

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 23rd June, 2009 at 5.00 p.m. at the Civic Offices, Telford

PUBLISHED ON MONDAY, 29th JUNE, 2009

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN THURSDAY, 2nd JULY, 2009)

PRESENT: Councillors A.J. Eade (Chairman), S. Bentley, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, M.B. Hosken, A. Lawrence and J.M. Seymour

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors R.K. Austin, G.M. Green and V. Tonks (Opposition Group Leaders);

CB-19 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 9th June, 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CB-20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None – as all Members present.

CB-21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CB-22 END OF YEAR FINANCIAL & PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS 2008/09

(I) Overview of Service, Financial and Risk Performance outturns at end of year 2008/09.

Key Decision identified as **Financial Monitoring and Financial Updates** in the Forward Plan published on 14th May 2009.

Councillor A. Lawrence, Cabinet Member: Resources presented the joint report of the Head of Policy, Performance & Partnership and the Head of Finance, which took stock of service and financial performance at both corporate and portfolio levels at end of year 2008/09.

Attached to the report before Members was an analysis of performance outturns for key targets and performance indicators at end of year 2008/09; and the end of year Revenue Budget and Capital Programme monitoring for 2008/09.

Messages on service and financial performance were summarised in the individual reports and the information showed how the Council was performing against the statutory performance indicators and local indicators, while at the

same time controlling spending, managing risk, and achieving value for money for local people.

Instability in financial markets leading into a deepening recession had provided a difficult environment against which the Council had continued to deliver against key service and investment priorities for the area while staying within budget for the year.

Strong service performance and financial monitoring throughout the year had enabled the Council to accommodate growing pressures on key income and expenditure budgets and outturn more than £0.3m under budget for 2008/09.

The national economy was officially in recession in the last two quarters of 2008/09. The West Midlands had been hit hardest of all the English regions by the recession due to its industrial structure, in particular reliance on manufacturing and construction.

Telford was highly vulnerable. The Borough had the highest proportion of manufacturing jobs to all employees in the region, with a number of firms involved in automotive supply. In March 2009, unemployment stood at 4.9% with 3 Wards over 8%, and with male unemployment (7%) far higher than female unemployment (2.6%) reflecting industrial structure. Unemployment in Telford was still less than the regional average of 5.4% but the gap between the Borough and the region was closing and the level was well above the national figure of 4.1%.

However, there were a number of positives. Long term (over 12 months) unemployment in the Borough, at 3.9% of those claiming job Seekers Allowance, was low compared to regionally (9.6%) and nationally (7.7%) suggesting that measures to move people back into employment in the Borough were relatively successful. The rise in unemployment in the Borough between February and March 2009 was also less than expected.

The recession would impact directly on performance in achieving economic outcomes, but would also impact on wider performance outcomes such as new housing, income collection etc.

As a result of the service and financial planning process a number of key investments were made in the 2008/09 budget to improve key services and facilities. It was important to ensure that those investments had achieved their objectives. Details relating to individual portfolios were outlined within the report.

Members were pleased with the overall content of the report.

RESOLVED – That the performance of the Council in delivering against investment and service priority performance in a period of deepening recessionary impact be welcomed.

(ii) **Performance Management – Analysis at End of Year 2008/09**

Non-Key Decision

Councillor S. Kelly, Cabinet Assistant: Performance presented the report of the Head of Policy, Performance & Partnership which gave an overview of performance against the Council's priorities at end of year 2008/09.

It was reported that Central Government had introduced a new national Performance framework in 2008/09, with a National Indicator Set (NIS) of approximately 200 indicators. Many were based on work the Council undertook with key partners such as the Police and the PCT. It was the first year that the Council had reported on outturns against those indicators. The Council's new performance management framework for 2008/09 included new LAA2 targets, key targets set out in the new Priority Plans and the National Indicator Set. As many indicators were new, it was not always possible to set targets against the indicators and some had been set during the year when data became available. Because of changes to arrangements in collecting data nationally, some information (particularly Partner indicators), was not currently available.

RESOLVED –

- (a) **that Portfolios consider the position of the Priority Plan and NIS indicators at end of year, and ensure this information is used for informing target setting as part of the business planning and Priority Plan refresh process that is currently being finalised.**
- (b) **that Portfolios finalise, in discussion with PP&P, the indicators that are in the Council's basket of "high risk" indicators for 2009/10 now that we have the end of year position.**
- (c) **that, where there are still gaps in performance data Portfolios are asked to look at the indicators to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made to understand the Council's (or Partner's) position.**

(iii) **Financial Outturn Report 2008/09**

Recommendation to Council – not subject to Call-In.

Councillor A. Lawrence, Cabinet Member: Resources presented the report of the Interim Corporate Director: Resources, which set out the Council's final net spending in 2008/09 as compared with the estimates for the revenue and capital programmes.

The gross revenue budget for 2008/09 was £366m – net budget for reporting purposes just over £117m. The revenue outturn position was within budget with a final net underspend of £368,000 (-0.31% of net budget) which was an improvement from the last monitoring report. Regular monitoring had been

undertaken throughout the year and Portfolio Management Teams had worked hard to maintain outturn within budget. There had been a number of service pressures experienced in 2008/09, notably the cost of providing care to Looked After Children and Specialist Education, which together with the impact of the economic downturn had made it a challenging year. Benefits from treasury activities, reduced insurance premiums and the unused element of the budgeted contingency had greatly assisted the overall position.

Overall, provision had been made to meet the costs associated with the council's initial re-structure and a contribution to BSF project costs. Overall, capital expenditure ended the year under the final approved estimate, at £62.6m against an approved estimate of £77.6m.

Council Tax collection (£57m), Business Rates (£63m) and sales ledger income (£44m) all ended the year with collection rates below target. That was a clear impact of the economic downturn and comparisons with other Local Authorities indicated that similar issues were being experienced nationally.

Summaries of the outturn on revenue and capital along with major variations were shown as appendices to the report.

During a robust discussion, Members commented that the financial position of the Council was under careful control and commended the initiatives taken in the Borough, particularly the road improvements to the A442 northern section and the improvements planned as part of the regeneration of the 6 Borough Towns.

Other Members also welcomed the report, and the role played by officers.

RESOLVED - to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (a) that the 2008/09 Revenue outturn position, which was subject to audit by the Council's external auditors; and the related virements for 2008/09 and those for 2009/10, detailed in Appendix IV (the formal statement of accounts would be included for the Council Meeting and would also require approval), be approved;**
- (b) that the Capital outturn position and related supplementary estimates and slippage, as set out in Appendix V as summarised in the report; the £6m capital allocation detailed at Paragraph 7.2 which provides additional investments in 2009/10 and the changes to the Borough Towns Programme set out in paragraph 7.3 of the report, be approved.**
- (c) that the good performance against income targets be noted.**

CB- 23 PRIORITY PLANS

Key decision identified as **Community Strategy / Local Area Agreements** in the Forward Plan published on 14th May 2009.

Councillor A Lawrence, Cabinet Member for Resources, presented the report of the Head of Policy, Performance & Partnership that sought endorsement of new and updated Priority Plans.

Effective service planning was essential to ensure that the Council was clear about what it was seeking to deliver and resource. In recognition of that, Priority Plans had been developed that detailed how the Council would deliver each of its Community Priorities over the next three years. The Priority Plans set out the medium-term corporate strategy and were now the key way in which the Council planned its services and managed its performance.

It was explained that the Council now had seven Priority Plans:

- Giving Children & Young the Best Possible Start in their Lives (Children and Young People's Plan);
- Maintaining a High Quality, Attractive and Sustainable Environment;
- Creating a Safe, Strong and Cohesive Community;
- Promoting Healthy Communities and Improving Quality of Life of Vulnerable and Older People (Health and Well-Being Strategy);
- Strengthening the Local Economy & Skills of Local People;
- Securing Sustainable Housing Regeneration and Development;*
- An Efficient, Effective and Customer-focused Council that delivers Value for Money the Community*

* The 'Housing' and 'Efficient, Effective Council' Priority Plans were new plans to be implemented during 2009/10.

The full draft Priority Plans along with a schedule of all key targets could be viewed on the Council's Website and Intranet. An overview of the Priority Plans was given in Appendix 1 of the report.

Members supported the report.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the Priority Plans be endorsed as the basis for publication;**
- (b) that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, or appropriate Corporate Director, following consultation with the lead Cabinet Member, to make any final amendments and approve publication.**

CB-24 DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACE ORDER (DPPO) - DAWLEY

Recommendation to Council – not subject to Call-In.

Councillor J.M. Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adult & Consumer Care, presented the report of the Corporate Director for Adult & Consumer Care which briefed Cabinet Members, and provided a report to Full Council with the necessary information on which to consider the implementation of a

Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) in Dawley (area shown in Appendix A of the report).

Members had been asked to consider an approach to tackle alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in Dawley that built on the positive work that had been undertaken to date through partnership work and sustained police activity in the area. The Order would allow the Council to designate an area where restrictions on public drinking would apply. That would make it an offence for any person to drink alcohol after being required by a police officer (or CSO) not to do so. Such Orders could only be used in areas that had experienced persistent alcohol disorder or nuisance.

Members welcomed the report and in doing so commented that the measures were introduced with good intent to address the issues in the Dawley area.

The Telford & Wrekin Peoples Association (TAWPA) Group Leader and local Ward Member for Dawley Magna, commented that it was a comprehensive Report and trusted that Police resources would be able to address the issues.

RESOLVED – TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (a) that the introduction of a Designated Public Places Order in the area identified within the Dawley Magna ward, subject to a formal review process, be confirmed**
- (b) that the legal process to be followed prior to the implementation of any DPPO be recognised.**

CB-25 DEVELOPING A USER-LED ORGANISATION IN TELFORD AND WREKIN

Non-Key Decision.

Councillor J.M. Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adult & Consumer Care, presented the report of the Corporate Director for Adult & Consumer Care which summarised work that had been undertaken to develop a user-led organisation for people with disabilities and others who had health, social care or support needs. Endorsement of proposals for the work was to be taken forward on a joint basis with voluntary and community organisations.

The reasons for developing a User-led Organisation (ULO) and the potential for it to be linked to the potential development of a Centre for Independent Living (CIL) were explained. Subject to further joint work and agreement, it was intended that a ULO should be established in Telford & Wrekin during 2010 as a means of enabling representation and greater influence for people who use services and their carers on the way that relevant services were provided.

It was proposed that further developmental work be undertaken through a steering group of local voluntary organisations, with support from a part-time post.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the work that had been undertaken in partnership with local voluntary and community organisations be noted;
- (b) that the proposals for further work within existing resources, with an aim of establishing a User-led Organisation for Telford & Wrekin during 2010, be supported.

CB-26 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2009/10

Non-Key Decision

The report of the Head of Legal Services requested Cabinet to appoint representatives to Outside Bodies for the municipal year 2009/10.

Attached to the report was an Annex, amended at the meeting, showing the nominations for the various appointments, and Cabinet was asked to decide on those appointments for where there was more than one nomination.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the nominations to represent the Council on Outside Bodies, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved subject to the following:
 - (i) Councillor J.M. Seymour to represent the Council on the Community Safety Partnership;
 - (ii) Councillor S.P. Burrell to be nominated as a Trustee on The Donnington & Trench Learners Trust for a period of five years;
 - (iii) Councillor J.A. Francis to represent the Council on the National Association of Councillors and as the third representative on the NAC – English Region Branch;
 - (iv) Councillor V.A. Fletcher to represent the Council on the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Strategy Group;
- (b) that the vacancies to represent the Council on Outside Bodies, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved as follows:
 - (i) Councillor J.A. Dixon to represent the Council on Age Concern Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Age Concern

Wrekin Executive Committee (for the period up to May 2011);

- (ii) **Councillor E.J. Carter and Councillor S. Bentley to represent the Council on the West Midlands LGA's Strategic Advisory Panel**

CB - 27 URGENT ITEM – Section 100B(4), Local Government Act 1972.

The Chairman of the meeting made the following statement:

"I am of the opinion that the following item of business should be dealt with as a matter of urgency at this meeting in order to avoid any unnecessary delay".

CB – 28 REQUEST TO FORMALLY TENDER FOR TAXI SERVICE PROVISION FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICE USERS

Key Decision identified as **Transport Service Review** in the Forward Plan published on 14th May 2009.

Councillor A Lawrence, Cabinet Member for Resources, presented the joint report of the Head of Customer Services & Transformation and Head of Mobility that sought approval to undertake a procurement exercise to tender for Taxi services for Education and Social Care Service Users through the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)

A review of the operational transport arrangements of the Council was undertaken between March and April 2009. The full report providing initial recommendations was due for consideration by Cabinet at the end of July.

However, the OJEU process was estimated to take between three and four months to complete and to minimise disruption and change for the majority service users, the new contract needed to commence at the beginning of a new school term. To that end, the procurement process had to commence before the end of June 2009 so the Council could have a new framework in place by 2nd November; the first day back after the October half term holiday.

Members supported the report.

RESOLVED – that approval be given to proceed, under OJEU regulations, to tender for a Taxi Framework Agreement.

The meeting ended at 5.43 p.m.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

**Jonathan Eatough
Head of Legal Services
Date: 29th June 2009**

Signed:

Date:

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 7th JULY 2009

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF FIRST POINT

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD

1. PURPOSE

This report is to inform Cabinet of the discussion at The Scrutiny Leadership Board on 9th March 2009 about the First Point Advice Centre and recommendations they wish to make.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Leadership Board recommends:

- 2.1 continual monitoring of the First Point Advice Centre to ensure that the appropriate ranges of services are provided to the public;**
- 2.2 the Cabinet consider providing a permanent point of contact for Council services in the town centre vicinity;**
- 2.3 the Cabinet considers the use of library facilities to offer a first point of contact for Council services throughout the Borough; especially in areas where the library is used on a part time basis.**

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

SLB-19 - Scrutiny Leadership Board meeting held on Monday 9th March 2009

4. INFORMATION

The Scrutiny Leadership Board held their meeting at the location of the First Point Advice Centre in Telford Central Library and invited the Head of Customer Services and Business Transformation, The Customer services Manager, Customer Quality Manager, Borough Librarian and the Service Director from Citizen's Advice Bureau to provide information on the new First Point Advice Centre.

Scrutiny Leadership Board members were impressed by the numbers of people accessing First Point within the first two weeks of it's operation; a total of 300 people. They were further impressed with the wide array of advice services on offer, and noted with approval the co-operation between the organisations participating in the scheme.

The Scrutiny Leadership Board felt that the general ambience of the Library setting presented a far more friendly and welcoming environment than either Civic or Darby offices could, and that this had probably contributed to the numbers of people accessing the service so far. Questions were asked about possible expansion of advice given.

The Scrutiny Leadership Board's recommendations based upon their discussions are detailed in section 2 above.

5. BACKGROUND

The Customer Services Strategy in 2007, had as an action to support an objective to deal with as many customer enquiries at the first port of call, the introduction of a series of one stop shops to be branded as "First Point". The need for this service was heightened by the onset of the current economic recession, and in response, the Cabinet in January 2009 approved the establishment of a First Point Advice Centre.

5.1 Equality & Diversity

There are no implications from these scrutiny recommendations in terms of the Council's commitment to equality and diversity.

5.2 Environmental Impact

By recommending a permanent location and further first point contacts within Libraries around the Borough, this would remove further the need for residents to travel and in consequence reduce their carbon footprint.

5.3 Legal Comment

Under the Council's Constitution, the Scrutiny Leadership Board can submit reports to Cabinet for their consideration; paragraph 11 of Section 5 of Part 4 applies. Under paragraph 2.3 vi) of Section 4 of Part 4 of the Constitution the Cabinet can receive and consider any report from the Scrutiny Leadership Board.

5.4 Links with Corporate Priorities

The Scrutiny recommendations link with many of the Council's corporate priorities; particularly priority 7, a Modern Efficient and Effective Council.

5.5 Opportunities and Risks

The opportunities and risks associated with these recommendations will be assessed on acceptance by the Cabinet.

5.6 Financial Implications

The operational costs of the Advice Centre are estimated at £199k for a period of 12 months. This includes staffing costs and general overheads associated with running this service at the Library. In addition to these costs one off costs of approximately £38k were also incurred in setting up the advice centre. Provision was made in the 2009/10 budget strategy to fund all of these costs on a one off basis. There is no funding available at present to extend this service beyond the initial 12 month period.

6. WARD IMPLICATIONS

Borough wide implications

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

CB124 - Cabinet report 12th January 2009

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 7th JULY 2009

RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REPORT – REVIEW OF FIRST POINT TELFORD

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet Members of the proposed response to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Leadership Board following their review of the Credit Crunch Advice Centre known as First Point Telford.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Leadership Board are noted and the detailed response set out in Appendix 1 is approved.**

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 This report summarises the response to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Leadership Board following their review of the services provided at First Point Telford. The responses are detailed in **Appendix 1**. The Scrutiny Board's review has been thorough in its coverage and was assisted by the involvement of partner organisations that provide services at First Point Telford.

4.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1 None

5.0 INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Corporate Management Team will shortly be asked to consider a proposal that will allow a One Stop Shop to be developed on the ground floor of Civic Offices, the current location of the main civic office reception service. The proposal will create a permanent and much larger facility than First Point at Telford, which will allow us to build on the success of First Point at Telford by bringing together many more council and partner services into one facility, in turn offering more joined up services and improved access to services.
- 5.2 First Point at Telford was set up to provide residents and businesses with a single point of contact for multiple Council and partner organisation services, that could

help them deal with the impact of the current economic recession.

- 5.3 The creation of First Point was in accordance with the Customer Services Strategy, which includes the aim to deal with as many customers at the first point of contact in one place at a time and place convenient to customers.
- 5.4 Following Cabinet approval in January 2009, First Point at Telford was opened in February 2009. Up to 22nd May, 1854 customers have benefited from the services provided at First Point Telford. This equates to 140 customers per week.
- 5.5 First Point Telford is aimed at all residents of the Borough, to improve their access to services, in particular joined up services e.g. a customer with debt problems would contact the council about repayment of their council tax and then be advised to contact CAB for help in managing their other debts. The customer previously may not have followed this advice. Now, as both services are located in the same facility, the two teams will work together immediately to address the customers' issue there and then.
- 5.6 The review focused on the services that were provided at First Point Telford, how those services worked together to benefit the customer, the facilities that were at available at First Point Telford and the opportunity.

6.0 **BACKGROUND**

6.1 **Equality & Diversity**

- 6.1.1 Every effort is made to assist customers when accessing services to ensure that wherever possible we are able to provide them with the services/information that they require in a manner that is beneficial to them. This is the cornerstone of the Customer Services Strategy.
- 6.1.2 All of the reception staff have received Equalities & Diversity training, and aware of individual customers needs, and know how to access translation and interpretation services where they are required.
- 6.1.3 An equality impact assessment will be undertaken on the First Point Telford if it becomes a permanent facility to ensure we are addressing all equality and diversity needs and capturing vital performance management information within this process.

6.2 **Environmental Impact**

- 6.2.1 Having more public services accessible under one roof will hopefully reduce the amount of individual visits customers would have had to make had these services remained separate and located on separate sites. This in turn will help the council to continue to reduce its carbon footprint.

6.3 **Legal Comment**

- 6.3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6.4 Links with Corporate Priorities

6.4.1 The continued development of First Point at Telford, to offer advice and guidance on issues relating to the current economic recession addresses many of the Council's Corporate Priorities, particularly the priority for a Modern, Effective Council.

6.5 Opportunities & Risks

6.5.1 The opportunities and risks associated with First Point Telford were identified and actions were put in place to mitigate any perceived risks during its development.

6.6 Financial implications

6.6.1 The operational costs of First Point Telford are estimated at £199k for a period of 12 months. This includes staffing costs and general overheads associated with running this service. Provision was made in the 2009/10 budget strategy to fund all of these costs on a one off basis for 12 months.

6.6.2 Within the current capital programme an allocation of £160k in 2009/10 was made for provision of a "One Stop Shop". This could be used to fund any conversion costs should First Point at Telford re-located to Civic Offices on a permanent basis. The current budget strategy also made provision of £20k ongoing revenue to support the operating costs of a "One Stop Shop". Further work is required to finalise the ongoing revenue costs of the "One Stop Shop", however every effort will be made to deliver this within existing staffing resources with any additional funding required being considered as part of the 2010/11 budget strategy.

6.7 Ward implications

6.7.1 Borough wide implications.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Scrutiny Review Of First Point – 9th March 2009

7.2 CB124 - Cabinet report 12th January 2009

Report prepared by Andrew Meredith, Customer Services Manager. Tel: 01952 382560

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF FIRST POINT TELFORD

	Scrutiny Commission Recommendations	Benefits of recommendation	Summary of Action Being Taken	Timescale	Officer responsible
1	Continual monitoring of First Point Telford to ensure that the appropriate ranges of services are provided to the public;	To ensure that the services that are provided at First Point Telford are those that meet the current needs of customers experiencing the impact of the current economic recession.	<p>First Point Telford has limited capacity due to the size of the accommodation. However, whilst all of the major services are already provided, new services are being added on a regular basis, through the use of surgeries. The latest partner wishing to explore the benefits of co-location at First Point is the PCT.</p> <p>The introduction of a larger 'One Stop Shop' (see recommendation 2) will create the opportunity to add further services to our one stop offer, building on the success of First Point at Telford.</p>	Autumn 2009 and ongoing	Andrew Meredith, Customer Services Business Manager
2	The Cabinet consider providing a permanent point of contact for Council services in the town centre vicinity;	To ensure that the benefits realised by the creation of First Point Telford available to our customers on a permanent basis.	The Corporate Management Team will shortly be asked to consider a proposal that will allow a One Stop Shop to be developed on the ground floor of Civic Offices. The One Stop Shop will build on the success of First Point Telford, bringing together many more council and partner services into one facility.	Autumn 2009 for outline of plans	Angie Astley, Head of Customer Services
3	The Cabinet considers the use of library facilities to offer a first point of contact for Council services throughout the Borough; especially in areas where the library is used on a part time basis.	To extend the benefits provided by First Point Telford across the borough, making the services even more accessible.	This recommendation is in line with the Customer Strategy. The current review of Leisure and Culture being undertaken by Northgate Kendrick Ash and the Business Efficiency Team have been asked to consider this recommendation as part of their review.	Review will report in September 09	Angie Astley, Head of Customer Services

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 7 JULY 2009

THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PERFORMANCE & PARTNERSHIP

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To put in place a process in the Borough to enable local organisations to put forward proposals that require Central Government action to support and improve the sustainability of local communities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. **That the proposals set out in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 to enable proposals to be submitted to the Council and considered and agreed by a ‘Sustainable Communities Act Local Panel’ are endorsed;**
- 2.2. **That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to submit the proposals(s) prioritised and agreed by the ‘SCA Local Panel’ to the Local Government Association.**

3. INFORMATION

- 3.1. The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (SCA) aims to enable local communities, organisations and public bodies to propose, through their local councils, changes at a national level to help deliver projects and work locally to support and improve sustainability. All proposals need to be submitted via councils.
- 3.2. The Act begins from the principle that local people and local organisations know best what needs to be done to encourage the improvement of the economic, environmental or social well-being of their area, but that sometimes they need Central Government to act to enable them to do so.
- 3.3. The Government has issued an invitation for local people and organisations to identify issues and submit proposals, via their council, on which Central Government should take action to promote the sustainability of local communities. Government advice suggests that proposals would be more likely to succeed if they are specific about the action required of Central Government, do not require additional public expenditure, and are not already within the powers of local authorities.

- 3.4. As there are likely to be proposals from across the country, the Government has asked that local areas should first try to prioritise and agree the proposals to be submitted via a 'Local Panel'. Following this, the Council would submit the proposals to the Local Government Association (LGA) in London which will be responsible for short-listing a small number of proposals it receives for the Secretary of State's consideration. Local areas must submit their proposals to the LGA by the end of July.
- 3.5. The LGA has indicated that proposals should have significant impact on local sustainability, be specific about the barriers that need to be removed and the action required by Government have been consulted on within communities. Given that only a very few projects in the country will even be submitted to the Government for consideration, it would seem evident that only proposals that organisations have already been developing for other purposes for some time would be best placed for submission under the SCA. The Council would not advocate committing additional significant resource to develop proposals, particularly as the Government has yet to confirm whether there will be further rounds of seeking proposals under the Act.
- 3.6. As mentioned above, in order for the Council to submit proposals on behalf of the community to the LGA, the Act specifies that there must be a Local Panel to consider and agree the proposals to be submitted. The Act requires that such a Panel should include representatives of the local community including people from under-represented groups.
- 3.7. There is no statutory requirement to participate in the SCA process. However, the Council has received expressions of interest in principle from a significant number of Town and Parish Councils, through the Wrekin Area Committee of Local Councils encouraging it to put in place the necessary process to enable any proposals to come forward. In order to do this, the following steps have been taken:
 - A letter has been sent to all Town and Parish Councils and the Council for Voluntary Service asking them to promote the SCA and for any proposals to be submitted to the Council for a Local Panel to consider;
 - The SCA was an agenda item at a meeting for all Town & Parish Councils arranged by the Wrekin Area Committee on 3 June;
 - A presentation has been given to the LSP Agenda Group;
 - Proposals have been requested by 17 July.
- 3.8. In order to convene a 'SCA Local Panel' meeting, it is proposed to form this from the Local Parishes Forum with additional representatives invited from the Council for Voluntary Service and Wrekin Area Committee. The LSP Agenda Group has also suggested inviting the Chair (or their nominee) from the Connecting Communities Group, Disability Forum, Young People's Forum and Senior Citizens Forum. A meeting will be arranged towards the end of July.

3.9. The Council will submit the proposal(s) agreed by the Panel on behalf of the Borough.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. The SCA aims to identify actions that Central, not Local, Government should take. The Council will manage the SCA and Local Panel process from within existing resources. The SCA does not advocate proposals that seek additional public expenditure.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There is no legislative imperative for the Council to respond to the Secretary of State's invitation to submit proposals under the Act and there is no statutory or formal process to 'opt in'. The purpose of the Act is to identify areas of Central Government policy, action or expenditure where a change is required to improve local sustainability. Actions which are already within the powers of local authorities do not fall within the remit of this Act.

5.2. The proposed approach set out in this report places the Council in an enabling role, submitting the proposal(s) agreed by the Local Panel, which is being established for the specific purposes of the Act, on behalf of the local organisation(s) which submitted the proposals(s).

6. EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The Act requires the participation of representatives of the local community including people from under-represented groups. The proposals put forward for taking this process forward seek to achieve this by drawing from existing consultation structures.

7. LINKS TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND OTHER PRIORITIES

7.1. The SCA can link to all the Council's priorities as it seeks proposals to improve the economic, environmental and social well-being of communities.

Report prepared by Richard Partington, Head of Policy, Performance & Partnership – Tel: (01952) 380130

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 7TH JULY 2009

TELFORD AND WREKIN RURAL PLAN

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval and inform on the content of the Rural Plan for Telford and Wrekin.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Rural Plan for Telford and Wrekin be approved.**

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 Over the last nine months the Council has been developing a Rural Plan for the borough of Telford and Wrekin and the Locality Manager for Newport and Rural areas has been working in consultation with parishes, partners and officers of the council.
- 3.2 A Rural Forum is currently being formed which will support further development and monitoring of the Rural Plan.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Not Applicable

5. INFORMATION

5.1 Background

The purpose of the Rural Plan is to acknowledge and respond to the issues affecting, and to maximise the opportunities for, people living within the rural areas.

Consultation was undertaken with a wide range of organisations and individuals within the rural areas. In addition, the Telford and Wrekin Rural Forum held workshops to establish issues that rural communities felt needed addressing. From these consultations the initial action plan has been developed.

5.2 The Rural Plan

A copy of the Rural Plan draft document is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The draft Plan essentially:-

- a) Defines Telford and Wrekin's rural areas

- b) The purpose of the Rural Plan
- c) Short profile of rural Telford and Wrekin
- d) The key issues for rural Telford and Wrekin
- e) The objectives and priorities

5.3 Equality and Diversity

The Plan has undergone an initial equality impact assessment and highlights the different needs of the communities within the rural areas which will be taken into account in developing and implementing the Plan

5.3 Environmental Impact

Copies of the plan will be available electronically and there will also be a web page for the community which will reduce the amount of literature that needs to be printed.

5.4 Legal Comment

The work envisaged by this report is within the Council's powers. Officers and Members involved in rural partnerships should familiarise themselves with the Council's Partnership Protocols and seek advice from Legal Services on structures, governance and potential liabilities (for example, liabilities for contracts, volunteers, and public liability) where appropriate.

5.5 Links with Corporate Priorities

The Plan links to all the Council's Corporate Priorities and will need to become fully embedded within each of the Priority Plans:

- Maintaining a High Quality, Attractive and Sustainable Environment Promoting Healthy Communities and Improving the Quality of Life of Vulnerable and Older People (Health and Well-Being)
- Strengthening the Local Economy and Skills of Local People
- Creating a Safe, Strong and Cohesive Community
- Giving Children & Young People the Best Possible Start in Life (CYPP)
- Securing Sustainable Housing Regeneration and Development
- Efficient, Effective and Customer-Focused Council that delivers Value-for-Money for the Community

5.6 Opportunities and Risks

The opportunities and risks associated with the Plan will be assessed. Arrangements will be put in place to manage the risks and maximise the opportunities that have been identified.

5.7 Financial Implications

5.7.1 The action plan for consultation and implementation outlined in section 4 of the Rural plan can be funded from within existing budgets held by Locality Management. It is anticipated that funding for any specific actions or projects identified by the Rural Forum through the consultation process will be sought from third parties and external grants. However the Authority has a capital

allocation of £20k in 2009/10 and a further £10k in 2010/11 that could be used towards rural projects.

6. WARD IMPLICATIONS

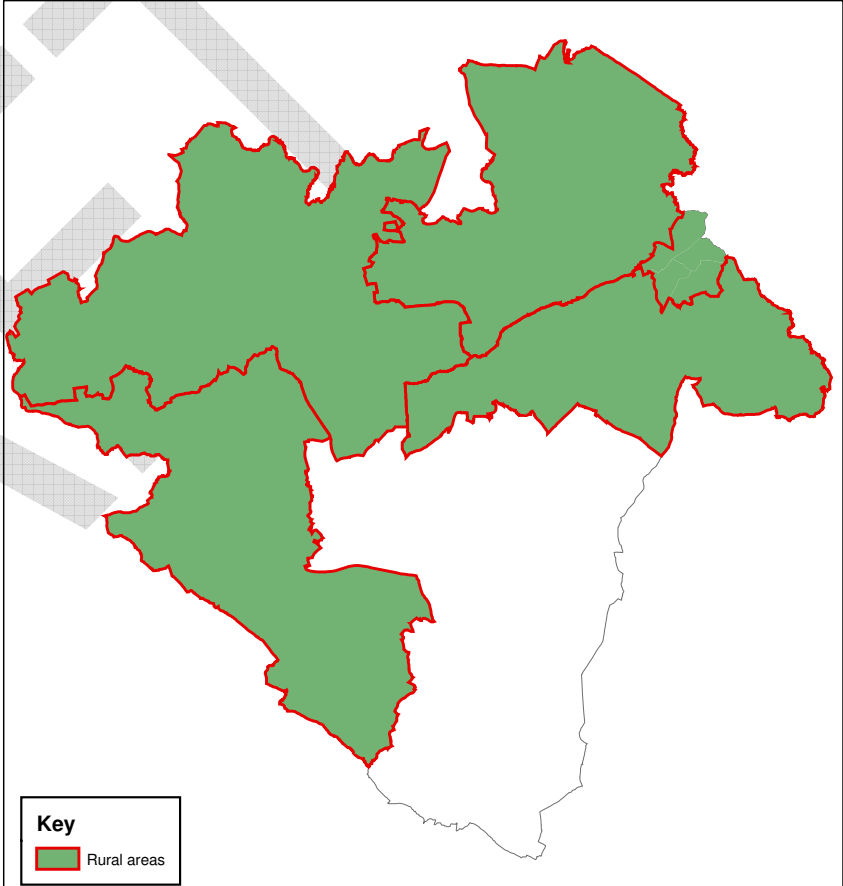
The Rural Plan has implications for all rural wards across the borough

Report prepared by

***Caroline Oakes
Locality Manager (Newport & Rural)
Neighbourhood and Communities
Telford & Wrekin Council
Tel: 01952 382136***

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1. Introduction

Background

The Telford and Wrekin Rural Plan is an agreed framework for collective action – based on evidence – to ensure well-being, sustainable communities and a sustainable countryside in rural Telford and Wrekin. The plan sets out a strategic framework that takes into account the government's three priorities for rural communities:

- ❖ Economic and social regeneration - supporting enterprise across rural England, and targeting greater resources at areas of greatest need (a sustainable rural economy)
- ❖ Social Justice for all – tackling rural social exclusion, wherever it occurs and providing fair access to services for all rural people (sustainable rural communities)
- ❖ Enhancing the value of our countryside – protecting the natural environment for this and future generations¹ (a sustainable rural environment)

Definition of Telford and Wrekin's Rural area.

For the purposes of attracting funding to assist with the development of services in the rural areas of the Borough it is proposed that the four rural council wards of Church Aston & Lilleshall, Edmond, Ercall Magna, Wrockwardine and the market town of Newport are included in the defined rural areas of the Borough

Reasons for the Rural Plan

Disadvantage is commonly experienced by our older and most vulnerable people who find it difficult to access public services. Rural areas next to large urban populations can have a double disadvantage, with the majority of both funding and strategy being aimed at the most severe problem areas based on area-based deprivation measures, which are almost always urban areas. It is important that the rural evidence base is improved to strengthen the argument for specific measures for rural communities.

It is important that rural settlements near to large urban areas are maintained as functioning communities that retain their distinct qualities and character while also providing access to services and opportunities for economic activities and growth.

Wider Context

This plan has been devised at a time when rural communities are undergoing significant change and pressure. Some of the issues facing rural communities

- Access to services
- Climate change
- Economic challenges

We will identify the issues of the rural areas by engaging with the communities. We will use the rural plan as a tool to highlight the issues and address them. The Rural Forum will act as a mechanism to enable the communities to work with key services and partners as well as networking with each other. We will also encourage and support rural communities to put together a parish plan or needs assessment.

¹ The Government's Rural Strategy 2004 – Priorities for Rural Policy

2. The profile of rural Telford & Wrekin

Rural population

Two thirds of Telford and Wrekin is rural with 16% of the total population of the Borough living in the rural areas and the market town of Newport. Outside the town of Newport there are 14 parish councils that make up the rural area, see map.

Telford and Wrekin's rural population grew by 15.8% between 1991 and 2001, compared with the borough-wide increase of 11.9%. The statistics for rural England show an average of 5% increase over this time². The rural population profile is older than the borough average, which often means that there is a significant amount of volunteering and involvement within these communities. However the future implications for this are likely to be an increased demand for services especially health services, care facilities and public/community transport.

Edgmond had proportionately fewer children than the Borough profile but had the highest rates of student households due to Harper Adams University College being based in the ward. Church Aston and Lilleshall had 19.6% 65years+ compared with 12.4% for the Borough, while Ercall Magna had the highest ward rate for 85years+ at 4% of the ward's population.

Deprivation

Action must focus on excluded people and communities wherever they exist - including those living in otherwise generally prosperous areas.

Use of the Index of Multiple Deprivation can be misleading when looking at rural areas, where the poor and the more affluent live side by side such that the index statistics give no clear picture of the underlying issues. This is in contrast to many of the urban areas where much higher concentrations of deprivation are seen.

The percentage of rural residents in poverty has risen from 16% to 18% between 2004/5 and 2006/7. After housing costs are taken into account the increase is from 16% to 19%. This is a faster percentage rise than in urban areas.

The need for evidence

It is recognised that there is a lack of data for the rural areas. Any available data tends to cover both rural and urban areas and distorts the picture in the countryside. This lack of data can create difficulties when it comes to prioritising needs within the rural areas of Telford and Wrekin and monitoring progress. It can also hinder progress when bidding for external funding. One of the early actions is to identify routes to improving the specific data available on Telford and Wrekin rural areas.

'Profiling the Rural Areas of Telford & Wrekin', produced by Telford & Wrekin Council's Policy, Performance and Partnership Unit, contains area profiles for the rural wards and the market town of Newport. This can be found at: <http://intranet/sites/PolicyPerformancePartnerships/Docs/Public/Rural%20area%20census%20profile.PDF>

² Population Trends in Rural Areas of England 1991 – 2001 Rural Statistics Unit Defra

3. Key issues for rural Telford & Wrekin

Since February 2008 extensive research has taken place with organisations, agencies, parish councils and communities to find out what the issues for the rural areas are. These issues will help to form the basis for a rural plan that will be produced and prioritised by the newly established Rural Forum. The following are a brief summary of these issues, more details can be obtained by contacting the Locality Manager (Newport and Rural)

A sustainable rural economy

- **Agriculture** - is still an important part of the rural community and needs to be supported to enable it to adapt to the changes that are taking place. Particularly in relation to the reform of the European Union, subsidy changes and disease threats
- **Business and employment** - There are high percentages of small rural businesses in need of business support, access to staff, incubator units to expand to. There are also a large percentage of the rural population who commute to urban areas.
- **Education and skills** – Neighbourhood and Employment Skills Plans for the Rural areas are being used to identify the particular needs of the rural community

Sustainable rural communities

- **Housing** – Average house prices in the rural area are almost double those of the urban area.
- **Access to services** – Many village services are closing leading to the most vulnerable people having greater difficulties in accessing social services.
- **Transport and highways** – Lack of regular public transport leads to higher car ownership and access to services being more difficult for those without personal transport.
- **Community safety** – Rural areas are generally safer with lower levels of crime and ASB however issue around speeding traffic are of particular concern.
- **Health and social care** - Access to healthcare and support for carers
- **Children and young people** – Rural children are often isolated with fewer things to do which can lead to lower expectations of services.

A sustainable rural environment

- **Biodiversity and landscape** – Wrekin is part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Telford and Wrekin has a bio-diverse landscape that needs to be protected.
- **Countryside access** - Footpaths and bridleways important to communities and visitors, access to some areas needs to be improved.
- **Climate change** – Increasing unpredictable weather needs to be prepared for especially with flooding becoming a more serious issue in the rural area.

Links to Key Strategies

The Rural Plan does not summarise or duplicate other strategies but takes into account the various plans and policies.

Local

- Telford & Wrekin Community Strategy 2006- 2011
- Local Area Agreement 2008-11
- Telford & Wrekin Council Rural Access to Services Programme 2006 – 2009
- The Borough Towns Initiative
- Parish Charter
- Priority Plans
- Equality & Diversity Scheme 2008 - 2011

Regional, National and European

- Report of the Rural Advocate 2007
- State of the Countryside 2008
- Strong & prosperous communities white paper 2006 – this was enacted in 2007
- Communities in Control: real people, real power (the empowerment white paper)
- The New Common Agricultural Policy in Europe
- The Rural Development Programme for England 2007 -2013
- Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food
- West Midlands Economic Strategy
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands
- Regional Sustainable Development Framework

4. Objectives and Action Plan

Following the first meeting of the rural forum and research done with organisations and communities in the rural areas two objectives have been identified to underpin the work of the Rural Forum.

1. Ensure that Telford and Wrekin's rural communities have a sustainable future.
2. To improve the quality of life for people living in Telford & Wrekin's rural areas.

Objective	Key Targets	Key Action	Lead Officer	Key Services/Partners	By When	Source of Resources
1.	The percentage of rural parishes with parish plans/needs assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33% • 42% • 50% 	Hold awareness raising events to encourage parishes to participate	Caroline Oakes	Wrekin area Committee SALC	2009/10 2010/11 2011/12	
		Introduce a rural proofing process for council documents	Caroline Oakes	Policy & Performance	2009/10	
2.	Facilitate Rural Forum meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 meetings • 4 meetings • 4 meetings 	Developing a programme of community engagement and involvement activity for the rural area and through the locality management structure. Especially with the young people and other hard to reach groups.	Caroline Oakes/locality managers	Rural Forum Cluster Partnerships Wrekin Area Committee	2009/10 2010/11 2011/12	

Objective	Key Targets	Key Action	Lead Officer	Key Services/Partners	By When	Source of Resources
2.		Agree a representative from the Rural Forum to sit on the Telford and Wrekin Local Strategic Partnership	Caroline Oakes, Partnership Officer	Local Strategic Partnership. Rural Forum.	2009/10 2010/11 2011/12	
	Facilitate Newport & Rural Cluster Partnership Meetings including Task & Finish Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 meetings • 4 meetings • 4 meetings 	Issues identified, task and finish groups set up. Main cluster meetings organised	Caroline Oakes	Meredith Evans Newport Cluster Partnership	2009/10 2010/11 2011/12	
	Satisfaction levels for those residents living in the rural areas increase – baseline to be determined (citizens survey 2009)	Launch Rural Web page	Caroline Oakes/Caz Platt	ICT Rural Forum	2009/10	
		Launch Rural newsletter	Caroline Oakes	Rural Forum Design & Print	2009/10	

5. Making it happen

Getting the most from resources

Many of the actions and initiatives proposed in the Rural Plan's accompanying Action Plan will be carried out within existing budgets. The intention is that the Rural Plan will be used to influence budget spending programmes locally. It is not intended that the Rural Plan is dependent on large amounts of council funding rather it will assist in attracting external funding to the area. It can be achieved by making good use of resources that are already available though a coordinated and strategic approach to budget allocation. This will also support the development of a partnership approach to working with our rural communities within the Borough.

Large new projects and schemes may be required to find separate funding. There are limited external funding opportunities available and Telford & Wrekin faces stiff competition when bidding against other areas within the West Midlands. The limited funding is available from a number of sources, including the European Union, Central Government, regional agencies, the National Lottery and charitable trusts. There are opportunities to gain funding by working in partnership with other agencies and also to look at working with neighbouring authorities to attract funding.

Monitoring and Review

To make sure the plan is a success there is a commitment to review its content and monitor its output regularly and report back to the Rural Forum. The monitoring will be through the Rural Action Plan Tables and will be led by the Locality Manager (Newport and Rural)

Rural Action Plan Tables

As actions are identified to be taken forward from the issues that are highlighted by the Rural Forum

A Sustainable Rural Economy					
Priorities	Actions	Partners	Timeframe	Resources	Outcomes
Sustainable Rural Communities					
Priorities	Actions	Partners	Timeframe	Resources	Outcomes
A Sustainable Rural Environment					
Priorities	Actions	Partners	Timeframe	Resources	Outcomes

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 7 JULY 2009

PERSONALISATION – TRANSFORMING ADULT SOCIAL CARE

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR: ADULT & CONSUMER CARE / HEAD OF SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE

This report summarises the conclusions reached through the Putting People First programme to develop a model for 'personalisation' of adult social care. The government's stated aim is to transform social care so that decisions and choices are led by people who use care services. The proposals described in this report set out how we could approach the organisation and arrangements for services by 2011 in meeting the transformation requirements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:-

- **Consider the principles of personalisation for adult social care services and the implications for fundamental changes in the way care and support is organised and arranged in Telford & Wrekin;**
- **Note that a further report will be produced following pilot work so that the new model of personalised services can be considered for full implementation during 2011.**

3. SUMMARY

Putting People First was published as a government protocol towards the end of 2007. The document was signed by the Secretaries of State for government departments, including Health, Work & Pensions, Communities & Local Government, and Children, Schools & Families, plus others such as the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. It was presented as the basis for joining up services around individuals and was the first time that such a wide-ranging protocol had been produced. The government has stated that Putting People First 'sets the direction for adult social care over the next 10 years and more'.

A programme for Putting People First in Telford & Wrekin was established from July 2008, following earlier work to consider how we should rethink community care. This programme has involved work across six main areas to develop

proposals for achieving personalisation of adult social care services. These areas are based on helping people who use social care services, families and their carers by;

- Improving ways to gain access to information and services;
- Providing brokerage to support and assist in choosing services;
- Enabling the promotion of independence and avoiding unnecessary dependency;
- Allowing more influence and control for the individual through personal budgets;
- Working with providers to develop flexible and responsive care service;
- Developing the workforce and skills for the future.

Options for each area were developed from local and national sources so that best practice and effectiveness could be identified. This work resulted in a set of proposals at the beginning of 2009 that are now being brought together as a 'target operating model'. This model sets out the process and arrangements that we will aim to have as our way of organising adult care and support to achieve personalisation of services.

Subject to the completion of pilot work, consultation and systems development, it is intended that the revised model for personalised services will be brought into effect on a planned basis during 2009-2011. It is proposed that the changes will be completed by mid 2011 so that the new approaches operate as the norm for the future.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- Personalising Services – CAPS 1.9.08
- Putting People First in Telford & Wrekin – CAPS 1.9.08; Cabinet 29.9.08
Cabinet Minute CB-63

5. INFORMATION

5.1 Background

The main elements of a new model for delivery of adult social care services are:

- Improving the process of **access to our services**, through **better information and advice**. Seeking to resolve queries in a more responsive way, either to signpost to other, more relevant avenues of help (e.g. voluntary services), provide low level services (e.g. equipment, community meals), or to progress to a more detailed assessment of need or emergency service. There are opportunities here to link with services such as voluntary organisations and health for example.
- Mainstreaming **enabling and preventative services** to help individuals reduce or eliminate their level of long-term need (e.g. through falls prevention). Continuing work to prevent hospital admissions and aid discharges.

- Enabling **self-assessment or assisted assessment**. An assessment process that makes sure a person is in control and able to express how that individual wants to live their life.
- A **personal budget** for every individual that has been calculated using a clear and straightforward system. A range of options on how this personal budget is managed, from the individual themselves, to the Local Authority on their behalf.
- A **brokerage** process whereby the best deal can be found for the use of a personal budget, with staff who can provide detailed information and knowledge of the range of services on offer.
- **Working with care providers** to ensure the range of services that are wanted by our citizens, are available to buy. Ensuring these services are appropriate, good quality, provide value for money, and are safe.
- Making sure our **workforce** and staff working for independent care providers have the right level of skill and knowledge to deliver this model of care to our citizens.

Work through the Putting People First in Telford & Wrekin programme has involved considering the options for the main elements that should be part of the approach for the future. The results of this work have been reviewed through a steering group of managers and representatives from Council portfolios, the NHS Primary Care Trust and Council for Voluntary Services. This has also been supported by the Department of Health Care Services Efficiency Delivery (CSED) regional team.

The Programme Board is led by the Cabinet Member for Adult and Consumer Care and involves senior representatives from across the Council and partner agencies. The Board maintains overall control of the workstreams and actions to enable wider engagement. A number of events have been held to raise awareness and help in opening up discussion around the ideas and features of the future model for personalisation of social care services.

5.2 Proposals for the Future

The proposed model for the future is described in the attached document 'Personalising Care & Support'. At this stage, the proposals are for the main elements that would be part of the future approach and approval is being sought for the model to be adopted as the basis for more in depth work to develop specific arrangements and processes.

Subject to agreement in principle, the next phase of work will focus on ensuring that the new model will be effective in enabling people who use social care services to achieve greater control and independence. This will require significant changes and pilot projects to test that the key parts of the future model work effectively before actions for full implementation. In view of the scale and complexity of these changes, a two year programme is proposed so that the full personalisation approach is in place for all social care services by mid-2011.

In parallel with the Putting People First programme for social care, there are corresponding developments being pursued in other linked services, such as housing and the NHS. We are working to integrate or ensure that effective links are made so that each person can have the right services in place according to their individual needs and choices. Some examples of these links are for personal health and care budgets; promoting preventative services and enablement in social care and health; and supported housing so that people can continue to live in the community as an alternative to residential care.

5.3 Achieving Personalisation

The principles of personalisation have received wide support both nationally and locally. Proposals for enabling people to have choices and control in their lives are particularly important for individuals who may experience major barriers due to disabilities or age or ill-health; often through a combination of these factors.

The nature of the changes envisaged through the Transforming Social Care Grant and Putting People First are fundamental and will involve some major changes in the way we work as individuals and as a Local Authority. In view of the extent to which there are also links to areas such as health services and housing, there are corresponding changes in those organisations that we will need to make links to. An example of this is the introduction of World Class Commissioning in the NHS which includes strands such as choice, personal health budgets and enablement.

The work to implement personalisation through our programme over the next two years will require revisions to information systems, new financial processes, new roles such as brokerage, changes in the processes that we operate, such as assessment and care management, and development of external service providers so that they can operate in a more flexible way according to the preferences and choices of individual service users. The implementation programme will involve extensive discussion with service users, staff and others who will be affected by the changes. Our aim will be to ensure that there is a smooth transition to the new operating model and in relation to the changes required to achieve this such as redefining roles and providing appropriate training and skills for staff.

5.4 Consultation

An important part of the process through the Putting People First programme is to ensure that there is consultation at each key stage. The project plans will identify future consultation for people who use services, families and organisations with an interest in social care and the wider general public. As part of the developing initial ideas there was a launch event in November 2008 – with the involvement of the National Lead for Learning Disabilities - and a follow-up in February 2009 centring on emerging options. These sessions were led by the Cabinet Member for Adult and Consumer Care and the Corporate Director, with an invited audience to represent the wide range of stakeholders.

Further events will be held as part of the consultation on the final proposals and subsequently for implementation of the programme.

5.5 Equal Opportunities

Access to good quality care and support is central to the quality of life for many people who need assistance for reasons such as ill-health, disability or frailty due to old age. Historically, services have been decided and arranged on the basis of identifying a service area that the person met need criteria for. This has produced an inconsistent approach and a lack of flexibility, choice and control for the individual often linked to other factors such as social deprivation and low income. The proposals for Putting People First will place the individual at the centre of services and enable wider access to services that the person can direct according to their preferences. This will have a significant impact on achieving equal opportunities by allowing each person to ensure that factors such as age, disability, ethnicity and other considerations relating to equality and diversity are met according to their personal choice.

5.6 Environmental Impact

The proposals within this report and the attached document do not have any direct environmental implications but may lead to some increased use of transport as individuals exercise choices requiring services in different locations. However, the overall impact on the environment is likely to be minor.

5.7 Legal Comment

The proposals for personalisation have been developed following the White paper *Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services*, Department of Health (2006) which describes an integrated approach toward health and social care. This was reinforced by the publication of *Strong and Prosperous Communities: The Local Government White Paper*, Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) which widens the approach into the community. The approach was confirmed in the '*Putting People First*' *Concordat* published in December 2007 and as described in the body of this report.

Local authorities already have powers to make direct payments under the Community Care, Services for Carers and Children's Services (Direct Payments)(England) Regulations 2003 and the Government is considering extending this through corresponding powers and duties for the NHS to make individual budget payments.

Circular LAC(DH)(2009)1:Transforming Adult Social Care was published on 5th March 2009, which sets out further information to support Councils and their partners in this process and indicates that a Green Paper will be published by the Department of Health this year.

5.8 Links with Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the Council's priorities around promoting healthier communities and the quality of life for older and vulnerable people and promoting the health, well-being and life chances of children and young people.

5.9 Opportunities and Risks

The opportunities and risks associated with the introduction of new approaches to achieve personalisation have been identified and assessed. Arrangements have been put in place to manage the risks and maximise the opportunities that have been identified.

Part of the approach through the Putting People First in Telford & Wrekin has been to work with the corporate risk officer so that a range of risks could be established and actions proposed to reduce them. There are potential risks such as pressure for additional resources due to personal budgets being introduced or services deteriorating due to poorly implemented changes. While these risks may present problems if they aren't addressed properly, the approach that has been adopted in our Putting People First programme should avoid or minimise the likelihood of significant unresolved issues. The strong focus on effective financial management that is in place for social care services will continue and will be adapted to meet personal budgets and other new arrangements. Similarly, any transition to new forms of providing services will be carefully managed and tested through pilot work before being fully implemented.

Major changes always result in unavoidable risks but the alternative of avoiding change will lead to even greater risks if services and our approach become out-dated. The project and programme management for Putting People First in Telford & Wrekin will ensure that change is introduced as an opportunity to improve the lives of local people while minimising risks such as inadequate control of resources.

5.10 Financial Implications

One of the outcomes of the Personalisation process is likely to be a redistribution of budgets and a change in emphasis; from accounts held to pay for total costs of care provision eg home care, to accounts which will now be specific to each individual client and may result in more people opting for Direct Payments. Many authorities are looking at a Resource Allocation System which is designed to allocate resources to individual clients based on an assessment of their needs and/or required outcomes. This model is currently being reviewed as part of the Target Operating Model and a pilot to test the system will take place in due course.

The process will also change our current system of charging client contributions. We will also have the option to allocate budgets to service users *net* of client income, significantly reducing the need for invoicing. Current

charging mechanisms are informed by the cost of provision eg day care costs etc. Initial guidance from Department of Health has suggested that charging may be based upon a fixed proportion of the costs of service provision, subject to both Local Authority cap on maximum charge and clients' maximum affordability, identified through a financial assessment process.

Following implementation, there is the *potential* for a certain level of ongoing efficiency to be generated through service users directly procuring their own care packages and having the flexibility to purchase care specific to them at locally agreed prices. It is however far too early both locally and nationally, to gauge whether efficiencies are actually realisable or not. There are numerous other factors to consider, not least of which is an anticipated increased level of demand from clients who previously may not have considered a package of care.

In order to support the costs of implementation, the Dept of Health has awarded the Council specific grant allocation of c£259k for 2008/09 with further grant of £612k being receivable in 2009/10 and further grant of £763k receivable in 2010/11. The total costs of implementation will be contained within this level of resource.

The actual financial implications of Personalisation will be closely monitored through robust financial reporting.

6. WARD IMPLICATIONS / CONSULTATION

District-wide implications.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Key documents that can be referred to for background information:

- "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services", Department of Health, January 2006
- "Putting People First" Concordat, Department of Health, December 2007
- "Transforming Adult Social Care LAC (DH) (2008)1", Department of Health, January 2008
- "The case for change – Why England needs a new care and support system", HM Government, May 2008
- "Transforming Adult Social Care LAC (DH) (2009)1", Department of Health, March 2009

***Report prepared by Paul Donohue, Head of Service Development,
telephone (01952) 381007, email: paul.donohue@telford.gov.uk***

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 7th JULY 2009

SMALL SITES AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME

**JOINT REPORT OF HEAD OF THE INTEGRATED HOUSING PROJECT
AND HEAD OF ASSET & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Members on the establishment of a Small Sites Affordable Housing Programme (the Programme) in partnership with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA).
- 1.2 To seek approval for a number of Council owned sites to be included in the Programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses the establishment of a Small Sites Affordable Housing Programme in partnership with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA).
- 2.2 That the Head of the Integrated Housing Project is given delegated authority to enter into a collaboration agreement with the HCA which will formalise the partnership and set out the objectives and expectations of the Programme.
- 2.3 That the Head of the Integrated Housing Project, is given delegated authority to negotiate and finalise the arrangements for the joint procurement with the HCA in the appointment of a development partner.
- 2.4 That the Head of the Integrated Housing Project, is given delegated authority to authorise any necessary work to bring forward the Council's sites in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration.
- 2.5 That the Head of Asset & Property Management be granted delegated authority, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to identify appropriate Council owned sites for inclusion in the Small Sites Affordable Housing Programme and thereafter to dispose of those sites to the procured development partner at nil value.
- 2.6 Agree to use New Growth Point funding as detailed in the financial comment at section 7.

3.0 SUMMARY

3.1 In response to the recession, the HCA and the Council through the Housing & Regeneration Partnership (comprising the Council, Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and the HCA) are trying to stimulate the provision of affordable housing in the Borough by developing a Small Sites Programme. The Council will participate by including a number of Council owned sites in the Programme. Authorisation is needed to both dispose of these sites and also to dispose at nil value. The Programme is anticipated to deliver some 200 affordable housing units in the first instance. A development partner – likely to be a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) – will be procured in order to deliver the Programme.

4.0 INFORMATION

4.1 Recent information has shown a lack of affordable housing being built in the Borough. The Housing & Regeneration Partnership is trying to stimulate provision by developing a programme of small sites for affordable housing. A number of Council and HCA owned sites will be offered to a development partner.

4.2 It is anticipated that the Programme will run over 2-3 years. It is proposed that approximately 10 sites are put forward for the Programme (which will include 5 sites already identified by HCA), these will be of varying sizes and capable of accommodation of between 10 and 50 housing units which would deliver in the region of 200 affordable units in total. A mix of tenures and sizes would be agreed for each site. Quality and design standards will be agreed for the Programme and in more detail for each individual site.

4.3 The HCA owned sites which have already been identified all have the benefit of outline planning permission. Local people will have the opportunity to comment upon the detailed plans for these sites through the submission of reserved matters planning applications by the RSL. It is envisaged that HCA owned sites would come forward as a first phase of development. A number of Council owned sites have also been identified but they are not as advanced as the HCA sites. Feasibility and technical studies are now underway to assess their viability for inclusion in the Programme. The intention is that the Council would work with the chosen development partner to secure planning permission for its chosen sites.

4.4 The next stage is to procure the development partner. It is likely to involve a two stage process. The first stage will involve inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI). A number, (to be agreed between the Council and HCA), would then be short-listed and invited to submit detailed bids. An important consideration will be the level of National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) grant requested by the RSL to

develop the sites. It is anticipated that the development partner would be chosen by November 2009. It will be a requirement for the development partner to consider using local labour and local building firms to supply materials.

- 4.5 The Council will be expected to cover the costs of bringing forward its sites, such as planning and legal fees. It is recommended that a sum of circa £132,000 is made available for the Programme in 2009/10 and 2010/11 from the New Growth Point funding.

5.0 LEGAL COMMENT

- 5.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 allows principal local authorities to do anything they consider likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area (the “well-being” powers). Use of these powers in this context is consistent with the Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy and also follows guidance on the exercise of the well-being powers.

- 5.2 The Council has the power to dispose of land under section 123 Local Government Act 1972. However, in doing so it is required to achieve the best price it reasonably can for the land, unless consent is first obtained from the Secretary of State for Communities.

- 5.3 The Council is not permitted by virtue of section 25 Local Government Act 1988 to provide financial assistance (a gift of land in this case) for the provision of housing unless consent has been obtained from the Secretary of State. In this particular case it is likely that the financial assistance (in the form of a gift of land) accords with one of the consents issued by the Secretary of State under the General Housing Consent 2005. This consent also applies and meets the requirement for consent under section 123 Local Government Act 1972 for the disposal of the land at nil value.

- 5.4 The joint procurement with the HCA will be made in accordance with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules and may also be subject to the EU Procurement Regulations.

- 5.5 State aid liabilities have been considered and in this instance subsidising affordable housing may constitute the giving of State aid, but following case law the European Commission have issued a Decision to the effect that clearance need not be sought in respect of aid for, amongst other things, social housing where aid is given in support of the general economic interest. Further advice will be sought on this issue but provisional advice indicates that State aid is unlikely to be an issue in this instance.

- 5.6 Advice will be available from Legal Services as and when required throughout the Programme.

6.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

- 6.1 The Programme provides the opportunity to bring forward up to an extra 200 affordable homes over the next 2-3 years.
- 6.2 Careful consideration would need to be given to achieving the right mix of affordable housing on each site to ensure that it maintains a balanced community. Failure to do so could undermine community confidence in the Programme and increase uncertainty for the development partner.
- 6.3 The Council intends to only put forward sites that are granted outline planning permission in order to reduce this uncertainty.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In order to support the Programme the Council will be required to provide land at nil value. The current proposed land parcels do not have any planning permission, however on the assumption that planning would be granted for housing the estimated value of the land, as at June 2009, would be £457k.
- 7.2 In addition to providing the land there will be cost to the Council for bringing the sites forward including feasibility and ecological studies, planning and a contribution to the legal costs incurred by the HCA. This is estimated to be circa £132k and will be met from the New Growth Point capital funding.
- 7.3 These costs do not include land remediation or full geotechnical studies as it is anticipated that the developer partner will meet these.
- 7.4 As highlighted above the Council will contribute to the HCA's legal fees associated with procurement. All other procurement costs will be met by HCA.
- 7.5 It is also expected that the developer partner will secure NAHP Housing grant from HCA to deliver these sites. The Council will not be expected to contribute towards the cost of the residential development.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMENT

- 8.1 The Programme will be expected to achieve the former Housing Corporation and Building for Life standards. It is envisaged that these requirements will deliver high quality schemes

9.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The sites are spread across the Borough to give as much local choice as possible.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The establishment of the new Housing & Regeneration Partnership with, (comprising the Council, the HCA & AWM) has provided the opportunity to work collaboratively on these types of initiative. This Programme is one of the first of its type being progressed by HCA and a local authority and illustrates the strength and delivery commitment of the new Housing Partnership. It also provides an early opportunity identify and test some of the issues that will need to be considered if the Partnership wish to establish a wider ranging Joint Venture Company or Local Delivery Vehicle to address market and affordable housing delivery in the future.
- 10.2 The current recession has led to a significant reduction in construction development across the Borough. The Programme will help to redress the shortfall in housing provision.
- 10.3 The Programme, in addition to providing high quality housing, will also provide opportunities for local employment and support for the local economy.

Report prepared by Katherine Kynaston, Head of the Integrated Housing Project and David Sidaway Head of Asset & Property Management

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 7th JULY 2009

THE FUTURE OF THE CORONERS' SERVICE WITHIN SHROPSHIRE

REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR: RESOURCES

1.0 PURPOSE

For Members to consider the future of the Coroners Service in Telford & Wrekin in the light of the potential impact of the Coroners and Justice Bill and also the fact that the current Coroner for Telford & Wrekin has indicated that he intends to resign from his position in September 2009.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 that Members authorise the Head of Legal Services to approach with Shropshire Council with a view to developing a shared coronial service within Shropshire.

2.2 that Members authorise the Head of Legal Services to work to secure agreement from the Ministry of Justice to proposals for a shared approach that are agreeable to both Councils.

2.3 that the thanks of this Council be passed on to the current Coroner for his commitment and the exemplary way that he has carried out his duties during his tenure.

3.0 SUMMARY

Members need to plan for the changes in the coronial service that have been brought about by the proposed retirement of the current Coroner for Telford & Wrekin and the potential impact of the changes to the coronial service contained in the Coroners and Justices Bill that is currently before Parliament.

4.0 BACKGROUND

The current Coroners service

Coroners in England and Wales are independent judicial officials who investigate deaths reported to them and find out the cause of death to allow it to be registered. Although Coroners are appointed and funded by Local Authorities across the current 129 coronial districts, the Coroner is not a Local Government Officer but holds office under the Crown.

Coroners in England and Wales were notified of some 230,000 deaths last year. This represents nearly 45% of all deaths that occurred. (The Coroner in Telford & Wrekin was notified of 761 deaths last year and 72 inquests were held. In Shropshire the 2 coroners were notified of 1130 deaths and 135 inquests were held.

The Coroner, supported by his/her staff, will investigate these cases and conclude them with a formal inquest if necessary. This is a vital task. It gives certainty and reassurance to bereaved people and is in the public interest as it determines the facts of death which are reported to them and identifies lessons which could prevent future deaths. These deaths may be violent, or unnatural or of unknown cause. It means that many bereaved relatives and friends have contact with Coroners and their staff, as do those working in the Health Service, the Police, Local Authority and other public service staffs.

Coroners nationally are supported by several hundred Coroners' Officers who are employed locally by either the Police or Local Authority. (Within Telford & Wrekin there are currently 3 Coroners Officers who are employed by West Mercia Police Force. In Shropshire there are 5 Coroners Officers who are also employed by West Mercia Police.

Limitations of the current service

The Government considers that there are inherent weaknesses in the present system because it is fragmented, unaccountable, variable in its processes and quality, ineffective in part and archaic in its statutory basis.

For example, Coroners can only be dismissed by the Lord Chancellor and have no retirement age. This means that Councils can find it very difficult to hold Coroners to account for poor performance or even disciplinary matters.

Proposals for change

The Government wants to strengthen and improve the service Coroners currently provide and to that end has recently published proposals for reform of the Coroners Service. The aims of the Bill are to

- Offer a better service to bereaved people and others affected by the work of the Coroner.
- create a national framework and leadership for the service, whilst ensuring that it remains firmly grounded locally;
- ensure that investigations and inquests are more effective; and
- introducing a proposed retirement age of 70.

The Bill proposes a new governance structure for the Coroners Service: It introduces the role of Chief Coroner to lead the service, with powers to intervene in cases in specified circumstances, including presiding over an appeals process designed specifically for the Coroner system. It is also proposed that there be a senior (full time) Coroner for each Coroner area (presently known as Coroner districts) with the possibility of appointing area Coroners and assistant Coroners to assist the senior Coroner for the area. (The Bill also proposes to bring together small areas into one whole time coronial jurisdiction reducing the number of senior Coroners. The proposed reduction will be in the region of 50%, down from current levels of 110 full and part-time Coroners to 64 full time Coroners.

It also gives Coroners powers aimed at improving the effectiveness of investigations. For example it will give Coroners new powers to obtain information, including medical advice, to help them with investigations and to dispose of inquests in certain cases, create new rights for the bereaved, establish a Chief Coroner and an Advisory Coronial Council with the power to commission inspections, provide guidance and promote good practice, change investigation and inquest processes (including a power to impose reporting restrictions), including removing boundary restrictions.

The Bill also proposes to leave the appointment and funding arrangements with Local Authorities and the power to confirm or remove appointments with the Lord Chancellor

The Consequences of Change

- The Bill makes a commitment to retaining the Coroners service as a local service and Coroners will continue to be appointed and funded by their local councils and supported by existing Coroners' Officers. However, reducing the number of coronal areas will mean greater cross boundary working than is currently the case.
- Greater consistency through the development of national standards and guidance developed by the Chief Coroner.
- Greater accountability as the Chief Coroner will be accountable to Parliament.
- New rights for bereaved people. They will have new rights to appeal against matters and decisions which concern them. A Coroners' Charter will set out guidelines and standards to make clear the level of that service bereaved people can expect and to promote better contact between them and the Coroner and Coroners' staff.
- Improved access to medical support will better inform decision making

The Local Position

There is currently 1 Coroner operating within Telford & Wrekin. His name is Michael Gwynne and he has been the Coroner for many years. Shropshire has 2 other Coroners operating with jurisdictions for North and Mid Shropshire, John Ellery, and South Shropshire, Anthony Sibcy.

The Coroner for Telford & Wrekin has indicated that he wishes to retire from this position in September 2009 although he has indicated that he might be prepared to defer this for a short while to enable alternative arrangements to be made.

The Coroners all support the proposals in the Bill and are committed to improving the already good local service provided to the bereaved and their families.

In order to manage the proposed retirement of the Coroner for Telford & Wrekin officers have held discussions with all the Coroners within Shropshire to consider how to manage the service in the future in the best interests of the people of Shropshire. It is clear from the Bill that a like for like replacement for Michael Gwynne will not be a sustainable solution.

It is agreed that some amalgamation of the existing areas is required and consideration has been given as to how this might be best achieved to comply with the spirit of the proposal in the Bill and yet also best meet the expectations of local people for a local service.

2 options have been identified, namely a coronial service for Shropshire or a service with a wider jurisdiction. It is the view of the Shropshire coroners, and officers, that it is most appropriate for the service to be maintained at a county level. Widening beyond this would dilute the value of local knowledge and local relationships that are key to the provision of such a sensitive service. Much weight should also be given to the fact that such an area links to both healthcare and police boundaries. (It is worth noting that John Ellery, the coroner for mid Shropshire is currently Mr Gwynne's Assistant Deputy and accordingly is familiar with Telford.)

It is foreseeable that the base means of identifying new Coroners areas would require more deaths than currently take place in Shropshire as a whole but there 2 key growth points in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Shrewsbury so it is reasonable to assume that this gap will reduce in the medium term. Notwithstanding this Coroners and officers are agreed that this is a blunt method of designing a service and does not outweigh the stronger reasons for a county wide service as identified in this report.

In order to minimise disruption to services across Shropshire the move to a single Coroner could start with the retirement of Michael Gwynne this year, amalgamating Telford & Wrekin and North and Mid Shropshire areas. The South Shropshire area completing the amalgamation with the retirement of Anthony Sibcy which will, if the Bill is enacted in its current format, have to be within the next 5 years.

What to do next

Members are asked to consider the contents of this report and consider how they want to ensure the continued provision of this service in Telford & Wrekin. It is recommended that officers are asked to undertake work with Shropshire Council to agree a joint way forward along the lines of a shared county service.

If this can be agreed we propose to initiate formal discussions with the Ministry of Justice to ensure their agreement to any agreed proposed service it would not be sensible to make changes now that would be changed when/if the Bill becomes law and comes into force.

5.0 Equality & Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken to ensure that any proposed changes to the existing service retain or enhance the accessibility of the service across the community.

6.0 Environmental Impact

None

7.0 Legal Comment

The Council has a duty to provide a coronial service within its administrative area and the proposal outlined in this report would enable the Council to comply with that duty.

Members need to be aware that the Coroners and Justice Bill is currently just a Bill and it might not be passed in its current form or at all. If it follows its timetable the majority of its provisions are expected to come into force in early 2010.

8.0 Links with Corporate Priorities

Priority - 4 Creating a safe, strong and cohesive community; and

Priority 7 – Creating an efficient effective customer focussed Council that delivers value for money for the community

9.0 Opportunities and risks

There is always some risk to the service when such key posts become vacant. Mr Ellery has a lot of experience within Shropshire and his appointment as Telford & Wrekin Coroner would enable him to become a full time Coroner and be the first phase in the delivery of the wider strategy as outlined in the Coroners and Justice Bill.

10.0 Financial implications

This authority is commended by the current Coroner for the support provided to him in the performance of his duties but the fact is the cost of this service continues to increase. The costs of the service are outside the Council's control because the majority of costs are the result of decisions taken by the Coroner, on the basis of his professional judgement. These costs include, for example, post mortem and laboratory fees, support for the bereaved and large public interest inquests.

In the last financial year the cost of the service was £337,961 which resulted in the service being £191,061 over spent against the budget. The costs for this service have been increasing year on year, the outturn in the 2008/09 financial year was over £100,000 more than in the previous year.

The proposals will have cost implications for the Council and the Department for Constitutional Affairs has said that these will be fully funded but nevertheless officers suggest that this is a good opportunity to review

the service's efficiency and effectiveness to identify if the amalgamation of the service could deliver savings to ensure that it continues to provide value for money and minimises the burden on local taxation.

11.0 Ward implications

This report has implications for all Wards.

12.0 Background papers

The Coroners and Justices Bill, the file on the Coroners Service maintained by Legal Services

Report prepared by
Jonathan Eatough
Head of Legal Services