and the hands-on support of our managing director.

The inspection provided us with valuable learning, and has confirmed our areas of strength and provided a clear focus for our improvement work in the future, in order to 'get to good' across all parts of the service.

This improvement plan focuses specifically on the 11 recommendations contained within the Inspection Report. It does not include the areas for development identified in the report or the wider ongoing improvement activity across the service. Details of this wider improvement agenda are contained in our regularly updated 'Where We Are' self assessment document, which demonstrates our strengths, areas for improvement and improvements made so far, and in the detailed action plans for specific areas of work.

The Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB) was reviewed at the same time as the SIF and judged to be 'Good'. A separate improvement plan has been developed, and we will continue to work together closely to achieve the desired improvements.

The diagram on page 4 of the document sets the 11 recommendations within three priority themes:

1. Scrutiny, oversight and advocacy
2. The quality and effectiveness of front line practice
3. Outcomes for children and young people in specific circumstances

Context

The Improvement Plan is set within the context of high and increasing numbers of referrals, children and young people subject to child protection plans and in care. Additional capacity and resources will be required in order to achieve the required improvements at a time when the Council is experiencing severe financial pressures, with an anticipated reduction to our revenue budget of around £10-11m a year for the next 3-4 years.

Monitoring arrangements

The improvement plan will be led by the DCAS and Assistant Directors and monitored quarterly by Senior Leadership Team. Progress will be reported quarterly to Senior Management Team and also overseen by Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Quality Practice and Operations Subgroup of Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board.

**THEME 1:
SCRUTINY, OVERSIGHT AND
ADVOCACY**

Ensure that all social workers receive sufficiently regular and good quality supervision, oversight and direction from first-line managers to support consistently good practice (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 1)

Ensure that the IRO service provides sufficient scrutiny and drive to planning for children and young people. In particular, ensure that IRO's caseloads are in line with statutory guidance (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 2)

Develop further the effectiveness of performance management so that it is more responsive to new priorities as they emerge and takes into account feedback from children, young people and their families (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 3)

Ensure that the support of an advocate or independent visitor is available for all children and young people who could benefit from this (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 11)

**THEME 2:
QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS
OF FRONT LINE PRACTICE**

Support improved outcomes for children and young people by making sure that plans contain clear details, actions and timescales and are informed by timely assessments that contain clear analysis (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 4)

Ensure that an appropriate range of agencies are engaged and share information within child protection strategy discussions (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 5)

Strengthen and speed up permanence planning for those children and young people who achieve permanence through routes other than adoption (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 10)

**THEME 3:
OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN
SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES**

Improve work to identify children and young people who are privately fostered and assess their welfare, so that arrangements are fit for purpose and compliant with statutory guidance (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 6)

Ensure that return home interviews for children and young people who have been missing from home or care are all carried out in a timely manner (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 7)

Strengthen arrangements for supported and supervised contact, so that children looked after do not experience the cancellation of contact sessions due to a lack of resources (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 8)

Increase the availability of suitable housing, including emergency accommodation, for homeless 16 - and 17 - year-olds and care leavers (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 9)

Complete
In progress and on schedule
In progress but behind schedule
Overdue

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
THEME 1: SCRUTINY, OVERSIGHT AND ADVOCACY						
1.1	Ensure that all social workers receive sufficiently regular and good quality supervision, oversight and direction from first-line managers to support consistently good practice (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 1)			Jo Britton		Status at 31.10.16
	Review and refresh supervision policy, including development of protocol template	Improved frequency and consistency of supervision in terms of agenda and recording	Supervision policy and template completed and implemented 90% of practitioners receive monthly supervision (depending on absence) Audits evidence improved quality of supervision	Marie Hatton	October 2016	
	Develop decision making 'milestones' flowchart for managers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)	Managers and IROs have clear guidance regarding decision making and recording, and have a consistent approach	Flowcharts developed and briefed out 75% cases audited graded 'good' or 'outstanding' 75% of cases audited score 'good' or 'o/s' for management	Marie Hatton	November 2016	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
			oversight and decision making 75% of cases score 'good' or 'o/s' for effectiveness of IRO scrutiny			
	Review and improve infrastructure with a focus on policies, processes and procedures around safeguarding services	Common approach is agreed across services and individual workers and consistency of practice improves.	75% cases audited graded 'good' or 'outstanding'	Marie Hatton	Stage 1 Core elements: February 2017 Stage 2: all Trix policies/ procedures December 2017	
	Deliver bespoke strengthening practice program training for front line managers	Managers have the skills and tools to deliver improved oversight and supervision	Number of managers receiving training Evaluation of training 75% of cases audited score 'good' or 'o/s' for management oversight and decision making	Marie Hatton	Training to begin: March 2017 End: March 2018	
	Review electronic recording mechanisms to ensure authorisation points are clear	Improved clarity regarding management and senior management authorisation	Authorisation points clear	Helen Smith	March 2017	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
1.2	Ensure that the IRO service provides sufficient scrutiny and drive to planning for children and young people. In particular, ensure that IRO's caseloads are in line with statutory guidance (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 2)			Clive Jones		
	Recruit full time Conference and Reviewing Team Manager	Increased capacity will improve management oversight and drive improvement, leading to better outcomes for children and young people	Improved performance across IRO scorecard IROs performing in line with IRO Handbook Increase in wider QA activity	Tilly Heigh	January 2017	
	Increase capacity of Conference and Reviewing Team by 1 fte	Reduced caseloads will enable IROs to improve oversight and challenge and perform a wider QA role within children's services	Improved performance across IRO scorecard Case audits evidence improved IRO challenge Improvement in RAG ratings of care plans	Tilly Heigh	February 2017	
	Increase business support capacity in Independent Safeguarding and Quality Service	Increased capacity will enable the continued development and implementation of LEAN systems which will improve timeliness and better support quality assurance activity	Timeliness of distribution Improved recording Increase in QA activity	Tilly Heigh Clare Hall-Salter	December 2016	
	Implement QA scorecard for Conference and Reviewing Team	IROs are aware of performance and engaged in improvement activity	Improved performance across the scorecard	Tilly Heigh	November 2016	
	Review Conference and Review Service	Development and training needs are identified and	Review completed 75% of cases score	Tilly Heigh	March 2017	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
		appropriate improvement support provided	'good' or 'o/s' for effectiveness of IRO scrutiny			
1.3	Develop further the effectiveness of performance management so that it is more responsive to new priorities as they emerge and takes into account feedback from children, young people and their families (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 3)			Clive Jones		
	Scrutinise supervision and management oversight data at monthly Safeguarding Services Management Meetings	Improved monitoring enables identification of areas for challenge, deep dive interrogation and analysis, leading to improvement	Dataset presented at CSSSMT	Jon Power	February 2017	
	Introduce service specific targets against the Strengthening Families outcome framework. This framework is currently built on a Family Circle assessment tool which includes input from young people and their families.	DCLG targets for "turning around families which need support" are achieved and demand in Safeguarding Services is reduced	Number of families 'turned around'	Clive Jones	April 2017	
	Better link procurement and commissioning budgets to outcome targets	Overspend in current budgets is reduced	Budget balanced	Jon Power Helen potter Jonathan Eatough	To April 2017	
	Continue to review the Children & Families service performance framework to ensure it accurately reflects:	Provides evidence that challenges and pressures are addressed effectively and performance improves	Improved performance across the dataset	Children's Services Senior Leadership	September 2016 and quarterly	Sept 16 complete

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the whole service the pressures and priorities of the communities and customers it serves. 	against "killer actions"		Team		
	Work with regional partners to improve the timeliness and quality of the regional benchmarking programme.	A more timely, rationalised data sets is delivered	Refreshed Regional benchmarking framework	Helen Potter	March 2017	
	Review strategic partnership performance frameworks and processes	Ensures that the pressures and priorities from across partner organisations are fully understood and shared so that a joint response can be developed where appropriate	Review completed.	Sarah Constable Helen Potter	March 2017	
	Implement QA Plan 2016-17, in particular the use of feedback from parents, children, young people and participation groups, in addition to the learning from complaints.	Feedback from parents, children and young people is used to inform priorities and service delivery	Actions in plan completed QA reporting includes feedback from families and learning from complaints.	Helen Smith	March 2017	
1.4	Ensure that that the support of an advocate or independent visitor is available for all children and young people who could benefit from this (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 11)			Clive Jones		
	Raise awareness re. Rights and Representations Service with children and young people in care, IROs and practitioners	All children and young people know about the service, are encouraged to use it and supported to improve their experience of being looked after.	Number of CiC accessing the service Proportion of complaints resulting in improved experience for CiC	Tilly Heigh	December 2016	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
			Number/% of children and young people attending CiC Reviews			
	Raise awareness re. Rights and Representations Service with children and young people subject to CP Plan, IROs and practitioners	All children and young people know about the service, are encouraged to use it and supported to improve their experience of child protection processes	Number of children subject to CP plan accessing the service Proportion of children reporting that the support helped improve their experience of CP services Number/% of children and young people attending CP conferences and reviews	Tilly Heigh	December 2016	
	Review impact of increased awareness raising on capacity of Rights and Representations Service and if necessary submit business case for increasing the capacity in the team	Team has capacity to meet increased demand without loss of quality in the service provided to children and young people	Team capacity is in line with need for service	Tilly Heigh	March 2017	
	Implement MOMO consultation software and training for practitioners and CiC	CiC are offered an alternative choice to engage in their reviews and raise issues with their social workers	Increased involvement in CiC Review activity No. of children and young people using MOMO	Tilly Heigh	January 2017	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	Scope the potential number of CiC who may wish to access an Independent Visitor (IV) Service, and raise awareness of the service	A more accurate view regarding the potential numbers will inform commissioning and performance monitoring of current service provider, as well as enabling targeted awareness raising activity.	Number of CiC requesting an IV Timeliness of provision of IV by provider	Tilly Heigh	November 2016	
	Raise awareness re. Independent Visitor Service with children and young people in care, IROs and practitioners	CiC, particularly those within the scope of the IV service, are aware of the service offer and able to access it.	Number of CiC requesting an IV	Tilly Heigh	December 2016	
	Review current IV commissioning arrangements to improve performance	CiC who request an IV are matched successfully and without undue delay	Timescales for providing IV for CiC Proportion of CiC who report satisfaction with the service and improved outcomes as a result.	Tilly Heigh	March 2017	
THEME 2: QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FRONT LINE PRACTICE						
2.1	Support improved outcomes for children and young people by making sure that plans contain clear details, actions and timescales and are informed by timely assessments that contain clear analysis (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 4)			Jo Britton		
	Deliver strengthening practice program modules in assessment and planning to all social workers	Social workers are able to produce good quality assessments and plans that inform effective intervention. Chronic risks to children	Number of practitioners attending training Evaluation of training 75% of cases audited score 'good'	Marie Hatton	Training to begin: March 2017 End: March 2018	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
		and young people are managed in a proactive and timely way.	or 'o/s' for quality of assessments and effectiveness of plans			
	Agree and implement common practice framework across children's services	Practitioners have consistent tools to incorporate into their practice to support improvement in planning and assessment work. Chronic risks to children and young people are managed in a proactive and timely way.	Practice framework embedded across all services and embedded in workforce strategy 75% of cases audited score as 'good' or 'o/s' overall Reduction in court activity	Marie Hatton	Framework agreed: October 2016 Training begins: May 2017	
	Evaluate effectiveness of current 'pods' and agree actions to ensure they are used consistently and result in improved practice	Consistent use of 'pods' encourages reflection and critical analysis of practice, shared approach and results in solutions which achieve improved outcomes for children. Chronic risks to children and young people are managed in a proactive and timely way.	Evaluation completed Pods meet regularly across the service Audits evidence pod activity influencing engagement with children and families and positive case outcomes	Marie Hatton	Evaluation complete: January 2017	
	Continue 'back to basics' monthly learning program with social workers	Improved proficiency of core social work practice, including assessment and planning, leads to all risks, including chronic risks, being managed robustly	Number of social workers attending sessions Feedback from sessions 75% of cases audited score as	Marie Hatton	September 2016 and ongoing	Complete and continuing

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
			'good' or 'o/s' overall			
	Complete baseline audit of development plans for individual social workers	Gaps are identified and appropriate action taken Skill deficits are identified and inform training provision, including back to basics Capability processes are supported	Audit completed Proportion of social workers with development plan in place 75% of cases audited score as 'good' or 'o/s' overall	Marie Hatton	December 2016	
	Incorporate the Strengthening Families outcome framework and 'Family Assessment' tool in the development of a shared assessment tool .	Use of a shared assessment tool across early help and safeguarding services improves consistency and ability to identify and articulate risk	Shared assessment tool agreed and implementation begins	Debbie Lloyd	April 2017	
2.2	Ensure that an appropriate range of agencies are engaged and share information within child protection strategy discussions (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 5)			Jo Britton		
	Review Family Connect Service and agency resource contribution	All agencies to have available resource in Family Connect to ensure there are no Gaps in sourcing information to inform strategy and triage discussions	80% strategy discussions include at least 3 agencies	Debbie Lloyd	January 2017	
	Increase management capacity in Family Connect by recruiting an additional fte Consultant Social Worker	Improved management oversight regarding complex and chronic risks and more timely decision making	90% of decisions made within 24 hours of referral	Debbie Lloyd	January 2017	
2.3	Strengthen and speed up permanence planning for those children and young people who achieve permanence through routes other than adoption (OFSTED			Jo Britton		

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	RECOMMENDATION 10)					
	Develop Placement Strategy to be developed with a clear vision to ensure that all our children achieve the best possible permanence route, without delay or drift.	CiC achieve the best possible permanence route, without delay or drift	100% of CiC have an appropriate (including twin track) permanence plan at second review Improved timeliness of CiC achieving permanence	Angela Yapp	December 2016	
	Review all existing cases at Permanence Panel to ensure that the best possible option for permanence is achieved in a timely way – to include return to family, SGO, CAO, Revocation of CO for stable PwP	CiC where there are delays in achieving permanence are identified and action taken to progress permanence options.	100% of CiC have an appropriate (including twin track) permanence plan at second review Improved timeliness of CiC achieving permanence	Nick Bennison	December 2016	
	Embed the care planning regulations for those children and young people in long term fostering arrangements to reduce statutory duties as per recommendations	CiC in settled long term placements receive a more proportionate, less intrusive service in line with their needs.	Number of CiC where statutory duties are reduced	Angela Yapp	February 2017	
	Re-launch placement stability panel to support placements at an early point	Issues in long term placement are identified and action taken to help prevent breakdown while identifying appropriate alternative placement if breakdown cannot be avoided.	Reduction in number of long term placements breaking down Stability of future placements for CiC whose long term placements break down	Angela Yapp	January 2017	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	Recruit forever families/long term foster carers to improve the fostering resource.	There is enough choice of placements to ensure long CiC can be matched with permanent carers in a timely way	Increase in long term foster placements Increase in foster to adopt placements	Shirley Wilson	Commenced April 2017 Project end March 2019	
	Review SGO arrangements to ensure children have the security and support they need.	Children subject to SGO are able to live in safe, secure and stable homes	Number of CiC subject to SGO Proportion of SGO arrangements which break down	Angela Yapp	January 2017	
	Launch permanence activity at full staff briefing to ensure that all staff understand the expectations and processes for securing permanence for our children.	Practitioners and managers understand the expectations and children achieve stable permanent placements in a timely way	% of staff attending briefing Case audits identify improved pace in achieving permanence for CiC and improved outcomes for CiC through living in stable, secure homes.	Angela Yapp	November 2016	
	Review IRO approach to ensure consistency and challenge to ensure appropriate permanence plans for our looked after children are in place in a timely way.	IRO scrutiny and challenge ensures children achieve secure, stable permanent homes without undue delay	100% of CiC have an appropriate (including twin track) permanence plan at second review Improved timeliness of CiC achieving permanence	Tilly Heigh	November 2016	
	Review the new 0-25 Emotional Health and Wellbeing service and to understand any potential gaps in support services.	Children and young people have good emotional health and wellbeing to achieve permanency through	Proportion of children in care with complex needs achieving	Helen Didlock	December 2017	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
		remaining in a stable placement.	permanency. Review is completed and any gaps identified. Reduction in the number of permanent placement breakdowns			
	Following the restructure of the fostering service, additional support to be made available to foster carers, both in and outside office hours to help to maintain vulnerable placements.	Foster carers are able to access support, helping to reduce placement breakdowns and improve stability for CiC	Number of foster carers accessing out of hours support Satisfaction reported by foster carers with out of hours support Number of long term placements breaking down	Angela Yapp	December 2016	
THEME 3: OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES						
3.1	Improve work to identify children and young people who are privately fostered and assess their welfare, so that arrangements are fit for purpose and compliant with statutory guidance (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 6)			Jo Britton		
	Review existing awareness raising activity around private fostering and agree and implement communication plan, ensuring wider involvement of the TWSCB and Family Connect.	Professionals, agencies, schools and residents are aware of the notification requirements for private fostering	Raised awareness by own/partner agencies and members of the community. Increased notifications.	Angela Yapp	December 2016	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	Deliver information session regarding private fostering process and procedure to social worker staff and IROs at whole staff briefing	Children in private fostering arrangements are kept safe through the provision of timely and appropriate assessment of need and provision of support	100% of visits and assessments achieved within timescale 75% of PF cases audited score as 'good' or 'o/s' overall	Angela Yapp	November 2016	
	Review and enhance protocol recording mechanisms	Improved reporting is available to enable monitoring, tracking and reporting around private fostering	Improved data quality. Fit for purpose recording. Clear audit trails available	Helen Smith	March 2017	
	Regular reporting of private fostering activity to be included on monthly performance dashboard.	Senior Managers are better able to provide monitoring and oversight, leading to improved outcomes for privately fostered children	Performance measures included on SLT dataset 100% of visits and assessments achieved within timescale	Richard Worton	December 2016	
3.2	Ensure that return home interviews (RHIs) for children and young people who have been missing from home or care are all carried out in a timely manner (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 7)			Jo Britton		
	Undertake an internal audit of Missing Children operational process and practices	Reviewing operational processes and practices enables required improvements to be made to ensure they are fit for purpose.	Checks and balances that approach supports RHI activity. 90% RHIs are completed on time	Tina Knight	January 2017	
	Review and put in place RHI quality controls, focussing on	Children and young people who return home from	Quality of information recorded.	Tina Knight Helen Smith	December 2016	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	timeliness and quality of RHI for all teams.	being missing are seen in a timely way and have any additional support needs assessed and met	90% RHIs are completed on time			
	Missing Children Operational Group to data match the reports between the police and LA.	Accurate data helps ensure that all children and young people who go missing are identified and offered appropriate support	All missing children correctly reported and RHI undertaken.	Tina Knight	Commenced September 2016	
	Develop CRM processes to enable automated contacts to allocated workers when the children and young people on their caseload have been missing.	Practitioners who are working with children and young people who go missing are alerted at an early stage and able to offer more timely RHI and support	90% RHIs are completed on time	Tina Knight Sarah Johnson	December 2016	
	Arrangements made for Early Help practitioners to complete all RHI where there is not an allocated worker.	Children who are not already known to services receive RHI and appropriate support at an early stage	90% of RHI for children previously unknown to services are completed on time	Debbie Lloyd	December 2016	
	Develop CRM processes to automatically inform managers of delays in RHIs and require recording of management decision and reason for delay.	Delays in delivering RHIs are reduced by enabling improved management oversight	Standard operating procedures processed and understood. Management oversight captured. 90% RHIs are completed on time	Tina Knight Sarah Johnson	February 2017	
	Develop service operational procedures (SOPS) around missing processes and disseminate to all teams	Improved awareness and guidance for practitioners results in improved consistency of practice and	Audit activity evidences improved consistency of practice for RHI	Tina Knight	January 2017	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
		application of agreed procedures	90% RHIs are completed on time			
	Aggregate information from RHI questionnaires to determine gaps in services.	A better understanding of service needs and reasons why children and young people go missing informs the commissioning and provision of support services which will help to keep them safe by reducing missing episodes.	Information aggregated and learning reported Learning informs commissioning Reduction in missing episodes for individual children and young people Reduction in need for RHIs	Tina Knight Helen Smith	March 2017	
3.3	Strengthen arrangements for supported and supervised contact, so that children looked after do not experience the cancellation of contact sessions due to a lack of resources (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 8)			Jo Britton		
	Review organisation of Contact Team to improve flexibility and assess need for additional permanent and sessional workers	Greater capacity to supervise contact enables greater flexibility and reduces cancellation, reducing negative impact on CiC	No contact sessions cancelled due to lack of resources	Darren Knibbs	September 2016	Reorganisation completed
	Complete move of contact service into family friendly building	Contact can take place in child friendly environment Additional space available for contact	Contact service moves and contact takes place in new building	Darren Knibbs	September 2016	
3.4	Increase the availability of suitable housing, including emergency accommodation, for homeless 16 - and 17 - year-olds and care leavers (OFSTED RECOMMENDATION 9)			Jonathan Eatough		
	Agree and establish a same day referral for care leavers with the provider Thrive into Supported	Enable 16 and 17 year olds care leavers access to good quality supported	No care leavers in Bed and breakfast.	Jo Cornwell and Sue Wardle	August 2016	

Ref	Action	Outcome	Success Measure	Lead(s)	Date Due	Status
	Accommodation (Supporting People) to increase the availability of this accommodation.	accommodation.				
	Provide emotional health and wellbeing support to care leavers via the new 0-25 Emotional Health and wellbeing service.	Care leavers have improved emotional health and wellbeing to enable them to live independently	Increased stability of independent housing – reduced number of moves.	Louise Mills	May 2017	
	Increase overnight and day support provision at the council's temporary accommodation service to enable emergency referrals and PACE transfers for 16 and 17 year olds, Care leavers to have the priority.	16 and 17 year olds have a safe supportive environment to reside in and will be assessed appropriately for their risks and needs.	No 16/17yo or care leavers placed in Bed and Breakfast All 16 and 17 year olds have a clear plan of move on.	Helen Didlock/Tim Moore	March 2017	
	Increase day support to 24/7 to support care leavers up to the age of 25 who become homeless and support 16/17 year olds to find their permanent home	Care leavers aged 16 to 25 are supported to effect a positive change to enable them to live independently	Reduction in the number of care leavers who are homeless. No care leavers or 16 and 17 year olds in bed and breakfast.	Helen Didlock/Tim Moore	March 2017	

GLOSSARY

CiC	Child in Care	The definition of a child in care is found in the <u>Children Act 1989</u> . This is a child who is looked after by a local authority, either because the court has granted a care order or because their parent(s) have agreed to them being looked after in accommodation provided by or on behalf of the local authority. The term 'looked after' is also used for these children, but here in Telford & Wrekin we use 'Child in Care' as that is what our children in care have said they wanted to be called.
CP Plan	Child Protection Plan	When a child protection case conference decides a child or young person is at risk of harm or abuse they are known as a 'child subject of a child protection plan'. This is to remind us that it is what we all do, as set out in the plan, that keeps children safe. The aims of a child protection plan are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To keep the child safe ➤ To promote their welfare ➤ To support their wider family to care for them if it can be done safely
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer	Independent Reviewing Officers ensure that children looked after by the Local Authority have regular reviews to consider the care plan and placement. It is the role of IROs to ensure that a child's views are taken into consideration and that the Local Authority is fulfilling its duties and functions. In Telford & Wrekin our IROs also function as Child Protection Conference Chairs, and chair multi-agency meetings to decide whether or not a child needs to be made subject to a Child Protection Plan. If so they help to agree a plan to address identified risks, and ensure that parents and young people are able to participate in the conference and understand what they need to do to care for their child safely.
QA	Quality Assurance	Quality assurance involves the systematic monitoring and evaluation of practice, policies, and procedures, with the aim of improving our services to achieve better outcomes for children and their families.
RHI	Return Home Interview	Return Home Interviews are offered to all children and young people who go missing from home or care. They provide an opportunity to uncover information that can help protect children from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing or from risk factors in their home. Interviews should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**CABINET – 17 NOVEMBER 2016****PROPOSED CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL ORGANISATION INCLUDING THE RE-DESIGNATION OF ATTENDANCE AREAS****REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: EDUCATION AND CORPORATE PARENTING****LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR GILLY REYNOLDS****PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT****1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Council currently has designated attendance areas for the vast majority of maintained schools and academies. Whilst these attendance areas do not prevent parents or carers from expressing preference for other schools it is widely accepted that the practice of allocating an attendance area, usually linked to the school's proximity to local housing, helps to determine a range of issues which assists to provide an efficient service for allocating school places. Our attendance areas have remained largely unchanged since 2008 and it would seem a logical time to re-visit the discussions both as a result of new schools which have been built as part of BSF and also in the light of a recent upturn in new housing developments.
- 1.2 Due to pressure on secondary school places in Newport we are proposing that pupils residing in the Muxton area will be designated a secondary school within three miles. This will free up school places at Burton Borough School for new residents moving in to Newport due to anticipated housing growth.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. **That Cabinet receives and takes note of all the information relating to the proposed consultation on the changes to attendance contained within this report; and**
- b. **Authorises the Assistant Director for Education, Employment & Regeneration to take all required actions and exercise all the Council's relevant powers to enable consultation on agreed issues contained within the report to be undertaken during December 2016 and January 2017.**

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Children and Young People – to consult and involve all stakeholders with a vested interest in children’s education and safety
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Children and Families living in the Borough
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	Consultation to be completed by January 2017 with a potential implementation date for changes of September 2018	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The proposal to change the catchment areas of Burton Borough and Telford Priory schools, so that Muxton moves out of the Burton Borough catchment area and into Telford Priory’s catchment, offers substantial potential transport savings. Muxton is within three miles of Telford Priory school and so there would be no statutory requirement for the Council to provide transport for these pupils. Muxton parents could choose to continue to send their children to Burton Borough, but as this would no longer be their catchment school, there would again be no statutory requirement for the Council to provide transport. Currently four Council funded buses run from Muxton to Burton Borough at a cost of approximately £40,000 per bus, so substantial savings would be likely to arise from this change in catchment areas.
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<p>It is the responsibility of Local Authorities, governing bodies and decision makers to ensure that they act in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.</p> <p>Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 requires a local authority to secure that sufficient schools in number, character and equipment for providing primary and secondary education are available for its area</p> <p>Section 14(3A) requires a local authority to exercise its functions in this respect to with a view to securing diversity in the provision of schools, and increasing opportunities for</p>

	<p>parental choice</p> <p>On 8 April 2016 the Government published a suite of revised statutory guidance for local authority maintained schools:</p> <p><i>Making “prescribed alterations” to maintained schools – statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers</i></p> <p><i>Guidance for decision - makers –Statutory guidance for decision makers deciding prescribed alteration and establishment and discontinuance proposals</i></p> <p><i>Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision -makers</i></p> <p>The statutory guidance includes guidance upon consultation requirements and is to be read in conjunction with:</p> <p>the Education and Inspections Act 2006 – Parts 2 and 3 and Schedules 2 and 3 the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013; the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 the School Organisation (Removal of Foundation, Reduction in the Number of Foundation Governors and Ability of Foundation to Pay Debts) (England) Regulations (2007)</p> <p>The statutory guidance <i>School Admissions Code –statutory guidance for admission authorities ,governing bodies ,local authorities ,school adjudicators and admission appeals panels</i> came into force on 19 December 2014 and issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices</p>
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		<p>and criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective. The Code sets out the requirements for consultation.</p> <p>The statutory guidance <i>Home to school travel and transport guidance – statutory guidance for local authorities</i> was published in July 2014 in respect of duties under the Education Act 1996</p> <p>There is also non- statutory guidance published in March 2015 <i>Advice on standards for school premises – for local authorities ,proprietors ,school leaders ,school staff and governing bodies</i> in respect of the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012, which are required to be followed in respect of the standards and suitability of school premises.</p> <p>Departmental non statutory advice for local authorities and new school proposers on establishing new schools and the free school presumption was last updated on 12 February 2016 in respect of Part 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which sets out the statutory requirements in Sections 6A to 14 for the establishment of new schools, in Sections 15 to 17 on the discontinuance of schools and in Sections 18 to 24 on alterations to schools [<i>The free school presumption – departmental advice for local authorities and new school proposers</i>]</p> <p>KF 21.10.2016</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	Borough wide impact but particular impact for Muxton residents.

4. INFORMATION

4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. It must also ensure that there are sufficient schools in the area, promote diversity, and increase parental preference.

In addition the Council will also seek to:

- Improve educational outcomes by ensuring access to high quality provision;
- Ensure cost effective provision, by developing links to other initiatives such as early years provision, developing formal collaborations with partner organisations and actively seek developer contributions where available;
- Provide or assist in procuring local schools for local children by promoting community cohesion, and ensure the provision of new schools are in the right place to serve their communities;
- Facilitate the diversity of school provision by offering a range of provision to promote preference to parents;
- Maintain the sustainability of schools in terms of financial, social and environmental impacts;
- Consult with stakeholders over school organisation proposals and as part of the commissioning process.

In order to achieve these outcomes, first and foremost it is necessary to ascertain the future pupil places needed within the Borough. Individual school level projections are undertaken annually to ensure that there is sufficient data available to support proposals for school organisation, whether that be a new school, expansion or merger.

4.2 In recent years the Borough has experienced an increase in the primary school population, which has been in part due to larger year groups starting school and smaller year groups leaving at the end of year 6. This has also been affected by a higher number of completions of new homes within the Borough over the last few years.

4.3 These higher cohort numbers are now also impacting on secondary schools and this, combined with new housing development yielding additional pupils, means that our overall secondary surplus is decreasing and that in some areas of the borough there will be a need to rationalise secondary school places.

4.3 There is also increasing pressure to provide places for children with Special Educational Needs due to the population of the borough increasing and the fact that an increased number of children with profound and complex difficulties are surviving for longer.

5. PRIMARY SCHOOL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Individual Planning Area – Primary Schools

The following table details 7 separate planning areas that are used for school organisation purposes. They have been based on proximity and influence on each other's pupil numbers and admissions, and also based upon geographical boundaries where they exist, such as major roads, railway lines etc. The areas are Newport, Wellington, North Central, North East, South West, South East and South Queensway.

The schools included in each area are as follows:

South Queensway	South West	South East	North East	North Central	Wellington	Newport
Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge CE Pri	Aqueduct Primary	Grange Park Primary	Donnington Wood Infant & Junior	Apley Wood Primary	Crudgington Primary	Church Aston Infant
John Randall Primary	Captain Webb Primary	Hollinswood Primary	Priorslee Primary Academy	HLC Primary	Dothill Primary	Moorfield Primary
John Fletcher of Madeley Primary	Dawley CE Primary	Holmer Lake Primary	Redhill Primary	Meadows Primary	High Ercall Primary	Muxton Primary & Lilleshall Primary
Sir Alexander Fleming Primary	Ladygrove Primary	Randlay Primary	St George's CE Primary	Millbrook Primary	Short Wood Primary	Newport Infant & Junior
St Mary's Catholic Primary	Lawley Primary	Windmill Primary	St Lawrence CE, Preston	Queenswood Primary	St Patrick's Catholic Pri, Wellington	St Peter's CE Primary, Edgmond
William Reynolds Primary	Lawley Village Academy		St Luke's Catholic Primary, Trench	Wombridge Primary	St Peter's CE, Bratton	Ss Peter & Paul Catholic Primary
Woodlands Primary	Lightmoor Primary		St Matthew's CE, Donnington		Wrekin View Primary	Tibberton CE Primary
	Newdale Primary		Teagues Bridge Primary			
	Old Park Primary		Wrockwardine Wood Inf & Jnr			

5.2 There are several housing developments in various stages of planning in the **Newport area**. Some of the major developments have already begun and more are likely to begin within the next five years which will impact on the school infrastructures in the Newport area. There are further dwellings due to be built which have not yet been included within the projections as their start date is not yet firm enough and a further 600 properties that Planning have resolved to permit. The current schools have already been extended to near the limits of their sites and so it is likely that a new primary school will need to be provided in the southern half of Newport.

5.3 At present there is shared attendance area between Muxton and Lilleshall Primary Schools and we are proposing that each primary will have its own individual attendance area so that Lilleshall residents will have priority within the Lilleshall attendance area and Muxton residents will have priority within the Muxton attendance area for their respective schools. Lilleshall attendance area will remain in the attendance area for Burton Borough School whilst Muxton attendance area will have priority at Telford Priory School at secondary level.

5.4 At present the projections do not show a great deal of change within the **Wellington area** in the immediate future. However, if all the housing developments currently proposed begin to come forward over the next five years then more primary school places will definitely be needed. The most effective place to provide these will be a Wrekin View Primary School as its site is best suited to expansion and there is also a council owned building next door which could be remodelled to accommodate primary pupils.

5.5 There is a plan to build a new village on the outskirts of the Wellington area on the site of the old sugar beet factory at Allscott. This development has not been included in the projections as a start date has yet to be confirmed. We have negotiated a s106 agreement with the developer to provide a primary school for the development.

5.6 **North Central area** has experienced the impact of very high in area figures from the Staffordshire and Shropshire Health Informatics Service coupled with substantial housing development. The pressure on the school's attendance area at HLC Primary has led the council to remodel part of the school in order to provide 30 additional places per year group. These places will start being occupied in September 2016 and then each new reception year after that will have an additional 30 places until by 2023 there will be 3 forms of entry across the school. This has been funded through developer contributions. The remodelling of HLC has meant moving the early years' team and the cluster base.

5.7 With the addition of places over the past 4 years this area is projected to have a small surplus over the current planning period. There is an additional development planned for the old Maxell site and when this is built the council will need to expand one of the existing primary schools in the area to cater for the new pupils. Discussions have already been held with Millbrook Primary School whose site is the most suitable for expansion. Funding to provide the extension would come from developer contributions.

5.8 There has been sustained pupil growth in the **North East area** over the past 5 years and the number of children able to gain places in the schools from outside their attendance areas has been steadily decreasing. This is in spite of 2 of the schools having been extended within the past four years to increase their capacity. There are further housing developments planned on the eastern boundaries of this area and the scale of these is such (circa 1,400 consented homes) that a new primary school will be necessary. Negotiations are currently underway with developers about the provision of a new school.

5.9 Lawley Village Academy opened in September 2015 with just one reception class and is expected to grow by one cohort a year. The building is designed to have core facilities capable of accommodating 420 pupils and it is expected that as housing totals in the area increase it will need to increase from its current 210 places. The initial phase of building has been paid for by a mixture of developer contributions and basic need funding. A funding source for the additional 210 places has yet to be identified. This school is sponsored by REAch2 and is already proving popular and it may be advantageous to grow the school more rapidly than originally planned.

5.10 The **South West area** currently has an overall surplus of 3% but it is likely that we will experience increased pressure by 2019 as there are more housing developments planned for the area. It will therefore be necessary to expand one or more of the existing schools to accommodate these new pupils.

6. SECONDARY SCHOOL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 At secondary level the borough is split into 3 planning areas again on the basis of geographical location and the movement of pupils. These are – Newport, North Telford and South Telford. The Schools include in each area are as follows:-

Newport	North Telford	South Telford
Adams' Grammar School	Charlton School	Abraham Darby Academy
Burton Borough School	Ercall Wood Technology College	Madeley Academy
Newport Girls High School	Hadley Learning Community	Telford Langley School
	Holy Trinity Academy	Telford Park School
	Telford Priory School	<i>Thomas Telford CTC</i>

6.2 There are 3 secondary schools situated within **Newport**. Two of these, Adams' Grammar School and Newport Girls High School, are single sex grammar schools which select applicants on the basis of their academic ability and the third, Burton Borough School, is a comprehensive school. All three schools have been remodelled under the BSF project, although none of them has been rebuilt, and are usually oversubscribed each year. An additional 150 places were added to Burton Borough in order to allow it to develop post 16 provision. These places are not currently in use and, as new legislation has made it harder for schools to open new post 16 provision, these places may be available to accommodate additional statutory school aged pupils in the future.

6.3 The pressure on places within the Newport area arising from the large amount of consented housing development means that it will be necessary to revisit the attendance area for this school. The Burton Borough School has a net capacity of 1,080 and there are 1,064 pupils currently attending the school. It is possible that a further 1,089 properties will be built in the Newport area over the next few years which we would expect to yield approximately 170 pupils. Approximately 80% of the pupils currently attending Burton Borough school live within the Newport area with half of the remaining pupils coming from outside of the Borough and the remainder coming from within the Borough.

6.4 It is expected that these places that are currently being occupied by children from outside the Newport area will in future be needed for Newport residents. Newport is relatively isolated geographically and at the current time pupils living in Muxton are transported to Newport each day. ***In view of the potential pressure on places in Newport we propose to give priority for the available places to residents of Newport and its surrounding villages and to identify alternative places for Muxton pupils elsewhere within the Telford north area which is geographically closer than Newport.***

6.5 There are two new schools to the eastern side of the **north Telford area** with surplus Holy Trinity Academy and Telford Priory School. Telford Priory School opened on a new site in September 2015 and has significantly enhanced provision for Arts and sport. Telford Priory was built to accommodate 1200 pupils and there are currently 1,072 pupils attending, this gives a surplus of 128 places. Approximately 75% of their current pupils reside in the attendance area, this leaves us with 300 places that would be prioritised for Telford Priory and Muxton residents. There are approximately 400 properties with planning consent within the Telford priory catchment area and regard of the proposed Strategic Urban

Extension within the Muxton area has also been taken into account when considering the proposed changes to the attendance area for Telford Priory School. ***This school is within three miles of Muxton and therefore we propose that this becomes the attendance area for Muxton residents.***

6.6 Hadley Learning Community is situated in the centre of the north Telford area and admits principally pupils from Hadley, Ketley and Leegomery. It has increased in popularity and is now generally oversubscribed. There have been substantial areas of housing development within the attendance area, notably the millennium development in east Ketley and the large development south of Trench Lock. The primary provision within the school has recently been extended and discussions are currently underway with the school to look at the possibility of creating additional secondary places.

6.7 There are two schools serving the **Wellington** area, Charlton in the north and Ercall Wood in the south of the district. The Charlton School has few vacant places at present and there is housing development scheduled for its area, both within the town boundary and in the rural areas to the west and north. Ercall Wood Technology College serves the southern half of Wellington and also the Lawley area. The school has a number of surplus places but the lower year groups are fuller than those in key stage 4.

6.8 New housing has been built in the southern area of Wellington on Holyhead Road and there is currently an inquiry into whether a large development on Haygate Road will be permitted. It is expected that the available places within Ercall Wood will be necessary to accommodate pupils from new development in Wellington. ***We propose that the Lawley area should become a shared attendance area between Ercall Wood and Telford Langley School.***

6.9 All four schools within the **south Telford area** have been rebuilt within the last decade, Madeley Academy, Abraham Darby Academy, Telford Park School and Telford Langley School. Madeley Academy was the first to move into new premises in 2010, followed by Abraham Darby in 2012 and then Telford Langley and Telford Park Schools, the latter opening in September 2015. Also located in south Telford, but accepting pupils from postcodes across the town and some postcodes in Wolverhampton, is Thomas Telford City Technology College.

6.10 The two halves of the planning area are different in character. The two most southerly schools, Madeley and Abraham Darby, are well-established and successful academies which are generally oversubscribed and have few surplus places for compulsory school aged pupils. The two more northerly schools, Telford Langley and Telford Park, are relatively new academies sponsored by the Communities Academy Trust and are not so well established. Both of these schools currently have a number of surplus places which ensures that we have sufficient capacity at secondary level. In future we will need to revisit school attendance areas and/or explore the possibility of free school places in the future to help relieve pressure created by a buoyant birth rate and large areas of new housing development.

7. SPECIAL SCHOOL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 It is anticipated that the number of school age pupils will continue to increase in Telford because of a combination of an increase in the birth rate and continuing housing

development. At present special schools within the borough are largely full with very few surplus places available. If the proportion of children seeking special school places to meet their needs remains the same, then the number of special school places may need to be increased or more mainstream schools may need to develop resources to meet the needs of these students.

7.2 New special school places are not easy to provide using section 106 developer contributions as special schools admit pupils from across the borough and not children local to any particular housing development as mainstream schools do. The new restrictions on pooling developer contributions for authorities without a community Infrastructure Levy in place has meant that this situation has deteriorated further. It is likely that the authority will have to submit a business case for special school expansion to try and gain funding from the Education Funding Agency as soon as an opportunity arises and these discussions are currently under way.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1 Telford & Wrekin Council has a statutory obligation to provide free home to school transport in the following circumstances:

- (a) For all pupils of compulsory school age (5-16) if their nearest suitable school is
 - Beyond 2 miles (if below the age of 8)
 - Beyond 3 miles (if aged between 8 and 16)
- (b) For all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school or college because of mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues relating to their special educational needs or disability. Eligibility is assessed on an individual basis.
- (c) For all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to the nearest suitable school because the nature of the route is deemed unsafe to walk.
- (d) When pupils are entitled to free school meals or their parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit if
 - (i) The nearest suitable school is beyond 2 miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11)
 - (ii) The school is between 2 and 6 miles (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools)
 - (iii) The school is between 2 and 15 miles and the nearest school is preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16).

8.2 The key proposed change is to move Muxton into Telford Priory's catchment area and remove it from Burton Borough's catchment area on order to meet the demand for places in Newport as a result of housing growth. This will mean that most pupils living in Muxton are within 3 miles of their catchment (i.e. nearest suitable) school. There may be a small number of pupils entitled to free schools meals or with parents in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit, who live more than two miles from the school who will still qualify for free transport.

- 8.4 Four buses are currently commissioned by the Council to transport pupils from Muxton to Burton Borough. These proposals will **not** impact on pupils receiving transport assistance under the current policy **until** the end of their current phase of education. Pupils already supported for travel to Burton Borough will continue to receive this until the end of Year 11.
- 8.5 The proposed change in catchment therefore means the current expenditure of around £40,000 per bus will not be necessary once the new arrangements are in place which is a significant Council saving.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 The school organisation and attendance area consultation will run from 18 November 2016 to 16 January 2017. This will ensure we cover the statutory requirement for a 6 week term time period of school admissions consultation for academic year 2018/19. Consultation findings will be reported to Policy Review on 9 February 2017.

Prior to consultation we will have discussions with key organisations including:

- Specifically affected schools
- Academy sponsors potentially affected by the proposals
- Diocesan representatives affected by the proposals

Public consultation will include:

- Other primary and secondary schools including governing bodies, PTA associations and school councils
- News for You database
- Key stakeholder, admissions authorities and partner organisations
- Online web page

The purpose of the consultation will be to find out public views to help the Council continue to offer the best, cost effective education solutions within the budget to meet the needs of a growing pupil population. The consultation questions will help to identify any concerns that people may have in relation to suggestions outlined in the report.

10. PREVIOUS MINUTES

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report prepared by Jules Millington, School Organisation Specialist.



Consultation on the changes to school catchment areas

In common with most councils in the country Telford and Wrekin has designated catchment areas known as attendance areas for maintained schools and academies in the Borough. Since 2008, these areas have mostly remained the same.

Over the last few years, many Telford and Wrekin schools have been rebuilt or remodelled to offer more pupil places. However many new homes have been built locally and more are planned across the Borough.

With these changes, the Council now needs to look carefully at some school catchment areas to make sure that enough school places can be provided locally to meet the growing population of school aged children locally.

Changes to some school catchment areas are propose to be made in September 2018.

Parents, as they are able to now, can apply for places at any school in the borough. However, when considering school places, priority will be given to pupils from within their school's catchment areas.

More information about the Council's statutory duties regarding school places can be found [here](#)

When new housing estates are built, developers sometimes make financial contributions towards increased pupil school places. More information about this can be found [here](#)

Summary of key proposed points in primary school catchment areas

- Lilleshall residents will have priority for the Lilleshall Primary School catchment area
- Muxton residents will have priority for Muxton Primary School catchment area

Summary of key proposed points in secondary school catchment areas

- Priority for schools in Newport catchment will be given to residents of Newport and the surrounding villages Cherrington, Church Aston, Edgmond, Howle, Lilleshall, Sambrook and Tibberton
- Lilleshall residents will remain in the catchment for Burton Borough School
- The catchment area for Telford Priory School will be extended to include Muxton residents who will no longer be in the catchment for Burton Borough School
- Lawley will have shared catchment area with Ercall Wood Technology College and Telford Langley School

These changes would come into effect from September 2018.

Primary Schools

There are seven separate Primary School planning areas in Telford and Wrekin. These are Newport, Wellington, North Central, North East, South West, South East and South Queensway. Within each planning area there are a number of schools for primary aged pupils. Further details of this can be found in the Cabinet Report here.

Secondary Schools

At secondary level the borough is split into 3 planning areas, Newport, North Telford and South Telford. In each planning area there are a number of schools for secondary aged pupils.

Newport	North Telford	South Telford
Adams' Grammar School	Charlton School	Abraham Darby Academy
Burton Borough School	Ercall Wood Technology College	Madeley Academy
Newport Girls High School	Hadley Learning Community	Telford Langley School
	Holy Trinity Academy	Telford Park School
	Telford Priory School	Thomas Telford CTC

Newport

Additional housing development in the Newport area will inevitably put pressure on school places. There are three secondary schools situated within Newport. Two of these, Adams' Grammar School and Newport Girls High School, are single sex grammar schools which select applicants on the basis of their academic ability and the third, Burton Borough School is a comprehensive school.

All three have recently been remodelled and each year, all are usually over subscribed. Burton Borough School may be able to accommodate additional pupils; however it will be necessary to change the catchment area for this school. Currently pupils living in Muxton are transported to Burton Borough each day.

- The Council is proposing to give priority for any available places to residents of Newport and surrounding villages and to identify alternative places for Muxton pupils at Telford Priory School.
-

North Telford

There are two schools within the Wellington area, Charlton in the north and Ercall Wood in the south. Ercall Wood also takes pupils from the Lawley area of Telford. Proposed new housing in and around Wellington, may mean that the secondary school attendance area for pupils living in the Lawley area will need to be changed.

- We are proposing that Lawley area should become a shared catchment area between Ercall Wood and Telford Langley School.
 - It is proposed that the catchment area for Telford Priory School will be changed to include the catchment area for Muxton Primary school.
-

South Telford

All four schools with the South Telford area have been rebuilt within the last decade, Madeley Academy, Abraham Darby Academy, Telford Park School and Telford Langley School. Thomas Telford City Technical College is also located in South Telford, but accepts pupils from across the borough and from some postcodes in Wolverhampton.

In future, because of high birth rates and large areas of new housing it will be necessary to consider changes to the school attendance areas in the south of Telford.

Thank you for taking your time to complete this survey and share your views. Please return your survey before **27 January 2017**.

Do you have any children under the age of 16?

Yes
No

Are your children (Please select all that apply)

Not yet of school age
At Pre-school/Reception
At Primary school
At Secondary school
Other, please state below

Proposed changes to some designated school catchment areas

Q1 How would the Primary School catchment area proposals impact on your household?
(Please select one box in each row)

Very positive impact Positive impact No impact Negative impact Very negative impact

Lilleshall residents will have priority for the Lilleshall Primary School catchment area

Muxton residents will have priority for Muxton Primary School catchment area

Q2 Please use the box below to make any specific comments you have on the impact of the Primary School catchment area proposals

Q3 Do you agree or disagree that residents from Lilleshall village should receive priority for school places at their closest school - Lilleshall Primary School

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree nor disagree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q4 Do you agree or disagree that residents from Muxton area should receive priority for school places at the closest school - Muxton Primary school

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree nor disagree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q5 Please use the box below to make any specific comments you have on why you agree or disagree with these proposals

Q6 How would the Secondary School catchment area proposals impact on your household?
(Please select one box in each row)

	Very positive impact	Positive impact	No impact	Negative impact	Very negative impact
Priority for schools in Newport catchment will be given to residents of Newport and the surrounding villages Cherrington, Church Aston, Edgmond, Howle, Lilleshall, Sambrook and Tibberton					
Lilleshall residents will remain in the catchment for Burton Borough School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The catchment area for Telford Priory School will be extended to include Muxton residents who will no longer be in the catchment for Burton Borough School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lawley will have shared catchment area with Ercall Wood Technology College and Telford Langley School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7 Please use the box below to make any specific comments you have on the impact of the Secondary School catchment area proposals

Q8 Do you agree or disagree that residents from Newport and the surrounding villages should receive priority for school places at their closest school - Burton Borough Secondary School?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree nor disagree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q9 Do you agree or disagree that residents from Muxton should receive priority for school places at their closest secondary school Telford Priory School?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree nor disagree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q10 Do you agree or disagree that residents from Lawley area should have priority for school places at both Ercall Wood Technology College and Telford Langley School in order to offer sufficient places for pupils?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither agree nor disagree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11 Please use the box below to make any specific comments you have on why you agree or disagree with these proposals

Monitoring Information

You do not have to fill in all the following information, but if you do it will help us to check that we are hearing views from all sections of the community, including those people who may be directly affected by our proposals.

Q12 Are you?

Male

Prefer not to say

Female

Q13 What age group are you?

16 years or under

25-39

Prefer not to say

17-18

40-64

19-24

65+

Q14 What is your ethnicity?

White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British

White: Irish

White: Gypsy or Traveller

White: Polish

White: Any other (please write in box below)

Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean

Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African

Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian

Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Any other (please write in box below)

Asian/Asian British: Indian

Asian/Asian British: Pakistani

Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi

Asian/Asian British: Any other (please write in box below)

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African (please write country of origin in box below)

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Any other (please write in box below)

Other ethnic group: Arab (please write country of origin in box below)

Other ethnic group: Chinese

Other ethnic group: Any other (please write in box below)

Prefer not to say

Q15 Do you have any long-standing illness or disability that limits your daily activity?

Yes

Prefer not to say

No

Q16 Do you belong to any particular religion or hold particular beliefs?

Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other religion (please state below).....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Q17 What is your postcode?

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Q18 Are you a member of staff, volunteer or governor of a school or college in Telford and Wrekin?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
No.....	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Q19 If yes, please tell us which school or college

Q20 If you are completing this survey on behalf of a group or organisation, please tell us the name of the group or organisation

Giving your views

We would like a wide range of people, adults and children to give their views on these proposals.

If you have any questions about this survey please contact Jim Collins, Assistant Director for Education and Corporate Parenting by email schoolorganisation@telford.gov.uk or telephone 01952 383413.

To complete this survey online please visit www.telford.gov.uk/budget

Alternatively you can post your completed survey using the following **FREEPOST** address:

Freepost RTKJ-KGJA-ASZU
Co-operative Council Delivery Team
Telford & Wrekin Council
Darby House
Lawn Central
Town Centre
Telford TF3 4JA

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**CABINET - 17 NOVEMBER 2016****PRIDE IN YOUR HIGH STREET- UPDATE REPORT****REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: BUSINESS, DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT****LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR GILLY REYNOLDS****PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT****1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Pride in Your High Street (PIYHS) fund provided £1m to support physical and social regeneration across our Borough High Streets. The fund recognised the importance of thriving high streets and local centres to strengthening communities and local economies and forms part of the Council's 'business winning and business supporting' agenda.
- 1.2 The Fund was launched in April 2015. All 9 eligible high streets and local centres submitted successful projects and promoters were notified about their successful applications in January 2016; a number of great projects are now in delivery or have been completed, making a real difference to both the physical environment and vitality of our borough towns. It is clear already that Pride in Your High Street is going to create a lasting impact with projects that will go from strength to strength:
- In **Newport the Food Frenzy, Carnival and Italian Market** were a fantastic success with many hundreds turning out in support, stallholders reporting good sales and 150 volunteers involved – Facebook reflected the overwhelming success of the events with huge support for a repeat next year and beyond.
 - **Social enterprise Wavelength** received PIYHS funding to open '**The Forge**' in **Wellington** and in 3 months achieved such success that they have now set up a permanent home in the town centre.
 - Business support specialists **Good2Great** have provided training to more than 50 businesses across 6 high streets, helping a wide range of businesses from florists to cafes, hardware shops and accountants, who have attended nearly 80 different training sessions – all designed to help them increase their business turnover.
 - **10,000 attended the Oakengates Carnival** and thanks to PIYHS funding this looks set to become an annual event.
 - **In Madeley a Band Concert, Queen's Birthday Tea Party and a Victorian fete**, achieved the twin objectives of raising the profile of the Anstice and raising funds to pay for the refurbishment of the Ballroom floor.
- 1.3 At the end of the bidding process, an amount of unallocated funding was identified, and so 5 high streets which had experienced a lack of suitable applications, had received no applications for one or other of the elements of the fund or where circumstances prevented approved projects from proceeding, were each allocated a share of this funding and a second bidding round was opened, led by the Parish/Town Councils in those areas.

- 1.4 In view of the second bidding round and as a number of organisations have experienced unavoidable delays in delivering their projects, it is proposed that delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director, Business, Development & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Regeneration, to give an extension to organisations to complete their projects beyond the original deadline of 31 March 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the success of the Pride In Your High Street programme to date.
 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Regeneration, to extend the deadline for expenditure of Pride in Your High Street grants beyond 31 March 2017.
 2.3 That the final deadline for completion of projects and receipt of financial and outcome monitoring information from organisations will be 31 March 2018.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	The programme will contribute directly to the following priorities: -Protect and create jobs as a 'business supporting and business winning Council'. -Ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well-maintained. -Regenerate those neighbourhoods in need.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	Successful projects have the potential to have a positive impact on a wide cross section of the community.
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	It is envisaged that some projects will be complete by March 2017, but the Managing Director will have discretion to agree an extension beyond this deadline where appropriate and where significant progress has been made to move towards project delivery. All projects will need to be completed by 31 March 2018.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	£1million was approved for the Pride in Your High Street programme as part of the 2015/16 Budget strategy and was allocated to successful applicants following a grant bidding process. After the initial bidding process a balance of £300k was unallocated which then became the subject of a second bidding round, open to specific areas as detailed within paragraph 4.9 To date this has resulted in bids of £184k being received. On completion of the second bidding round the remaining unallocated amount and any underspend that emerges through project delivery may be used to

		<p>fund future high street initiatives.</p> <p>As stipulated within the Cabinet report of the 19th March 2015, all successful bidders will be required to evidence the availability of match funding and confirm their business plan for the long-term sustainability of their projects prior to the confirmation of funding. Successful bidders will be required to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with the Council prior to the release of funding which will define; the terms of the grant, the purpose for which it can be used, the arrangement for the drawdown of funding, which will be upon the receipt of evidence of expenditure, repayment and claw back arrangements for grant and the ongoing monitoring of grant to ensure that grant funding is being properly applied and outputs are being delivered. Financial advice and support will be provided as required. AEM 27/10/16</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<p>Provision was made within the Pride in Your High Street Funding Agreement to allow for grant works to be completed within the Grant Period this was to be no later than 31 March 2017.</p> <p>The Funding Agreement is in essence a contractual agreement between the parties, i.e. the Council and the Grant Recipient, and as such the parties are at liberty to agree amendments to any of its terms and conditions, including this extension to the date of the Grant Period.</p> <p>Any variation is at the discretion of the Council, must be agreed in writing and will therefore be put in place by a formal variation of the existing terms and conditions signed by both parties.</p> <p>All other terms and conditions relating to the funding, e.g. payment, use and conditions of funding, and clawback, will remain in place and therefore enforceable.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough wide impact

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Pride in Your High Street Fund comprised two elements; a Bidding Fund of £800k and an Innovation Fund of £200k. The Fund was open to projects centred on 9 Borough Town high streets and local centres, with bidding open to applications from a range of groups from Parish and Town Councils to regeneration partnerships, businesses and charities. Projects of community or strategic importance were encouraged to come forward to increase visitor footfall, support high street businesses and encourage community events and activities, bringing benefits across the Borough.
- 4.2 21 projects successfully bid for funding in the first bidding round, securing funding totalling over £800,000. These projects came from Parish and Town Councils and public, private and voluntary sector partners. They ranged from projects to improve the physical environment of centres including landscaping and improvements to buildings and memorials, to business support programmes that will help existing traders and businesses to thrive, and events including music, fairs and art trails that will improve high street vitality and encourage visitors to visit our historic centres. A few highlights are drawn out below with images illustrating some of these in Appendix 1.

Some Project Highlights

- 4.3 **Social Enterprise Wavelength Pop Up Shops** – this first round bid proposed to create pop up shops in four high streets with a focus on supporting disabled and disadvantaged people. The first shop – ‘The Forge’ - opened in Wellington in an empty retail unit and was open six days a week. It rented out sale space for local crafters, involved and encouraged start up businesses and helped those not confident in selling on line. Workshops have been facilitated by local crafts people, helping local people to develop skills and refreshments are provided offering healthy and local options to eat and drink. This project has increased footfall and its success has resulted in a sustainable and lasting legacy – The Forge has been so successful that it has now moved into a permanent unit in Wellington. Wavelength are now working with Oakengates Town Council to open their second shop early in 2017 promising similar success.
- 4.4 **Madeley Town Council Russell Green and War Memorial Project.** The project involved the enhancement of a civic square on the edge of Russell Green and the redesign of this space. This now provides a strong pedestrian link between the historic Madeley High Street and new retail development on the former Madeley Court school site. This project was completed in Summer 2016 and has created an attractive focal point for the Town Centre. Located close to the Anstice Memorial Hall, an enlarged and more accessible civic space now provides an ideal space for more gatherings and community events and it supports Madeley’s ambitions to develop as a tourist centre, and enhance its appeal to new businesses and residents.
- 4.5 **Good2Great Business support programme** – this programme addresses the lack of business support focussed on retailers aiming to deliver across 7 High Streets. The Good2Great programmes include retail and hospitality excellence training, new business market testing, successful selling techniques (including window dressing) and business sustainability. As of September 2016, the programme has delivered training to 55 businesses, has 43 businesses awaiting appointments and is regularly achieving satisfaction levels of over 90%. The success of the programme is particularly highlighted in Newport, where due to demand for the courses, the Town Council encouraged Good2Great to bid for additional funding in the second round.

- 4.6 **Newport Italian Food Festival and Newport Food Frenzy** - held in Summer 2016 was a great success, with both events creating a foundation and legacy for building a much bigger annual event. All businesses attending the events **reported good sales and are keen to return next year.**
- 4.7 **The Oakengates Carnival** in July 2016 attracted almost 10,000 people and the PIYHS Fund has enabled Oakengates to purchase equipment to use for future events.
- 4.8 **St George's Heritage Group** Digital Platform – embracing new technology acquired with PIYHS funding the Group is creating a digital platform to display its work and local historical information and volunteers are learning new skills such as digital photo restoration and web site building.
- 4.9 **Madeley Anstice Fundraising Events** a packed programme of events including a Band Concert, Queen's Birthday Tea and a Soul Nite, not only raised the profile of the Anstice but raised funding to pay for the refurbishment of the unique ballroom floor. The programme of events involved 15 volunteers whose confidence and wellbeing have noticeably improved.
- 4.10 In **Dawley, the Friends of Dawley Park** have created a great partnership and are successfully engaging with the community to develop Festival Dawley, a music and event festival. In **Donnington** a great Easter event has provided a foundation for future events, working with volunteer groups and the community are now working on a Christmas event. In **Ironbridge**, Severn Hospice are partners in the design and planning of a public art trail which will be delivered in early Summer 2017. In **Hadley** work is on-going to secure quotations for extensive improvement works to the public realm including car parking and lighting.

Second Bidding Round

- 4.11 At the close of the first bidding round there was an amount of unallocated funding and so 5 high streets which had either experienced a lack of suitable applications, had received no applications for one or other of the elements of the fund or where projects were unable to proceed as a result of changes in circumstances, were each allocated a share of this funding. A second bidding round, open only to those 5 high streets (Wellington, Donnington, Oakengates, Newport and Dawley) with calls for projects led by the Parish and Town Councils in those areas have so far resulted in an additional 8 successful projects supporting high street and local centre regeneration, with a project for Dawley to come forward for evaluation shortly.
- 4.12 The Council is now in the process of drawing up grant funding agreements for the additional projects which include:
- Donnington** - improvements to library and lifelong learning centre facilities
- Oakengates** - a new Community Hub as part of the Town Council's proposals for new community facilities and a one-stop information point for residents.
- Newport** – enhancements to the Newport Heritage and Visitor Information Centre to create a destination attraction and lighting and CCTV in Stafford Street Car Park making it safe for residents.
- Wellington** - a new Hub for business start ups and a centre for the promotion of Wellington to new investors, a food and entertainment festival event in Spring 2017 with potential to become an annual fixture and modernisation of public toilets for visitors to the market.

Dawley – a programme of improvements to the environment and shops of Dawley High Street will bring life and increase footfall in the high street and create a focus for community events.

- 4.13 A number of physical regeneration projects from the first bidding round are still in delivery. The Council is supporting project sponsors to bring their projects forward as soon as possible, however where projects involve the design and commissioning of physical works, for example, it is likely that these will run beyond the original programme completion date of 31st March 2017. Given the investment being made by project sponsors including private and voluntary groups and the success of projects delivered to date it is proposed that flexibility be provided for extensions in the delivery period to be made, up to March 2018.

5. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cabinet 28th January 2016 Pride in Your High Streets & Local Centres

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Report prepared by Kathy Mulholland, Service Delivery Manager, Investment and Business Support. Telephone: 01952 567572

Appendix 1 – Project Highlights

Wave-length – The Forge, Wellington



“Without PIYHS we would not have been able to showcase the creative work of local Telford organisations and individuals, bringing not only us to the high street but others with us. We have not aimed to simply sell the craft but to enhance the community at the same time, with the artists and crafters agreeing to put on free to attend craft sessions - soon we will extend the offer of Wellington to include wider arts such as music, heritage etc.. FORGE Wellington has become a hub for the community and with this now in place it becomes our showcase for other PIYHS projects; we are now developing the Oakengates offer and are in exploratory talks with Madeley and Ironbridge to find the right premises”. **Ann Johnson, Wave-length**

Russell Green Project, Madeley



Madeley Anstice Fundraisers – Queen’s Birthday Tea, Band Concert and Soul Nite



Terri Jane Edwards
19 March

Full house in the Anstice tonight... Great to hear it ringing with the sounds of The John Fletcher of Madeley Primary School Choir, & The Jackfield Band, and The Famous Ukulele Band...

Like Comment Share

You, Lyndy Boden Was Haughton, Karen Price and 73 others

2 shares

Michelle Welch Looks a fab night. Would love a bear.can we still order from jubilee house?. Thankyou
Like Reply 3 19 March at 20:25

Terri Jane Edwards Yes you can still order at jubilee house Michelle

ROYAL BIRTHDAY TEA PARTY
at The Anstice on
Saturday 4 June - 3pm - 5pm
Celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday

Join the Tea Party, Wave Your Flags and Singalong to some old favourites with 1940s/50s Tribute Act - Chloe May

ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY
Free Tickets available from Jubilee House
Donations Welcome at the Door
We apologise there is currently no disabled access

Madeley Victorian Fête
Sunday 14 August 2016
Anstice Square ~ 10am - 4pm

Traditional Victorian Attractions
Carousel, Policemen on Penny Farthings, Victorian Magician, Coconut Shy, Hoopla, Hook a Duck, Punch & Judy Shows, Maypole Dancing and more.

Food & Craft Market
Hog Roast & Refreshments

Newport Food Frenzy, Italian Market and Carnival



Quotes via face-book from food fair visitors:

Jos Boyes: "Really enjoyed it. Big thanks to the organisers - some really different stalls I hadn't seen before and some excellent presentations/talks in the tent, can't wait for next year!"

Alison Owen: "Really fab day, Newport should be proud!!"

Liz Eyre-Walker: "It was brilliant .. I picked up lots of nice treats"

Stephen Grice: "Really great day, well done to the organisers. Hopefully the first of many."

Kelly White: "It was brilliant! We loved it xx"

Quotes via face-book and survey forms from food fair traders:

Atia Shazad: "A big thanks to u guys. Zainz Catering had a very good day - sold out at 12. Looking forward to next year"

Andrea Weallans: "We'd like to thank you for our invite to take part in a great day. From us all at Weal Ales Brewery. Hopefully see you next year."

The New Inn (Joules Brewery): "A really good event, well done to all involved and everyone who attended the day, a great atmosphere and buzz about town."

Good2Great – High Street Business Support Project



Testimonials from a selection of Telford & Wrekin's Pride in Your High Street Participants who have attended G2G courses



Chris and Eira Moore, Tax Assist Accountants, Madeley

Attended 'Locally Social' Workshops in Madeley. *"Learning about how social media can help grow our business has been rewarding and exciting."*

Outlet, Donnington

Has attended 'Locally Social'; 'Retail Sustainability' and 'High Street Excellence' in Donnington, also booked onto 'Window Dressing'.

"The course (High Street Excellence) has been tough but I now understand DISC – it's really a very good course. So impressed by Good2Great's very in depth knoweldge."

Pradip Patel, The Flooring



Mark and Gail Fisk, The Forge, Ironbridge
Attended 'High Street Excellence' and 'Locally Social' in Ironbridge. Also booked onto 'Window Dressing'.

"Excellent discussions and topics, very relevant. The course provided some useful recommendations and tools to assist small business planning and control of finances. It has



really helped increase our confidence level to support our current plans. Thank you.”



Sue and Hannah Tranter, The Cookshop, Newport

Attended ‘High Street Excellence’ and are booked on ‘Window Dressing’ and ‘Locally Social’.

“Lots of food for thought. After just one session we started moving the shop around and started seeing things through customers’ eyes. Such excellent sessions – lots to think about and implement – so much to do, but now we have the skills to take it forward. Looking forward to putting the time management into practice and preparing marketing plans for the future – exciting times!”



Tina Pound, Telford Florist, Wellington

Attended ‘High Street Excellence’ and ‘Locally Social’ and is booked onto ‘Successful Selling’ and ‘Window Dressing’.

“I have followed up more on the activities and homework on this workshop than I ever have with previous training I have done.

“It is simple to follow and more relevant to my business.”

Sally Finnegan of Aunt Sal’s Café and

Charmaine Briscoe of Bellmans Yard Garage, both in Newport, on graduating from the ‘High Street Excellence’ course. Both also attended ‘Successful Selling’ and are booked in for ‘Window Dressing’ and ‘Locally Social’.

“I’ve now done 2 courses with Good2Great. Each session has been relevant, interesting, bang up to date and full of useful information and ideas to take away to use in our own business. I thoroughly recommend Good2Great training for every business, especially the free courses through Pride in the High Street. Don’t miss out!” **Charmaine Briscoe**





“I have just finished High Street Excellence Course with Good2Great. I really enjoyed it. I wasn't quite sure how I would benefit from this course. Just to tell you that it is well worth the time out to go on! It gave me inspiration, and made me look at my business from lots of different angles! As we all run our own businesses - never think that you know it all, and that you can't ever learn something new. Thank you so much Sally and to the team of Good2Great - I feel like you have given my mo-Jo back!!!” **Sally Finnegan**

John Ellis, The Crown, Oakengates
Attended ‘High Street Excellence’ and ‘Locally Social’ in Oakengates.

“A great session – which has proved to be an excellent refresher. WOW! So many ideas – my head wants to burst!

I do urge other retailers to take every advantage of the free training provided by Good2Great. The only investment is your time. It's well worth it.”



Helen Briscoe, Country Chic Interiors, Oakengates

Attended ‘High Street Excellence’ and ‘Locally Social’ in Oakengates.

“I always say – you don't know what you don't know. And these workshops have been a revelation.

I know I need to get my shop out to a wider audience and now I have the tools to do it. Thankyou.”



Chris Boyles, The Grey Door Café, Wellington

Attended 'Locally Social' ; staff have attended 'High Street Excellence' and is booked for 'Window Dressing'.

"I know I will benefit greatly from the advice offered. It was so informative – I didn't realise social media could be such a powerful tool."