

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 22nd December, 2011 at 5.00 p.m. at the Civic Offices, Telford

PUBLISHED ON FRIDAY, 30th DECEMBER, 2011

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: THURSDAY, 5TH JANUARY, 2012)

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A.J. Eade (Conservative Group Leader) and Councillor W.L. Tomlinson (Lib Dem/Independent Group Leader)

CB-77 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 8th December 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CB-78 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor H. Rhodes

CB-79 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CB-80 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2011/12

Key Decision identified as **Financial Monitoring and Financial Updates** in the Forward Plan published on 16th November 2011.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Resources & Service Delivery, presented the report of the Head of Finance, which provided Members with the latest financial monitoring information for 2011/12.

It was reported that Revenue spending for the year was projected to be within budget at year end, after setting aside £2.145m to support the 2012/13 budget, and using £1.957m of the remaining corporate contingency. The main pressures were: the cost of Adult Social Care purchasing (projected overspend of £0.9m); the cost of Children in Care placements and use of agency staff in the Safeguarding service (projected net overspend of £1.4m); the cost of Specialist Education (projected overspend of £0.54m); along with income shortfalls and inflationary pressures. Projected variances of over £0.100m for each service delivery unit were detailed in the report.

There were benefits from active treasury management, the New Homes Bonus Grant, and £0.580m 2012/13 efficiencies delivered early. It was proposed to carry this benefit forward to 2012/13 to create a one-off contingency. It was clear that the Council would have an extremely challenging position for next year, and it was essential that very tight control on spend was exercised for the remainder of the current year. The impact of the 100 day budget was included in the overall position shown in the report.

The capital programme would total £101m, which reflected adjustments for re-phasing and new approvals and the impact of the 100 day budget. Spend to date was 26% and robust programme management and monitoring was in place to ensure schemes were delivered. Appended to the report were a number of new allocations, slippage and virements for approval. The capital programme over the next few years relied on a significant amount of capital receipts as part of its funding, and the position was being closely monitored.

Collection levels for Council Tax collection were ahead of target, while NNDR collection and Sales Ledger debt were both behind target at the end of October, and were being closely monitored.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the 2011/12 revenue spend, currently projecting to be within budget at year end, be noted.**
- (b) that the position in relation to capital spend be noted;**
- (c) To RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that the new capital allocations, slippage and virements detailed in Appendix 3 of the report be approved;**
- (d) that it be noted that collection of council tax income is ahead of target, while collection of NNDR and Sales Ledger are slightly behind target at the end of October 2011.**

CB-81 SERVICE & FINANCIAL PLANNING 2012/13 – 2014/15

Key Decision identified as **Budget Strategy/Service & Financial Planning Process** in the Forward Plan published on 16th November 2011.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Resources & Service Delivery, presented the report of the Managing Director Designate and the Head of Finance, which set out the proposed service and financial planning strategy for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15 with specific budget proposals for 2012/13, and the proposed engagement and consultation activities with the community. He thanked the Head of Finance and his team for all their hard work in preparing the draft budget.

The Cabinet Member set out the background and context to the budget round, particularly in relation to the 28% reduction in Government grant funding for local authorities over four years, and the continuing uncertainty about the national and global economic situation. The Autumn Statement announced on 29th November made it clear that the outlook for public finances was not improving, and the squeeze on public spending was likely to continue for some time. The revised provisional grant settlement for 2012/13 had resulted in only minor changes to grant, but the financial projections for future years were more uncertain due to the current major review of the local government finance system. Other factors and additional pressures included the Council's historic low council tax levels compared to other authorities, the continued effect of the damping mechanism which would result in around £2m of grant being withheld from the Council, the implications on the revenue budget of committed capital repayments and significantly reduced balances and reserves.

In terms of the base budget position, the Council was facing a funding gap of nearly £22m for 2012/13. The report set out the proposals to bridge the gap, including savings proposals and use of balances. The proposals had been developed in the light of extensive consultation with the community, and included:

- a further reduction in senior management
- continuation of a comprehensive programme of service reviews and staff restructuring
- to seek views from the community on whether the Council should accept the offer of a one-off grant from the Government to freeze the level of council tax in 2012/13, or should increase council tax levels to help protect services;
- make new ongoing investments of £1.9m in the adult social care budget to meet increasing demand, including £1.3m towards Continuing Healthcare costs being displaced onto the Council
- continued investment in key infrastructure projects such as new and improved schools, and £6.15m in the proposed capital programme for improvements to the Brookside area;
- use of £1.4m balances and one-off benefits carried forward from the current year to support the budget for 2012/13.

The non-staff savings strategy had focussed on improving procurement and driving down costs that had minimal impact on service delivery (eg: stationery and postage). However, due to the scale of the budget gap, the Administration had no option but to consider some savings that would impact on services. Wherever possible, the focus would be on planned long-term, positive service changes as opposed to withdrawing services or closing facilities. Appendix 8 of the report detailed specific proposals for savings on non-staffing budgets. The savings package also included a number of proposals to increase fees and charges, particularly for those services where charges had not increased for a number of years or were significantly lower than other councils.

A programme of community engagement and consultation on the budget proposals would be undertaken until the end of January 2012. Views would be sought on the proposed investment and savings packages and whether the

Council should accept the one-year only Council Tax freeze grant. Details of the communication and engagement plan were appended to the report. Final proposals would be considered by the Cabinet on 23 February 2012 for recommendation to full Council on 1 March 2012.

During the ensuing debate, Councillor W. Tomlinson (Lib Dem/Independent Group Leader) commented on the detailed and comprehensive nature of the service and financial planning document, and expressed concern at the scale of the cutbacks in Government grant and the uncertainty for Councils and schools over the levels of future grant funding. Councillor A. Eade (Conservative Group Leader) stated that there was a lot of detail to look at, but the Administration needed to take a lead in making clear what it was recommending for the Borough. A number of Cabinet members referred to the difficulties ahead, and that there were no easy options in balancing the budget. However, the Co-operative Council approach sought to mitigate the worst effect of the cuts by encouraging local people and organisations to work together. It was also important that the Council supported the most deprived communities in the Borough.

RESOLVED – that the Service and Financial Planning strategy set out in the report be approved for consultation with the community.

CB - 82 NHS TRANSFORMATION – IMPLICATIONS FOR TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

Non-Key Decision

Councillor E.A. Clare, Cabinet Member for Adult & Social Care, presented the report of the Head of Service – Social Care Specialist, which considered the implications of health transformation and the Health & Social Care Bill for local NHS services, for the Council in respect of new statutory responsibilities, and for joint working with the NHS.

The report set out the main provisions of the Health & Social Care Bill that was currently passing through the parliamentary process. These included:

- market based reforms – likely to lead to NHS services being increasingly delivered by large Foundation Trusts.
- System reform – the proposed radical reorganisation of NHS structures was already being seen with the Telford & Wrekin PCT being absorbed into a West Mercia cluster and the NHS taking a Shropshire wide health economy approach. The Cabinet Member highlighted the dangers of losing Telford & Wrekin's separate identity, and the importance of forming close working links with the new Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to develop a common vision and joint approach
- Commissioning – the move to GPs taking on commissioning responsibilities from the PCTs would require the Council to work with the new CCG to develop a fully integrated model of local joint commissioning

- Health & Wellbeing Board – the Council would need to establish a shadow Board by April 2012, before taking on its full statutory role in April 2013
- Public Health – responsibility for public health would be transferred in shadow form to the Council from April 2012, including transfer of management and co-location of staff.
- Healthwatch – the current Local Involvement Network (LINK) organisation would be replaced with a local Healthwatch – designed to increase the public/patient voice within the NHS and Social Care. The Council would need to commence a procurement process to secure a preferred provider for the Healthwatch service – with a start date of 1 October 2012.

Members referred to the challenges ahead for the Council in terms of the new structures and arrangements for the commissioning and delivery of health services, and the need to develop strong local partnerships and joint working in order to safeguard local accountability.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that agreement be sought with the Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group, as a matter of urgency, on a strategic direction of travel for commissioning and integration of operational health and social care services, taking the opportunity to develop a more fully integrated model of local commissioning and the support arrangements to underpin it;**
- (b) that a robust Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board and Strategy be in place from April 2012, with strong Clinical Commissioning Group and Council representation alongside other key stakeholders. This will drive integrated key strategic decisions about health and social care provision from this date, based on the priorities emerging from the Health & Wellbeing Strategy;**
- (c) that agreement be sought with T&W PCT and the Clinical Commissioning Group, on how to manage local Public Health (PH) responsibilities in shadow form from April 2012, as a sustainable operational structure including PH functions is developed within the Council over the next year;**
- (d) that it be noted that the Local Involvement Network (LINK) host contract will expire on 31 March 2012, and that interim arrangements will need to be discussed with LINK;**
- (e) that a specification be agreed for each of the Healthwatch functions by 31 January 2012 with a view to commencing the process to secure a preferred provider, which may involve a tendering process, by the end of July 2012, and that authority be delegated to the Head of Care & Support, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult & Social Care and the Head of Governance, to award the contract.**

**CB - 83 DELEGATED POWERS IN RESPECT OF THE SUNBEDS
(REGULATION) ACT 2010**

Non-Key Decision

Councillor C.F. Smith, on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Transport & Community Protection, presented the joint report of the Head of Governance and the Head of Housing, Planning & Public Protection, which sought approval for delegated powers to be given to public protection staff to carry out their duties on behalf of the Council.

The Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 was intended to prevent young people using sunbeds in places including salons, gyms, hotels and leisure centres - with the aim of helping to reduce the incidence of skin cancer. Enforcement of the legislation fell to staff in Public Protection, and might involve inspections, test purchases and reacting to customer complaints. It was therefore necessary to delegate authority to public protection staff to exercise the powers given to the Council by this legislation. The proposed delegations were appended to the report.

RESOLVED – that the scheme of additional delegation in relation to the Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

The meeting ended at 5.55 p.m.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

**Jonathan Eatough
Head of Governance
Date: 30 December 2011**

Signed:

Date:

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 26 JANUARY 2012

LEISURE CONCESSIONS AND ARTHOG REMISSIONS POLICY REVIEW

**REPORT OF THE CO-OPERATIVE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet on proposed changes to the leisure services concessions policy in order to make the £50K savings required for 2012/13.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees the recommendations set out in section 9.3 of this report to meet the required £50k savings target for leisure concessions including:-
- 2.2 To remove the automatic concessionary status for new over 60s except for those in receipt of Pensions Credit;
- 2.3 To introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups;
- 2.4 To standardise and increase concessionary Health & Fitness membership to £21.50pcm for all members;
- 2.5 To remove concessions on golf for all groups.
- 2.6 That the existing Arthog Remissions Policy is retained.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee meetings, 9th November 2011 and 1st December 2011.

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 Members of the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to review leisure concessions as part of the 2011/12 work

programme. The Cabinet Member, Leisure & Wellbeing, and senior officers had put the suggestion forward and the Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be engaged at an early stage of the policy review.

- 4.2 Members of the Committee were Cllrs. Angela McClements (Chairman), Stephen Bentley, Nathan England, Kevin Guy, Tracy Hope, Amrik Jhawar, Jackie Loveridge, Karen Tomlinson and Co-optee Lynda Baker-Oliver.
- 4.3 The review was driven by the need to make 20% non-staff savings in line with other Council service areas. This meant a savings (or additional income) target of around £400k for Leisure of which £50k was proposed from a review of concessionary charges from 2012/13.
- 4.4 The aim of the review was to identify revisions to the concessions schemes to meet the required savings/income target and to recommend the selected options to Cabinet.
- 4.5 In carrying out this review, the Committee met Cllr. Arnold England, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Wellbeing, Angie Astley Head of Customer Services, Leisure and Libraries and Stuart Davidson, Community & Leisure Services Delivery Manager.
- 4.6 The Committee met on 9th November and 1st December 2011 to consider the existing concessions policy and to appraise the options for revising the schemes to generate the required level of additional income. A wide range of options were considered across all age groups and activities. Members considered the potential impact on service users and the financial risks associated with each option, as well as new ideas for income generation.
- 4.7 This report sets out the key issues discussed at the meeting and the Committee's conclusions and recommendations.

5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Council currently affords free or discounted access to a range of sports and leisure activities for a number of concessionary groups as defined in the table below.

Group	Definition	Number of Cardholders	Entitlement
1	People/families in receipt of Council Tax Benefit, Pension Credit, Leaving Care Allowance, free school meals or Healthy Start	2,482 adults 1,710 junior	Free Swimming and off peak skating. Up to 40% discount on other non instructed activities and up to 25% off instructed activities.

	Vouchers		
2	People in receipt of one or more of the following: Employment and Support Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Disability Working Allowance, Disabled Persons Tax Credit, Industrial Disablement, Attendance Allowance, Mobility Allowance.	598	Free Swimming and off peak skating. Up to 40% discount on other non instructed activities and up to 25% off instructed activities. Above also applies to an accompanying carer.
3	People in receipt of Carers Allowance.	Included within group 1	Free Swimming and off peak skating. Up to 40% discount on other non instructed activities and up to 25% off instructed activities.
4	60+	2,459	Free Swimming and off peak skating. Up to 40% discount on other non instructed activities and up to 25% off instructed activities.
5	Full time students aged 16 and over	916	Admission at Junior rates.

5.2 The purpose of the concessions scheme is to provide equality of access to the Council's sports & leisure activities for those groups that may be considered to be financially disadvantaged.

5.3 The Council does in addition to the concessions scheme offer targeted leisure and physical activity provision for hard to reach groups through commissioned projects, external funding and sponsorship. This provision typically targets hard to reach and low participation groups. Current projects include:

- I Can Too (free activities for disabled children)
- Fit 4 Life Scheme (reduced price activities for referred users)
- Inclusive Leisure (support for disabled adults to access activities)
- Active Families (funded activities for inactive families)
- Physical Activity reward Scheme (activities for 13-19 year olds)
- Kidz 4 A Quid (subsidised holiday activity programme)
- Tackle Your Health (health screening and activities for men)

- 5.4 The concessions scheme is administered through the Flex Card which allows for secure and accurate capture of data. The concessions card is visibly indistinguishable from non-concessionary cards.
- 5.5 Leisure is a discretionary service and as such there is no statutory requirement to provide services or to offer a concessions scheme. Concessionary entitlement is currently open to residents only, with the exception of Disabled card holders where residency is not currently a requirement.
- 5.6 A breakdown of current concessionary card ownership is included within the table in paragraph 5.1 above. Whilst the entitlement criteria are consistent across the service the level of discount applied differs. For example the over 60's are entitled to free swimming and off peak skating whilst the level of discount for golf is less than 20% and excludes weekend usage.
- 5.7 Concessionary discounts are not currently available on block bookings or group activities.
- 5.8 Telford & Wrekin registered Foster Carers are also currently afforded concessionary status.
- 5.9 Concessionary schemes vary greatly across local authorities and direct comparisons are not easy. However, the current Telford & Wrekin scheme is considered to be generous.

6.0 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Members recognised the positive impact of leisure concessions on the level of physical activity and overall health and wellbeing in the borough. There was concern about the potential impact of any changes, but also a recognition that changes must be made because of the reduction in the Council's grant. A number of underlying factors were taken into account during the discussion:
 - 6.1.1 That revisions to schemes must generate a projected overall income of £50k during 2012/13.
 - 6.1.2 That equalities issues must be considered, and the need to protect people and families in receipt of benefits and minimise the financial impact on people and families on low incomes as far as possible.
 - 6.1.3 That swimming and health & fitness represent by far the most popular concessionary activities and therefore offer the greatest potential for achieving savings.
 - 6.1.4 That revisions to concessions must be balanced against the

need to protect income streams and the risk of lower admissions arising from increased charges.

6.1.5 That revisions to concessions must be balanced against the risk of a reduction in the level of physical activity and the consequent long-term impacts on health and wellbeing in the borough.

6.1.5 That leisure is a discretionary service and there is no statutory duty to offer concessions. Concessions offered by Telford & Wrekin Council were considered generous compared to other authorities.

6.2 At the first meeting, a broad range of ideas and options were explored to establish initial views on where savings could potentially be made.

6.2.1 Free swimming for under 16s with a Flex Card.

The 100 Day budget had proposed the re-instatement of free swimming for under 16s with a Flex Card (subsequently approved by Council on 24th November). Members reviewed feedback from the consultation with the public on the proposal which showed that of 639 people responding, 67.3% supported the proposal, 21.1% did not support the proposal, 9.9% neither agreed nor disagreed and 1.7% "didn't know". Comments ranged from those who supported free swimming for the health and physical activity benefits to those who felt parents should pay for swimming.

There was significant debate about the retention of free swimming, and one view was expressed that it was the responsibility of parents to pay for their children to swim. However, on balance the Committee agreed that free swimming for under 16s should remain for 2012/13 as a continued incentive for children and young people to take part in physical activity. It was felt this should be an inclusive policy so that all young people and families (especially those on low incomes) had equality of opportunity. The long-term health, wellbeing and social benefits were felt to be very important, as well as the safety aspect of making sure as many children as possible are able to swim.

Although not within the control of the Council, Members recommended that where possible the authority should try to influence schools to ensure that all pupils receive at least the minimum requirement for swimming lessons, and that travel to and from the pool should not be included as swimming time.

6.2.2 Concessions for over 60s

The option to review the automatic (non means tested) entitlement for residents over 60s was considered. All over 60s are entitled to free swimming as well as off-peak skating and

discounts on other non instructed activities. The most popular activity was swimming with 22,042 admissions during the previous year.

A comparison of 17 local authorities showed that Telford & Wrekin was the only authority to offer a 100% discount on swimming to over 60s. Other authorities offered a partial discount, with the majority (8) offering a 50% discount. Others ranged from 70% (1), 60% (2, but one of those was only for people on pension credit), 35% (3), 33% (1), 25% (1).

Members considered increasing the age of entitlement to 65, more in line with the rising retirement age. Most 60+ admissions (77%) were over 65 which did not leave scope for making meaningful savings from lifting the age of entitlement, and as it would put Telford & Wrekin out of line with other authorities, Members rejected this as an option.

Based on the information provided, the fact that the over 60s concession was not means tested and therefore applied to people who are still working or on reasonable pensions, and that the over 60s population is projected to increase significantly, members agreed that over 60s concessions should be considered as an area for potential savings.

The Committee agreed that whatever model was applied, senior citizens in receipt of Pension Credit would qualify for concessionary status.

6.2.3 Income related discounts

Members were concerned that benefit-based eligibility criteria for concessions were unfair as those on low incomes just over the benefit threshold were expected to pay disproportionately for leisure activities. The possibility of introducing a sliding scale of discounts based on income was discussed, but discounted due to prohibitive level of additional resources that would be required to administer such a complex scheme. It was agreed that although there was an inherent risk of unfairness in the system for people on low incomes, the benefits-based criteria would remain as no viable alternative could be identified.

It was noted that the Flex Card entitles people to a discount on admissions prices and that special offers are run during school holidays to help more people take advantage of services during peak times.

6.2.4 Flex Cards

Flex Cards entitle people to discounts on admissions prices. The annual cost of the standard adult Flex Card is £7.50, with

various discounts for eligible groups such as the under 16s, people on benefits, disabled people and students.

Members discussed the option of generating additional income by raising Flex Card charges. Charges for Flex cards were only reintroduced from April 2011 as part of the non staff savings measures and it was therefore felt that a further price increase may deter people from renewing or buying the cards. For these reasons, Members rejected this as an option.

The Committee suggested that a family Flex Card or a “whole package” deal incorporating other sports could be offered, and were pleased to hear that options for this were being explored following the “Active Families” pilot.

6.2.5 Corporate Gym Membership

Members suggested developing a corporate membership package as a way of generating additional income. Corporate membership packages were already offered, and opportunities for expansion into the corporate market were being considered to coincide with the opening of the new facilities at Abraham Darby and Wellington. A number of large and smaller local employers (including the Council) were already signed-up to corporate membership schemes. The Committee supported further marketing and development of the corporate market as a way of increasing revenue.

6.2.6 Marketing of new facilities

The new gym and pool facilities at Abraham Darby and Wellington would provide brand new state of the art facilities and equipment which would easily compete with local private clubs. Members recognised the potential for increasing membership by packaging and promoting the new facilities and were pleased to hear that the marketing strategy was being reviewed.

- 6.3 Having considered the broad range of options, Members requested further detailed modelling reports, focussing on the options for the 60+ age group where it was felt there was scope for making savings.

7.0 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 7.1 At the second meeting, Members considered more detailed information and evaluation on the options to remove the automatic concessionary entitlement of the over 60s. The modelling showed that reducing or removing concessions for this group alone was not projected to generate sufficient levels of additional income to bring about the required level of savings, and as such it would be necessary to consider the wider policy for additional options. The range of options modelled is shown in Appendix 1.

- 7.2 Further detailed modelling had been carried out on swimming and health & fitness activities as these had the highest level of concessionary admissions and the potential for the highest level of savings. Estimated projections were based on current admissions numbers. The figures reflected the key relationship between the level of charges and the potential impact on usage and therefore income. This is shown in Appendix 2.
- 7.3 The options modelled for the over 60s showed that automatic concessionary entitlement for the over 60's could still be addressed in a way that reduced the impact upon users and the associated risks, and ensured the consistent application of a defined means testing approach to concessions. New 60+ Flex card applicants could, in order to qualify for concessionary status be required to prove entitlement through receipt of Pension Credit while existing 60+ Flex card holders would retain their concessionary status. It was proposed that that this would reduce the risk of disgruntled customers and loss of existing income but would at the same time address a policy that might be considered to be inconsistent and unsustainable. The estimated additional income was £5k with potential for future growth.
- 7.4 Swimming was currently offered free of charge to concessionary groups and Telford & Wrekin children (the latter would remain unaffected by proposals). A number of options had been modelled based upon balancing potential income returns against the risk of lost custom. The options modelled were full-price, half-price and a flat £1 concessionary charge. It was estimated that introducing a flat £1 charge for concessionary groups could generate a similar amount of income as charging either full or half price given the risk of drop-off resulting from loss of custom. A £1 charge would also ensure that the Council retained a comparatively generous policy. The estimated additional income was £23k.
- 7.5 Unlike swimming, there was an additional risk associated with wholesale changes to health & fitness concessions. In increasing prices, membership may go down and this may actually result in a loss of income. The Council currently operates two levels of concessionary Health & Fitness membership: a historic £16pcm Gym Only membership and £21pcm which includes swimming and exercise classes. From April 2010 the Gym Only membership was closed to new members, 222 memberships remain. The option existed to amalgamate the two concessionary memberships and charge £21.50pcm which would include the added benefits of swimming and classes and would still represent excellent value for money, particularly if the option to introduce a fee for concessionary swimming was introduced. The proposed £21.50pcm package would be available to new 60+ members. The estimated additional income was £14k.
- 7.6 Concessionary groups were entitled to a 20% discount at Horsehay

Village Golf Centre Monday to Friday only. The option existed to remove this concession. The impact of this could be offset by the use of special offers based upon business need. Additionally regular users can benefit from a Direct Debit option. The estimated additional income was £5k.

- 7.7 Concessionary groups were entitled to 15% off swimming lessons. The option existed to remove this concession. Swimming is however considered to be a life skill and it may be that the level of risk outweighs the potential additional income. The estimated additional income was £6k.
- 7.8 Members considered the evaluation of each option in detail. In all options, over 60s in receipt of Pension Credit would still qualify for concessions.

Option 1: Remove automatic concessionary status for over 60s

Estimated potential income (saving)	Swimming income £14k based upon 25% drop off rate Health & Fitness £7k based upon £21pcm Other activities including golf £5k Future additional income from new users £5k
Comments	Insufficient income generation to meet savings target. Participation from over 60's is likely to be disproportionately affected.
Risk	Medium

It was noted that removing concessions for the over 60s alone would not generate the required level of savings, and members considered this option in conjunction with the wider savings proposals put forward. It was felt that withdrawing the concessionary entitlement of this group entirely would present difficulties for people who were accustomed to receiving the benefits and that wholesale withdrawal of entitlement may lead to a loss of reputation to the Council. On balance, Members agreed that the concessionary status should remain for existing over 60s, subject to the entitlement revisions for all concessionary groups recommended in this report.

Option 1 was **rejected** subject to other revisions recommended in this report.

Option 2: Remove automatic concessionary status for new over 60s

Estimated potential income (saving)	£5k, potential to increase given demographic profile
Comments	Limits impact on existing users. Minimises risk to existing usage and income. Addresses existing policy concerns.
Risk	Low

The removal of automatic concessionary status for new over 60s was given a great deal of consideration. The Committee was aware of the potential perception of unfairness amongst new over 60s, but felt that the impact would be limited as people would not miss an entitlement they had never enjoyed. Furthermore, as the over 60s population was projected to increase significantly, there was the potential to increase revenue streams from this group to help sustain high quality services.

Over 60s in receipt of Pensions Credit would still qualify for concessions.

Option 2 was **recommended**.

Option 3: Remove swimming concessions altogether

Estimated potential income (saving)	£25k based upon 75% drop in attendances
Comments	Does not reflect policies of other Councils. Participation from disadvantaged groups is likely to be disproportionately affected.
Risk	High

The full adult admission price for a swim is £3.25. The Committee rejected this option out of hand because of the high risk of drop in admissions, the likely disproportionate impact on disadvantaged groups and the fact that it would put Telford & Wrekin out of line with other authorities.

Option 3 was **rejected**.

Option 4: Introduce a half price charge for swimming for all concessionary groups

Estimated potential income (saving)	£25k based upon 50% reduction
Comments	More closely reflects concessionary policies of other authorities. Participation from disadvantaged groups may be disproportionately affected.
Risk	Medium/High

Option 5: Introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups

Estimated potential income (saving)	£23k based upon 25% drop off
Comments	Level of concession remains comparatively high. Participation rates likely to be less affected.
Risk	Low/Medium

Options 4 and 5 were considered together to compare a flat £1 charge with a half-price charge of £1.65 for concessionary groups. Members considered the financial risks of each option. It was assumed that the

higher the admission price, the greater the risk of drop in admissions. A 50% drop in admissions for the half-price charge would generate less income (£25,277) than a 10% drop in admissions for the £1 flat fee (£28,073) and only slightly more than a 25% drop for the £1 flat fee (£23,394). It was agreed that the risk of introducing a half-price charge was not worth taking.

It was overwhelmingly agreed that a flat £1 rate would be more affordable and acceptable to the public than £1.65, and that there were psychological barriers to exceeding the “£1” mark. Further, a cautious approach to the pricing structure now would allow flexibility for further refinement in the future should budgets come under further pressure.

Option 4 was **rejected**.

Option 5 was **recommended**.

Option 6: Remove concessions on swimming lessons, currently 15%

Estimated potential income (saving)	£6k
Comments	Level of savings low given potential impact.
Risk	Medium

The Committee rejected this option on the grounds of safety issues and that as much encouragement as possible should be given to children and young people to learn to swim. It was also felt that children having swimming lessons may be more likely to take part in swimming activities continuing through to adulthood.

The Committee again urged that that through the Council’s relationships, schools should be encouraged to ensure that all children receive at least the minimum required swimming lesson time.

Option 6 was **rejected**.

Option 7: Standardise concessionary Health & Fitness memberships to £21.50pcm.

Estimated potential income (saving)	£14k
Comments	Increased cost reflects additional benefits. Provides consistent approach. Still reflects good value. Increase will affect some of our longest standing customers
Risk	Low

The option was to standardise and increase the concessionary gym membership fee. The current monthly fee was £21, but there were still 222 people paying £16 on the legacy Gym Only contracts. Options had been modelled on fee increases to £26pcm and £21.50pcm, with

exercise classes and swimming included in membership entitlement.

Members were very conscious of the risks associated with increasing membership fees as this was a main source of income and used to offset activities in other areas. The Council was operating at the value end of the market and had benefited from the recession with an uptake in membership of people looking for better value deals and it was essential that this income stream was protected.

A cost comparison with private clubs had been carried out and monthly fees ranged from £25 at the bottom end for restricted time membership to around £40 per month. Members agreed that an increase in the Council's fee to £26pcm was too high risk and would jeopardise the retention of existing customers and deter new members who may drift to private clubs if the price differential was narrowed too far.

Members did however agree that an increase of £0.50 per month to £21.50 was acceptable, especially given the additional benefits of exercise classes and swimming and with the new state of the art facilities coming on stream at Abraham Darby and Wellington, and that this price would continue to offer great value for customers. It was also agreed that it was fair to standardise fees, and that customers on the old £16pcm contracts should be lifted to the new £21.50 fee.

Option 7 was **recommended**.

Option 8: Remove concessions on Golf for all groups

Estimated potential income (saving)	£5k
Comments	The option exists for regular players to take out a Direct Debit option which offers value for money
Risk	Low

The Committee agreed that the concessionary discount should be removed as golf tended to attract more affluent people and fewer people would be affected. It was noted that Horsehay Village Golf Centre was an excellent facility and Members urged that ways of generating additional income from this asset should be explored.

Option 8 was **recommended**.

8.0 ARTHOG REMISSIONS POLICY

8.1 In addition to the leisure concessions policy, members also considered the Remissions Policy for Arthog. The review was triggered by a recent complaint from a Telford & Wrekin parent who had raised concerns in respect of the fact that they considered it unfair that pupils were either required to pay the full fee or nothing

- 8.2 Arthog Outdoor Education Centre primarily provides residential outdoor education opportunities for schools. The current cost of a 5 day residential course for Telford & Wrekin pupil ranges from £228 to £263 depending upon the term.
- 8.3 The Council operates a Remissions Policy whereby the Council fully subsidises the cost of the course for children of families verified as meeting the remissions criteria (Free School Meals, Income Support, Working Tax Credits). In 2010/11 the Council funded 514 pupil places through the scheme. The purpose of the Remissions Policy is to ensure that no child should be denied access to Arthog because of financial hardship.
- 8.4 Members considered two options for revising the Remissions Policy:
- 8.4.1 To reduce the level of subsidy per pupil and require a partial contribution, for example £50, from families meeting the eligibility criteria. Members were very concerned that the introduction of even a partial charge would risk excluding children from disadvantaged families from taking part in the course and that this risk should be avoided. The consequent financial impact on the Arthog remissions budget was also noted. For these reasons this change was not agreed.
- 8.4.2 To introduce a sliding scale of entitlement linked to wholly or partially funded places based on ability to pay. It was agreed that such a scheme would be difficult and expensive to administer and complicated for parents and schools, and for these reasons was not considered a feasible option. It was regretfully acknowledged that no matter what system is in place to help disadvantaged families, there would always be families who fall just outside the criteria but that a realistic line had to be drawn.
- 8.5 It was acknowledged that schools also offer additional localised arrangements financed through their own budgets dependent upon specific circumstances, and also noted that no other complaints had been received about the Policy in previous years.
- 8.6 After weighing up the information provided and the potential risks and costs of amending the Remissions Policy, the Committee agreed that the existing Policy should remain in place.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Whilst reducing concessions entitlements for leisure is regrettable, the Scrutiny Committee acknowledged that in the current financial climate changes to the policy were unavoidable if the necessary savings are to be made.

- 9.2 In undertaking this review, Members were mindful of several concerns:
- That savings of £50k from a review of concessions for 2012/13 needed to be found
 - The desire to protect the most vulnerable and people on benefits
 - The desire to minimise the impact of any revisions as far as possible
 - The need to minimise the risk to income streams which would jeopardise services in the long-term

- 9.3 With these concerns in mind, the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee is making the following recommendations:

9.3.1 To remove the automatic concessionary status for new over 60s except for those in receipt of Pensions Credit

Estimated potential income (saving) - £5k with potential to increase with demographic changes.

9.3.2 To introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups

Estimated potential income (saving) - £23k assuming a 25% drop in admissions.

9.3.3 To standardise and increase concessionary Health & Fitness memberships to £21.50pcm for all members

Estimated potential income (savings) - £14k

9.3.4 To remove concessions on golf for all groups

Estimated potential income (savings) - £5k

9.3.5 That the existing Arthog Remissions Policy is retained.

- 9.4 The total estimated potential income (savings) from the combined recommendations is £47k. This falls just short of the required £50k savings, but the Committee felt there was sufficient scope within the recommendations to exceed the estimates (for example on the removal of the new over 60s concessions) and from other on-going efforts to generate additional income.

- 9.5 An Equalities Impact Assessment of the recommended options will be carried out and reported back to the Scrutiny Committee.

10. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out on the

recommended options.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report.

12. LEGAL COMMENT

As stated in the report, the provision of leisure services is a non statutory function. Any decision in respect of concessions should be reasonable and balanced. An Equalities Impact Assessment will inform Members of any equalities issues that need to be considered. As with any decision made by Members in respect of Council policy, there is the potential for such a decision to be challenged by way of Judicial Review; however, as long as Members have made a reasonable decision based on all relevant facts then any challenge should be capable of being successfully defended.

13. LINKS WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The recommendations link to the priority to make the required level of budget savings in 2012/13, and to protect leisure services over the long-term for the health and well being benefit of residents.

14. OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

There is a risk of loss of income resulting from lower admissions as a result of changes to the policy, but the recommendations take a cautious approach to reduce the risks as far as possible.

The review highlighted opportunities for increasing revenue streams from the promotion of new facilities, the potential growth in the new over 60s market and expansion into the corporate market.

15. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Service & Financial Planning Strategy for 2012/13 to 2014/15 was presented to Cabinet on the 22 December and is now in a consultation period with final decisions due to be taken at Council on 1st March 2012. It contains savings proposals totalling £50k in respect of additional income generated following changes to the Leisure concessions policy (as per Appendix 7 of the budget papers saving number 9). The review of concessions currently available has resulted in 4 proposed amendments to the concessions policy which will

achieve estimated additional income of £47k. Clearly this will meet the majority of the £50k savings target and it is anticipated that the shortfall will be met through further additional income.

The calculation of savings generated from changes to the concessions policy contains assumptions around the impact on usage figures. Should usage fall below the levels predicted then income targets will not be achieved. This will be monitored and reported as part of financial monitoring throughout 2012/13.

MLB 16.12.11

16. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The concessions policy is borough-wide.

**Report prepared by Stephanie Jones, Scrutiny Group Specialist, Tel:
01952 383114**

Appendix 1 – Options

Option	Estimated Potential Income (Saving)	Comments	Risk
<p>Remove automatic concessionary status for over 60's.</p> <p>Over 60's entitled to Pension Credit would still qualify for concessions.</p>	<p>Swimming income £14k based upon 25% drop off rate.</p> <p>Health & Fitness £7k based upon (£21 pcm)</p> <p>Other activities inc Golf £5k</p> <p>Future additional income from new users £5k</p>	<p>Insufficient income generation to meet savings target</p> <p>Participation from over 60's is likely to be disproportionately affected.</p>	Med
<p>Remove automatic concessionary status for new over 60's.</p> <p>Over 60's entitled to Pension Credit would still qualify for concessions.</p>	£5k, potential to increase given demographic profile	<p>Limits impact on existing users.</p> <p>Minimises risk to existing usage and income.</p> <p>Addresses existing policy concerns.</p>	Low
Remove swimming concessions altogether	£25k based upon 75% drop in attendances	<p>Doesn't reflect policies of other Councils.</p> <p>Participation from disadvantaged groups is likely to be disproportionately affected.</p>	High
Introduce a half price charge swimming charge for all concessionary groups	£25k based upon 50% reduction	<p>More closely reflects concessionary policies of other authorities.</p> <p>Participation from disadvantaged groups is likely may be disproportionately affected.</p>	Med/High
Introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups	£23k based upon 25% drop off	<p>Level of concession remains comparatively high.</p> <p>Participation rates likely to be less affected.</p>	Low/Med

Remove concessions on swimming lessons, currently 15%	£6k	Level of savings low given potential impact.	Med
Standardise concessionary Health & Fitness memberships to £21.50pcm.	£14k	<p>Increased cost reflects additional benefits.</p> <p>Provides consistent approach. Still reflects good value.</p> <p>Increase will affect some of our longest standing customers.</p>	Low
Remove concessions on Golf for all groups	£5k	The option exists for regular players to take out a Direct Debit option which offers value for money.	Low

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 26 JANUARY 2012

**RESPONSE TO THE CO-OPERATIVE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
REVIEW OF LEISURE CONCESSIONS**

REPORT OF: CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE & WELLBEING

(PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1 Following a review of the current leisure concessions scheme and respective charges in partnership with the Co-Operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee it is proposed to:

- Remove the automatic concessionary status for new over 60s except for those in receipt of Pensions Credit;
- Introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups however retain free swimming for children and young people aged 16 and under.
- Standardise and increase concessionary Health & Fitness membership to £21.50pcm for all members;
- Remove concessions on golf for all groups.
- Retain the existing Arthog Remissions Policy

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet agree the response to the Co-Operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

2.2 That the revised policy and new charges be implemented from April 1st 2012.

3 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	Health and Wellbeing
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Customers of different ages Telford & Wrekin residents over 60 with a Flex card are currently entitled to concessionary status regardless of their financial

		<p>circumstances. From April 2012 any new over 60 Flex card applicants will be required to prove entitlement to Pension Credit in order to a benefit from concessionary status. Existing Flex card holders aged over 60 will continue to be entitled to concessionary status but subject to review in 2014.</p> <p>Customers with a disability Disabled Flex card holders will still benefit from concessionary status,</p> <p>Customers on low income Financially disadvantaged groups will still benefit from concessionary status, however, along with other concessionary groups the introduction of or increasing of the level of charges may result in a reduction in usage.</p>
TARGET DATE	The revised policy and new charges would be implemented from April 1 st 2012.	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p>The proposed Service & Financial Planning Strategy for 2012/13 to 2014/15 was presented to Cabinet on the 22 December and is now in a consultation period with final decisions due to be taken at Council on 1st March 2012. It contains savings proposals totalling £50k in respect of additional income generated following changes to the Leisure concessions policy (as per Appendix 7 of the budget papers saving number 9). The review of concessions has resulted in 4 proposed amendments to the concessions policy which will achieve estimated additional income of £47k. Clearly this will meet the majority of the £50k savings target and it is anticipated that the shortfall will be met through further additional income.</p> <p>The calculation of savings generated from changes to the concessions policy contains assumptions around the impact on usage figures. Should usage fall below the levels predicted then income targets will not be achieved. This will be monitored and reported as part of financial monitoring throughout 2012/13.</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	No	<p>The provision of leisure services is a non statutory function. Any decision in respect of concessions should be reasonable and balanced. An Equalities Impact Assessment will inform Members of any equality Issues that need to be considered. As with any decision made by Members in respect of Council policy, there is the potential for such a decision to be challenged by way of Judicial Review; however, as long as Members have made a reasonable decision based on all relevant facts then any challenge should be capable of being successfully defended.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNIT	Yes	The removal of or reduction in the level of concessions may impact upon the use of facilities and therefore physical activity levels amongst affected groups.

IES		
IMPACT ON WARD		Borough wide impact.

(PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4 INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Council remains committed to encouraging residents to maintain a healthy lifestyle and it is recognised that physical activity plays an essential part in keeping people healthy. As such any decision that may potentially impact upon current physical activity levels is one that needs careful consideration.
- 4.2 Benchmarking carried out in respect of the current Council Leisure Concessions policy supports the notion that the current scheme is comparatively generous particularly in relation to the inclusion of free swimming for concessionary groups.
- 4.3 A key consideration in coming to the recommendations as detailed in Appendix 1 was that of trying to deliver the required amount of savings through additional income, whilst attempting to minimise the impact upon community physical activity levels.
- 4.4 A further key consideration was that of ensuring that future concessions are targeted at those with the most genuine need.
- 4.5 In addition to the concessions scheme the Council also provides targeted interventions, such as 'Tackle Your Health' to increase and support physical activity opportunities. Most of these schemes are funded externally either through grant funding or are commissioned by the Primary Care Trust.
- 4.6 The Council will continue to work with partners to identify and provide further sport and physical activity opportunities within the community and Leisure Services, through existing delegated authority we will utilise 'special offers' to incentivise customers in accordance with business need. The use of special offers and further use of Direct Debit opportunities will ensure that services remain accessible, sustainable and continue to provide value for money.
- 4.7 It is considered that the proposed changes will ensure that the level of concessions remains comparatively generous, protect existing users aged over 60, and deliver the required level of savings with a relatively low projected reduction in attendances and activity levels.
- 4.8 A further review including an evaluation of impact and level of additional income achieved is to be undertaken in 12 months time.

Report prepared by Stuart Davidson, Leisure Service Delivery Manager
Telephone: 01952 382601

Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Report

Scrutiny Committee: Co-operative & Communities		Cabinet Member: Cllr. Arnold England	
Report: Leisure Concessions Review		Response prepared by (name and title):	
Lead Scrutiny Member: Cllr. Angela McClements		Date of Cabinet meeting: 26th January 2012	
Lead Scrutiny Officer: Stephanie Jones/Tracy Clarke			
Scrutiny Recommendation	Response and summary of action being taken to implement, or reason for rejection	Date by which action will be taken	Person responsible for action (name and title)
To remove the automatic concessionary status for new over 60s except for those in receipt of Pensions Credit.	Recommendation accepted. Public information relating to the concessions policy will be updated.	1 st April 2012	Stuart Davidson Leisure Service Delivery Manager
To introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups.	Recommendation accepted. Charge to be introduced as part of annual review.	1 st April 2012	Stuart Davidson Leisure Service Delivery Manager
To standardise and increase concessionary Health & Fitness membership to £21.50pcm for	Recommendation accepted. All affected customers will be written to. Charge to be	1 st April 2012	Stuart Davidson

all members.	introduced as part of annual review.	1 st April 2012	Leisure Service Delivery Manager
To remove concessions on golf for all groups.	Recommendation accepted. Revised charges Charge to be introduced as part of annual review.	1 st April 2012	Leisure Service Delivery Manager
That the existing Arthog Remissions Policy is retained.	Recommendation accepted.	Ongoing	Leisure Service Delivery Manager

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This Report seeks Cabinet approval to work co-operatively with Brookside residents, public sector partners, the third sector and businesses to facilitate the physical regeneration of Brookside Local Centre. Brookside is Telford & Wrekin Council’s co-operative pilot ward and the Council is committed to working closely with residents to deliver major improvements across the estate.
- 1.2 The initial focus on the Local Centre responds to residents concerns as demonstrated by the 2008 Resident Survey and subsequent public engagement since May 2011. The timetable proposed will see a focus over the next few months on developing proposals with the community and stakeholders prior to preparing the design. To address some immediate term community concerns a number of urgent actions will be delivered in the Local Centre, in advance of the main scheme. These will be informed by and agreed with the Community. The Council is currently consulting on its draft Budget Strategy which sets out a range of savings and investment proposals including the proposed investment in Brookside. The feedback from this consultation will be used to inform the Council’s final Budget Strategy and the investment in Brookside.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to undertake a public consultation working directly with the Brookside Community coordinated through the Brookside Co-operative Pilot Steering Group to fully develop a proposed scheme for the regeneration of Brookside Local Centre (“the Scheme”)
- 2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Property & ICT in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnership to take all steps necessary to deliver the “Urgent Actions” for Brookside Local Centre subject to being in accordance with the Council’s Budget Strategy following Budget Consultation
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes that a final report will be brought to Cabinet confirming design proposals and providing a budget update following the Public Consultation, design development and final approval of the Council’s Budget Strategy and that Cabinet recommends that Council approves the necessary capital and revenue estimates as detailed in the report

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	<i>Housing, Regeneration & Prosperity</i>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	<i>Residents of Brookside</i>
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	<i>Consultation and design: February - September 2012</i> <i>Tender & Contractor Appointment: November 2012</i> <i>Start on site: January 2013</i> <i>Contract completion: April 2014</i>	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<i>The proposed capital programme includes £6.15m in respect of improvements to Brookside. Following the results of the consultation the final scheme will be costed and phased and the revenue impact of the scheme has been built into the proposed budget for 2013/14.</i>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<i>The Council has the power to carry out the recommendations contained within this report and ongoing legal advice will be provided.</i>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	<i>See ‘risk and opportunities’ below.</i>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	<i>The proposals are within the Brookside Ward.</i>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 Brookside Local Centre is located approximately 2 miles south of Telford Town Centre. It is accessed via two cul-de-sacs, Bembridge and Burford from the perimeter road of Brookside Avenue. There are a number of footpaths that cross through and around the Local Centre.
- 4.2 The Local Centre comprises of a supermarket, three retail units (comprising of a chip shop, Wrekin Housing Trust (WHT) Office and a Hairdresser's Salon) a Community Centre and a Youth Service Building. These facilities are owned and managed by Telford & Wrekin Council.
- 4.3 The Council carried out a survey of Brookside residents in 2008. The key issues from the survey were:
- 96% of respondents agreed that the Local Centre needed to be improved – new shops and better facilities for young people were the two main priorities
 - 64% of respondents were dissatisfied with the local environment – better maintained public spaces and removal of fly tipping were the key priorities
 - Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live has fallen since 2000 with satisfaction levels lowest in relation to issues of crime and anti-social behaviour
- 4.4 Brookside Local Centre has been constructed in the form of a dark covered square of inward facing shops and community facilities. The layout is poor with the public spaces around the centre requiring investment and the Centre is set away from main roads and through routes making access difficult. Photographs attached at Appendix 1 indicate the poor quality of the existing environment.
- 4.5 Separate to the main development is a Youth Centre Building which is one of the best attended Youth Clubs in the Borough. The Youth Centre Building is a very poor quality building. The Centre is surrounded on three sides by flats that are a mixture of social rented and leasehold flats with the WHT being the predominant landlord.
- 4.6 Brookside is the Council's co-operative pilot ward and the Council wishes to work closely with residents to deliver major improvements across the estate. In keeping with this commitment a scheme for the redevelopment of the Local Centre will be drawn up in consultation with residents and stakeholders in early 2012. The Council will work with residents to design a scheme that will address the poor layout and accessibility of the Centre, as well as the quality of existing buildings such as the youth and community provision that will secure the long term sustainability of the area.
- 4.7 In order to inform the budget planning process, the Council has drawn on experience of other recent Regeneration Schemes where similar issues had to be addressed. On this basis the budget has made allowance for the following concept proposals:
- Activities (community, retail and social) could be grouped together in one area in order to create a proper focus and heart for the centre of Brookside. The grouping of facilities could be around an area of high quality public realm and facilitate the upgrading of Community and Youth facilities in the Local Centre.
 - Accessibility could be improved by creating a through route which will improve the viability of the centre and creation of high quality public spaces
 - Other developments surrounding the Local Centre could further improve the public spaces

Way Forward

- 4.8 The next step will be to discuss and agree with residents how best to consult and closely involve them in the development of the scheme. It is proposed that consultation and resident involvement be discussed initially with the Brookside Co-operative Pilot Steering Group. This Steering Group, established in 2011, is made up of key stakeholders and most importantly includes representatives from the Brookside Improvement Group (B.I.G) which was formed by residents to support the Council in responding to the issues highlighted in the 2008 Survey. This group of resident volunteers have already taken a proactive lead in a number of Regeneration Projects across the estate and their role will be key in establishing an effective structure for consultation and engagement with residents on physical proposals.

- 4.9 The Local Centre scheme will need to fulfil the requirements and aspirations of the community and will need to be commercially viable. On the basis of the findings of the resident survey and issues already raised via the Steering Group and B.I.G. it is anticipated that this will include a particular focus on:
- The design and usage of the Community Centre, addressing concerns with the existing Youth Building and increasing community usage of the Centre
 - The detailed design and layout of any the new public realm and open space areas
 - The viability of a road link to further improve connections across the estate and make the Centre sustainable in the long term
- 4.10 Once the concept proposals have been developed and agreed, there is potential for a number of task groups involving B.I.G. and other community stakeholders to be established to develop the detail of the scheme. If this approach is supported by residents these groups could then work closely with Council Officers from a number of service areas including Youth Services, Community Services, Environmental & Leisure Services, Property & ICT to develop the physical regeneration plans and also consider and engage with related social regeneration opportunities. Recent regeneration in the centre of both Woodside and Sutton Hill could be used to provide ideas and examples of what can be achieved.

Social Regeneration

- 4.11 The physical regeneration of Brookside is just one aspect of the work being carried out by the Brookside Co-operative Pilot Steering Group. The Group has identified a number of opportunities and challenges in relation to improving outcomes for residents in Brookside. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010 indicates that 43% of Brookside's population live in areas ranked in the 10% most deprived nationally. Breaking this data down further shows that the higher levels and concentrations of deprivation are located at the centre of the ward. There are a range of opportunities that provide a platform for the social regeneration of the area and although the Local Centre is currently of poor quality, with some improvement, resources such as the Community Centre will provide an opportunity to build the capacity of the community.
- 4.12 There is a growing interest amongst residents in becoming involved in improving the local area, the main focus of this is currently via B.I.G who continue to grow and develop as a resident's group. When the co-operative pilot was launched as part of the local 'Brookside Big Bang' event a number of residents came forward as volunteers to work on a number of local projects. The physical regeneration of the Local Centre will provide an opportunity to further engage residents and to encourage greater involvement and ownership by the community in local resources such as the community and youth centres. The physical regeneration work may also offer opportunities for employment and training for local people and these will be explored through the procurement process.
- 4.13 The physical regeneration of the centre will be complemented by the wider work of the Co-operative Pilot Steering Group, which is exploring a range of interventions to improve outcomes for residents. This includes a focus on employment, skills and training, supporting families with complex needs and improving health outcomes. In December a workshop was held with a number of residents and front line officers from a range of agencies that work in Brookside. The purpose of the workshop was to identify some of the actions that would contribute to improving outcomes across the issues identified. The close relationship between the delivery of the physical and social regeneration of Brookside is crucial to bringing about sustainable changes within the area.

Urgent Action

- 4.14 The early actions for the pilot have focused upon responding to some of the issues that had been raised through the previous survey and through subsequent engagement activity, some of which was carried out directly by B.I.G as part of their own work. The Steering Group worked with partners to develop a 'quick win' action plan for Brookside. This plan identifies a number of environmental and social issues around the Local Centre that are of particular concern to residents. A number of environmental improvements have already been made and work has commenced on developing a new range of activities to be delivered from the Community Centre. It is proposed to establish a user group to continue to develop this area of work which will also inform improvements that may be proposed to the Centre as part of the physical regeneration. Community Support Officers have also had an increased presence around the Local Centre in order to engage with residents and to understand their community safety concerns.

- 4.15 An allowance has been made within the physical regeneration budget for some of the urgent actions relating to the environmental improvements in the Local Centre to be brought forward in advance of a main scheme. Most significantly, allowance has been made for the removal from the Centre of a long section of wall (known by residents as 'the perch') which has become a gathering place and a focus for anti-social behaviour. Allowance has also been made for some landscaping works following removal of this wall, to be designed in consultation with the community.

Draft Timetable

- 4.16 The draft timetable includes:
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Consultation, Design & Planning: | February - September 2012 |
| Contractor Appointment: | November 2012 |
| Start on Site: | January 2013 |
| Contract Completion: | April 2014 |
- 4.17 Following the completion of the consultation, the design will be finalised and following a further Report to Cabinet, planning approval will be sought and a tender invited for the necessary work.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Financial/Value for Money Impact

- 5.1 The proposed Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2014/15 includes £6.155m in respect of improvements to Brookside. Further details based on concept proposals are outlined in the Brookside Report to be assessed within the Cabinet Agenda of 26 January 2012.
- 5.2 Details of the final scheme and phasing of spend will be worked up following results of the budget and community consultation. Financial support will be given throughout the process and further reports will be brought forward as necessary.

Risks and Opportunities

- 5.3 There are significant opportunities for community engagement and empowerment and as a stimulus to social regeneration.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

**Report prepared by Katherine Kynaston, Housing & Development Planning Manager
01952 384021**

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

CABINET – 26 JANUARY 2012

CO-OPERATIVE COUNCIL – 6 MONTHS ON

REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Members on the steps towards becoming a Co-operative Council and to set out a proposed programme of work to further develop and embed co-operative working across the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Cabinet approves the proposed work programme set out in Section 5 of this report; and**
- 2.2 **Cabinet delegates authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for the Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, to take all steps necessary or appropriate to implement the work programme set out in section 5 of this report and to deliver the proposed Adopter Programme as set out at Appendix 2.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council has made a clear commitment to become a Co-operative Council. We were the first Council in the West Midlands to make this commitment and we are founder members of the Co-operative Council Network (www.councils.coop), which includes 17 councils and opposition groups. The network meets regularly to share best practice and ideas. Since declaring ourselves as a Co-operative Council, Stoke on Trent City Council has declared itself as a Co-operative Council, with interest also being expressed from councillors in other West Midlands councils.
- 3.2 Being a Co-operative Council is about working together with our residents, partners and other local organisations to collectively deliver the best we can with the resources available. It also involves encouraging and enabling residents and customers of the Council to be more than passive recipients of services, be active in shaping the future, making decisions and working with the council to provide best value for tax payers and service users.
- 3.3 To achieve this, we are focused on building a new partnership between local people and the Council where power and responsibility are more balanced. We also want the Council to use this principle when working with the private sector, Parish and Town Councils, other public bodies and agencies and third sector organisations.

- 3.4 An initial programme of work was agreed by Cabinet on 26 July 2011. Section 4 summarises progress to date. Our first step to becoming a Co-operative Council has been to deliver a range of Early Adopter projects that put co-operative working into practice. These are tangible first steps, where in a relatively short period of time in a tough economic environment and reducing council budgets, the adopters provide examples of a co-operative council in action.
- 3.5 Our other main priority has been to establish two Commissions; the Co-operative Commission involving community and business leaders and residents, and an internal Employee Commission. By establishing these Commissions, we are recognising that the Council does not have all the solutions to all of the issues within the Council and that we need to involve others in developing our approach to becoming a Co-operative Council. All political groups within the Council were offered a place on the external Co-operative Council.
- 3.6 The ethos of the internal Employee Commission is that it is open to all and is employee-led, offering a new way for employees to get involved in shaping their own organisation. This opportunity has been well-received with over 80 employees joining the Commission so far.
- 3.7 In November 2011, Cabinet approved a senior management and organisational review, which described how we will become more co-operative by:
- Bringing more public services together so that people get what they need at the right place and the right time;
 - Involving local people and our employees more in planning and running services; and
 - As a Council, supporting our community better and encouraging people to do more to help their own communities.
- 3.8 This report also highlighted the need to have a clear sense of the way that we want to be as an organisation, as well as what we want to achieve. We are currently linking in with members of the Co-operative Commission who are developing a set of co-operative values that they would like to see adopted by the Council and promoted across the Borough. We will clearly be informed by this work but our initial ideas about the values the Council should be aiming for include:
- Open, fair, honest, decisive and accountable;
 - Treating people with dignity and respect;
 - Collaborative – across the Council and the Borough;
 - Meaning and doing what we say;
 - Being innovative and supporting managed risk-taking;
 - Empowering;
 - Inclusive, approachable and friendly;
 - Communicating, consulting and listening;

- Always conscious that we are responsible for public money; and
- Promoting the need for a healthy work-life balance.

3.9 Six months on, we now want to take stock of what has been achieved to date and set out a proposed way forward. The work programme in Section 5 supports the vision set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy for Telford & Wrekin to be a 'successful, prosperous and healthy community which offers a good quality of life for the people of Telford & Wrekin' and the Council has had regard to the Secretary of State's guidance regarding Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 in developing the proposals in this report.

4. PROGRESS UPDATE

4.1 Early Adopter Programme

4.1.1 Our first step to becoming a Co-operative Council was to identify a number of practical Early Adopter projects to put co-operative working into action. Appendix 1 summarises progress to date.

4.1.2 Achievements include:

- Working co-operatively with the Primary Care Trust, we have launched a Health Hub at Civic Offices First Point so that First Point customers can now also access a range of health services;
- Working co-operatively with TCAT, we have opened a new Employability Centre at Meeting Point House offering a full programme of training and advice sessions to help young people and adults back into employment, education and training;
- In Brookside, a pilot ward for co-operative working, we are working alongside local residents, partners, members and the Parish Council to deal with some immediate issues in this area, such as improving street lighting and an environmental clean-up involving Community Payback;
- Over 3,000 people have taken part in an extensive programme of community engagement and the results of this have been used to develop a new vision and priorities for the Borough and to inform the Council's budget strategy;
- A new package of flexible employment options for employees has been launched that will benefit both the Council and employees;
- A new Schools Learning Partnership has been launched to help improve educational attainment. The Partnership is working co-operatively with the Council to develop school to school support, including development of each of the subjects in the curriculum, staff training opportunities and leadership ;

- We have taken the first steps to bringing Dawley Town Hall back into community use by completing an initial feasibility study and securing a commitment from a number of partners to being involved in the future management of the Town Hall;
- We have launched 'Your Money, Your Projects'. A pot of money totalling £54,000 has been allocated to this project and our 54 ward members have each been allocated £1000. 'Your Money, Your Projects' encourages much greater engagement between ward members and local residents about how money is spent than under previous schemes. Residents have put forward proposals for how this money could be spent and over 106 proposals have been received so far.

4.1.3 We have also launched a new residents' publication Your Voice, which will be sent to every home in the Borough quarterly. This will be used to support consultation on key Borough-wide issues, wherever possible including feedback forms, underlining the commitment as a co-operative council to consult with residents on such issues as widely as possible. The first edition for example has sought residents' views on options for Council Tax as part of the budget consultation. Your Voice is also seeking joint funding from partners further showing how the Council is working together with other organisations to achieve the best services and value for Borough.

4.2 **Co-operative Commission**

4.2.1 The Co-operative Commission was established to involve community and business leaders in developing our approach to becoming a Co-operative Council – to draw on the wide range of skills and expertise that exists in the Borough and to bring a fresh, independent and challenging perspective to how we do things.

4.2.2 The first Assembly of the Co-operative Commission met on 15 September 2011 with over 60 people attending. Its primary objective was to identify a small number of themes against which working groups of Commissioners would develop recommendations to improve and establish new ways of working based on co-operative principles. These recommendations will need to be legal, affordable and where appropriate 'equalities impact assessed'.

4.2.3 Commissioners were able to set their own agenda - the 5 priority themes identified were:

- Employment, skills and the economy;
- Procurement;
- Co-operative values and communication;
- Volunteering;
- Image of Telford & Wrekin.

4.2.4 Commissioners chose which of the themed groups they wished to participate in – not all Commissioners chose to participate and a number are working on more than one group. Organised and facilitated by Council officers, each of the 5 working groups have now met twice. At the first meeting, Commissioners identified the main areas to be considered and evidence they wished to explore. The second meetings have now taken place and for most groups have started to develop their recommendations.

4.2.5 We have also been working in partnership with Rights & Fairness Telford (RAFT) to establish a Commission Community Forum. The purpose of the forum is to enable residents to input their views and thoughts into the working groups and to comment on the final recommendations of the working groups. The first meeting of the Forum took place on 15 December 2011 and was attended by around 50 local residents and representatives from local groups.

4.3 **Employee Commission**

4.3.1 The first Employee Commission meeting was held on 14 October 2011. As with the Co-operative Commission, those attending set their own agenda and identified a range of interesting ideas that could help the Council to work more co-operatively. The Commission prioritised five main themes that they wanted to initially focus on. These were:

- Employee volunteering;
- Financial management;
- Internal communications and engagement;
- Social responsibility;
- Skills planning and development.

4.3.2 The Employee Commission is being led and overseen by Councillor Rae Evans. Employee working groups have been set up for each theme and are meeting regularly to discuss ideas and develop their recommendations. The full Employee Commission met for a second time on 12 December 2011 so that all involved could get an update on progress and emerging recommendations from a representative of each of the five working groups.

5. **WAY FORWARD - PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME**

5.1 The proposed future Co-operative Council Programme includes 6 main work-streams:

- Adopter Programme;
- Co-operative Commission;
- Employee Commission;
- Working in partnership;

- Strengthening relationships with the community;
- Making the change.

5.2 **Adopter Programme (lead: Policy Manager)**

5.2.1 Building on the practical co-operative projects that have already been delivered or that are in progress, we are proposing to continue with a second phase Adopter Programme. This will include a number of ongoing Early Adopter projects along with a combination of new reviews and projects.

5.2.2 The Adopter Programme will be developed based on the following principles:

- There will be at least one review or project in each service area (based on proposed new service areas);
- Reviews/projects will be clearly linked to the Council's emerging priorities;
- Reviews/projects will take account of the Council's service and financial planning process and budget position.

5.2.3 This second phase of work will include a number of short, targeted reviews that will consider:

- What need/demand is there for the service?
- Who should run/provide the service? (to include a review of a range of different service delivery options)
- If the Council is the best option, how could we involve others more in planning and running the service?

5.2.4 Appendix 2 summarises the initial proposals for inclusion in the Adopter Programme along with proposed next steps.

5.3 **Co-operative Commission (lead: Delivery and Planning Manager)**

5.3.1 Working groups have been asked to finalise their recommendations by w/c 13 February 2012. The full Assembly of the Co-operative Commission will meet on 2 March 2012 to consider the working group reports and agree the recommendations to be made to Cabinet.

5.3.2 The Commission's recommendations will be reviewed by the Cabinet on 29 March 2012, who will decide which recommendations can be implemented immediately and which require a further period of consultation. There will be a progress report to Cabinet in May 2012 with a report to full Council in June 2012. Once agreed, recommendations will be incorporated into the Council Plan.

5.4 Employee Commission (lead: Organisational Improvement Manager)

5.4.1 The next step for the Employee Commission will be to carry out a co-ordinated consultation exercise. This will be via an employee survey, which will be launched on 17 January 2012, to seek the views of all employees to help the working groups develop their recommendations.

5.4.2 The working groups will consider the feedback from the employee survey and where appropriate update their proposals, which will then be reviewed by the Employee Commission in February 2012 before being reported to Cabinet on 29 March 2012. We will then need to develop an implementation plan for recommendations that are taken forward.

5.5 Working in Partnership (lead: Delivery and Planning Manager)

5.5.1 To support the development of the Co-operative Council, we will work with other organisations in the Borough to refocus partnership working. A proposed new partnership framework is shown in Appendix 3. The framework includes four main elements:

- Boards – will develop the strategic direction and a high-level plan for a defined agenda, such as Children and Families or Environment and Transport;
- Delivery Functions – will take forward the priority actions identified by the Boards' plans. These will include 'Co-operative Neighbourhood Delivery Groups' that will work at a community level and 'Task Forces' that will be set up to address specific problems, such as families with complex needs;
- Engagement Partnerships & Forums (including the Co-operative Commission) – will seek the views of key partners to inform priorities and plans;
- Local Strategic Partnership Executive – will ensure that partnership working is fit for purpose, review the work of the Boards and in particular will oversee the delivery of the Community Strategy (the short to medium-term delivery plan for the Borough's vision).

5.5.2 Key aspects of this framework are already in place including the LSP Executive, Children & Families Board and Health & Wellbeing Board albeit at different stages of development. We expect to have completed this review and implementation by the end of 2012. Exact timing will be dependent on agreement of strategic priorities as part of Service & Financial Planning and the development of a new Vision.

5.6 **Strengthening Relationships with the Community (lead: Community Engagement Equalities and Action Manager)**

- 5.6.1 To help strengthen our relationship with local people and organisations, we will develop a new overarching Settlement in conjunction with the community. The Settlement will be based on the co-operative values that are currently being developed by the Co-operative Commission (to be considered by Cabinet on 29 March 2012). The Settlement will set out what the Council will do and what we would like the community to do to put the agreed co-operative values into practice.
- 5.6.2 Our three existing agreements with the community, the Parish Charter, the Customer Charter and the Voluntary Sector Compact, will be updated to reflect the over-arching Settlement once agreed. These agreements will set out in greater detail how we will work with Town and Parish Councils, service users and the Voluntary and Community Sector.
- 5.6.3 A particular priority will be to incorporate a number of new service pledges into an updated 'Customer Charter'. Rather than the Council deciding which pledges to make, we will develop the pledges alongside local people, based on the services that are most important to them. This approach will also mean that pledges will be two-way – clearly setting out what both the Council and the community can and will do to deliver the pledge.
- 5.6.4 It is proposed to develop this piece of work with input from the Employee Commission's Social Responsibility sub-group. The Community Engagement and Equalities Manager will work with the group to scope this piece of work.

5.7 **Making the Change (leads: various)**

- 5.7.1 Becoming a Co-operative Council and delivering the other work-streams will depend on changing the culture and working in new ways across all services. Key to making the change will be:
- **Communication (leads: Communications Manager/Organisational Improvement Manager)** – communication is a key area that we need to continue to focus on. Internally, we have run a number of open meetings for employees and managers and put regular updates in the daily updates and e-news for employees and members. We have also set up a Co-operative Council Intranet page, email address and a Share-point collaborative working site where members of the Employee Commission and the five working groups can exchange information. Quick links have been added to the Members Information Point (MIP) to ensure that members can access this information from their Share-point site.

We have also set up dedicated Co-operative Council pages on the Council's Website, incorporated Co-operative Council into the Council's visual identity and actively promoted the Co-operative Commission and Early Adopter projects as they are delivered.

However, it is clear that Co-operative Council is a challenging concept to communicate. We therefore plan to continue to step-up the communication campaign as more schemes begin to give residents, employees and other groups a better understanding of what being a Co-operative Council means, the difference it makes and how they can get involved. This will include:

- Meeting with individual teams to talk directly to employees about how 'Co-operative Council' applies to them and their service (rolling programme, prioritising front-line services that have completed their restructures);
 - Raising residents' awareness through an in-depth feature on the Co-operative Council in the Council's new magazine (January 2012);
 - Promoting the work and findings of the Employee and Co-operative Commissions as they begin to report back and telling local people and employees how they can have their say on the Commissions' proposals (March 2012);
 - Running a co-operative awards event to coincide with 'Co-operative Fortnight' to celebrate 2012 being the International Year of Co-operatives – an opportunity to promote our co-operative values and promote examples of co-operative working across the Borough (June 2012);
 - Continuing to provide regular updates for residents, employees, members (using the Members Information Point) and other groups and promoting Co-operative Council events internally by including them in the Corporate Diary (ongoing).
-
- **Skills development (lead: various)** - workforce planning sessions have been taking place with Service Delivery Areas following restructuring over the last six months to establish their workforce needs for the future and how restructuring has changed these. The Workforce Strategy will be based on these findings together with the needs of being a Co-operative Council. A draft workforce strategy will be prepared by the end of March 2012 and will be kept under review to ensure that emerging themes and priorities are addressed. We will also launch a 'Be Your Own Boss' scheme for employees, particularly those at risk of redundancy, who are interested in setting up their own business (with an emphasis on social enterprise). The scheme will include an initial business start-up course followed by ongoing support from a trained business advisor.
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- **Making co-operative working the 'day job' (lead: Delivery and Planning Manager)** – whilst the Adopter Programme will include at least one major review or initiative in each service area, it is also important

that those working in services that are not directly involved in this are also starting to think about how they can work more co-operatively on a day to day, smaller-scale basis, for example how could employees and service users be more involved in planning the service? To support this, we will ask all services to identify how they could work more co-operatively as part of the service planning process. We will also ask the Employee Commission to consider how employees can be involved in this, for example by having co-operative champions within each service area.

- **Leadership (lead: Managing Director)** – the Managing Director will be the Programme Sponsor. The lead Cabinet member will be the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Co-operative Council and Partnerships, supported by Councillor Rae Evans who will continue to lead and oversee the Employee Commission.

As set out in the recent organisational review, we are also proposing to bring together a dedicated, central Co-operative Council Delivery Unit. The unit will incorporate 4 teams, all of which have key roles to play in the transition to becoming a Co-operative Council and in the longer-term, a Co-operative Borough. The teams are:

- Delivery & Planning – focusing on developing a new vision and priorities, overseeing service planning and performance management, gathering intelligence and developing partnership working, including through the Co-operative Commission ;
- Community Engagement, Equality & Action – focusing on community engagement and involvement, developing relationships and co-operative working with Town and Parish Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector, promoting volunteering and civic participation and carrying out targeted work with local communities to help ‘narrow the gap’, including through the Poverty Taskforce;
- Communications – focusing on proactive, priority-led communication and marketing of the Council and its services;
- Policy – focusing on developing our approach to becoming a Co-operative Council/Borough, overall project management and co-ordination of Co-operative Council work-streams and supporting policy/strategy development Council-wide, particularly the Service & Financial Planning Strategy.

The managers of these teams will report directly to the Managing Director to reflect the need for co-operative working to be embedded right across the Council.

As well as keeping an overview of progress against the work programme, the Senior Management Team will play a lead role in shaping how our approach should be further developed. To inform this thinking, we are

proposing to run a 'co-operative future' event (May 2012) for managers, team leaders, and members of the Employee Commission to come along and share their ideas with SMT about how they would like to see us move forward as a Co-operative Council.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Community Impact	Yes	A Commission Community Forum has been set up by Rights & Fairness Telford (RAFT) which will play a key role in helping to assess the impact of the Co-operative Commission's recommendations on different groups within the community. The development of the Co-operative Settlement and initiatives within the Adopter Programme will be subject to equalities impact assessments as they are developed.
Financial & Value for Money Impact	Yes	The proposed Service & Financial Planning Strategy for 2012/13 to 2014/15 was presented to Cabinet on the 22 December and is now in a consultation period with final decisions due to be taken at Council on 1 st March 2012. The strategy is set in the context of severe financial pressures facing the Council, including significant reductions in Central Government funding, service pressures due to the difficult economic climate which is having an impact on the community, in particular demands in Adults and Children's social care, and uncertainties around future funding levels with changes to both the local government finance system and the Welfare system being on the horizon. A clear priority identified in the strategy is being a Co-operative Council, working with residents, partners and local organisations to collectively deliver services to the area within the resources available. This report highlights six main work streams which will result in recommendations to further develop co-operative working. There is a small co-operative council budget of £15k, intended to be used to pump-prime monies for community projects which was approved by Full Council as part of the 100 day budget in November 2011. Given the financial constraints, the scope for any additional investment is very limited and it is important that any financial implications are identified and considered when individual recommendations are made prior to approval. The Co-operative Council delivery programme also includes undertaking a number of reviews which will explore whether services can be delivered more

		cost effectively which may deliver savings in the future.
Legal Issues	Yes	Under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of any one or more of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area. In deciding whether to exercise this power the Council must have regard to its sustainable community strategy and also have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State regarding the use of the power. Paragraph 3.9 of this report sets out how the Council has had regard to both the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Secretary of State's guidance in developing the proposals in this report. Legal Services will be involved throughout the implementation of these proposals and all necessary legal arrangements such as property documentation or partnership agreements will be put in place.
Other impacts, risks and opportunities	Yes	The ongoing programme of work will be evaluated to ensure risks are identified and managed and any associated opportunities are maximised. Mainstreaming the cooperative values and ways of working throughout the authority amongst officers and members remains key to becoming a Co-operative Council.
Environmental	Yes	Actions already underway as part of the Brookside pilot are delivering environmental improvements including a programme of work to clean up the estate and the planned programme of shrub bed rationalisation. The planned investment into physical regeneration of Brookside local centre will deliver further environmental improvements addressing residents concerns. Other initiatives will be assessed for environmental impacts as the proposals are developed
Impact on specific wards	Yes	Borough-wide impact.

7. PREVIOUS MINUTES

7.1 Minute number CB23-26 July 2011

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

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APPENDIX 1 - EARLY ADOPTER PROGRAMME (summary of performance)

Some key achievements:

- Working with the PCT, a health hub has been launched at Civic Offices First Point for customers to access a range of health services in one location.
- Opened a Telford Employability Centre with a full programme of activities, including work clubs, benefits advice and employability qualifications.
- Launched 'Your Money, Your Projects'. A pot of money totalling £54,000 has been allocated to this project and our 54 ward members have each been allocated £1000. Residents have put forward proposals for how this money could be spent and these have been evaluated, with over 106 proposals received to date. Some examples of schemes that will benefit from this include:
 - Churncote Environment Improvement Group in Stirchley (where money will be used to fund lasting landscaping improvements to the local environment in Churncote, while enhancing the area's visual outlook);
 - Children's activities across the Priorslee ward (to include multi-sports, street sports, holiday activities and dance mats for the after school club);
 - Lawley and Overdale Parish (where money will support the creation of a history trail highlighting 23 local historic sites across a three mile circular walk).
- Work has begun on a co-operative working pilot in Brookside – an action plan has been developed and some of the actions that have been delivered or commenced so far include a 'Big Bang' event to launch the project, improvements to street lighting, a programme of work to clean up the estate (being delivered by Community Payback) and funding bids are being prepared to develop a Family Support Group and Substance Misuse mentoring project.
- An initial feasibility study has been produced and a number of partners have made a commitment to being involved in the future management of the Dawley Town Hall.
- Carried out an extensive range of consultation to inform the Council's budget and a new vision and priorities for the Borough over the summer. Over 3000 people took part. This included a budget review survey which closed on 30th September, and the launch of a Suggestion Box and Budget Calculator on the Council's website. Face to face engagement also took place at locations across the borough making it easier for residents to take part and have their say.
- A 'cost challenge' pilot was carried out in the Corporate Core to involve employees in identifying additional savings. A number of suggestions were put forward and when considered by managers an additional £3050 worth of savings were put forward. Feedback from participants was very positive – they thought it was a worthwhile exercise to take part in as it was informative and helped them better understand the savings process.

- We have put in place a package of new flexible employment options that will benefit both the Council and employees. These include the chance to reduce working hours, purchase additional annual leave, take unpaid leave or sabbatical or change working hours. All options are subject to service needs and cover.
- Community Panel – following a promotional campaign, 317 new members have been recruited, with more targeted recruitment in process.
- An online consultation portal has been launched on the Council's website for customers to directly access information on consultation. Users will be able to register for updates on consultations, view findings from previous consultations and find out what the Council has done as a result of public consultation.
- National Volunteers Week – ran a campaign to create awareness and promote the benefits of becoming a volunteer, also showing our appreciation to those that are already getting involved. Since then we have set up Volunteer Steering Group that will develop proposals for implementing an employee volunteer scheme at the Council.
- A new Schools Learning Partnership was launched at the end of September – open to all academies, community and trust schools in the secondary sector. The partnership will establish operational groups consisting of head-teachers, alongside the Local Authority, to establish and develop school to school support, including development of each of the subjects in the curriculum, staff training opportunities and leadership.
- A 'Co-operative Youth Offer' has been developed to improve opportunities for all young people in the borough, particularly those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable. The provision will help them to develop their social and personal skills whilst building relationships and exploring issues affecting them.

a) Joining up Services

Early Adopter	Target Delivery Date	Lead Officer	Progress	Comments
In partnership with the Primary Care Trust, launch a 'Health Hub' in the Civic Offices First Point to enable First Point customers to access a range of health services and council services in one location	Phase 1 – End of July 2011	Andrew Meredith	Complete	The health hub was set up earlier this year as a pilot scheme funded by the PCT. Full lifestyle screenings are available to our customers and in some cases referrals are then made to the lifestyle risk management service where further medical advice is provided. We have been advised that the funding for this project has now been extended for another year (until March 2013).
Set up a direct email account and single direct line to Wrekin Housing Trust for Telford & Wrekin Councillors so that they can report issues on behalf of residents in their wards	End of July 2011	Andrew Meredith	In progress	Following the launch in September, we are now liaising with Councillors to assess how well this system is working.
Establish Telford Employability Partnership (Council, Telford College of Arts and Technology, Job Centre+ and other training providers supporting unemployed and at risk of redundancy) to provide information, advice and support to help young people and adults into employment, education and training, including outreach in the most disadvantaged communities	Launch 31 October 2011	Corin Crane	In progress	The Telford Employability Centre opened on 21 November at Meeting Point House. A full programme of activities are provided by the Council, TCAT and Next Step, including work clubs, benefits advice and employability qualifications. The programme also includes intergenerational sessions to work with different generations of the same family to try to break the cycle of unemployment. Some new courses are planned to start in February and we will hold an open day for potential learners on 31 January 2012. We are planning a more formal launch of the scheme in February 2012.

b) Involving the community in planning services

Early Adopter	Target Delivery Date	Lead Officer	Progress	Comments
Launch a new approach to the Community Fund with a greater role for ward councillors and Parish Councils	New approach agreed 21 June 2011	Rachael Jones	Complete	<p>Your Money, Your Projects was launched on 22 July following a briefing session with ward members. A pot of £54,000 has been allocated and our 54 ward members have each been allocated £1000.</p> <p>The proposals have been evaluated, with over 106 proposals being received from Ward Members to date.</p>
Set up a facility on the Council's Website for people to submit their savings suggestions (Suggestion Box)	1 July 2011	Fliss Mercer	Complete	<p>A new online tool was launched on the Council's website in July to allow local people to submit ideas on how they think the Council could save money or do things differently and more efficiently.</p> <p>This was promoted throughout the summer and at engagement events across the borough – to date we have received over 700 suggestions. These are now being assessed by Heads of Service to determine whether they could be adopted by the Council or not and we are working on a feedback campaign that will respond to all the suggestions indicating either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the ideas are being explored with a view to implementing them; • That the ideas have been implemented, or • That we cannot implement the ideas (stating the reasons for this) <p>We started to publish responses in December 2011 and we will continue to do this over the next few months.</p>

Involve people in budget development through a new online 'budget calculator'	Launch 27 July 2011	Fliss Mercer	Complete	<p>The Budget Calculator went live on schedule and was an online tool that allowed people to have a go at balancing the Council's budget against their own priorities, seeing the impact these changes had on Council Tax levels and possible changes to service delivery.</p> <p>This was a much more detailed consultation, requiring more time and thought to complete and was available to use until mid November.</p> <p>In total we received approximately 100 responses and the key messages have been reported to our Senior Management Team and Cabinet Members to consider when developing the Council's Budget Strategy for 12/13.</p>
Re-launch the Community Panel and run a campaign to recruit new members	Impact to be reviewed Sept 11	Andy Challenor	Complete	<p>Since April we have recruited an additional 317 members to the Community Panel, and have begun to monitor additional characteristics to ensure the panel is representative of the local population.</p> <p>This has led to a more targeted recruitment exercise to ensure that membership is as representative as possible.</p>
Carry out a programme of engagement with the whole community to develop a new vision and set of priorities for the Borough	Draft Vision by mid Nov 2011	Andy Challenor	Complete	<p>The Shaping the Future consultation programme was completed at the end of September 2011. Approximately 3,000 people took part in the consultation and we received valuable feedback from residents. Cabinet are currently considering and using the results of the consultation to develop a new vision and priorities for the borough.</p>
Develop a single access point for all engagement activities so that people can go to one place to find out how they can get involved	Portal populated/ promoted by Nov 11	Andy Challenor	Complete	<p>The consultation portal is now live on the Council's website and will continue to develop. Users are able to directly access any appropriate consultation online and will also be able to register for consultation updates. Importantly, findings of consultation will also be published which will include what the Council has done as a result of public feedback.</p>

c) Supporting employees, local people and organisations to organise and run services differently

Early Adopter	Target Delivery Date	Lead Officer	Progress	Comments
<p>Pilot ward for co-operative service delivery (Brookside) – building upon previous community engagement within the area to work with local residents, community groups, the Parish Council, and ward members to review Council-run facilities and services. The aim will be to identify if these services could be redesigned or delivered differently to better meet the needs of local people</p>	<p>Agree action plan – early October 2011</p>	<p>Rachael Jones</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Initial work on the pilot involved identifying the key services, assets, facilities and partnerships within the area. A detailed needs analysis has also been completed along with a Ward Profile. This information has been used to identify some key opportunities and challenges within the area.</p> <p>A steering group comprising of a range of agencies, Elected Members, Residents and the Parish Council has been established, and the group has developed a '60 day' action plan to address some of the initial issues identified. Actions that have been delivered or commenced so far include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brookside Big Bang event to launch the project – residents were asked how they could be involved in the project and a number volunteers put themselves forward to be involved in community projects including a family group, toy library and community garden - Improvements to street lighting - Programme of work to clean up the estate being delivered by Community Payback - Consultation on the planned programme of shrub bed rationalisation - Funding bids being prepared to develop a Family Support Group and Substance Misuse mentoring project - Dedicated 'Brookside Community Notice Board' Facebook page has been established - A 'clean up' day of action is also being planned for early 2012 (date tba – February) <p>An officer and residents workshop took place in December to agree further actions for the project. These have been used to support the development of the longer term delivery plan for the area (see</p>

				Appendix 2)
Leisure, Culture & Libraries – we will test out a range of ways of giving the Leisure, Culture & Library Service greater freedoms and flexibilities in how they do things, such as the ability to make faster decisions and to pursue new income generation opportunities. All employees will be encouraged to get involved by suggesting and helping to implement new ways of working. Whilst services will continue to be provided by the Council, they will effectively be run at ‘arms-length’.	Agree governance arrangements and service objectives /targets by the end of Sept 2011	Angie Astley	In progress	<p>Following a workshop with service managers three main areas of freedoms were identified - Marketing, Human Resources and Finance.</p> <p>Service Level agreements are being drafted to describe how leisure will operate with these new freedoms and how we will work to further reduce the councils contribution into Leisure as a result (see also Appendix 2)</p>
Dawley Town Hall - in response to feedback from local residents about the future of Dawley Town Hall, we will work with a number of partners to assess the feasibility of bringing the facility back into community use	Feasibility study – end July 2011	Rachael Jones	Complete (Feasibility Study)	An initial feasibility study has been produced and a number of partners have made a commitment to being involved in the future management of the Dawley Town Hall as a community facility. It is proposed that Dawley Regeneration Partnership will oversee the future management of Dawley Town Hall. The business plan is currently being developed along with a funding application to the Lottery. A clean up of the outside of the Town Hall is planned with volunteers (see also Appendix 2).
Schools Learning Partnership - we will work with head-teachers to set up an educational partnership, open to all academies, community and trust schools in the secondary sector. The partnership will establish operational groups consisting of head-teachers, alongside the Local Authority, to establish and develop school to school support, including development of each of the subjects in the curriculum, staff training opportunities and leadership.	September 2011	Jim Collins	Complete	<p>Learning Partnership is now established and the scheduled meetings have gone ahead as planned, with a calendar in place for the whole of this academic year (term time). The partnership currently includes 10 mainstream schools, 2 special schools and 1 Pupil Referral Unit.</p> <p>Head Teachers have also met with the Schools’ Co-operative Society to explore the option of the Learning Partnership becoming a Co-operative Trust possibly by Summer 2012.</p>

Small Business Loans Fund – we will work with local business people to establish a small business loans fund, based on co-operative principles.	End October 2011 –	Corin Crane	Behind schedule	There has been limited interest from local businesses in contributing to a co-operative small business loans fund; instead businesses are working together to develop a ‘business angels’ model (investment and ‘mentoring’ in return for a stake in the business), which the Council will help to promote but will not contribute to financially. We are now considering alternative ways of developing a small business loans fund and options will be prepared for members to consider (see Appendix 2).
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d) Enabling local people and organisations to play a more active role in their communities

Early Adopter	Target Delivery Date	Lead Officer	Progress	Comments
Run a campaign to promote the benefits of volunteering as part of National Volunteers week	Delivered 1-7 June 2011	Wendy Tonge	Complete	<p>Following the promotional campaign as part of National Volunteers Week in June, both the Co-operative and Employee Commissions have identified ‘volunteering’ as a priority area of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Co-operative Commission has set up a Volunteer sub group that will look at how local organisations can make best use of volunteers, working across the borough. The Employee Commission has set up a ‘Volunteer Steering Group’ (sub group) that will develop practical, legal and costed proposals for an employee volunteer scheme at the Council
<p>Encourage employees, local people and organisations to become Fair-trade champions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal campaign to promote Fair-trade vending machines Fair-trade event in a school with link to global Fair-trade school programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> end of Aug 11 Oct 2011 	Harj Rayet	Behind schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters are now on display for internal promotion at Civic Offices and Darby House Agreed with Redhill School to run a Fair-trade event, including a live webcast with a school in a cocoa growing community in Ghana (date to be agreed). We are now looking at how we can work with other organisations to actively promote and support Fair-trade across the borough (see Appendix 2)

Review and develop a package of support for voluntary-run youth clubs, review charging policy for use of Council buildings by youth clubs and develop a package of support for other voluntary groups who include young people and are not supported by national governing bodies	October 2011	Jas Bedesha	Complete	A revised 'Co-operative Youth Offer' has been developed to improve opportunities for all young people in the borough, particularly those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable. The provision will help them to develop their social and personal skills through informal learning and positive activities, whilst building relationships and exploring issues that affect them. The Youth Offer sets out how the Council will work with local neighbourhoods and volunteers to deliver this provision and promote what is on offer.
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e) Developing a new partnership with employees

Early Adopter	Target Delivery Date	Lead Officer	Progress	Comments
Put in place a package of new flexible employment options that will benefit both the Council and employees. Prepared and currently in consultation with Trade Unions	Sept 2011	John Harris	Complete	A package of flexible employment options has been offered to all employees with effect from 30 September. These include the chance to reduce working hours, purchase additional annual leave, take unpaid leave or sabbatical or change working hours. All options are subject to service needs and cover. Options are open to employees but are not being imposed upon them. At end of October 2011, 38 people have expressed an interest so far although this figure is expected to increase as other employees are currently in discussions with their managers.
Pilot new ways to involve employees in identifying non-staff savings	Pilot 15 July 2011 (corporate core)	Fliss Mercer	Complete	<p>A 'Cost Challenge Pilot' took place with a small group of employee volunteers in July and a number of savings suggestions were put forward. These were then considered by managers and resulted in an additional £3050 worth of savings being put forward.</p> <p>Participants were asked to evaluate the session and the results have been positive. It was thought to be a worthwhile exercise as it was informative and helped staff better understand the savings process, also giving them the opportunity to get involved and make a contribution.</p> <p>We are now looking at how this exercise could be rolled out more widely.</p>

Investigate pilot scheme for employees to report issues/problems they see when out on site	TBC	Fliss Mercer	Complete	An initial meeting took place with employees to see how best this could develop. It was agreed that a separate reporting tool was not necessary and it was agreed that we should instead promote existing reporting tools to employees. This has now been carried out.
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Appendix 2 - Adopter Programme Initial Proposals

Proposal:	Link to priorities:	Lead Service Area(s):	Next Step(s)
Review of Meals on Wheels Service – to explore alternative forms of provision with the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable children and adults are protected - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Care & Support	Scope and commence review by end June 2012
Review of directly provided Adult Care Services (following implementation of Phase 2 restructure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable children and adults protected - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Care & Support	Scope and commence review by end June 2012
Develop Family Connect, a new single point of contact that will allow members of the public, schools and other professionals to access services for children and families via one user-friendly telephone number at flexible times. There will also be a Family Connect one-stop shop reception area for face to face enquiries. Enquiries to Family Connect will be prioritised and directed using a 'triage' system to ensure that people access the right service at the right time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved 'life-chances for all' - Vulnerable children and adults protected - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Children's Safeguarding/Family & Cohesion services/Education & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event to encourage partners to get involved in Family Connect (February 2012) - Develop and agree with partners how each type of enquiry will be dealt with (to start w/c 16 January 2012) - Recruit staff for Family Connect (start January 2012)
Continue to work with partners to bring Dawley Town Hall back into community use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved 'life-chances' for all - People feeling safe and proud of where they live - A Co-operative Council working with the 	Co-operative Council Service Delivery Unit	Report to Cabinet (23 February 2012)

	community		
Brookside – continue co-operative working pilot and develop proposals for physical and social regeneration of Brookside	- All	Co-operative Council Service Delivery Unit	See separate Cabinet report (26 January 2012)
Develop proposals for a Borough-wide Telford Loyalty Card for residents, offering discounts on Council services and with other local organisations and businesses. The Loyalty Card will help to encourage residents to use the services and businesses in their local areas.	- A Co-operative Council working with the community - A growing local economy to create jobs	Co-operative Council Service Delivery Unit	Develop costed proposals for Cabinet to consider (29 March 2012)
Increase the number of apprenticeships and internships offered by the Council and encourage other organisations within the Borough to offer more apprenticeships and internships	- Improved 'life-chances' for all - A growing local economy to create jobs - A Co-operative Council working with the community	Customer & People Services	Develop costed proposals for Cabinet to consider (29 March 2012)
Investigate providing free and filtered wireless Internet access to members of the public's personal devices when they are in the vicinity of a publicly accessible Council-owned building or site in priority areas (first phase – Southwater and Brookside)	- A growing local economy to support jobs - Improved 'life-chances' for all - A Co-operative Council working with the community	Customer & People Services	Carry out site surveys and develop costed proposals for Southwater and Brookside for Cabinet to consider (29 March 2012)
Develop a new Community Hub in Southwater as the first point of call for all Council and a range of partner services to include a new library	- Improved 'life-chances' for all - Vulnerable children and adults protected	Customer & People Services	Hub to open summer 2014

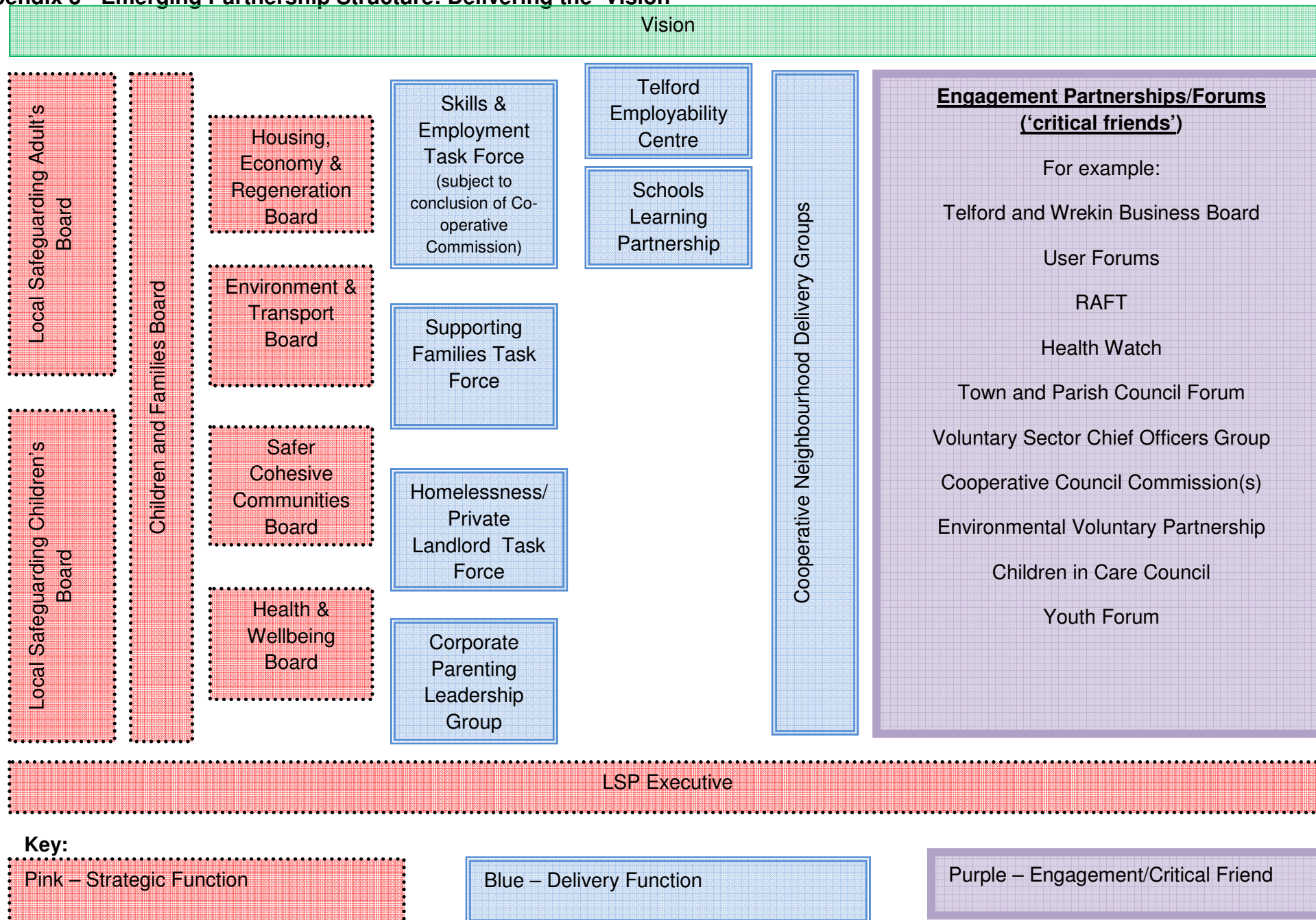
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A growing local economy to support jobs - A Co-operative Council working with the community 		
Review of Markets – to look at whether alternative service delivery options could offer additional benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A growing local economy to create jobs - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Development, Business & Housing	Scope and commence review by end June 2012
Launch a pilot co-operative small business loans fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A growing local economy to create jobs - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Development, Business & Housing	Launch – end of March 2012
Hold an event to promote Fair-trade in the Borough and to agree how the Council can work with others to promote Fair-trade in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Development, Business & Housing	Event to be held during Fair-trade Fortnight (5 March 2012)
Develop a 'First Point for Business' in conjunction with local businesses – to provide a single point of contact and more co-ordinated support for businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A growing local economy to support jobs - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Development, Business & Housing/Customer & People Services	Scope draft level of service as basis for engagement with businesses (April 2012)
Review of Life-Long Learning Provision – to look at opportunities to join up statutory school-age education and life-long learning and to consider alternative service delivery options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved 'life-chances' for all - A growing local economy to support jobs - A Co-operative Council 	Education & Skills	Scope and commence review by end May 2012

	working with the community		
Review of Oakengates Theatre with the aim of improving the efficiency of the organisation and delivery of services and involving local people more in the planning and running of the Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved 'life-chances' for all - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Education & Skills	Scope and commence review by end September 2012
Promote joint investment opportunities with Town and Parish Councils to encourage environmental and cultural improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean and well-maintained neighbourhoods and streets - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Environment & Leisure Services/ Customer & People Services	Follow-up expressions of interest from Town and Parish Councils and promote successful joint investment projects to Town and Parish Councils (ongoing)
Leisure – implement freedoms and flexibilities agreed in Phase 1 (see Appendix 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved 'life-chances' for all - A Co-operative Council working with the community 	Environment & Leisure Services	Service level agreements finalised and freedoms and flexibilities to take effect from April 2012
Pilot project in Dawley to give the community more involvement in the running of Dawley Park, to include devolving the additional works budget (£4,200 spend over and above the basic maintenance budget)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean and well-maintained neighbourhoods and streets - A Co-operative Council working with the community - People feeling safe and proud of where they live 	Environment & Leisure Services	Meet with local residents, Parish Council and other partners to co-ordinate activity and identify priority projects for the park based on funding available (Meeting – 23 January 2012)
Work in partnership with organisations in the Ironbridge area to provide activities and support packages for Children in Care or on the edge of care and their	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved 'life-chances' for all - Vulnerable children and adults are protected 	Family & Cohesion Services	Start to provide activities and support packages, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residential stays and activities through the Youth Hostel

families. This will provide targeted support for children and families with complex needs.	- A Co-operative Council working with the community		Association; - Volunteering opportunities at the Blists Hill Volunteer Centre; - Activities at the Coalport Employability Centre
Develop 'early intervention' support to prevent homelessness and work with private landlords to improve the quality and management of private rented accommodation	- Housing choices to meet the needs of all - A Co-operative Council working with the community	Family & Cohesion Services	Meet with Telford & Wrekin Landlord Forum (January 2012) and develop costed proposals for 'early intervention' support for members to consider (February 2012)
Pilot a 'Community Ambassador' scheme where volunteers provide early intervention peer support to families in the very early stages of difficulties	- Vulnerable children and adults protected - A Co-operative Council working with the community	Family & Cohesion Services	Agree scope of pilot scheme by end March 2012
Review of Employment Services (to include payroll, PSE support, recruitment and contract administration and employment checks) with the aim of improving cost-effectiveness whilst maintaining an accurate and good quality service. The review will look at alternative service delivery options, opportunities for process efficiencies and opportunities to provide affordable Employment Services to local voluntary and community organisations, including schools/academies.	- A Co-operative Council working with the community	Finance, Audit & Information Governance	Scope and commence review by end April 2012
Investigate Council's Legal Services providing free legal advice sessions for	- A Co-operative Council working with the	Law, Democracy & Public Protection	Prepare detailed, costed proposal for members to

local community and voluntary organisations	community		consider by end March 2012
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Appendix 3 - Emerging Partnership Structure: Delivering the 'Vision'



CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 26th January, 2012 at 5.00 p.m. at the Civic Offices, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 1st FEBRUARY, 2012

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 6th FEBRUARY, 2012)

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A.J. Eade (Conservative Group Leader) and Councillor W.L. Tomlinson (Lib Dem/Independent Group Leader)

CB-84 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd December 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CB-85 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor C.F. Smith

CB-86 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CB-87 SCRUTINY REPORT – LEISURE CONCESSIONS AND ARTHOG REMISSIONS POLICY REVIEW

Key Decision identified as **Scrutiny Committee Reports** in the Forward Plan published on 14th December 2011.

Councillor A. McClements, Chairman of the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee, presented the Committee's report on the review of the leisure services concessions policy. The Cabinet Member for Leisure & Wellbeing and senior officers had put the suggestion forward, and the Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be engaged at an early stage of the policy review.

The review was driven by the need to make non-staff savings of around £400k for Leisure, of which £50k was proposed from a review of concessionary charges from 2012/13. In carrying out their review, the Committee met with the Cabinet Member and the Head of Service/Service Delivery Manager. The Committee considered the existing concessions policy and appraised the options for revising the schemes to generate the required level of additional income. A wide range of options were considered across all age groups and activities. Members considered the potential impact on service users, and the

financial risks associated with each option, as well as new ideas for income generation. Members had also considered the Remissions Policy for Arthog Outdoor Education Centre following a complaint that it was unfair that pupils were either required to pay the full course fee or nothing. The recommendations arising from the review were:

- To remove the automatic concessionary status for new over 60s except for those in receipt of Pensions Credit
- To introduce a flat rate £1 charge for swimming for all concessionary groups
- To standardise and increase concessionary Health & Fitness memberships to £21.50 pcm for all members
- To remove concessions on golf for all groups
- To retain the existing Arthog Remissions Policy

The Committee felt that their recommendations were fair, and that those in genuine need would continue to benefit from the leisure concessions scheme. Even with these changes, Telford & Wrekin's concessions policy would still be relatively generous compared with other authorities.

Councillor A.R.H. England, Cabinet Member for Leisure & Wellbeing, presented the Cabinet's response to the Scrutiny Committee's report and recommendations. He thanked the Committee for their report and officers for the modelling work that had been done on the various savings options. Cabinet was accepting all the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations, and the proposed actions and timescales to implement them were detailed in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report. The revised leisure concessions scheme would be operational from 1 April 2012.

RESOLVED –

- that the response to the Scrutiny Committee's report, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;**
- that the revised policy and new charges be implemented from 1 April 2012.**

CB-88 REGENERATION OF BROOKSIDE CENTRE

Key Decision identified as **Proposed Brookside Regeneration** in the Forward Plan published on 14th December 2011.

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, presented the report of the Head of Property and ICT, which set out proposals to work co-operatively with Brookside residents, public sector partners, the third sector and businesses to facilitate the physical regeneration of Brookside Local Centre.

Brookside was the Council's co-operative pilot ward and, while the initial focus was on the Local Centre, the Council was committed to working closely with residents to deliver major improvements across the estate. It was proposed that consultation and resident involvement would be discussed initially with

the Brookside Co-operative Pilot Steering Group, which was made up of key stakeholders and representatives from the residents-led Brookside Improvement Group. Residents had previously identified a number of environmental and social issues around the Local Centre that were of particular concern, and a “quick win” action plan had been developed to urgently address these concerns ahead of the main scheme. This would represent a statement of intent to residents and partners of the Council’s commitment.

The Local Centre scheme would need to fulfil the requirements and aspirations of the community and would need to be commercially viable. It was anticipated that the scheme would focus on the design and usage of the Community Centre (including the existing Youth Building), the detailed design and layout of any new public realm and open space areas, and the viability of a road link to further improve connections across the estate and make the Centre sustainable in the long term. The Council was currently consulting on its draft Budget strategy which included the proposed investment in Brookside. The feedback from this consultation would be used to inform the Council’s final Budget Strategy and the investment in Brookside.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Officers who had worked on this project, as well as the local ward members and Stirchley & Brookside Parish Council.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that a public consultation be undertaken to fully develop a proposed scheme for the regeneration of Brookside Local Centre, working directly with the Brookside community through the Brookside Co-operative Pilot Steering Group;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Property & ICT, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, to take all steps necessary to deliver the “urgent actions” for Brookside Local Centre, subject to being in accordance with the Council’s Budget Strategy following budget consultation;**
- (c) that a further report be brought to Cabinet to confirm the design proposals and to provide a budget update following the public consultation and approval of the Council’s Budget Strategy.**

CB - 89 CO-OPERATIVE COUNCIL – 6 MONTHS ON

Non-Key Decision

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, presented the report of the Managing Director, which updated Members on the steps towards becoming a Co-operative Council and to set out a proposed programme of work to further develop and embed co-operative working across the Council.

The Council had made a clear commitment to become a Co-operative Council, which was about working together with residents, partners and other local organisations to collectively deliver the best services within the resources available. The initial programme of work was agreed by Cabinet in July 2011, and progress to date on the delivery of the Early Adopter projects was detailed in the report. These included the Brookside ward initiatives, the 'Your Money, Your Projects' scheme to allocate £1000 to each ward member, the launch of a new Schools Learning Partnership, establishment of a Health Hub at Civic Offices First Point (in conjunction with the Primary Care Trust), and taking steps to bring Dawley Town Hall back into community use. The other main priority had been the establishment of the Co-operative Commission involving community and business leaders and residents, and an internal Employee Commission. The Cabinet Member thanked the members of the Commissions, who were working voluntarily to find solutions to the issues facing local people at a time of tough economic conditions and reducing council budgets.

In terms of the way forward, the report set out the six main work-streams –

- continuation of the Adopter Programme;
- Cabinet to receive the recommendations of the Co-operative Commission;
- Employee Commission to carry out a co-ordinated consultation exercise;
- Working in Partnership – a proposed new partnership framework was appended to the report;
- Strengthening relationships with the Community – including developing a new overarching Settlement in conjunction with the community;
- Making the Change – changing the culture and working in new ways

Members welcomed the report, and highlighted some of the initiatives that were already demonstrating the benefits of co-operative working. Councillor A. Eade (Conservative Group Leader) expressed disappointment that the proposed Small Loans Business Fund had not been established. The Cabinet Member advised that there had been limited interest from local businesses in contributing to a co-operative small business loans fund. However, businesses were now working together to develop a 'business angels' model, which the Council would help to promote but would not contribute to financially. Cabinet Members also expressed the hope that all political groups on the Council would get involved on the Co-operative Commission.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the proposed work programme, as set out in Section 5 of the report, be approved;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Co-operative Council and Partnerships, to take all steps necessary or appropriate to implement the work programme set out in Section 5 of the report, and to deliver the proposed Adopter Programme as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.**

CB-90 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CB - 91 REGENERATION OF BROOKSIDE CENTRE

Key Decision identified as **Proposed Brookside Regeneration** in the Forward Plan published on 14th December 2011.

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, presented the report of the Head of Property and ICT, which followed on from the report considered earlier on the agenda. In taking forward the proposals for the regeneration of Brookside Local Centre (as resolved at minute CB-88 above), there were a number of commercial and financial implications that necessitated this particular report being considered as an exempt item of business.

The report set out the Development Concept for Brookside Local Centre, including details of land and property ownership, along with proposed acquisition and disposal of land, buildings and third party interests required to deliver the scheme. The proposed capital programme 2012/13 to 2014/15 included £6.155m in respect of improvements, and the report outlined the proposed funding and cashflow relating to the delivery of the indicative scheme for the Local Centre.

Consultation would take place with the local community on the design and planning of the scheme, after which a planning application based on the agreed design would be submitted.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Head of Property & ICT, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, to submit an application for planning permission in respect of the Scheme, following the outcome of the budget consultation;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Property & ICT, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Co-operative Council & Partnerships, to negotiate and finalise the terms for acquisition and disposal of land, buildings and third party interests required to deliver the Scheme, and to take all steps necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Scheme;
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Governance to take all steps necessary to facilitate land assembly and otherwise to deliver the Scheme, including the exercise of relevant powers of compulsory acquisition (if required) and to execute all documents

required to give effect to the recommendations in this report and the report considered earlier on the agenda;

- (d) **TO RECOMMEND to Council that the necessary capital and revenue estimates as detailed in the report be approved, subject to being in accordance with the Council's Budget Strategy following budget consultation.**

CB-92 BSF – ERCALL WOOD TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE LAND ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL

Key Decision identified as **Building Schools for the Future – Ercall Wood Land Acquisition and Disposal** in the Forward Plan published on 14th December 2011.

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, presented the report of the Head of Property & ICT, which sought approval for the acquisition, swap and disposal of land in order to facilitate the construction of a new School as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme.

The report also provided an update on the construction costs for the new Ercall Wood School, and the proposed site plan. Ercall Wood Technology College would be the 'sample' scheme for procuring from the PfS framework contract for the construction of the remaining schools in the BSF programme.

RESOLVED –

- (a) **that approval be given to (i) the acquisition of land adjacent to the existing Ercall Wood Technology College; (ii) a land swap with the Governing Body of the College; and (iii) subsequent to the construction of the new School, disposal of the School's existing playing field to generate a capital receipt to contribute to the construction of the new School;**
- (b) **that authority be delegated to the Head of Property & ICT, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Families, to agree the land acquisition, swap and sale arrangements;**
- (c) **that authority be delegated to the Head of Governance to agree and execute all necessary documentation.**

The meeting ended at 5.40 p.m.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

**Jonathan Eatough
Head of Governance
Date: 1 February 2012**

Signed:

Date: