

Open

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

6pm
Thursday, 3rd November 2016
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Members of Committee:

Chairman: Councillor H E Dyke
Vice-Chairman: Councillor M Rayner

Councillor J R Desmond
Councillor N Gale
Councillor A T Hingley
Councillor S J Walker

Councillor P Dyke
Councillor K Henderson
Councillor D Little
Councillor S J Williams

Would Members please note that, to ensure continuity in scrutiny, substitutes should only be appointed for the Scrutiny Committee in exceptional circumstances.

Information for Members of the Public:

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of “Exempt Information” for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members’ Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council’s constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI’s and ODI’s are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council’s Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

Co-opted Members

Scrutiny Committees may wish to appoint Co-Opted Members to sit on their committee in order to add value to the scrutiny process. To appoint a Co-Opted Member, a Committee must first agree to appoint either a specific person or to approach a relevant organisation to request that they put forward a suitable representative (e.g. the local Police Authority). Co-Optees are non voting by default but Committees can decide to appoint voting rights to a Co-Optee. The Co-Option of the Member will last no longer than the remainder of the municipal year.

Scrutiny Committees can at any meeting agree to terminate the Co-Option of a Co-Opted Member with immediate effect. Where an organisation is appointed to put forward a Co-Opted Member, they are able to send a substitute in exceptional circumstances, provided that they notify Democratic Services in advance. Co-Opted Members must sign up to the Members Code of Conduct before attending their first meeting, failure to sign will mean that they are unable to participate. This also applies to substitute Co-Opted Members, who will need to allow sufficient time before a meeting in order to sign the Code of Conduct.

The following will apply:

- i) The total number of voting co-opted members on any Scrutiny Committee will not exceed 25% at any one time.

- ii) The total number of voting Co-opted Members on any Review Panel will not be limited.
- iii) Those Co-opted Members with voting rights will exercise their rights in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in the constitution.

For Further information:

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information, you should contact Louisa Bright, Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Wyre Forest District Council

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 3rd November 2016

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Appointment of Substitute Members To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting.	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8 th September 2016.	7
5.	How Are We Doing? Performance Update To consider a report from the Head of Transformation and Communications which provides an update on the performance of the Council for Quarter 2 (from 1 st July to 30 th September 2016).	13
6.	Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year Review Report 2016/17 To consider a report from the Chief Financial Officer and Principal Accountant which provides a mid-year review of the Council's treasury management policies, practices and activities in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. To also consider the recommendations from the Treasury Management Review Panel from its meeting on Wednesday 2 nd November 2016 (to follow).	41

7.	<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review 2017/18</p> <p>To consider a report from the Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Manager which invites the Committee to provide recommendations to Cabinet as part of the consultation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme review for 2017/18.</p>	61
8.	<p>Report on the Worcestershire Partnership Plan</p> <p>To consider a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager on the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan.</p>	84
9.	<p>Alternative Temporary Accommodation Provision</p> <p>To consider a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager on a proposal to deliver alternative temporary accommodation provision for households who are in housing need or homeless within a Council owned empty property.</p>	122
10.	<p>Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review: Revised Local Development Scheme (Project Plan 2016 - 2019)</p> <p>To consider a report from the Interim Planning Policy Manager on the adoption of the proposed Revised Local Development Scheme 2016-19 (November 2016).</p>	129
11.	<p>Feedback from Cabinet</p> <p>To note the content of the Cabinet action list, following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 13th September 2016.</p>	154
12.	<p>Work Programme</p> <p>To review the work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy Theme, Corporate Plan Priority, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan.</p>	155
13.	<p>Press Involvement</p> <p>To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.</p>	
14.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	

15.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	
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Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

16.	<p>Industrial Units Investment Business Case</p> <p>To consider a report from the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration – North Worcestershire, on a proposal to invest in new industrial units.</p>	-
17.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER 2016 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), M Rayner (Vice-Chairman), J Baker, J R Desmond, P Dyke, N Gale, D Little, J D Smith, S J Walker and S J Williams.

Observers

Councillors: J-P Champion, S J Chambers, I Hardiman, F M Oborski MBE and J A Shaw.

OS.23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: K Henderson and A T Hingley.

OS.24 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor J Baker was a substitute for Councillor A T Hingley.
Councillor J D Smith was a substitute for Councillor K Henderson.

OS.25 Declarations of Interests by Members

Councillor J P Champion declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Agenda Item 12 as he is the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner.

OS.26 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.27 How Are We Doing? Performance Update

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Transformation and Communications which updated Members on the performance of the Council for quarter 1 (from 1st April to 30th June 2016).

The Head of Transformation and Communications led Members through the report and highlighted the excellent progress made in Income Generation and Competitive Products and Services in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5. The websites listed in the Report showed the work that has been done on the digital services agenda so that more transactions can be carried out online without the need for customers to telephone the Council.

Agenda Item No. 4

A question was asked regarding a project not on the report at Stourport Basins/Bridge Street. The Director for Economic Prosperity and Place confirmed that we are working with H2O which is the regeneration arm of the Canal and River Trust and are looking at the viability of a wholly housing scheme as it is not financially viable for a mixed use scheme.

There was also a question regarding the Public Realm Scheme in Kidderminster Town Centre and whether we would be receiving any compensation for the delay in completing this work. The Director of Economic Prosperity and Place advised that there would not be any compensation. Members also asked about the location of bus stops in this area and concerns were expressed regarding the one outside the Express and Star office and also the double yellow lines outside Barclays Bank as this is the only bank on the flat where disabled residents can park outside.

Members asked when the new Hoobrook Link Road would be opened and the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place advised that he understands it will be by the end of this month.

A Member raised a concern under Corporate Risk 9 and 10 Capacity and Reputation. When the updated WRS contract started it was noticed that there are now only 77 FTE posts compared to 162 previously. Residents had complained to the Member who raised this issue and he had defended the Officers but stated that Members need to think of the implications of further cuts in services as the Council can no longer provide the level of service the public expects.

There was also a question regarding the ICT Strategy and paperless agendas. The Head of Transformation and Communications confirmed that all Members are provided with IT equipment and training.

Agreed: The progress in performance for quarter 1 be noted.

OS.28

Annual Report on Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators 2015/16

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Financial Officer which provided a review of the treasury management activities for 2015/16, in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code). They also considered the recommendations from the Treasury Management Review Panel from its meeting on Monday 5th September 2016.

The Chief Financial Officer led Members through the report and advised them that there was lively debate at the Treasury Management Review Panel meeting. The Slides from the Training Session will be made available on the Intranet.

The Chairman of the Treasury Management Review Panel advised all Members to try and attend the next Training session as it was extremely interesting and can help when budget planning.

Agreed: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Council to:

- 1. Approve the actual 2015/16 prudential and treasury indicators in this report.**
- 2. Note the annual treasury management report for 2015/16.**

OS.29 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document – Adoption

The Committee considered a report from the Senior Planning Policy Officer which updated Members on the responses received to the Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation and presented the proposed final version of the SPD.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer led Members through the report and the three main areas of the Document which are Physical, Social and Green Infrastructure.

The Chairman of the Local Development Plan Review Panel commended the report to members and thanked colleagues who attended the meeting of the panel on 28th July. She was also very grateful to the officers as getting the document to this stage involved a tremendous amount of work.

Agreed: Endorse and recommend to Cabinet for Adoption the proposed Planning Obligations SPD as set out in Appendix 1.

OS.30 Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan Update

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager and the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer which updated Members on work to improve health and wellbeing in Wyre Forest and sought endorsement of the new Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan 2016-20.

The Strategic Housing Manager led Members through the report which showed that the health of residents of Wyre Forest continues to be of concern.

A discussion ensued and Members asked questions regarding teenage pregnancy rates which had improved and Dementia Awareness.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet that the Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan 2016-20 as attached at Appendix 1 is approved

OS.31 Climate Change Update

The Committee considered a report from the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer which provided an update on the implementation of the Wyre Forest Climate Change Action Plan 2015/16 and sought endorsement of the updated Action Plan for 2016/17.

The Principal Health and Sustainability Officer led Members through the report and highlighted activities areas that had been worked on in 2015/16. Members then discussed the Action Plan for 2016/17.

Agreed:

- **Note the progress on implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan 2015/16 (Appendix 1) and**
- **Recommend to Cabinet that the Climate Change Action Plan 2016/17 (Appendix 2) is approved.**

OS.32 Update on Work of the Home Improvement Agency

The Committee received a presentation from the Strategic Housing Services Manager on the work of the Home Improvement Agency.

Agreed: The update be noted.

OS.33 Recommendations from the S106 Monies Review Panel

The Committee received the recommendations from the S106 Monies review panel following its final meeting on Thursday 25th August 2016.

The Chairman of the S106 Monies Review Panel expressed his thanks to the Principal Committee and Member Services Officer and the Planning Officers who attended the meeting who dispelled any doubts the members had.

Agreed:

- 1. To ensure Members have the opportunity to appraise the Council's current S106 projects, an annual update from the S106 Monitoring Group and key responsible Officers be included on the Overview and Scrutiny future work programme.**
- 2. To ensure Members are fully informed about matters which affect their electoral ward, Members to be regularly updated of S106 money commitments within their wards by the key responsible Officer(s). In line with the Council's adopted No Surprises Protocol (attached at appendix 1), this will include where appropriate, the relevant Parish / Town Council via the Clerk.**

OS.34 Safer West Mercia Plan 2016 Consultation

The Committee considered the Police and Crime Commissioner's draft Safer West Mercia Plan 2016, with a view to submitting a response to the consultation which is open until 23:59 on Friday 16th September 2016.

The following was discussed and submitted to the consultation.

Response of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Safer West Mercia Plan 2016 (draft)

Putting Victims First

The Committee fully supported the new West Mercia Victims Board.

Building a more Secure West Mercia

The Committee would welcome a police presence in our more rural communities, especially when there are events happening in the area.

Concerns were raised regarding the treatment of vulnerable adults. They would like to see more mental health training for police officers.

Cllr P Dyke left the meeting at 7.58pm.

Reforming West Mercia

The Committee raised concerns about the 101 service. It has been reported that it can take a long time to get through to an operator. They felt that there was a gap in the service. If it is not an emergency then the only other option is to call 101. Sometimes people only need to log a crime for a reference number for an insurance claim, they may not need an officer response. They felt that the 101 service needed to improve and staff needed to be better trained.

Reassuring West Mercia's Communities

The Committee would like to see more visible policing. Also, they felt that there needed to be more awareness of hate crimes and how these should be reported to the Police. At the moment, they felt that not all hate crimes were being reported.

The Committee understood that the role of the PCSO was created to provide reassurance and high visibility for residents. As part of the West Mercia Plan they would ask that this post is kept for this purpose and not just become a drive-by service.

Agreed: The Executive Support Officer (Members) to draft a response on behalf of the Committee to be submitted.

OS.35 Feedback from Cabinet

Agreed: The content of the Cabinet decision list following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 12th July 2016 be noted.

OS.36 Work Programme

The Committee reviewed the work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy Theme, Corporate Plan Priority, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan. Members were asked to submit any requests for review panels.

A Member asked which Officer was attending the October meeting for the Development of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Plan and whether representatives from Wyre Forest Community Housing would be attending. The Chairman advised the Committee that they had requested Ray Brookes and Yvonne Leishman attend the meeting and this would be confirmed.

Agreed: The work programme be noted.

OS.37 Press Involvement

There were no future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.05pm.



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Alison Braithwaite, Head of Transformation and Communications

Date: Thursday 3 November 2016

Open

How Are We Doing? Performance Update

1. Summary

1.1 To update Members on the performance of the Council for Quarter 2 (from 1 July 2016 to 30 September 2016).

2. Background

2.1 Performance management is instrumental in all council activities as it helps us to keep track of how well we are performing and enables any potential issues to be identified at an early stage so remedial action can be taken. It also informs our decision making processes which underpin the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-19.

2.2 The Council has a number of processes in place to monitor our performance including:

- Corporate Plan Actions
- Corporate Risks and associated actions
- Leading Measures
- Lagging Measures

3. Progress

3.1 **Appendix 1** is an [exception report](#) for all of our purposes (People, Place, Housing, Planning, Business, Enabling).

3.2 **Appendix 2** is a detailed report of performance against our purpose ['Business'](#)

- **Support me to run a successful business**

3.3 **Appendix 3** is a detailed report of performance against our purpose ['People'](#)

- **Provide me with the information that I need**
- **Give me a Voice**
- **Help me improve my Health and Well-Being**
- **Help me with my Financial Situation**

4. Key Achievements/Issues

- 4.1 Listed in the exception report are those actions which have missed their due date. Each action has an explanatory note setting out the latest update on progress and any revised timescale being work to. It should be noted that some of these actions are large corporate projects which are dependent on a range of cross cutting factors to enable their successful completion. These actions will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis by the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure they are successfully completed as soon as possible.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the data for a number of our Business and People purposes is only collected on an annual basis, which is the reason why the last data entry may be the end of March 2016.
- 4.3 Our proactive support to businesses continues to have positive results as summarised below.
- 4.4 There continues to be a steady occupancy rate at SPACE (94%) based on the original 9 warehouse units, 3 offices, 4 storage sheds and 1 open storage yard (i.e. 17 units) of which 16 are currently occupied. More recently 6 container storage units have also been installed of which 3 are currently occupied.
- 4.5 Over the last 12 months 10 'start up' grants have been issued to new businesses with a value of £4,903. In addition, 8 'booster' grants with a value of £14,079 have been issued to existing businesses. The value of start up grants is less than the value of booster grants due to there being a smaller grant available to businesses. Grant levels have been lower than previous years as the main support programmes have closed.
- 4.6 Officers have been working with partners to develop new programmes of support and have been successful in securing a potential £1.2 million of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding to deliver support to businesses in the district. This will cover a range of support from start up and growing businesses, innovation, inward investment, energy efficiency and low carbon projects. We have also been working with our partners from the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure that the district's businesses have access to the £33 million Business Growth Programme aimed at supporting HS2 supply chain, innovation, environmental technologies and business development.
- 4.7 The most significant achievement this year for the 'Help me improve my Health and Wellbeing' purpose is the new Wyre Forest Leisure Centre on Silverwoods Way in Kidderminster, which opened its doors to the public on Wednesday 6 July. The project was completed on time and budget and will save the Council in excess of £500,000 per

annum. The centre includes a six lane 25m swimming pool, learner pool with moveable floor, 100 station fitness suite, 6 court sports hall, dance studios, climbing wall and small sided outdoor pitches. It also has a cafe with viewing areas, a double height children's adventure play area, a health suite with sauna and steam room and free parking. Further information on the Centre can be viewed here <http://www.placesforpeopleleisure.org/centres/wyre-forest-leisure-centre> By the time of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting the centre will have been officially opened on 27 October 2016 by double Olympic gold medallist Rebecca Adlington OBE.

5. Options

- 5.1 That the progress in performance for quarter 2 be noted.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The Leader of the Council.
6.2 Corporate Leadership Team.

7. Related Decisions

- 7.1 None.

8. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 8.1 Wyre Forest District Council Corporate Plan 2014 – 2019.
8.2 Wyre Forest Forward Transformation Framework 2014 – 2017.

9. Implications

- 9.1 Resources: No direct implications from this report.
9.2 Equalities: No direct implications from this report.
9.3 Partnership working: No direct implications from this report.
9.4 Human Rights: No direct implications from this report.
9.5 E-Government: No direct implications from this report.

10. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and it is considered that there are no discernible impacts on the nine protected characteristics as set out by the Equality Act 2010.

11. Wards affected

- 11.1 None.

12. Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix 1 – All purposes exception report
- 12.2 Appendix 2 – Full ‘Business Purposes’ report
- 12.3 Appendix 3 – Full ‘People Purposes’ report

13. Background Papers

- 13.1 Corporate Plan action information is available on the Council's Performance Management System, Covalent. Alternatively, reports can be requested from the Head of Transformation and Communications.

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Alison Braithwaite
Title: Head of Transformation and Communications
Contact Number: Ext. 2781
Email: alison.braithwaite@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Exception report for all purposes

Those actions that are approaching their due date or are overdue



Enabling others to do what they need to do

WFF 16/17 05	Wyre Forest House	<div style="width: 90%;"><div style="width: 90%;"></div></div> 90%	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2014	Ian Miller	All cellular offices in the Business Executive Suite are now occupied by tenants. A tenancy for the area where the Executive Support Officers used to sit has also been confirmed and will be occupied by early November. The whole of the Business Executive Suite is now let. Further works on fire alarm awaited by Thomas Vale. Working with RLB project managers on review of progress, including heating/cooling of chamber, to inform discussions with contractor.	07-Oct-2016

Improve my local area

WFF 16/17 19	Kidderminster Town Centre Public Realm Framework	<div style="width: 75%;"><div style="width: 75%;"></div></div> 75%	
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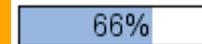
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
30-Apr-2016	Mike Parker	Works to all phases now substantially complete. Contractor has agreed final "snagging list" of minor outstanding works to be completed over forthcoming weeks, dependent upon receipt of materials and	10-Oct-2016

availability of paviour laying team. Stage 3 Safety Audit carried out on 6th October, results of which will be fed back to IBI Taylor Young (as designers) to determine any further remedial actions.

Make good development happen

WFF 16/17 16

Crown House



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
30-Sep-2016	Mike Parker	Thomas Lister & Co. appointed to undertake Viability Assessment work.	12-Sep-2016

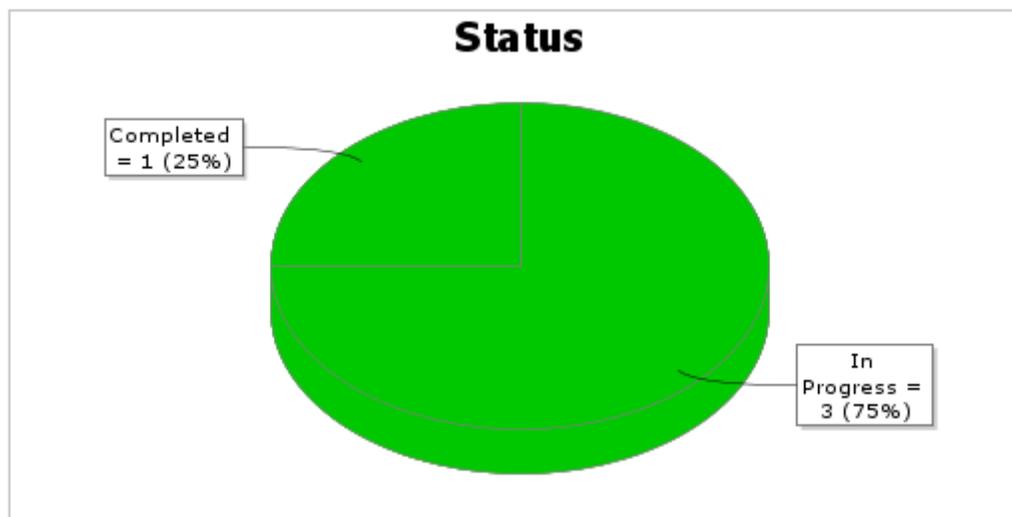
SUPPORT ME TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'support me to run a successful business'.



Actions

Listed below is the progress against our current major projects that support the delivery of our purpose of 'support me to run a successful business'



WFF 16/17 34

Vestia Employment and Skills Programme

25%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2017	Mike Parker; Dean Piper	<p>Targets for year:</p> <p>250 people receiving support from Vestia employability services</p> <p>56 people progressing into work within 6 months of receiving support</p> <p>175 people progressing into training within 6 months of receiving support</p> <p>Quarter 2: 135 people receiving support from Vestia; 11 people progressing into work within 6 months of receiving support; 57 people progressing into training within 6 months of receiving support</p>	21 Oct-2016

WFF 16/17 58

Business Rates Retention Scheme

30%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2017	Mike Parker; Tracey Southall	Commencement of the revised Worcestershire Business Rates Pool (without Malvern Hills) from April 2016. The Government has plans to reform Business Rates Retention with a view to 100% retention. The detail of this is emerging slowly but far more is needed to understand the impact on funding. The impact of the baseline reset	15-Aug-2016

planned to be effective from April 2017 is also being closely considered as this could potentially reduce future funding.

WFF 16/17 59 Apprenticeships Programme (Year 5) 50%

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2017	Mike Parker	Programme now fully committed with apprenticeships either agreed or in process of being agreed.	14-Jul-2016

Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LA048 Amount of new/extended business/commercial floorspace built as a result of the LDO

Aim to Maximise

LA048 Amount (m2) of new/extended business/commercial floorspace built as a result of the LDO

Year	Amount (m2)
2013/14	~250
2014/15	~100
2015/16	1,730

Legend: ■ Years ■ Months

Current Value

1,730

Managed By

Jonathan Elmer; Dean Piper

LA010 Total value of start up grants to businesses provided
 Aim to Maximise

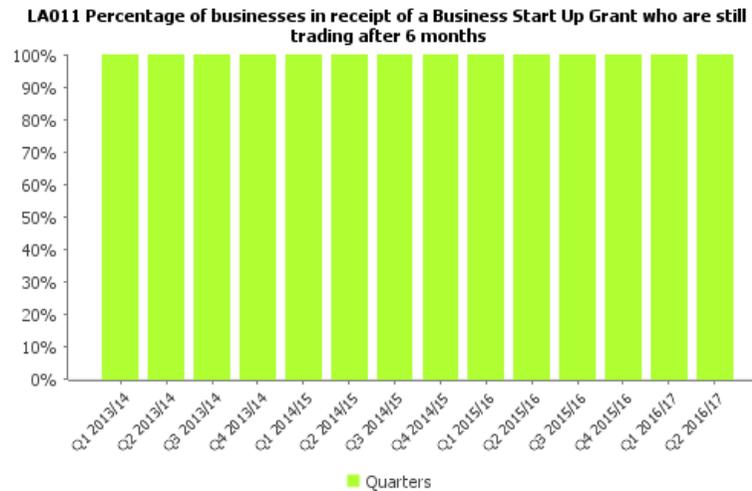


Current Value £11,389.00



Managed By Dean Piper;
 Steve Singleton

LA011 Percentage of businesses in receipt of a Business Start Up Grant who are still trading after 6 months
 Aim to Maximise

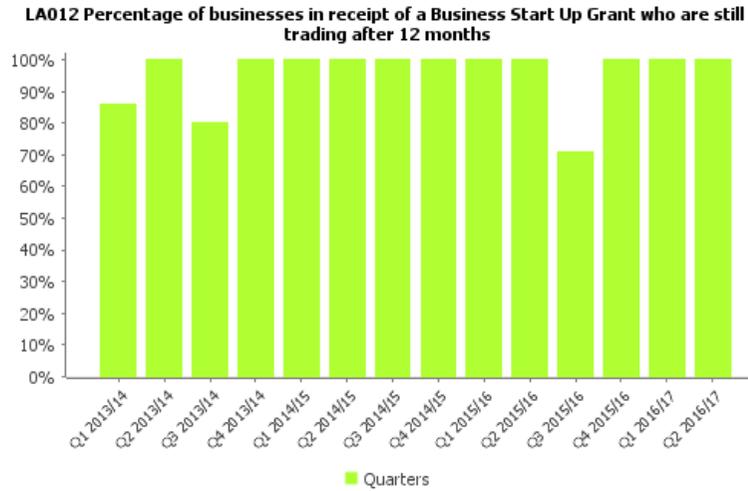


Current Value 100%



Managed By Dean Piper;
 Steve Singleton

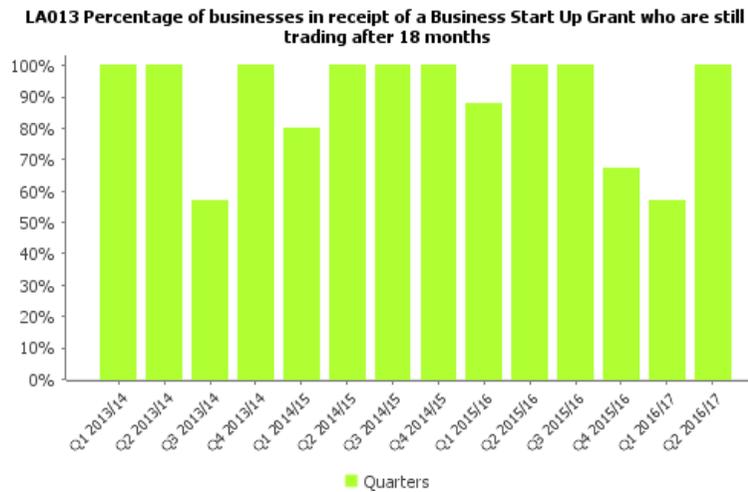
LA012 Percentage of businesses in receipt of a Business Start Up Grant who are still trading after 12 months
 Aim to Maximise



Current Value 100%

Managed By Dean Piper; Steve Singleton

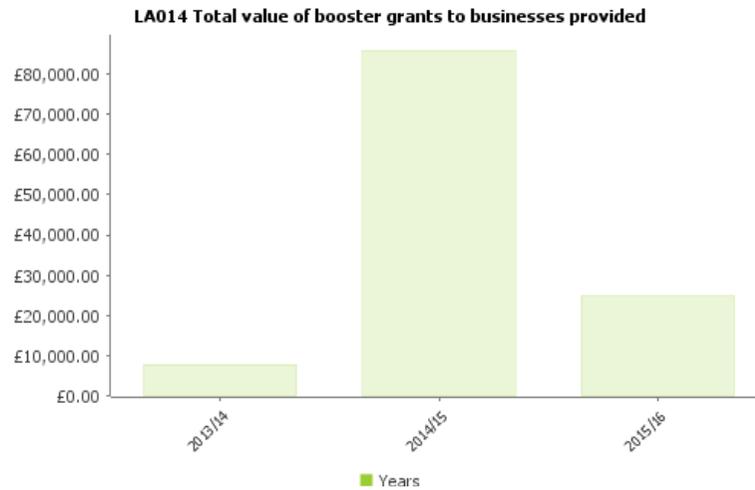
LA013 Percentage of businesses in receipt of a Business Start Up Grant who are still trading after 18 months
 Aim to Maximise



Current Value 100%

Managed By Dean Piper; Steve Singleton

LA014 Total value of booster grants to businesses provided
 Aim to Maximise

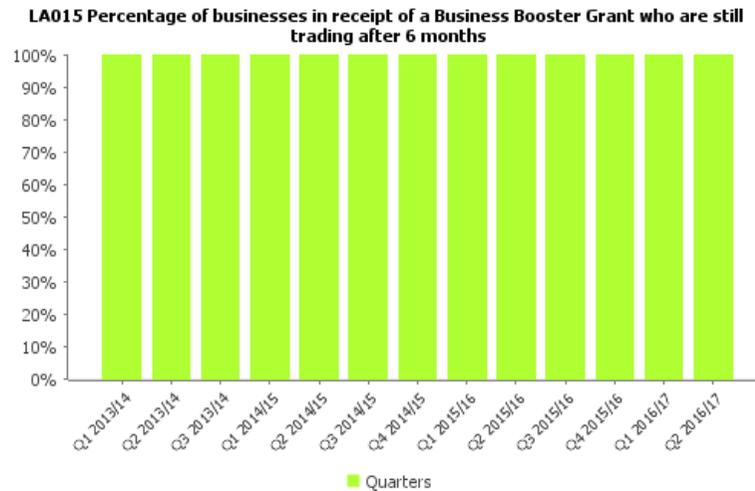


Current Value £24,914.00



Managed By Dean Piper;
 Steve Singleton

LA015 Percentage of businesses in receipt of a Business Booster Grant who are still trading after 6 months
 Aim to Maximise



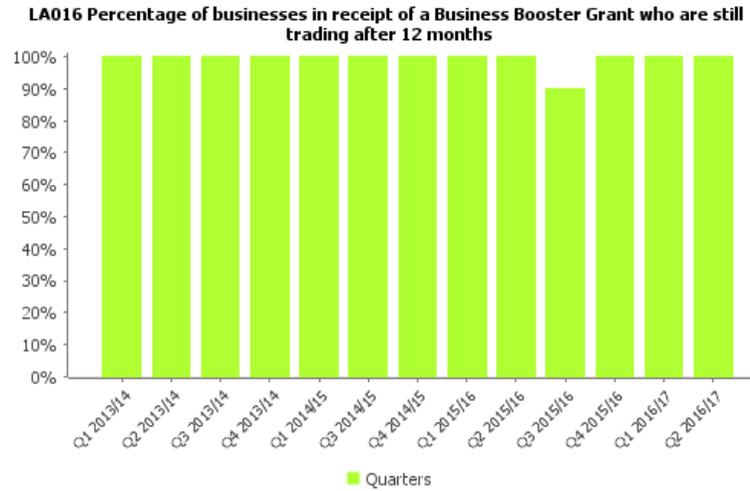
Current Value 100%



Managed By Dean Piper;
 Steve Singleton

LA016 Percentage of businesses in receipt of a Business Booster Grant who are still trading after 12 months

Aim to Maximise

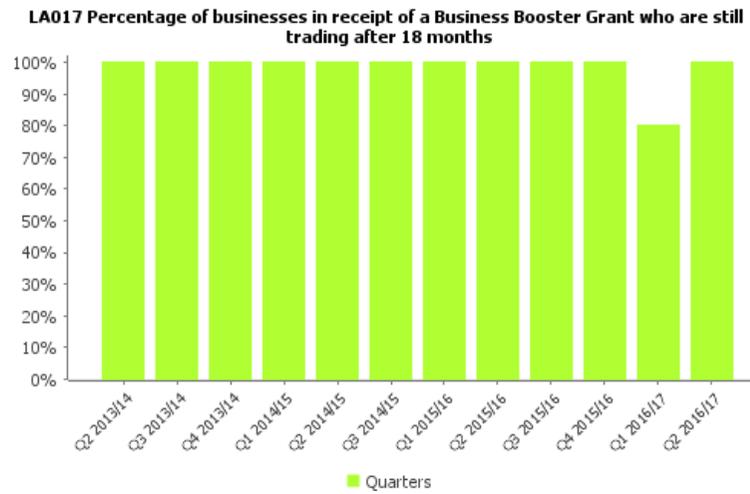


Current Value 100%

Managed By Dean Piper; Steve Singleton

LA017 Percentage of businesses in receipt of a Business Booster Grant who are still trading after 18 months

Aim to Maximise

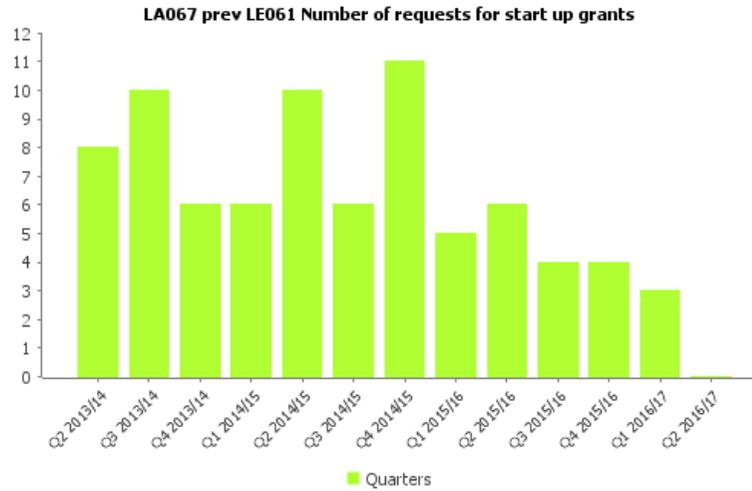


Current Value 100%

Managed By Dean Piper; Steve Singleton

LA067 Number of requests for start up grants
prev LE061

Aim to Maximise



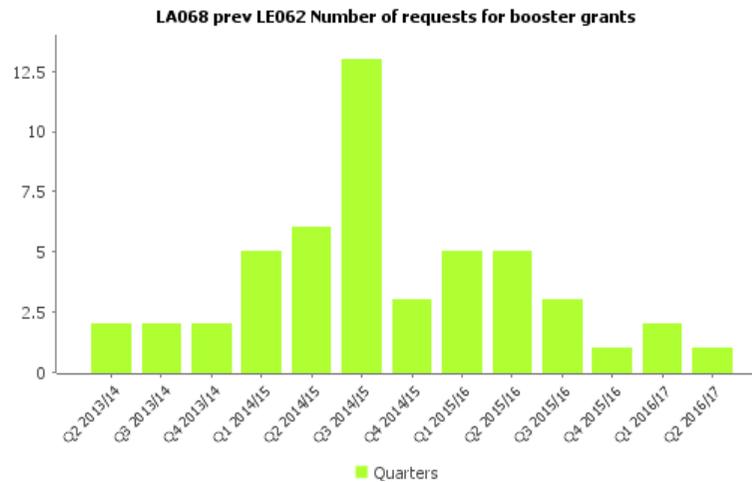
Current Value 0



Managed By Dean Piper;
Steve Singleton

LA068 Number of requests for booster grants
prev LE062

Aim to Maximise



Current Value 1

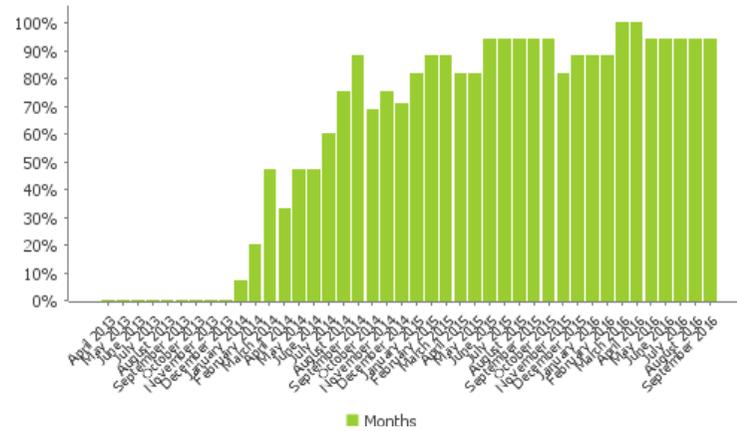


Managed By Dean Piper;
Steve Singleton

LE064a Number of incubator units occupied (industrial and office)

Aim to Maximise

LE064a Percentage of Wyre Forest District Council incubator units occupied (industrial and office)



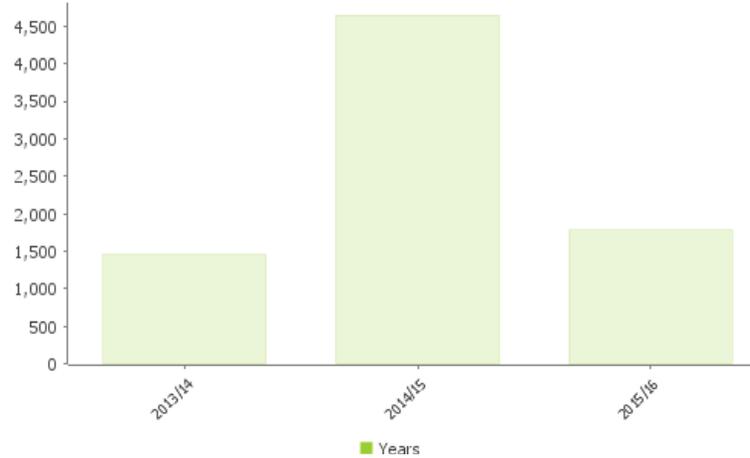
Current Value 94%

Managed By Dean Piper; Steve Singleton

LA034 Area of new commercial floor space completed through development

Aim to Maximise

LA034 Area of new commercial floor space completed through development



Current Value 1,783

Managed By Heather Stone

Risks

The below risk(s) has been identified as part of our Corporate Risk Register. All of the actions and measures detailed in this report aim to mitigate this risk(s) as well as drive forward our purpose of 'support me to run a successful business'.

CORPRISK03

Unable to improve the economic prosperity of the district. Lack of vitality in the local economy – although the District is holding up reasonably well in the current economic conditions it still aims to stimulate growth to support the economic recovery and to support the recovery of the local economy. The Council is now in its fifth year of the State of the Area Programme which includes a number of projects to assist in the stimulation of economic recovery. The Council is host of the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Service and a member of two Local Enterprise Partnerships and continues to maximise the benefit of that position. The Business Rates Retention Scheme introduced in 2013/14 increases the incentive to promote growth as there is significant financial risk to this Council if we are unable to sustain the baseline level of the business rates reflected in government projections. The promised Reform of the Business Rates System of 100% retention will be consulted on in June 2016. When more is known our position will be reviewed. Membership of the reformed Worcestershire Business Rates Pool can only mitigate this risk to a certain extent and economic growth is key to the future financial sustainability of the Council, this may change following Business Rates Reform.



PROVIDE ME WITH THE INFORMATION THAT I NEED

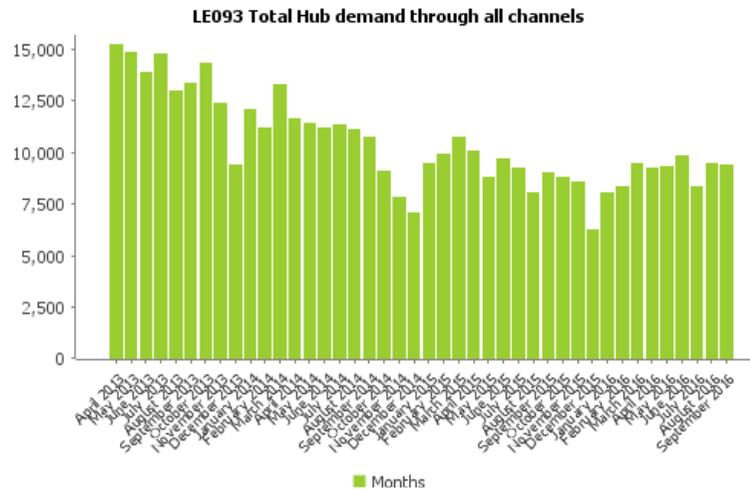
This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'provide me with the information that I need'.



Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LE093 Total Hub demand through all channels

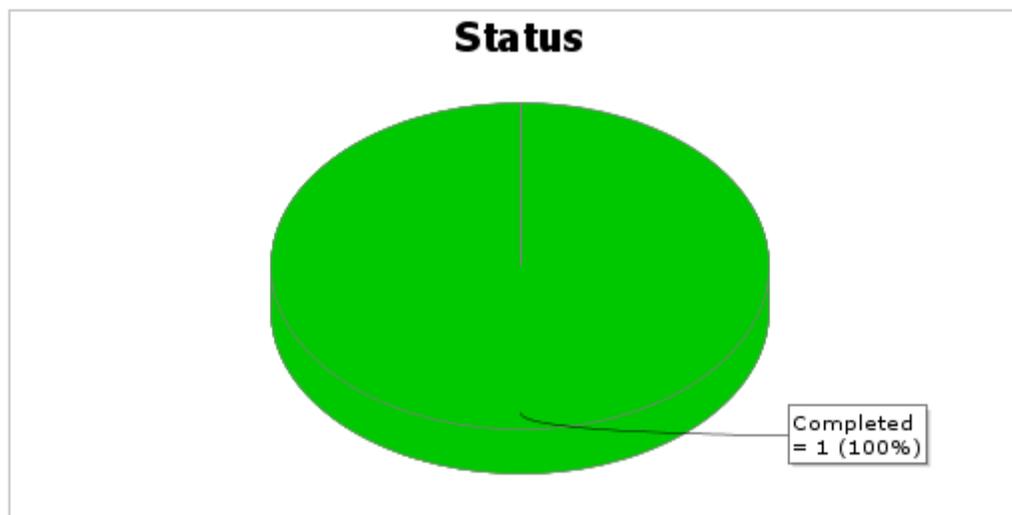


Current Value 9,417

Managed By Lucy Wright

GIVE ME A VOICE

This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'give me a voice'.

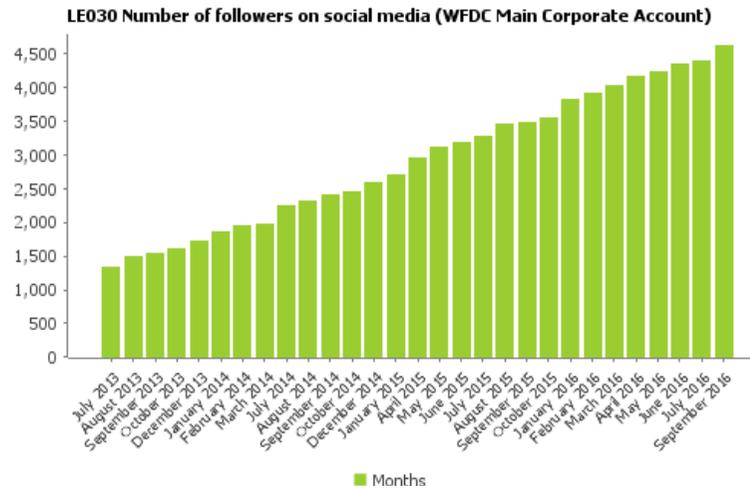


Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LE030

Aim to
Maximise

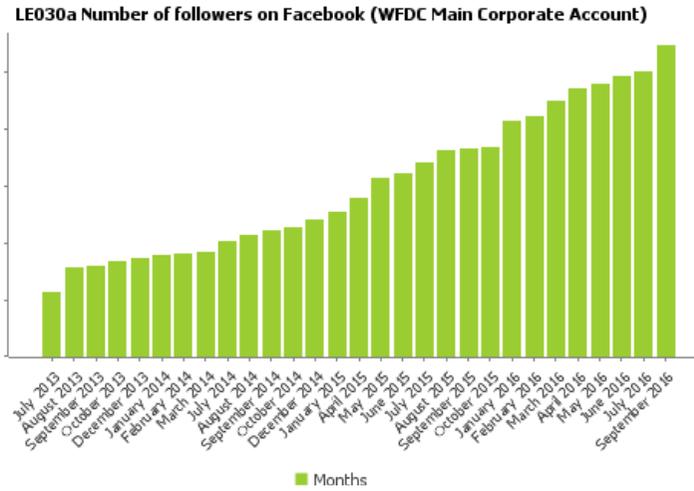


Current Value 4,609

 Managed By Lucy Wright

LE030a

Aim to
Maximise



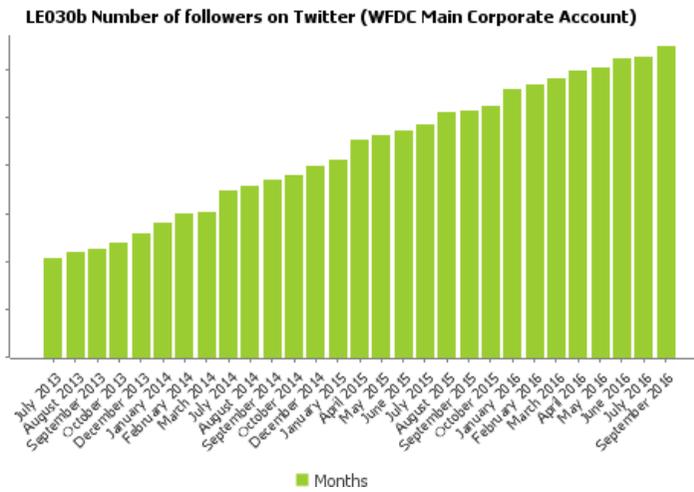
Current Value 1,368



Managed By Lucy Wright

LE030b

Aim to
Maximise



Current Value 3,241



Managed By Lucy Wright

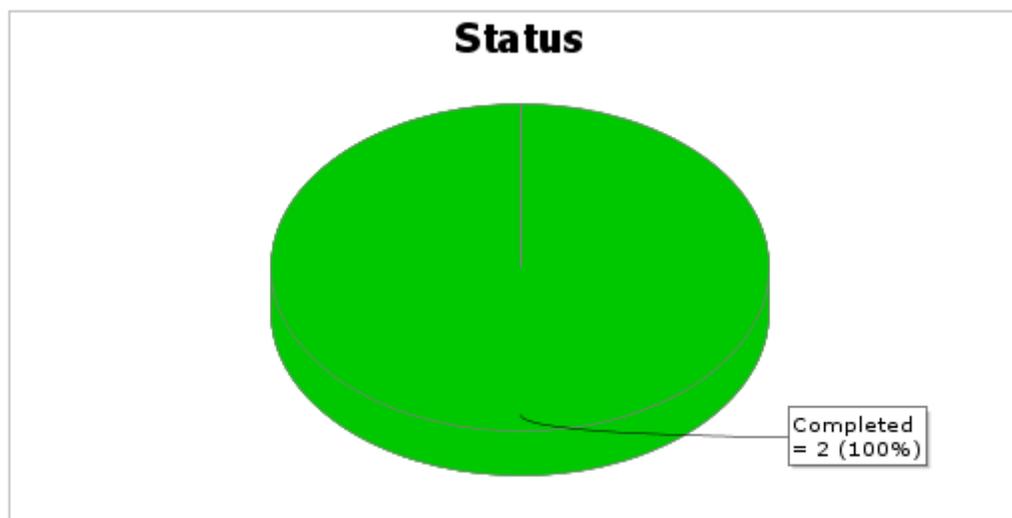
HELP ME IMPROVE MY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'help me improve my health and well-being'.



Actions

Listed below is the progress against our current major projects that support the delivery of our purpose of 'help me improve my health and well-being'.



WFF 16/17 07

New Leisure Centre

100%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Jul-2016	Kay Higman	Wyre Forest Leisure Centre opened on 6th July 2016 and was on budget and on time. This project has saved the Council over £240,000 extra this year. The new centre will save the Council over £500,000 pa. Both WFGLC and SSC now closed.	05-Sep-2016

WFF 16/17 69

Decommissioning of Glades and Stourport Sports Centre

100%



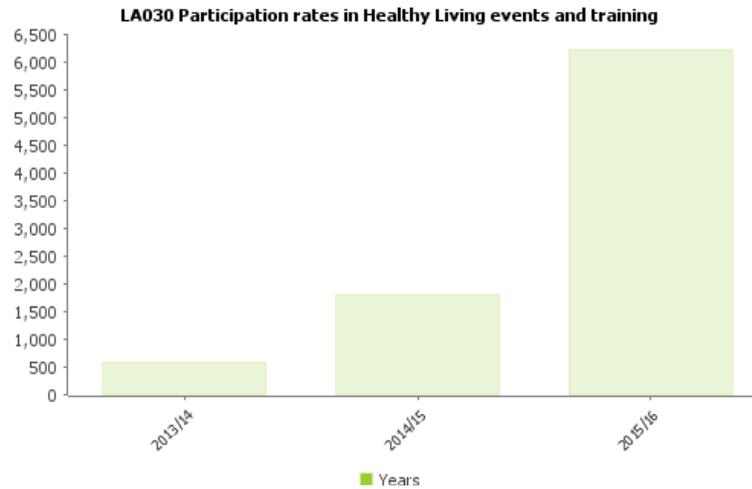
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Jul-2016	Mike Parker	Places for People handed keys back to WFDC on Friday 5th August. Decommissioning now complete and Council will look to dispose of site in accordance with adopted Eastern Gateway Framework. Demolition agreed cabinet 10th August 2017.	15-Aug-2016

Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LA030

Aim to
Maximise



Current Value 6,221



Managed By Kate Bailey

LA044

Aim to
Maximise



Current Value 27

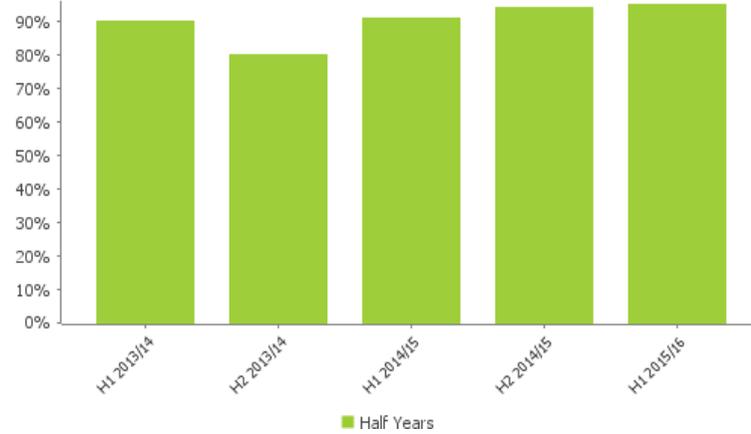


Managed By Kate Bailey

LA029

Aim to
Maximise

LA029 Percentage of people whose quality of life and sense of wellbeing has improved as a result of Cultural Activities



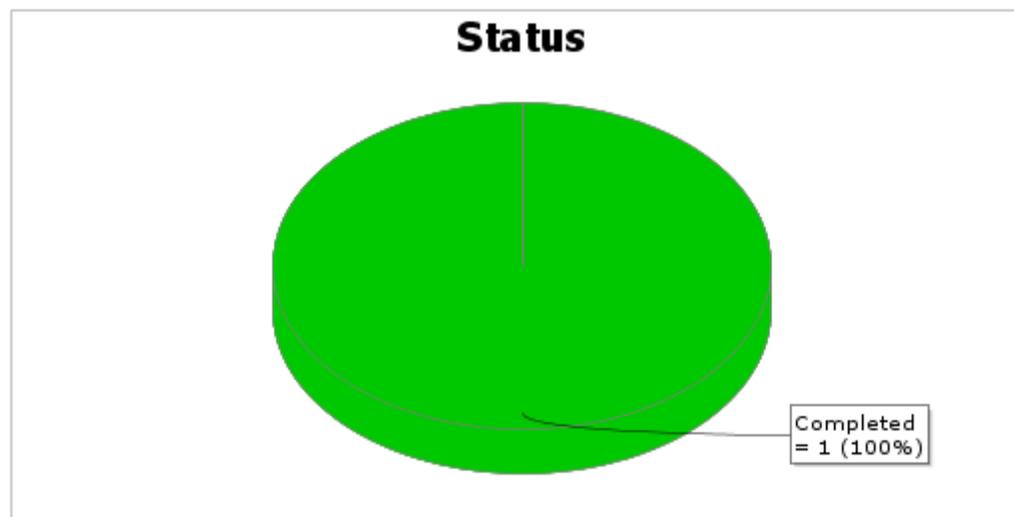
Current Value 95%



Managed By Kay Higman

HELP ME WITH MY FINANCIAL SITUATION

This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'help me with my financial situation'.



WFF 16/17 62

Wyre Forest Marketing Plan



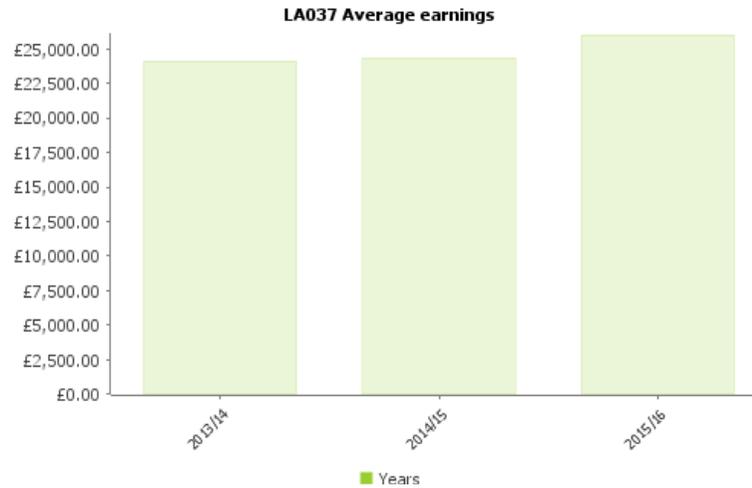
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2017	Alison Braithwaite	A marketing plan to support income generation has been produced to support the ongoing promotion of our commercial services across council directorates.	06-Oct-2016

Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LA037

Aim to Maximise



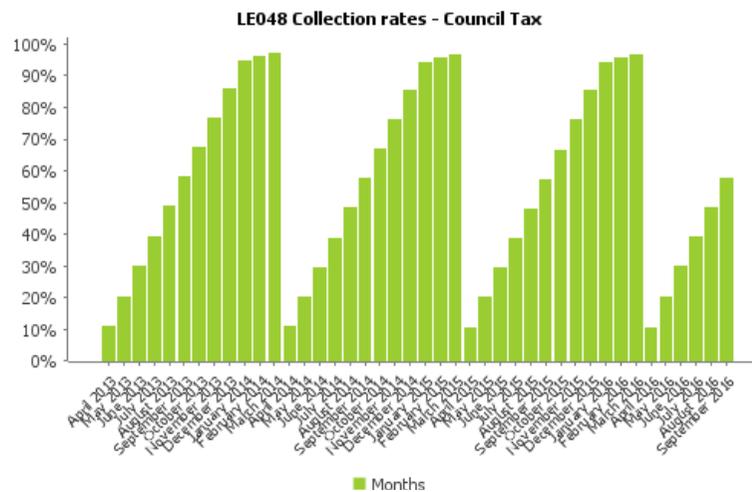
Current Value £26,010.40



Managed By Kate Bailey

LE048

Aim to Maximise



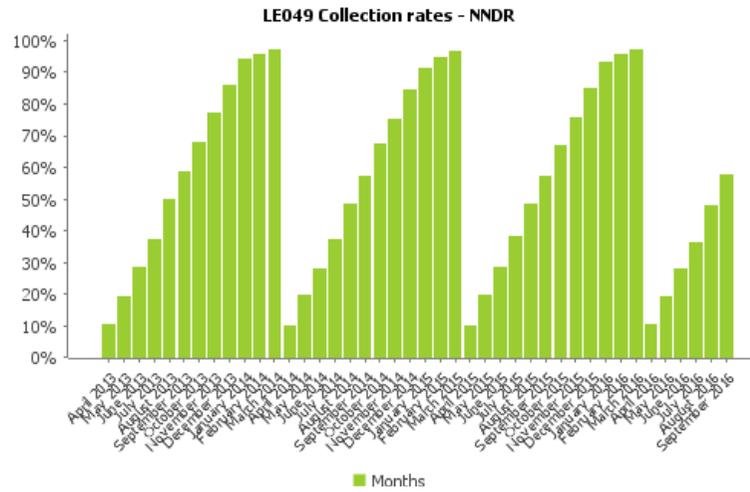
Current Value 57.53%



Managed By Lucy Wright

LE049

Aim to Maximise



Current Value

57.53%

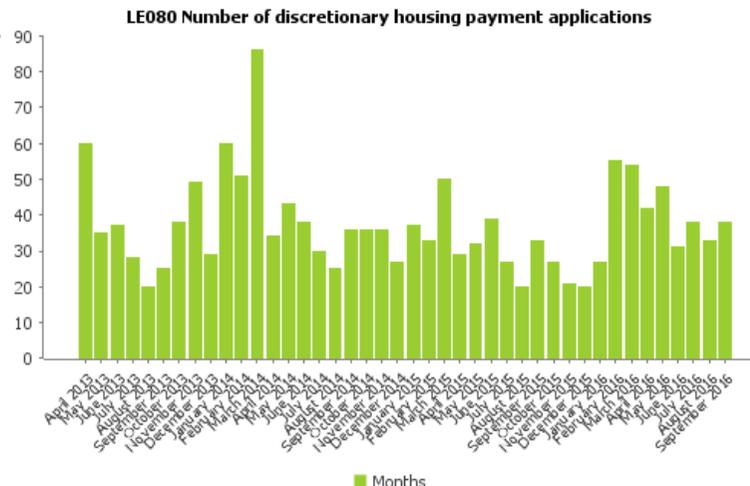


Managed By

Lucy Wright

LE080 Number of discretionary housing payment applications

Goldilocks



Current Value

38

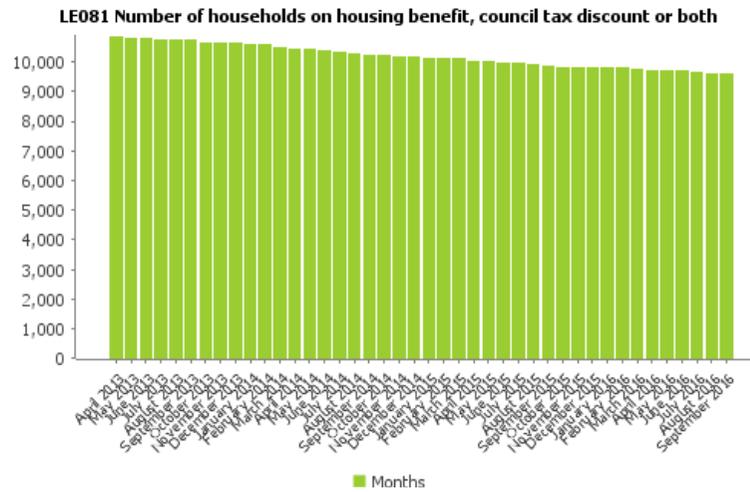


Managed By

Lucy Wright

LE081 Number of households on housing benefit, council tax discount or both

Aim to Minimise



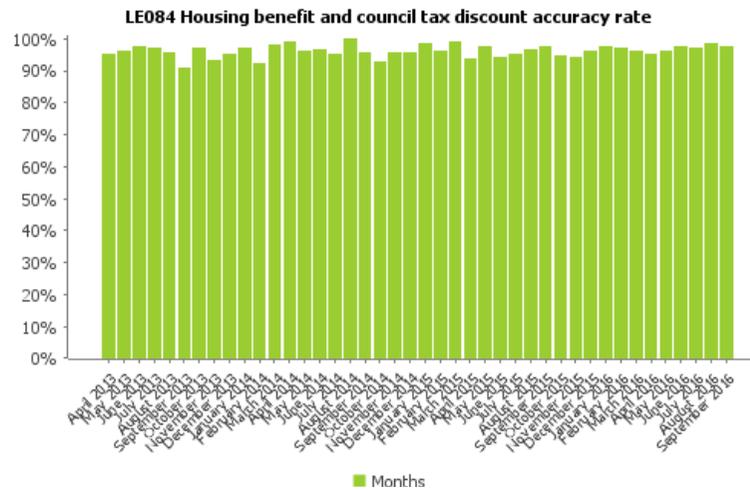
Current Value 9,561



Managed By Lucy Wright

LE084 Housing benefit and council tax discount accuracy rate

Aim to Maximise



Current Value 97.44%



Managed By Lucy Wright

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD NOVEMBER 2016

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement and
Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year Review Report 2016/17**

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor N J Desmond
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Financial Officer
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Tracey Southall - Ext. 2100 tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lisa Hutchinson - Ext. 2120 lisa.hutchinson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Prudential and Treasury Indicators

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a mid-year review of the Council's treasury management policies, practices and activities in accordance with the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Council to:-

- 2.1 **Approve this Treasury Management Mid-year Review and updated Prudential Indicators.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council operates a balanced budget, which broadly means cash raised during the year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering optimising investment return.
- 3.2 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its capital spending operations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

3.3 Accordingly, treasury management is defined as:

“The management of the local authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

3.4 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2011) was adopted by this Council on 29th February 2012.

3.5 The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement that sets out the policies and objectives of the Council’s treasury management activities.
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the Full Council of an Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement - including the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy - for the year ahead, a **Mid-year Review Report** and an Annual Report (stewardship report) covering activities during the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.
5. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specific named body. For this Council the delegated body is the Treasury Management Review Panel who considered and endorsed this report on 2nd November 2016, and made recommendations to this Committee. Council approval will then be sought.

3.6 This mid-year report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA’s Code of Practice on Treasury Management, and covers the following:

- An economic update for the first half of the 2016/17 financial year;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Council’s capital expenditure (prudential indicators);
- A review of the Council’s investment portfolio for 2016/17;
- A review of the Council’s borrowing strategy for 2016/17;
- A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2016/17;

- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2016/17.

4. ECONOMIC UPDATE (as provided by Capita Asset Services)

4.1 Economic performance to date and outlook

4.1.1 United Kingdom (UK)

UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates in 2013 of 2.2% and 2.9% in 2014 were strong but 2015 was disappointing at 1.8%, though it still remained one of the leading rates among the G7 countries (G7 comprises United States of America (US), UK, Germany, Japan, France, Italy and Canada). Growth improved in quarter 4 of 2015 from +0.4% to 0.7% but fell back to +0.4% (2.0% y/y) in quarter 1 of 2016 before bouncing back again to +0.7% (2.1% y/y) in quarter 2. During most of 2015, the economy had faced headwinds for exporters from the appreciation during the year of sterling against the Euro, and weak growth in the European Union (EU), China and emerging markets, plus the dampening effect of the Government's continuing austerity programme. The referendum vote for 'Brexit' in June this year delivered an immediate shock fall in confidence indicators and business surveys, pointing to an impending sharp slowdown in the economy. However, subsequent surveys have shown a sharp recovery in confidence and business surveys, though it is generally expected that although the economy will now avoid flat lining, growth will be weak through the second half of 2016 and in 2017.

The Bank of England meeting on August 4th 2016 addressed this expected slowdown in growth by a package of measures including a cut in Bank Rate from 0.50% to 0.25%. The Inflation Report included an unchanged forecast for growth for 2016 of 2.0% but cut the forecast for 2017 from 2.3% to just 0.8%. The Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, had warned that a vote for Brexit would be likely to cause a slowing in growth, particularly from a reduction in business investment, due to the uncertainty of whether the UK would have continuing full access, (i.e. without tariffs), to the EU single market. He also warned that the Bank could not do all the heavy lifting and suggested that the Government will need to help growth by increasing investment expenditure and possibly by using fiscal policy tools (taxation). The new Chancellor Phillip Hammond announced after the referendum result, that the target of achieving a budget surplus in 2020 will be eased in the Autumn Statement on November 23rd 2016.

The Inflation Report also included a sharp rise in the forecast for inflation to around 2.4% in 2018 and 2019. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) has started rising during 2016 as the falls in the price of oil and food twelve months ago fall out of the calculation during the year and, in addition, the post referendum 10% fall in the value of sterling on a trade weighted basis is likely to result in a 3% increase in CPI over a time period of 3-4 years. However, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is expected to look through a one off upward blip from this

devaluation of sterling in order to support economic growth, especially if pay increases continue to remain subdued and therefore pose little danger of stoking core inflationary price pressures within the UK economy.

4.1.2 United States of America (US)

The American economy had a patchy 2015 with sharp swings in the growth rate leaving the overall growth for the year at 2.4%. Quarter 1 of 2016 disappointed at +0.8% on an annualised basis while quarter 2 improved, but only to a lacklustre +1.4%. However, forward indicators are pointing towards a pickup in growth in the rest of 2016. The Federal Reserve System (Fed) embarked on its long anticipated first increase in rates at its December 2015 meeting. At that point, confidence was high that there would then be four more increases to come in 2016. Since then, more downbeat news on the international scene and then the Brexit vote have caused a delay in the timing of the second increase which is now strongly expected in December this year.

4.1.3 Eurozone (EZ)

In the Eurozone, the European Central Bank (ECB) commenced in March 2015 its massive €1.1 trillion programme of quantitative easing (QE) to buy high credit quality government and other debt of selected EZ countries at a rate of €60bn per month; this was intended to run initially to September 2016 but was extended to March 2017 at its December 2015 meeting. At its December and March meetings it progressively cut its deposit facility rate to reach -0.4% and its main refinancing rate from 0.05% to zero. At its March meeting, it also increased its monthly asset purchases to €80bn. These measures have struggled to make a significant impact in boosting economic growth and in helping inflation to rise from around zero towards the target of 2%. GDP growth rose by 0.6% in quarter 1 2016 (1.7% y/y) but slowed to +0.3% (+1.6% y/y) in quarter 2. This has added to comments from many forecasters that central banks around the world are running out of ammunition to stimulate economic growth and to boost inflation. They stress that national governments will need to do more by way of structural reforms, fiscal measures and direct investment expenditure to support demand in their economies and economic growth.

4.1.4 China and Japan

Japan is still bogged down in anaemic growth and making little progress on fundamental reform of the economy while Chinese economic growth has been weakening and medium term risks have been increasing.

4.2 Capita’s interest rate forecast:

4.2.1 The Council’s treasury advisor, Capita Asset Services, provides the following forecast (the forecasts are for Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) certainty rates; ie, 20 basis points below the standard PWLB rates):

	Dec-16	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17	Mar-18	Jun-18	Sep-18	Dec-18	Mar-19	Jun-19
Bank rate	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.50%
5yr PWLB rate	1.00%	1.00%	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%	1.20%	1.20%	1.20%	1.20%	1.30%
10yr PWLB rate	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.80%
25yr PWLB rate	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.40%	2.40%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%
50yr PWLB rate	2.10%	2.10%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%

4.2.2 Capita Asset Services undertook a quarterly review of its interest rate forecasts after the MPC meeting of 4th August 2016 cut Bank Rate to 0.25% and gave forward guidance that it expected to cut Bank Rate again to near zero before the year end. The above forecast therefore includes a further cut to 0.10% in November this year and a first increase in May 2018, to 0.25%, but no further increase to 0.50% until a year later. Mark Carney has repeatedly stated that increases in Bank Rate will be slow and gradual after they do start. The MPC is concerned about the impact of increases on many heavily indebted consumers, especially when the growth in average disposable income is still weak and could well turn negative when inflation rises during the next two years to exceed average pay increases.

4.2.3 The overall longer run trend is for gilt yields and Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rates to rise, albeit gently. An eventual world economic recovery may also see investors switching from the safe haven of bonds to equities. However, we have been experiencing exceptional levels of volatility in financial markets which have caused significant swings in PWLB rates. Capita’s PWLB rate forecasts are based on the Certainty Rate (minus 20 bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1st November 2012.

4.2.4 The overall balance of risks to economic recovery in the UK remains to the downside. Downside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates currently include:

- Monetary policy action reaching its limit of effectiveness and failing to stimulate significant sustainable growth, combat the threat of deflation and reduce high levels of debt in some major developed economies, combined with a lack of adequate action from national governments to promote growth through structural reforms, fiscal policy and investment expenditure.
- Weak capitalisation of some European banks.

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- A resurgence of the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis.
- Geopolitical risks in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, increasing safe haven flows.
- Emerging country economies, currencies and corporates destabilised by falling commodity prices and/or Fed rate increases, causing a further flight to safe havens (bonds).
- UK economic growth and increases in inflation are weaker than we currently anticipate.
- Weak growth or recession in the UK's main trading partners - the EU and US.

The potential for upside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates, especially for longer term PWLB rates include:

- The pace and timing of increases in the Fed funds rate causing a fundamental reassessment by investors of the relative risks of holding bonds as opposed to equities and leading to a major flight from bonds to equities.
- UK inflation returning to significantly higher levels than in the wider EU and US, causing an increase in the inflation premium inherent to gilt yields.

5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

- 5.1 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2016/17 was approved by this Council on 24th February 2016.
- 5.2 There are no policy changes to the TMSS that require Council approval. The details in this report update the position in the light of the updated economic position and budgetary changes already approved.
- 5.3 The Council's Annual Investment Strategy, which is incorporated in the TMSS, outlines the Council's investment priorities as follows:
- Security of Capital
 - Liquidity
- 5.4 The Council will also aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term, and only invest with highly credit rated financial institutions, using Capita's suggested creditworthiness approach and credit default swap (CDS) overlay information provided by Capita. However, consideration is given to special tranche rates that are occasionally offered by those banks that are part-nationalised.
- 5.5 A breakdown of the Council's current investment portfolio as at 30th September 2016 is shown in Section 7 of this report.

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- 5.6 Borrowing rates fluctuated slightly during the first quarter of the 2016/17 financial year, falling during the second quarter in response to market reaction to the result of the EU Referendum. The Council secured a further PWLB loan on 22nd June 2016, prior to the referendum, given that the market anticipated the result to be in favour of staying within the European Union and predicted uncertainty and volatility in the borrowing rates thereafter. The Council may be required to undertake further external borrowing during the next six months and will monitor the market to secure the most advantageous rates. Investments during the first six months of the year have been in line with the strategy, and there have been no deviations from the strategy.
- 5.7 As outlined in Section 4 above, there is still considerable uncertainty and volatility in the financial and banking market, both globally and in the UK.

6. THE COUNCIL'S CAPITAL POSITION (PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS)

- 6.1 This part of the report is structured to update:
- The Council's capital expenditure plans;
 - How these plans are being financed;
 - The impact of the changes in the capital expenditure plans on the prudential indicators and the underlying need to borrow; and
 - Compliance with the limits in place for borrowing activity.
- 6.2 Prudential Indicator for Capital Expenditure
- This table below shows the revised estimates for capital expenditure and the changes since the capital programme was agreed for the Budget.

Capital Expenditure by Service/Major Schemes	2016/17 Original Estimate £'000	Mid Year Position £'000	2016/17 Revised Estimate £'000
Future Leisure Provision	4,861	3,750	4,245
Chief Executive	610	82	272
Community Well-being and Environment	-	34	169
Economic Prosperity and Place	2,834	953	2,295
Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals	351	153	619
Total	8,656	4,972	7,600

6.3 Changes to the Financing of the Capital Programme

The table below draws together the main strategy elements of the capital expenditure plans (above), highlighting the original supported and unsupported elements of the capital programme, and the expected

Agenda Item No. 6

financing arrangements of this capital expenditure. The borrowing element of the table increases the underlying indebtedness of the Council by way of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), although this will be reduced in part by revenue charges for the repayment of debt (the Minimum Revenue Provision). This direct borrowing need may also be supplemented by maturing debt and other treasury requirements.

Capital Expenditure	2016/17 Original Estimate £'000	Mid Year Position £'000	2016/17 Revised Estimate £'000
Supported (RSG Settlement)	-	-	-
Unsupported	8,656	4,972	7,600
Total spend	8,656	4,972	7,600
Financed by:			
Capital receipts	1,339	89	378
Capital grants	1,779	1,076	2,034
Revenue	122	43	290
Total financing	3,240	1,208	2,702
Borrowing need	5,416	3,764	4,898

6.4 Changes to the Prudential Indicators for the Capital Financing Requirement, External Debt and the Operational Boundary

The table shows the CFR, which is the underlying external need to incur borrowing for a capital purpose. It also shows the expected debt position over the period. This is termed the Operational Boundary.

Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement

The latest estimate of the Capital Financing Requirement is slightly increased due to some capital programme slippage and the rescheduling of funding from capital receipts from asset disposals.

Prudential Indicator – External Debt / the Operational Boundary

	2016/17 Original Estimate £'000	2016/17 Revised Estimate £'000
CFR	18,344	18,845
External Debt/Operational Boundary	27,000	27,000

6.5 Limits to Borrowing Activity

The first key control over the treasury activity is a prudential indicator to ensure that over the medium term, gross borrowing will only be for a capital purpose. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2016/17 and next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited borrowing for future years. The Council has approved a policy for borrowing in advance of need which will be adhered to if this proves prudent (TMSS Section 8.5).

Limits to Borrowing Activity	2016/17 Original Estimate £'000	2016/17 Revised Estimate £'000
Gross Borrowing	18,008	18,006
Less Investments	(7,000)	(14,000)
Less Icelandic Investments (currently frozen)	-	(20)
Net Borrowing	11,008	3,986
CFR (year end position)	18,344	18,845

The Chief Financial Officer reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with this prudential indicator.

6.6 A further prudential indicator controls the overall level of borrowing. This is the Authorised Limit which represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

Authorised Limit for External Debt	2016/17 Original Indicator £'000	2016/17 Revised Indicator £'000
Borrowing	33,000	33,000

7. INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO 2016/17

7.1 In accordance with the Code, it is the Council's priority to ensure security of capital and liquidity, and to obtain an appropriate level of return which

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is consistent with the Council's risk appetite. As set out in Section 3, it is a very difficult investment market in terms of earning the level of interest rates commonly seen in previous decades as rates are very low and in line with the current 0.25% Bank Rate. The continuing potential for a re-emergence of a Eurozone sovereign debt crisis together with other risks which could impact on the creditworthiness of banks, prompts a low risk strategy. Given this risk environment, investment returns are likely to remain low.

- 7.2 The investment portfolio yield for the first six months of the year against the benchmark (7 Day LIBID) is shown below:

Benchmark	Benchmark Return	Council Performance to 30/09/2016	Investment Interest Earned to 30/09/2016
7 day LIBID	0.28%	0.63%	£63,540

As illustrated, the authority out-performed the benchmark by 35 bank basis points (bps). This was mainly due to there currently being more high quality counterparties available for use by this Council and higher cash balances during the first half of the year, enabling more fixed term deposits yielding slightly higher rates than those achieved on instant access investments. In addition, the Council has used some higher yielding notice accounts. The Council's original budgeted investment return for 2016/17 is £112,500, and performance for the year to date is £63,540. Unfortunately, the reduction in the Bank Base Rate to 0.25% in early August 2016 is anticipated to adversely impact the interest achievable in the second half of the year. This will be reflected as part of the budget process. The Council is also a member of the Capita Benchmarking Club, the results of which are reported separately to the Treasury Management Review Panel at its September and January meetings.

- 7.3 The tables below show investments held at 1st April 2016 compared to investments held at 30th September 2016, excluding Icelandic investments.

Investments Held With	1 st April 2016 £	Average Rate of Return	Duration
Santander	700,000	0.40%	Instant Access
Lloyds	1,670,030	0.40%	Instant Access
Standard Life Money Market Fund	3,420,000	0.45%	Instant Access
Black Rock Money Market Fund	4,000,000	0.48%	Instant Access
Federated Prime Money Market Fund	3,000,000	0.48%	Instant Access

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Federated Prime Short Term Cash Fund	1,000,000	0.65%	Trade Plus 1 Day
Santander	2,000,000	1.05%	120 Day Notice
Santander	1,000,000	0.90%	95 Day Notice
RBS (Certificate of Deposit)	1,000,000	0.87%	Fixed to 14/05/16
Lloyds	1,000,000	0.75%	Fixed to 31/05/16
Nationwide	1,000,000	0.71%	Fixed to 01/08/16
Lloyds	1,000,000	0.75%	Fixed to 05/09/16
Nationwide	1,000,000	0.71%	Fixed to 22/09/16
Total	21,790,030		

Investments Held With	30 th September 2016 £	Average Rate of Return	Duration
Santander	150,000	0.15%	Instant Access
Lloyds	455,030	0.20%	Instant Access
Standard Life Money Market Fund	1,565,000	0.32%	Instant Access
Black Rock Money Market Fund	1,800,000	0.28%	Instant Access
Federated Prime Money Market Fund	1,000,000	0.44%	Instant Access
Federated Prime Short Term Cash Fund	1,000,000	0.67%	Trade Plus 1 Day
Santander	2,000,000	0.80%	120 Day Notice
Santander	1,000,000	0.65%	95 Day Notice
Lloyds	1,000,000	0.8%	Fixed to 28/10/16
Nationwide	1,000,000	0.71%	Fixed to 14/11/16
Nationwide	1,000,000	0.71%	Fixed to 15/12/16
Svenska Handelsbanken (Certificate of Deposit)	1,000,000	0.63%	Fixed to 23/12/16
Nationwide	1,000,000	0.48%	Fixed to 01/02/17
Lloyds	1,000,000	0.65%	Fixed to 28/02/17
Barclays	1,000,000	0.42%	Fixed to 01/03/17
Lloyds	1,000,000	0.65%	Fixed to 06/03/17
UBS AG Bank (Certificate of Deposit)	1,000,000	0.67%	Fixed to 11/09/17
Total	17,970,030		

7.4 As illustrated in the economic background section above, investment rates available in the market are at an historical low point. The average level of funds available for investment purposes in the first six months of 2016/17 was £20,046,101. These funds were available on a

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temporary basis, and the level of funds available was mainly dependent on the timing of precept payments, receipt of grants and progress on the Capital Programme, including the timing of prudential borrowing. As detailed in 7.3, the Council has protected its budgetary position to some extent by fixing out some deposits for longer periods, i.e. 6 months to 1 year, therefore protecting an element of the portfolio from any further potential drop in the Bank of England Base Rate.

7.5 Investment Counterparty criteria

The current investment counterparty criteria selection approved in the TMSS is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function. However, yields continue to be low whilst the Council adheres to the low risk strategy due to the current economic climate.

The investment counterparty criteria continue to be very sensitive to any changes in the banking sector; this is particularly true for changes in the Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay.

8. **EXTERNAL BORROWING**

8.1 The Council's capital financing requirement (CFR) – as at 1st April 2016 was £14.146m, projected to rise to £18.779m by 31st March 2020. The CFR denotes the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. If the CFR is positive the Council may borrow from the PWLB or the market (external borrowing) or from internal balances on a temporary basis (internal borrowing). The balance of external and internal borrowing is generally driven by market conditions. The Council's external borrowing totalled £16m at 1st April 2016. The £2m market loan from the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Yorkshire was repaid upon its maturity date of 14th July 2016. Due to the overall financial position and the underlying need to borrow for capital purposes (the CFR) new external borrowing of £1m was undertaken from the PWLB as detailed in 8.2 below, with the Council continuing to benefit from historically low borrowing rates.

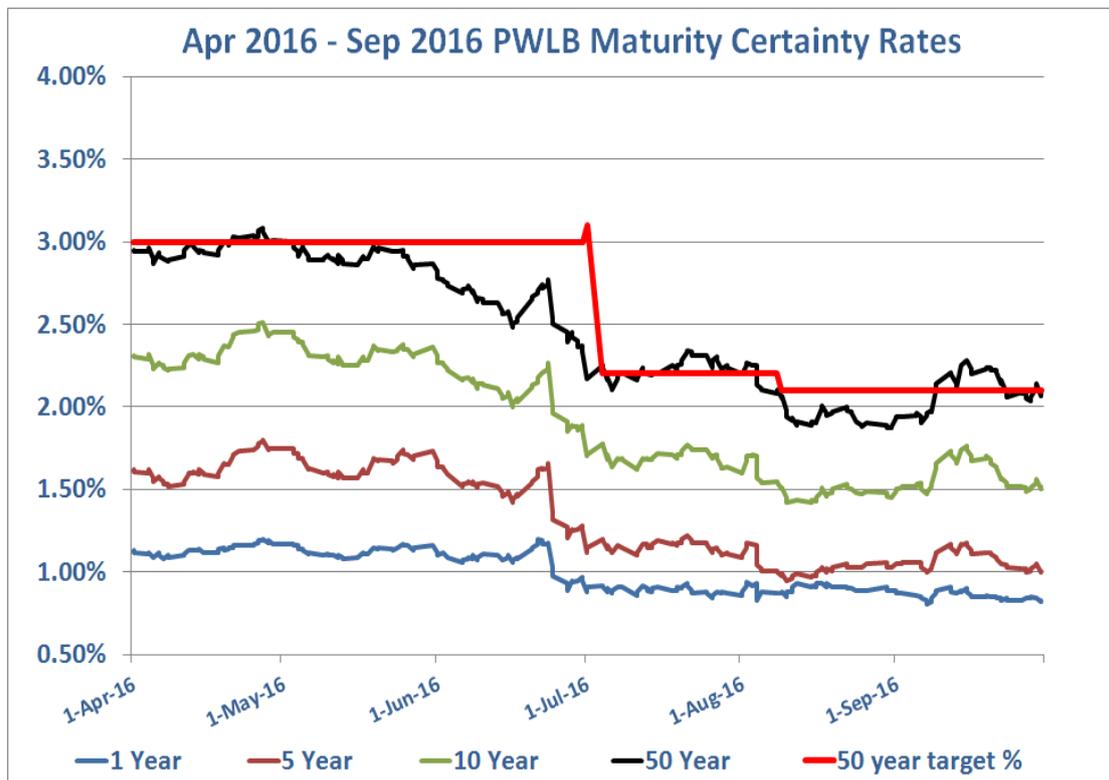
8.2 The table below shows the Council's external borrowing as at 30th September 2016.

Lender	Principal	Date	Type	Interest Rate	Maturity
PWLB	£1m	15/03/13	Fixed interest rate	2.62%	15/03/22 (9 years)
PWLB	£1m	02/04/13	Fixed interest rate	1.52%	02/04/18 (5 years)
PWLB	£1m	29/07/14	Fixed interest rate	3.99%	29/07/33 (19 years)
PWLB	£1m	20/10/14	Fixed interest rate	3.54%	20/10/56 (42 years)

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Lender	Principal	Date	Type	Interest Rate	Maturity
PWLB	£1m	02/12/14	Fixed interest rate	3.44%	02/12/39 (25 years)
PWLB	£1m	20/01/15	Fixed interest rate	2.99%	20/01/39 (24 years)
PWLB	£1m	04/02/15	Fixed interest rate	2.87%	04/02/41 (26 years)
PWLB	£1m	04/02/15	Fixed interest rate	2.80%	04/02/37 (22 years)
PWLB	£1m	08/04/15	Fixed interest rate	2.96%	08/04/35 (20 years)
PWLB	£1m	02/07/15	Fixed interest rate	3.35%	02/07/32 (17 years)
PWLB	£1m	20/07/15	Fixed interest rate	3.40%	20/07/31 (16 years)
PWLB	£1m	29/07/15	Fixed interest rate	3.13%	29/07/30 (15 years)
PWLB	£1m	06/08/15	Fixed interest rate	2.96%	06/08/28 (13 years)
PWLB	£1m	02/02/16	Fixed interest rate	2.99%	02/02/63 (48 years)
PWLB	£1m	24/06/16	Fixed interest rate	2.21%	24/06/26 (10 years)
Total	£15m				

- 8.3 Further borrowing may be undertaken during this financial year.
- 8.4 As outlined below, the general trend has been relatively minor fluctuations in interest rates during the first quarter, but then a fall during the second quarter, following the results of the EU Referendum.
- 8.5 The graph below shows the movement in PWLB certainty rates for the first six months of the year.



9. DEBT RESCHEDULING

9.1 Debt rescheduling opportunities have been very limited in the current economic climate given the consequent structure of interest rates, and following the increase in the margin added to gilt yields which has impacted PWLB new borrowing rates since October 2010. No debt rescheduling has therefore been undertaken to date in the current financial year.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS

10.1 It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the “Affordable Borrowing Limits”. Council’s approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators (affordability limits) are outlined in the approved Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Report.

10.2 During the financial year to date the Chief Financial Officer confirms that the Council has operated within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy Statement and in compliance with the Council’s Treasury Management Practices.

10.3 The Prudential and Treasury Indicators are shown in Appendix 1. These have been updated for the slippage in the Capital Programme and the associated requirements to undertake external borrowing.

11. LOCAL ISSUES

11.1 The Council had £9m invested in Icelandic Banks at the time of collapse in October 2008. In January 2014 the Council sold its Landsbanki claim, recovering almost 97% of the £3million that it had deposited.

11.2 The table below details the Council’s remaining Icelandic investments as at 30th September 2016.

Bank	Original Investment £	Interest Claimed £	Total Claim £	Dividends Received £	Balance Outstanding including Interest Due £	Balance Outstanding Principal Only £
Kaupthing Singer & Friedlander	5,000,000	156,378	5,156,378	4,318,467	837,911	812,500
Heritable Bank	1,000,000	31,110	1,031,110	1,010,488	20,622	20,357
Total	6,000,000	187,488	6,187,488	5,328,955	858,533	832,857

11.3 Over this, and the ensuing years, the funds available for investment will reduce as the Council progresses its Transformation Agenda in areas such as the ICT Strategy, the Carbon Management Plan and approved regeneration schemes. Each of these schemes are being pursued to ensure that the Council can reduce the on-going net cost of delivering services and also to help deliver corporate priorities.

11.4 The Council is also scheduled to make disposals of assets. Careful consideration will be made on each opportunity to ensure that the Council sells at a time that maximises the return to the authority. The approval of the Future Investment Evergreen Fund initiative by Council in September 2014 will provide a sustainable source of funding for future investments in approved projects. This fund will help the Council to realise the regenerative benefits of some of its vacant and underused assets as well as securing some longer term returns from working in partnership with developers. The aim is to help the district grow in housing, business and/or general economic terms.

11.5 As the capital programme expenditure progresses and balances of reserves that contribute to the make-up of the cash reserves available for investment reduce, external borrowing will be used as an affordable means of funding for approved projects. The timing of this borrowing is crucial, particularly given the volatility in borrowing interest rates following the European Referendum. Advice will be sought, as usual from Capita and appropriate market information referenced. The Chief Financial Officer currently considers that cash balances should be held at no less than £5m for a Council of our size (including the Council’s Working Balance of £1m). This forecast reduction in daily cash balances, together with the current limitations on the counterparty list, that are highly likely to continue, will make longer term investments more challenging to manage and it is therefore highly likely

investments yields will decrease as projected in the new revenue base budget.

- 11.6 The most significant issue facing the Council remains its financial position. The net revenue budget will have reduced from £16.4m in 2009/10 to £12.4m in 2018/19 based upon current plans. This represents a fall of around 24% in absolute terms, and more in real terms. The Wyre Forest Forward Programme and the approved budget proposals go a very considerable way towards closing the gap between what we are spending and our income. Alongside this work, the Council has overseen its most significant capital investment programme in many years, including the new leisure centre, which opened on time and within budget, as well as major injections of finance in its key priority of securing the economic prosperity of the district.
- 11.7 Significant funding challenges will continue for local government throughout this Parliament exacerbated by the uncertainty due to the fundamental reform of the funding streams including the phasing out of Revenue Support Grant (RSG), 100% Business Rates Retention, transfer of new burdens and reform of New Homes Bonus Funding. Ahead of the Autumn Statement at the Conservative conference in October, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer confirmed the Government would abandon previous plans to run a fiscal surplus by 2020. However, Mr Hammond added: "The task of fiscal consolidation must continue." So the impetus for control of day-to-day public spending, to deliver value for money to aid the overall economy continues. If finance reforms go to plan, then no doubt by 2020 the funding of local government including this Council will be very different.

12. KEY ISSUES

- 12.1 The Key issues are contained in sections 3 to 11 of this report.
- 12.2 As reported previously, the returns the Council is currently receiving from investments are significantly lower than those achieved during years up to 2007/08. Although we are forecasting increases in interest rates in later years, increases are expected to be modest and implemented over a long period. This together with the lower sums available to invest as detailed in this report will result in lower investment income.

13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Financial Implications of the treasury management function will be included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget and Policy Framework, currently being prepared.

14. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The Local Government Act 2003 supplemented by Regulations set out a new framework for a prudential system for local authority capital finance. This Act, together with CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, came into effect on 1st April 2004. This code together with recent revised editions, guides decisions on what Local Authorities can afford to borrow and has statutory backing under Regulations issued in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.
- 14.2 Adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services as part of the Authority's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, gives it the status of a "code of practice made or approved by or under any enactment", and hence proper practice under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 15.1 The Council is aware of the risks of passive management of the treasury portfolio. With the support of its external consultants we continue to proactively manage our investments. Capita Asset Services – Treasury Solutions (formerly Sector Treasury Services) are the Council's advisors, appointed from 1st September 2010. The current contract for Treasury Services was secured from 1st September 2015 for 3 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years on favourable terms.
- 15.2 Shorter-term variable rates and likely future movement in these rates predominantly determine the Council's investment return. These returns can therefore be volatile and, whilst the risk of loss of principal is minimised through the lending list, accurately forecasting returns can be difficult.
- 15.3 The Council has overseen its most significant capital investment programme in many years as well as major injections of finance in its key priority of securing the economic prosperity of the district. The affordability of capital has been helped by historically low interest rates keeping the costs of borrowing relatively low. However this is an issue we continue to monitor closely.
- 15.4 The anticipated Autumn Statement and the Government's continuing intention to fundamentally review local government finance including changes to Business Rates retention and the phasing out of Revenue Support Grant means there is further uncertainty over funding. The lack of detailed information on future funding represents a risk to the

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ensuing budget cycle as we are planning against many unknowns and have little/no ability to influence future funding levels going into the future. These macro-economic issues will have a knock-on effect to treasury management for all councils.

16. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 16.1 This is a financial report and there is no requirement to consider an Equality Impact Assessment.

17. CONCLUSION

- 17.1 See Recommendations.

18. CONSULTEES

- 18.1 Capita Asset Services – Treasury Solutions (Treasury Advisors).
- 18.2 Leader of the Council.
- 18.3 Cabinet Member for Resources.
- 18.4 Corporate Leadership Team.
- 18.5 Treasury Management Review Panel

19. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 19.1 Local Government Act 2003.
- 19.2 CIPFA's Revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, 2011.
- 19.3 CIPFA's Revised Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services, 2011.
- 19.4 Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 19.5 Council 24/02/16 – Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and updated Prudential Indicators 2016/17.
- 19.6 Council 28/09/16 - Annual Report on Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators 2015/16.
- 19.7 Treasury Management Review Panel 02/11/16 - Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year Review Report 2016/17

APPENDIX 1 Prudential and Treasury Indicators

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	actual	estimate	estimate	estimate	estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Expenditure	10,097	7,600	5,325	1,566	1,633
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	3.06%	5.20%	9.22%	10.07%	9.77%
Gross Borrowing					
brought forward 1 April	10,014	16,009	18,006	19,003	18,000
carried forward 31 March	16,009	18,006	19,003	18,000	18,000
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March	14,146	18,845	19,050	18,859	18,779
Annual change in Capital Financing Requirement	6,236	4,699	205	(191)	(80)
Incremental impact of capital investment decisions		£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Increase in council tax (band D) per annum		1.13	1.13	1.13	1.13

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TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	actual	estimate	estimate	estimate	estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Authorised Limit for external debt -					
borrowing	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000
other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000
Operational Boundary for external debt -					
borrowing	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000
other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000
Actual external debt	16,009	18,006	19,003	18,000	18,000
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure					
Net principal re fixed rate investments	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure					
Net principal re variable rate borrowing / investments	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days	£	£	£	£	£
(per maturity date)	2m	2m	2m	2m	2m

Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing during 2015/16	upper limit	lower limit
under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Lucy Wright, Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services
Manager
Date: Thursday, 3rd November 2016
Open

Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review 2017/18

1. Summary

1.1 This report invites the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide recommendations to the Cabinet as part of the consultation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme review for 2017/18.

2. Background

2.1 Under paragraph 4 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council is required to consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace its scheme for the forthcoming financial year.

2.2 Cabinet considered the report as outlined in **Appendix A** on 4th October 2016. As a result of this meeting, a public consultation is taking place to obtain feedback on proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2017/18.

3. Key Issues

3.1 A public consultation started on 5th October 2016 and closes on 7th November 2016.

3.2 Recommendations arising from this Overview and Scrutiny Committee will form part of the consultation response and be reported to Cabinet on 22nd November for its subsequent recommendation to Council. The final decisions will be taken by full Council on 14th December.

4. Related Decisions

4.1 None.

5. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

5.1 Corporate Plan 2014/19
5.2 Equality and Diversity Policy

6. Implications

6.1 Resources: It is not possible to put a value against the proposals listed in the consultation document as the changes would only apply to new claimants with effect from April 2017. It is known that as household income reduces, eligibility for and the cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme will be higher for new claimants if the changes are not implemented. Aligning Wyre Forest's scheme so the same rules apply would not only reduce confusion for customers but would also reduce the cost of the scheme in respect of new claimants. Depending on their individual circumstances, they may have to pay a slightly higher proportion of their council tax bills than current claimants. If these changes were not incorporated into the scheme, the cost of Council Tax Reduction to the Council and all preceptors would be higher than if the changes were made although it is impossible to estimate both the number of new claims made and the precise impact as that depends on the personal circumstances of future claimants.

6.2 Equalities: A full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and any negative equality impacts can be mitigated by the continuation of the exceptional hardship fund.

6.3 Partnership working: No direct implications from this report.

6.4 Human Rights: No direct implications from this report.

6.5 E-Government: No direct implications from this report.

6.6 Transformation: No direct implications from this report.

7. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

7.1 A full equality impact assessment has been undertaken and there is deemed to be a negative impact on age, people with disabilities and poverty within the district. These negative equality impacts that have been identified can be mitigated by the continuation of the exceptional hardship fund for those affected.

8. Wards affected

8.1 All wards.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix A – Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review 2017/18, Cabinet Report 4th October 2016

10. Background Papers

Council Tax Benefit Reform, Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8th November 2012
Council Tax Benefit Reform, Cabinet 12th November 2012
Council Tax Benefit Reform, Council 21st November 2012
Welfare Support Fund, Cabinet 23rd June 2015
Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Cabinet 10th November 2015
Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review 2016-17, Council 9th December 2015

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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
4th OCTOBER 2016

Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review for 2017-18

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor S Fearn, Cabinet Member for Transformation and Change
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services Manager
CONTACT OFFICER:	Lucy Wright Ext 2948 Lucy.wright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Draft consultation paper Appendix 2 – background information on development of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in Wyre Forest Appendix 3 – illustrative examples of impact of proposed changes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates Cabinet on the national changes to Housing Benefit and Universal Credit as part of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 that affect the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme and proposes a public consultation in order to align the schemes from 2017-18 onwards.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1 **AGREE** a consultation about proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 2017-18;
- 2.2 **NOTE** that a further report outlining the results of the consultation will be presented to Cabinet in November when it will consider any recommendations that will go to full Council in December.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Appendix 2 sets out background information on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) in Wyre Forest following its introduction in 2013.
- 3.2 Under paragraph 4 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council is required to consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace its scheme for the forthcoming financial year. This report discharges that duty. There is a separate duty to consult on any changes that the Council might propose to its scheme.
- 3.3 At the meeting held on 10 November 2015 Cabinet stated in their recommendation that the Council would not be minded to review the level of percentage contribution again before 2019-20, and this was agreed by Council.

However as the 2016-17 scheme was being developed, the Government announced changes to the Housing Benefit Regulations which mean the Council Tax Reduction Scheme is no longer aligned with Housing Benefit. There are further elements that have been introduced within Universal Credit that also impact on the scheme and this report recommends consulting on those changes too. Consequently, the Council needs to consult on limited adjustments to the scheme but this is only in response to the changes made by the Government.

- 3.4 The Government's amendments to benefit regulations and the prescribed scheme for pension age recipients of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme are part of welfare reforms and reduce entitlement to support from the State.
- 3.5 If the Council does not copy these changes within the CTRS for working age people, it will or may have the following negative impacts for the Council:
 - 3.5.1 There will be increased complexity for the Council in administering the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as staff will have to operate two different sets of rules for the same customers. Depending on the number of cases where double-handling will be required, this could add to processing times and therefore delay decisions on applications. If the number of cases where double-handling is required turns out to be significant, it might even be necessary to employ additional staffing resources which would add to the Council's running costs;
 - 3.5.2 There will be increased risk of confusion for working age applicants, most of whom also claim housing benefit or Universal Credit. Different rules will apply under the nationally determined benefits compared to those for the locally-determined CTRS, and it may be necessary to spend time explaining the difference to applicants. There is an associated risk from operating two sets of rules that staff may make errors in advising claimants about their position and what their entitlement might be;
 - 3.5.3 There is a risk that moving away from a scheme that is aligned with housing benefit could result in additional software costs, as suppliers have to make changes to accommodate two schemes. While the software supplier used by the Council has not presently indicated an intention to make a charge, it raised the possibility in 2015 although ultimately pressure from councils led to no charges being imposed. This risk is heightened if the Council finds itself among a minority of councils that have not aligned their council tax reduction schemes with national benefits.
- 3.6 It is not possible to determine how much Government funding is received as the funding for local schemes is now included in the Revenue Support Grant, that will be completely phased out for Wyre Forest in 2019-20. It is therefore essential that the cost of the scheme is kept as low as possible to avoid the burden of additional costs on this Council that will widen the already significant funding gap. It is not the Council's role to make good the national welfare reductions decided by the Government. It is certain that, if the Council does not align its scheme with benefit changes made by the Government, more households would be entitled to receive more council tax support from the Council. This is because the national benefits received by future claimants would be lower, as a result of the Government's welfare reforms, and therefore, because their assessed income would be lower, they would be eligible for a higher level of support under CTRS.

- 3.7 Making changes to the CTRS to align the scheme with changes that the Government has already introduced for nationally determined benefits would have a negative impact on future claimants from April 2017 onwards. **There would be no impact on existing claimants under CTRS if their circumstances remain unchanged.** However there may be impacts on them as result of Government changes to national benefits or the tax credit regime: these are not the responsibility of the Council. Existing claimants may or may not see a change to their CTRS award when they migrate to Universal Credit. The Government’s current timetable for completed migration is 2022.
- 3.8 It is impossible to model the number of people who might be affected by changes to the Council’s scheme as their identity and personal circumstances are, by definition, unknown. It is impossible therefore to say what the precise impact on them will be. This is particularly the case for those who are in employment as we cannot model the interaction with the tax credit regime.
- 3.9 Likewise it is not possible to know the income breakdown of claimants in receipt of passported benefits as this information is held by the Department of Work and Pensions. What is known is that the most vulnerable claimants who are in receipt of a passported benefit will be least affected as long as their circumstances do not change. Appendix 3 gives some illustrative examples of what CTRS claimants with certain personal circumstances would receive now and what future claimants would receive if the changes outlined below were to be made with effect from April 2017. Consistent with the Government’s welfare reforms, the changes would reduce the amount of CTRS support for future claimants, depending on their circumstances. **The hardship fund would remain available to support anyone facing severe difficulty in paying their council tax bills.**

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The original principles of the scheme that was set up in 2013 were as follows:

- Principle 1** Every household with working age claimants should pay something;
- Principle 2** The scheme should incentivise people into work;
- Principle 3** People with greater amounts of savings receive less support;
- Principle 4** Protection will be provided through a Hardship Fund to those who are least able to pay; and
- Principle 5** The scheme will be in support of the Council’s Corporate Plan Priorities of an increased supply of good quality and decent homes in which people can afford to live.

4.2 The breakdown of the Council’s CTRS caseload as at 1 August 2016 is shown below:

Total Council Tax Reduction caseload	8,764
Working-age Council Tax Reduction caseload	4,317
Pension-age Council Tax Reduction caseload	4,347
Working age claimants on a passported benefit	2,911
Working age claimants not on a passported benefit	1,506

A passported benefit is Income Support, Employment Support Allowance (income related), Job Seekers Allowance (income based) which give claimants maximum CTRS of 80%

Expenditure as at 1 August 2016:

Total Council Tax Support	£ 7,045,333
Working-age Council Tax Support	£ 3,184,161
Pension-age Council Tax Support	£ 3,861,172

- 4.3 The recommendations set out below comply with these principles. Given the changes introduced in April 2016, it is recommended that no *significant* changes are made to the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme and only the five minor changes shown in paragraph 4.6 are being proposed.
- 4.4 If the scheme is to continue to be aligned with housing benefit, it is necessary to consult the public to make changes to the scheme as outlined in paragraph 4.6. A consultation with all major preceptors is also required. Alignment will reduce the costs of the scheme in respect of new claimants as well as simplify processes for claimants and for the council in administering the scheme, as explained in the background section.
- 4.5 Consideration has been given to a proposal to remove the additional earnings disregard for those claiming Universal Credit in order to reduce administration costs. As this option does not comply with our agreed principle of creating a scheme that incentivises people into work, this option is not being suggested as part of a public consultation.
- 4.6 The changes announced in the Summer Budget in 2015 that now form part of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 are set out below. It is proposed to replicate changes that the Government has made to national benefits within Wyre Forest's council tax reduction scheme:

Removal of the Family Premium - *The Housing Benefit (Abolition of the family premium and limiting backdating) (Amendment) Regulations 2015* - From May 2016, the family premium of £17.45 per week will be removed from housing benefit for families who become newly responsible for a child after 30 April 2016. The Government has already made this change within the council tax reduction scheme regulations for pension age claimants. The proposed change is to remove this family premium for new working age CTRS claimants with effect from April 2017. There are 908 working age CTRS claimants on a non passported benefit with the family premium. It is not possible to determine if there is a family premium included in the needs allowance for claimants in receipt of a passported benefit. This proposal means current CTRS claimants will continue to receive the same level of CTRS support as long as their circumstances do not change.

Temporary Absence – *The Housing Benefit and State Pension Credit (Temporary Absence) (Amendment) Regulations 2016* – Introduced from 28th July, the temporary absence rule for housing benefit reduces from 13 weeks to 4 weeks for those travelling abroad. If the absence abroad is expected to last more than 4 weeks, housing benefit will cease. There are exceptions to this rule as outlined in the regulations. It is proposed to copy these arrangements

within the council tax reduction scheme so that, generally, an absence overseas for more than 4 weeks will lead to cessation of the reduction.

The number of claimants this is likely to affect cannot be predicted as information of those travelling abroad for more than 4 weeks is not known.

Removal of entitlement to Severe Disability Premium (SDP) – *The Universal Credit and Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 2015* – It has long been the case that, when a person is paid Carers Allowance to look after a housing benefit claimant, the SDP is not included within the calculation of their needs for housing benefit (applicable amount). This is to avoid paying for the same care twice. The same approach is taken in the council tax reduction scheme. However with the introduction of the carers element within Universal Credit, a change needs to be made to the council tax reduction scheme so that persons who receive the Universal Credit (Carers Element) are treated in the same way as those receiving Carers Allowance i.e. they will not receive the SDP as well.

Primary legislation has been passed for the following changes as part of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and awaits secondary legislation:

Removal of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) work related activity component – There is an additional component within ESA for individuals who are deemed to be capable of working and fall into the ESA (work related activity group). From April 2017 all new applicants who fall into this group will no longer receive this component either in their ESA or when calculating housing benefit. It is proposed to copy this approach in the council tax reduction scheme. If an individual is deemed not to be capable of working, they will not be affected and will keep their additional component (support component). It is not possible to determine the number of working age claimants that will be affected by this change however those in receipt of CTRS will not be asked to pay more council tax as a result of this proposal.

Number of dependent children additions are limited to two – From April 2017 new housing benefit, Universal Credit and tax credit claimants will be limited to a maximum of 2 children when being awarded a dependant’s addition of £66.90 per child within their calculation of their needs (applicable amount). It is proposed to adopt the same approach in the council tax reduction scheme for new claimants with effect from April 2017 i.e. a limit of two dependants’ additions in respect of children. The current number of working age claimants with more than 2 children is 609.

Out of the 609 claimants, 313 are in receipt of a passported benefit

Out of the 609 claimants, 296 are not in receipt of a passported benefit

Assuming an even distribution of age of children and that rates of births among potential claimant families will not change as a result of the welfare reforms (i.e. that people will not refrain from having more than 2 children), the data suggest that about 30-35 potential claimant families a year would have a 3rd child and therefore be affected by the change to the additions for the number of dependent children

4.7 Subject to consideration of this report, the next steps would be as follows:

Public consultation (5 weeks)	5 October to 7 November 2016
Consideration by Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3 November 2016

Consideration of consultation responses and Overview & Scrutiny Committee's advice by Cabinet and agree final recommendations to Council	22 November 2016
Decision by Council on any changes to council tax reduction scheme for 2017-18	14 December 2016 (Any decision to change the scheme must be agreed by full Council by 31 January 2017)
Scheme takes effect	1 April 2017

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is not possible to put a value against the proposals listed in this report as the changes would apply only to new claimants with effect from April 2017. It is known that as household income reduces, eligibility for and the cost of the CTRS will be higher for new claimants if the changes are not implemented. Aligning Wyre Forest's scheme so the same rules apply would not only reduce confusion for customers but would also reduce the cost of the scheme in respect of new claimants. Depending on their individual circumstances, they may have to pay a slightly higher proportion of their council tax bills than current claimants: illustrative examples are in Appendix 3. If these changes were not incorporated into the scheme, the cost of CTRS to the Council and all preceptors would be higher than if the changes were made although it is impossible to estimate both the number of new claims made and the precise impact as that depends on the personal circumstances of future claimants.
- 5.2 It is not possible to determine how much Government funding is received as the funding for local schemes is now included in the Revenue Support Grant, that will be completely phased out for Wyre Forest in 2019-20. It is therefore essential that the cost of the scheme is kept as low as possible to avoid the burden of additional costs on this Council that will widen the already significant funding gap.
- 5.3 There is a risk that moving further away from the current scheme (as aligned with housing benefit) could result in additional software costs as suppliers have to make changes to accommodate two schemes. There are also administrative advantages of operating the same rules for the council tax reduction scheme as apply for housing benefit – it reduces administration and the risk of incorrect advice being given to future claimants.
- 5.4 If the changes were made, new claimants would have to pay a higher proportion of council tax bills. The evidence shows that the collection rate for those receiving CTRS is lower than the average. The changes might therefore reduce the collection rate further. However most people receiving CTRS support pay all or most of their bills and therefore, overall, the Council and major preceptors are expected to receive some extra council tax income.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The report discharges the requirement to decide whether to review or replace the Council's council tax reduction scheme. Council is required to consult on any proposed changes and case law, determining how the consultation should take place, will be followed.

7. EQUALITY NEEDS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There are not believed to be any issues that affect the protected characteristics under the Equality Act. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken before final decisions are taken. The results will be presented in the report to Cabinet in November.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Any changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme must be consulted on. The consultation must be meaningful and allow an appropriate period of time as failure to do so could result in a challenge.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to agree that consultation should be undertaken. The results will be reported to Cabinet in November for final recommendation to Council in December.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Council Tax Benefit Reform, Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 November 2012
11.2 Council Tax Benefit Reform, Cabinet 12 November 2012
11.3 Council Tax Benefit Reform, Council 21 November 2012
11.4 Welfare Support Fund, Cabinet 23 June 2015
11.5 Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Cabinet 10 November 2015
11.6 Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review 2016-17, Council 9 December 2015

Detailed information on the current council tax reduction scheme can be found at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/counciltax

Wyre Forest District Council

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2017/18 Consultation Questionnaire

Background to the consultation

What is this consultation about?

Each year the Council has to decide whether to change the Council Tax Reduction scheme for working age applicants in its area. This year the Council has decided that changes should be made to bring the Council Tax Reduction scheme in line with the changes made by Central Government in Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.

What is Council Tax Reduction?

Council Tax Reduction is a discount for Council Tax. The level of discount is based on the income of the household. Currently the maximum discount is 80% of Council Tax for working age households and up to 100% for pensioners.

Why is a change to the Council Tax Reduction scheme being considered?

In April 2013, the Government made local Councils responsible for replacing Council Tax Benefit with a local scheme. As the Council is keen to keep the Council Tax Reduction scheme aligned with major benefits such as Housing Benefit and Universal Credit to assist in administration, this means that, as those benefits change, similar changes need to be made to the Council Tax Reduction scheme. Each of the changes may affect certain applicants. The changes to both Housing Benefit and Universal Credit are to encourage work and reduce the levels of benefit available in some cases. This will be reflected in the Council Tax Reduction scheme if the changes are made.

Who will this affect?

Working age households in the District who currently receive, or will apply for Council Tax Reductions.
Pension age households will **not** be affected as Central Government prescribe the scheme.

Are there any alternatives to changing the existing Council Tax Reduction scheme?

We have also thought about other alternatives to changing the scheme. These have not been completely rejected and you are asked about them in the questionnaire, but at the moment we do not think we should implement them for the reasons given.

We have considered:

1 Continuing with the current scheme

This would mean higher administration costs and scheme costs generally. This would increase the costs for all council tax payers in the District paying towards the scheme if funded by increasing council tax. However the Council has agreed to freeze council tax in 2017-18 and thus any additional costs from continuing with the current scheme is likely to result in impacts on spending on other services.

2 Reduce funding to other Council services

Keeping the current Council Tax Reduction scheme will mean less money available to deliver other Council services; or

3 Use the Council's savings to keep the Council Tax Reduction scheme

Using savings would be a short-term option. Once used they will no longer be available to support and invest in other Council services.

Questionnaire

Have Your Say on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Q1.

I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme:

Yes No

This question must be answered before you can continue.

Paying for the Scheme

Q2.

Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Reduction scheme? (Should it continue to administer the scheme and have the same level of support as it does at the moment?)

No Yes

Q3.

Please use the space below to make any comments you have on protecting the Council Tax Reduction Scheme from these changes.

Options to change the current Local Council Tax Reduction scheme

As explained in the background information, the Council is primarily consulting on the following proposals to change the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 1st April 2017, which would reduce the cost of the scheme generally and importantly align the scheme with Housing Benefit and Universal Credit to help in its administration. Your responses are a part of this consultation. Set out below are the proposals being considered.

Option 1 – Removing the Family Premium for all new working age applicants

The removal of family premium from 1st April 2017 for new claims will bring the Council Tax Reduction scheme in line with Housing Benefit. The family premium is part of how we assess the 'needs' (Applicable Amounts) of any applicant which is compared with their income. Family Premium is normally given when an applicant has at least one dependant child living with them. Removing the family premium will mean that when we assess an applicant's needs it would not include the family premium (currently £17.45 per week). This change would **not** affect those on Universal Credit, Income Support, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance.

The benefit of this is:

- It brings the working age Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with Housing Benefit changes proposed by Central Government. The change has already been introduced for pension age applicants by Central Government;

The drawbacks of doing this are:

- New working age claimants may see a reduction in the amount of support they receive.
- Some households with children will pay more

Q4.

Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Yes No

Q5.

If you disagree what alternative would you propose?

Option 2 - Reducing the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Reduction to 4 weeks

Within the current scheme, applicants can be temporarily absent from their homes for 13 weeks (or 52 weeks in certain cases) without it affecting the Council Tax Reduction. This replicated the rule within Housing Benefit. Housing Benefit has been changed so that if a person is absent from Great Britain for a period of more than 4 weeks, their benefit will cease. It is proposed that the Council's Council Tax Reduction scheme is amended to reflect the changes in Housing Benefit. There will be exceptions for certain occupations such as mariners and the armed forces.

The benefits of the Council doing this are:

- The treatment of temporary absence will be brought into line with Housing Benefit
- It is seen as fair
- There are exceptions for certain occupations including the armed forces and mariners.

The drawback of this is:

- If a person is absent from Great Britain for a period which is likely to exceed 4 weeks, their Council Tax Reduction will cease from when they leave the Country. They will need to re-apply on return

Q6.

Do you agree with the change to the temporary absence rule?

Yes No

Q7.

If you disagree what alternative would you propose?

Option 3 - To remove the element of a Work Related Activity Component in the calculation of the current scheme for new Employment and Support Allowance applicants.

From April 2017, all new applicants of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) who fall within the Work Related Activity Group will no longer receive the work related activity component in either their ESA or within the calculation of Housing Benefit. It is proposed that the Council's Council Tax Reduction scheme is amended to reflect the changes.

The benefits of the Council doing this are:

- The treatment of ESA will be brought into line with Housing Benefit
- It avoids additional costs to the Council Tax Reduction scheme.
- Persons receiving ESA will not experience any reduction in Council Tax Reduction.

There are no drawbacks to this change

Q8.

Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Yes No

Q9.

If you disagree what alternative would you propose?

Option 4 - To limit the number of dependent children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of two

Within the current scheme, applicants who have children are awarded a dependant's addition of £66.90 per child within the calculation of their needs (Applicable Amounts). There is no limit to the number of dependants' additions that can be awarded. From April 2017 Central Government will be limiting dependants' additions in Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Tax Credits to a maximum of two. This will only affect households who have a third or subsequent child on or after 1st April 2017. It is proposed that the Council's Council Tax Reduction scheme is amended to reflect the changes in Housing Benefit and Central Government Benefits. There will be exceptions where: there are multiple births after 1st April 2017 (and the household is not already at their maximum of two dependants within the calculation); adopted children or where households merge.

The benefits of the Council doing this are:

- Council Tax Reduction will be brought into line with Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and Tax Credits
- It is simple and administratively easy

The drawbacks of doing this are:

- Applicants who have a third or subsequent child after 1st April 2017 (and are not excepted from the rules) may receive less Council Tax reduction than applicants who have three or more children born before 1st April 2017

Q10.

Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Yes No

Q11.

If you disagree what alternative would you propose?

Option 5 – To remove entitlement to the Severe Disability Premium where another person is paid Universal Credit (Carer’s Element) to look after them

Currently when another person is paid Carer’s Allowance to look after a Council Tax Reduction applicant, then the Severe Disability Premium is not included when working out their needs (Applicable Amounts). The reason for this is that it avoids paying for the same care twice. This proposed change will align the scheme with Housing Benefit by treating persons who receive the Universal Credit (Carer’s Element) in the same way as anyone receiving Carer’s Allowance

The benefit of this is:

- Council Tax Reduction will be brought into line with Housing Benefit;
- It is simple and administratively easy

The drawbacks of doing this are:

- There are no drawbacks to this change as persons receiving Universal Credit (Carer’s Element) will be treated in the same way as those receiving Carer’s Allowance who look after any person who claims Council Tax Reduction

Q12.

Do you agree with this change to the scheme?

Yes No

Q13.

If you disagree what alternative would you propose?

Alternatives to reducing the amount of help provided by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

If the Council keeps the current scheme, it will be administratively more complex (as it will not align with Housing Benefit which is also administered by the Council) and it will cost taxpayers more. If this happens we will need to find savings from other services to help meet the increase in costs. The proposals set out in this consultation could deliver savings. The alternatives are set out in the background information.

Q14.

Do you think we should choose any of the following options rather than the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme? Please select one answer for each source of funding. Because the Council is committed not to increase council tax in 2017-18, the option of increasing the level of council tax is not offered.

Q14.1.

Find savings from cutting other Council Services

Yes No

Q14.2.

Use the Council's limited reserves (savings)

Yes No

Q15.

If the Council were to choose these other options to make savings, what would be your order of preference? Please rank in order of preference by writing 1 or 2 in the boxes below, where 1 is the option that you would most prefer and 2 is the least.

Reduce funding available for other Council Services

Use the Council's limited reserves (savings)

Q16.

Please use this space to make any other comments on the scheme.

About You

This information is completely confidential and anonymous. Your personal information will not be passed on to anyone and your personal details will not be reported alongside your responses.

Q19.

Are you, or someone in your household, getting Council Tax Reduction at this time?

Yes No

Q20.

Do you live in Wyre Forest?

Yes No

Q21.

Age

18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75-84 85+ Prefer not to say

Next steps....

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Progress reports on the consultation will be added to our website: www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk

You may submit further evidence, ideas or comments by email (worcestershirehub@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

The consultation closes on 7 November 2016.

We will listen carefully to what residents tell us and take the responses into consideration when making a final decision on the 2017/18 scheme.

Following the decision, the full results from the consultation will be available on the Council's website.

The new scheme will start on **1 April 2017**. The Council will consider the impact of the scheme annually and consult again if it thinks further changes need to be made.

Appendix 2 – background information on development of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in Wyre Forest

A.1 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme replaced Council Tax Benefit with effect from 1 April 2013. In transferring responsibility to councils, the Government reduced funding by 10% initially and has reduced it further since as the funding support is not provided as a specific grant. The Government has protected claimants of pensionable age, and they continue to receive support up to 100% of their council tax bill depending on their personal financial circumstances. It is open to councils to require a contribution from people of working age.

A.2 Wyre Forest District Council’s local scheme mirrors many aspects of Housing Benefit. However all working age claimants are expected to pay a small percentage of council tax as shown below:

	Minimum contribution required from people of working age
2013-14	8.5%
2014-15	10%
2015-16	10%
2016-17	20%

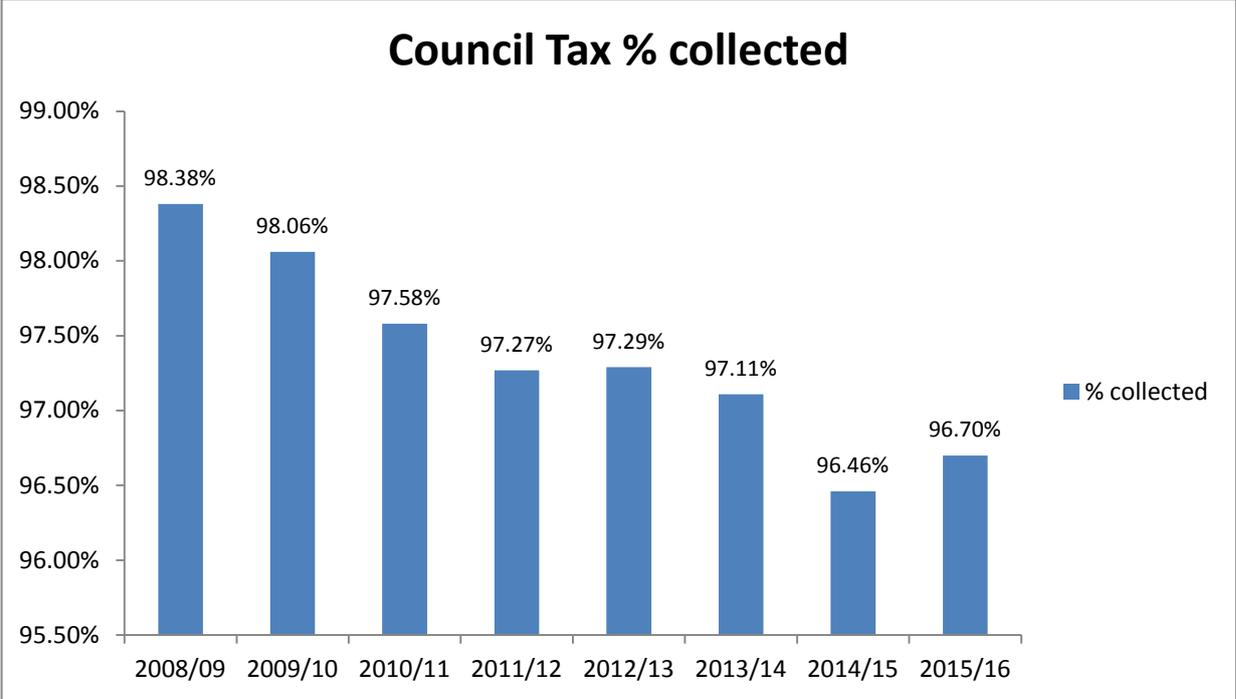
A.3 As part of the annual scheme review in 2015 Cabinet agreed to undertake a public consultation regarding various suggested changes to the scheme. Cabinet made a recommendation to Council based on the consultation results and the scheme for 2016-17 was formally agreed in December 2015.

A.4 The main changes to the scheme introduced in 2016-17 were to:

- increase the minimum payment required by all working age claimants from 10% to 20%
- lower the capital limit from £16,000 to £12,000
- retain the existing Hardship Fund
- reduce the minimum award entitlement from £5.00 per week to 50p per week
- allow backdating claims at management discretion
- make technical changes to the scheme with regard to how the claims are assessed

A.5 The cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme across all preceptors for both working age and pension age claimants in April 2013 was £8,113,000. The cost of the scheme in August 2016 has reduced to £7,045,000.

A.6 Since the scheme was introduced; council tax collection rates have reduced. Overall collection rates for 2015-16 were 96.70%, up slightly on the previous year. However the figure for 2015-16 for working age claimants in receipt of CTRS was lower at 92.26%



Appendix 3 – illustrative examples of impact of proposed changes

Illustrative examples

Example One

**Couple with 3 children, not working, no savings, on passported benefit
Council tax, Band B property in Stourport = £1,261.85 a year (full charge)**

What such a household would receive in council tax reduction scheme support in 2016-17
£1,009.48

Council tax bill to pay £252.37 (=£4.85 a week)

What such a household would receive in council tax reduction scheme support in 2017-18
£1,009.48

Council tax bill to pay £252.37 (=£4.85 a week)

Additional council tax to pay compared to current scheme £0.00 a year (£0.00 a week)

Example Two

Couple, no children, one adult works 15 hours a week, earning £6,000 a year, no savings. The couple go overseas to stay with relatives for a 10 week period each year.

Council tax, Band D property in Bewdley = £1,621.88 a year

What such a household would receive in council tax reduction scheme support in 2016-17
£1,297.50

Council tax bill to pay £324.38 (=£6.23 a week)

What such a household would receive in council tax reduction scheme support in 2017-18
if they went overseas for 10 weeks £1,047.98

Council tax bill to pay £573.90 (=£11.04 a week)

Additional council tax to pay compared to current scheme £249.52 a year (£4.80 a week)

Example Three

Single claimant, on Employment Support Allowance (with work related activity component)

Council tax, Band C property in Kidderminster = £1,081.31 a year (after single person discount applied)

What such a household would receive in council tax reduction scheme support in 2016-17
£865.05

Council tax bill to pay £216.26 (=£4.16 a week)

What such a household would receive in council tax reduction scheme support in 2017-18
£865.05

Council tax bill to pay £216.26 (=£4.16 a week)

Additional council tax to pay compared to current scheme £0.00 a year (£0.00 a week)



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Kate Bailey
Date: Thursday 3rd November
Open

Report on the Worcestershire Partnership Plan

1. Summary

1.1 This report will consider the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan that has been developed by the Strategic Housing Partnership and is currently out to a 10 week consultation ending on 22nd December 2016.

2. Background

2.1 The Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) was formed in 2011 and the terms of reference are included at Appendix One. This group brings together key strategic partners to oversee the delivery of housing services in their widest form. The group includes representatives from Clinical Commissioning Groups, Social Care, Childrens Services, County Council Commissioning Officers, Community Rehabilitation Company, Registered Providers (a North and South Representative) and the six Local Authorities.

2.2 In 2016 the Strategic Housing Partnership developed a memorandum of understanding (MofU), based on the national MofU, that supports joint action on the part of Health and Housing, to improve health through the home. At a national level this MofU was signed by various agencies including NHS England, Public Health England and the Homes and Communities Agency and Local Authorities have been encouraged to adopt a similar MofU in their local area. The Worcestershire MofU is included in Appendix Two and has now replaced the Terms of Reference.

2.3 The Worcestershire Housing Strategy has now come to an end with many of the actions completed (please see Appendix Three) and so the Strategic Housing Partnership have now developed an overarching draft Partnership Plan that sets out the strategic direction for housing across Worcestershire but will be signed up to jointly by a range of partners..

2.4 The Partnership Plan sets out how the partners will work together on jointly agreed priorities and will develop action plans and deliver on these in an integrated way. There are no new resources committed to delivery of the plan but it is hoped that by co-ordinating actions in a joined up way, then better use will be made of the existing resources.

3. Key Issues

3.1 In recent years there has been a concerted push by central government to join up health and care provision and to promote individuals wellbeing (Care Act

2014, NHS 5 Year Forward Plan, Better Care Fund). Nationally the role housing can play in improving health and wellbeing is seen as important and housing services / providers are recognised as a partner. The local MofU and Partnership Plan seek to translate this role at a local level into a set of jointly agreed actions.

- 3.2 The vision for the Partnership Plan is **“the right home environment is essential to health, wealth and wellbeing throughout life”**. This vision is supported by three key priorities. We will;
 - 3.2.1 Create a partnership approach to enable people to live as independently as possible.
 - 3.2.2 Drive the growth of the right type of homes
 - 3.2.3 Improve homes and transform places
- 3.3 From these three priorities a number of high level actions have been outlined in the Partnership Plan and project plans and/or proposals will then be developed to deliver on the actions, where these are not already included in strategies and plans of the Local Authorities or their partners.
- 3.4 The Partnership Plan outlines the following outcomes achieved through a good supply of the right housing;
 - 3.4.1 - helps people to live as independently as possible,
 - 3.4.2 - helps people to live close to family and community support
 - 3.4.3 - enables choice
 - 3.4.4 - reduces unnecessary demands on services
 - 3.4.5 - prevents homelessness
 - 3.4.6 - improves peoples health and wellbeing, especially those with the poorest health outcomes
 - 3.4.7 - supports educational attainment, access to employment and the development of a healthy workforce
- 3.5 Since the Worcestershire Housing Strategy was published there have been major changes in local government and housing. There have been several new strategies and pieces of legislation, from the Localism Act to the Housing and Planning Act that have profoundly changed both the housing and health environment Local Authorities are now operating in. The Partnership Plan seeks to capture some of these new strategies and legislation and identify the challenges that Local Authorities will face going forward.
- 3.6 The Partnership Plan gives some context to issues by outlining current trends in housing including around stock numbers and affordability. The plan highlights the overall housing shortage in Worcestershire that leads to many issues including homelessness and the poor condition of much of the housing stock that leads to ill health. The future challenges that the public sector face includes ongoing austerity measures including cuts to Local Authority budgets, welfare reform and a move away from grant funded social rented housing to low cost home ownership.

4. Options

- 4.1 To recommend to Cabinet that the draft Partnership Plan is published for consultation until the 22 December 2016; or
- 4.2 To recommend any amendments to the draft Partnership Plan to Cabinet and

- 4.3 To recommend to Cabinet that Wyre Forest District Council signs up to the Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding; or to recommend that the Council does not sign the MoU

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The draft Partnership Plan has been developed in consultation with a number of statutory and non-statutory bodies, following an event held in June 2016.
- 5.2 This Partnership Plan is now subject to a ten week consultation period ending on 22 December 2016 and has been circulated to various organisations within each Local Authority area and available to members of the public through the Council's website. The consultation document can be found on www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/JSKJWL6

6. Related Decisions

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 7.1 The Partnership Plan links to both priorities within the Corporate Plan 2014 – 2019; Support you to contribute to a successful local economy and Support you to live in clean, green and safe communities.

8. Implications

- 8.1 Resources: The delivery of the plan will be through existing resources.
- 8.2 Equalities: N/A
- 8.3 Partnership working: The delivery of this plan relies on many organisations coming together and working in partnership to achieve common goals.
- 8.4 Human Rights: N/A
- 8.5 E-Government: N/A
- 8.6 Transformation: N/A

9. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

- 9.1 There is no requirement to undertake an EIA at this stage.

10. Wards affected

- 10.1 All wards.

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix One: Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Terms of Reference
- 11.2 Appendix Two: Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding
- 11.3 Appendix Three: Worcestershire Housing Strategy
- 11.4 Appendix Four: Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2016
- 11.5 Appendix Five: Consultation questions

12. Background Papers

Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding.

Officer Contact Details:

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Appendix One

WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Name of Group

The group shall be called Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP). The relationship to other key groups within the county is set out in the attached diagram (Appendix A)

2. Membership of WSHP

This comprises of a range of strategic partners to include; Adult Services & Health, Childrens Services, Quality Leads from the Clinical Commissioning Groups, Community Rehabilitation Company, Homes & Communities Agency, 2 reps from Registered Social Landlords, Local Authorities Strategic Housing Officers, Community Safety Partnership Lead, Chair of the Worcestershire Delivery Group, Department of Works and Pensions,

- WSHP will engage with service users via relevant Service User Groups as required.
- WSHP will engage with Provider representatives via the Provider Forum as required
- Contract / Commissioning Leads and other guests to be invited for relevant Agenda items as required.

3. The aims of WSHP shall be:

- To develop, lead and drive the Worcestershire strategies and strategic plans which relate to housing, housing related support needs and the growth and economic success agenda to ensure a joined up approach across the county
- To keep up to date with the Government's agenda and use this to inform the strategic direction for housing.
- To work together for the mutual benefit of Worcestershire by considering and addressing strategic issues relevant to the provision of housing and related support services.
- To act as a key consultative group for the Chief Executives Panel, the Local Authority Leadership/Management Teams, the Health & Well-being Board, the Place Shaping Theme Group or any successor bodies and the Local Enterprise Partnership. .
- To work across the partnership to deliver key strategic objectives including those developed within the Worcestershire Supported Housing Commissioning Plan.
- To share information and good practice.
- To enable feedback to be given from other relevant county-wide groups.
- To ensure adequate needs information is made available in relation to all client groups
- To ensure that the benefits of good quality housing are recognised by all other bodies / and that all related initiatives are co-ordinated by the group
- To develop ideas for joint working and to engage across the partnership to achieve joint objectives in a cost effective and efficient way.
- To explore new housing and related support initiatives.
- To raise awareness of the housing and support needs within Worcestershire to help support partnership working.
- To establish joint protocols where relevant.
- To initiate joint training opportunities.
- To explore opportunities for pooled funding that can bring added value to partners involved.

- To contribute towards the agenda of the Chief Executives Panel, the Health & Well-being Board and the Place Shaping Theme Group or any successor bodies...

4. Frequency and Venue of Meetings

- Meetings shall be held bi-monthly, usually in Bromsgrove offices.

5. Confidentiality

WSHP members will respect the need for confidentiality, when discussing matters that affect the group. Agreement about the release of information that may be sensitive, for broader audiences will be determined by the group.

6. Chairmanship, Agenda setting and Minute Taking

- The positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary will be determined on an annual basis, effective from April each year.
- The Secretary shall be responsible for producing and circulating:
 - the minutes of the WSHP meeting within 7 days of taking place
 - An update of the Forward Plan to be circulated along with the minutes
 - An agenda 7 days before the date of the next WSHP meeting

7. Voting

There will be no formal voting arrangements for the WSHP. The intention of the Group is to work on a consensual basis and to recognise the autonomy of the individual member organisations.

8. Reporting arrangements

The Secretary will ensure that agendas and associated paperwork are forwarded to the Housing Lead of the Worcestershire Chief Executives Panel

9. Standing Agenda Items

- Minutes of previous meetings
- Matters arising
- Health Improvement Group
- Safeguarding Boards

Appendix Two Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

BACKGROUND

The right home environment is essential for delivering outcomes which support other strategic objectives, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational attainment, economic prosperity due to increased employment, crime reduction and sustainable communities.

The aims of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP) is to ensure that a wide range of high quality housing and related services are available across all sectors of the house market, which is secure, affordable, of a high standard and meets varying and changing needs and aspirations.

Poor and unsuitable housing circumstances affect our physical health and mental health. Providing the right home environment protects health and wellbeing, reduces hospital admissions, aids rapid recovery from periods of ill health and enables people to live at home longer. Under the Care Act 2012 there is a requirement for closer cooperation of services that support the health and wellbeing of those who may be in need of care and support.

Housing also plays a fundamental role in contributing to the attractiveness of localities which draw in investment by business and supports the local economy. The accessibility of housing, including affordable housing, enables effective labour markets increasing and supports mobility to access employment.

Housing has an important role to play across a wide range of services and this Memorandum of Understanding sets out our shared commitment to joint action and the principles of joint working for better outcomes in a cost effective way.

OUR AIMS

Working together we will seek to address housing need and achieve the wider benefits to partner organisations.

- Effective partnership working to deliver housing outcomes which will in turn support other strategic objectives, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children, employment, crime reduction and sustainable communities
- Improved collaboration, coordination and integration of healthcare and housing in the planning, commissioning and delivery of homes and services
- Promotion of the housing sector contribution towards addressing the wider determinants of health, social exclusion and re-offending.
- Maximising the delivery of housing by co-ordinating the activities of housing developers, providers and support agencies which will support economic growth
- Addressing the housing needs of specific groups and sectors of the housing market
- The provision of good quality housing to improve health and wellbeing.
- Integrated health, care and support and housing solutions to make best use of budgets across the NHS, local authorities and partners to achieve outcomes for less; for example, drawing on the Better Care Fund to support service transformation.

- A co-ordinated response to long term changes in the population
- Better use of existing housing stock
- Co-ordinated support for vulnerable people
- Increasing availability of affordable homes

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

- To have the skills, knowledge, expertise and statutory tools necessary to make successful and complimentary interventions in the housing market.
- A shared vision and culture of cooperation and coordination working closely with public, voluntary and private sector providers to improve services
- A whole systems and outcomes-based approach to meeting the needs
- To make decisions based on a robust understanding of the needs of individuals, their carers and families now and in the future
- Solutions to meet local needs based on evidence of 'what works'.
- To have an innovative approach
- Sharing information and good practice.

WHAT WE WILL DO TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS

- To have a shared plan setting out the priorities for housing and how they will be delivered.
- Initiate joint training opportunities.
- Exploring opportunities for pooled funding that can bring added value to partners involved.
- Develop, lead and drive the Worcestershire strategies and strategic plans which relate to housing, housing related support needs and the growth and economic success agenda to ensure a joined up approach across the county
- To work together for the mutual benefit of Worcestershire by considering and addressing strategic issues relevant to the provision of housing and related support services.
- To act as a key consultative group for the Chief Executives Panel, the Local Authority Leadership/Management Teams, the Health & Well-being Board and the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- To work across the partnership to deliver key strategic objectives including those around supported housing.
- To enable feedback to be given from other relevant county-wide groups.
- To ensure adequate needs information is made available in relation to all client groups

- To ensure that the benefits of good quality housing are recognised by all other bodies / and that all related initiatives are co-ordinated by the group
- To develop ideas for joint working and to engage across the partnership to achieve joint objectives in a cost effective and efficient way.
- To explore new housing and related support initiatives.
- To raise awareness of the housing and support needs within Worcestershire to help support partnership working.
- To establish joint protocols where relevant.
- Develop the workforce across sectors so that they are confident and skilled in understanding the relationship between where people live and are able to identify suitable solutions to improve outcomes
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand the needs of their customers and communities; their knowledge and insight can enable housing partners to identify and target those who are most in need.

ORGANISATIONS THAT ENABLE THE RIGHT HOME ENVIRONMENT

At a local level the right home environment is enabled by a range of stakeholders (not exhaustive):

- Local housing and planning authorities private sector, prevent homelessness, Home Improvement Agency.
- Housing providers' knowledge of their tenants and communities, and expertise in engagement, informs their plans to develop new homes and manage their existing homes to best meet needs.
- Voluntary and community sector offers a wide range of services, from rent deposit schemes for homeless people to information and advice to housing support services.
- Local Health and Wellbeing Boards have a duty to understand the health and wellbeing of their communities, the wider factors that impact on this and local assets that can help to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities. The inclusion of housing and housing circumstances, e.g. homelessness in Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, should inform the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and local commissioning;
- Housing, care and support providers provide specialist housing and a wide range of services to enable people to re-establish their lives after a crisis, e.g. homelessness, or time in hospital, and to remain in their own home as their health and care needs change. Home improvement agencies and handy person services deliver adaptations and a wide range of other home improvements to enable people to remain safe and warm in their own home;

OVERSIGHT AND DELIVERY OF THIS AGREEMENT

Membership This comprises of a range of strategic partners to include; Adult Services & Health, Childrens Services, Quality Leads from the Clinical Commissioning Groups, Community Rehabilitation Company, Homes & Communities Agency, 2 reps from Registered Social Landlords, Local Authorities Strategic Housing Officers, Community Safety Partnership Lead, Chair of the Worcestershire Delivery Group, Department of Works and Pensions,

- WSHP will engage with service users via relevant Service User Groups as required.
- WSHP will engage with Provider representatives via the Provider Forum as required
- Contract / Commissioning Leads and other guests to be invited for relevant Agenda items as required.

Frequency and Venue of Meetings: Meetings shall be held bi-monthly, usually in Bromsgrove offices.

Confidentiality WSHP members will respect the need for confidentiality, when discussing matters that affect the group. Agreement about the release of information that may be sensitive, for broader audiences will be determined by the group.

Chairmanship, Agenda setting and Minute Taking

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Voting There will be no formal voting arrangements for the WSHP. The intention of the Group is to work on a consensual basis and to recognise the autonomy of the individual member organisations.

Reporting arrangements The Secretary will ensure that agendas and associated paperwork are forwarded to the Housing Lead of the Worcestershire Chief Executives Panel

Appendix Three: Worcestershire Housing Strategy Update

The Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2011 – 2016 had four main goals;

- Making the best use of existing homes
- Delivering new homes
- Improving the condition of existing homes
- Providing Housing Related Support (HRS)

The strategy was written before the public austerity measures were fully implemented and so some of the ambitions and actions have not been achieved due to funding cuts and a change of government philosophy / policy.

Goal One

Challenge	Action	Update
Increase the number of empty homes brought back into use. 1178 empty homes were brought back into use against a target of 700 empty homes cross the county	Develop a countrywide toolkit	It wasn't possible to identify an officer resource to deliver this toolkit but good practise has been shared across the county and regionally.
	Attract available government funding to maximise the number of empty properties brought back into use	Government funding programmes ended but we were able to bring back 221 empty homes into use through other methods in Wyre Forest.
Reduce the level of under-occupation in affordable housing. 925 households were helped to move against a target of 1200	Develop a countrywide approach to identifying under-occupation	The introduction of the underoccupation subsidy (bedroom tax) has led to some reduction in underoccupation but this has been focused on those households in receipt of HB
	Use allocation policy to facilitate moves to smaller units	Within WF there were 176 households helped to move through the allocations system.
	Encourage under-occupiers to move to smaller accommodation through development of a comprehensive package of incentives.	Incentives have been introduced and utilised by some social housing landlords and the Housing Assistance Policy also supports those with a disability needing to move
Increase the use of the private rented sector	Use HC+ to promote the choice of privately rented homes as an alternative housing option	Achieved through promotional literature and the website
	Actively work with private	Achieved through landlord

	landlords	forums, working parties and bond schemes
Reduce the number of people living in overcrowded conditions	Work with partners to develop a toolkit of measures to tackle overcrowding	Officer resources didn't permit development of a toolkit but 2059 households who were overcrowded were assisted with a move countywide (against a target of 3000) of which 206 households were from Wyre Forest.
Enable people to make the right choice of home and where appropriate repair-adapt to meet the needs of occupants	Further develop housing options	Achieved – 1623 disabled households were assisted with a move to more suitable accommodation (520 in Wyre Forest). 6256 DFG adaptations were completed in the County with 2330 of these in Wyre Forest (LA and RP)
	Research means of ensuring more effective use of the resources available to offer financial assistance	Local Authorities joined the kickstart scheme but the funding for this was withdrawn.
	Improve housing opportunities for single people by developing a shared housing living model	WF have developed some shared housing and will continue to explore this model.
To create move on opportunities within supported housing and floating support services	Work with partners to provide support to enable people to move on to full independence	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget.
	Free up supported accommodation by facilitating move on	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget.
To address the issue of over/under and inappropriate supply of sheltered and supported housing	Undertake strategic service reviews	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget.
	Use existing research and evidence to determine best use of supported/sheltered housing and re-model	Some re-modelling of low demand schemes has been undertaken.

Goal Two

Challenge	Action	Update
To implement the government directive to reduce tenancies for life	Develop and implement a Tenancy Strategy	Achieved
To attract investment into the county to support maximum delivery to meet the needs	Implement and continually review the Local Investment Plan	Achieved
	Develop a Supported Housing Commissioning Plan	Achieved
	Explore the opportunity for a countrywide approach to the use of public sector assets	Ongoing
To embed “fit for purpose” structural arrangement within the county	Keep under review the governance structure and groups for place shaping	Place Shaping Theme Group established but subsequently disbanded. Strategic housing Partnership now oversees the strategic direction of housing services..
To develop provision to meet the diverse needs of our communities. Countywide 3464 affordable homes were delivered against a target of 2500	Fully utilise and review housing needs evidence	Achieved through the Strategic Housing Needs Assessment but now replaced on more local level by Objectively Assessed Housing Needs.
	Maximise the delivery of affordable homes	Within Wyre Forest 425 affordable homes were built.
	To deliver the supported housing needs identified by the Supported Housing Commissioning Plan	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget
	Complete a new Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment	Achieved
To ensure the right commissioning partners are engaged and encouraged to invest resources in Worcestershire	Review existing RP commissioning partner arrangements	Achieved in Wyre Forest.
To undertake further research to bridge gaps in the strategic housing evidence base	Ensure strategic housing evidence base is kept up to date	Achieved in part – evidence primarily updated as part of local plan making process.

Goal Three

Challenge	Action	Update
Improve the property standards across tenures	Investigate opportunities for a consistent approach to working with private landlords including common accreditation scheme and working group	Voluntary accreditation not successful but working group established.
	Use of enforcement powers appropriately to enforce property standards across all tenures	Achieved
	Move away from awarding capital grants to recycling housing assistance and equity release products	Achieved in part – Kickstart funding withdrawn so equity release product ended.
	Develop consistent approach through Worcestershire Care and Repair (WCR)	Achieved
	Review and re-tender WCR	Achieved
To attract investment to help improve property standards including energy efficiency	Explore opportunities with private/public sector to provide greater levels of funding and ways to improve property standards	Achieved in part – funding for private sector improvements was withdrawn and the energy company obligation funding package was reduced.
	Prepare for and maximise take up within the county of nationally funded schemes	Achieved in part as the energy company obligation funding package was reduced and Green Deal scrapped.
Support households and Registered Providers (RP) to take responsibility for improving their homes and reducing fuel poverty	Apply a consistent countywide approach to empowering people to improve their quality of life through providing information, skills and training	Achieved in partnership with Act on Energy.
	Work with RPs to incorporate renewable technologies / energy efficiency	Achieved in part – Code for Sustainable Homes ended but some measures included in building regulations.

Goal Four

Challenge	Action	Update
Manage financial reductions to supporting people programme	Manage budget reductions by prioritising service provision	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget
	Support and implement the Supporting People Strategy	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget
	To work with the Joint Commissioning Unit to develop financially sustainable models of Extra Care	Achieved in part – HRS cuts have impacted on this as will the Housing Benefit cap in social housing.
To mitigate risks of increasing levels of homelessness and to address the needs of those who become homeless	Review and renew the Worcestershire Homeless Strategy and action plan	Achieved
	Focus on increasing homeless preventions	Achieved – over 80% of all housing advice cases end in homelessness prevention or relief in Wyre Forest.
	Monitor the impact of benefit reforms on the levels of homelessness and worklessness	Ongoing
	To review the joint working arrangement and funding for countywide posts	Achieved
	Supporting the development of housing and support pathways for offenders and people recovering from alcohol and drug dependency	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget
To provide equal access of opportunity to affordable housing and other options	Use information we know about need for supported housing and floating support to ensure that new provision is appropriate	This action was not achieved due to cuts to the Supporting People budget
	Consider the needs of BME households, Gypsies and travellers etc	Achieved in part due to Supporting people cuts.
	Keep the allocation policy under review to ensure accessibility and consistency/fairness	Achieved
	To enhance the range and consistency of advice and information with various media	Achieved
	Consider the impact of the personalisation agenda when	Achieved

Agenda Item No. 8

	developing or reviewing strategic housing procedures, policies etc	
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Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2016

CONSULTATION DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Partnership Plan is the overarching document setting the strategic direction for housing across Worcestershire. It recognises that to improve the service to our customers and make the most effective use of existing resources, we need to work very closely with partner organisations. Creating the right home environment has numerous benefits for residents and will result in many other organisations achieving their objectives and outcomes.

Effective partnership working to deliver housing outcomes will in turn support other strategic objectives, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children and young people, employment, crime reduction and sustainable /resilient communities.

We understand that organisations will already be delivering key housing related actions. This document recognises these actions ensuring that we can work together where beneficial to organisations and residents. It will also be important to make sure that housing becomes an integral part of the prevention element contained in other agencies strategies and plans because currently this is not the case.

We have directly consulted with partner organisations at all stages in producing this document to understand their key housing related issues and priorities and it is clear we are all working towards similar goals and priorities. This document sets out how we will develop shared priorities and deliver these in an integrated way, building on good work over a number of years but now scaling up and moving into a stronger partnership and cross sector approach. We need to adopt the Partnership Plan and use it to support improved governance and formal strategic co-operation to assist with the delivery of the actions.

BACKGROUND

Under a range of legislation there is a requirement for closer cooperation of services that support the health and wellbeing of those who may be in need of care and support. As part of a drive for more integration, a pioneering national Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between government departments was signed. This supported joint action on improving health through the home.

The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (Partnership) developed their own local MoU which expanded the range of partners (see below for list of partners) who have a shared commitment to joint action. The local MoU sets out how the Partnership will work together to address housing need and achieve the wider benefits to partner organisations.

Building on the work of the Partnership and the local and national MoU, this Partnership Plan sets out the actions required to achieve these wider benefits. Both the local MoU and the Partnership Plan require formal sign off and the involvement and shared commitment of all the relevant agencies and appropriate Boards e.g. Health and Wellbeing Board.

Members of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership:



(additional logos to be inserted)

OUR AIMS

This Partnership Plan has been developed to achieve the aims and ambitions set out in the National and Local MoU.

These aims are;

- Effective partnership working to deliver housing outcomes which will in turn support other strategic objectives, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children, employment, crime reduction and sustainable communities
- Improved collaboration, coordination and integration of healthcare and housing in the planning, commissioning of homes and services
- Promotion of the housing sector contribution towards addressing the wider determinants of health, reducing social exclusion and re-offending
- Maximising the delivery of housing by co-ordinating the activities of housing developers, providers and support agencies which will support economic growth
- Addressing the housing needs of specific groups and sectors of the housing market
- The provision of good quality housing to improve health and wellbeing
- Integrated health, care and support and housing solutions to make best use of budgets across the NHS, local authorities and partners to achieve outcomes for less; for example, drawing on the Better Care Fund to support service transformation
- A co-ordinated response to long term changes in the population
- Better use of existing housing stock
- Co-ordinated support for vulnerable people
- Increasing availability of affordable homes

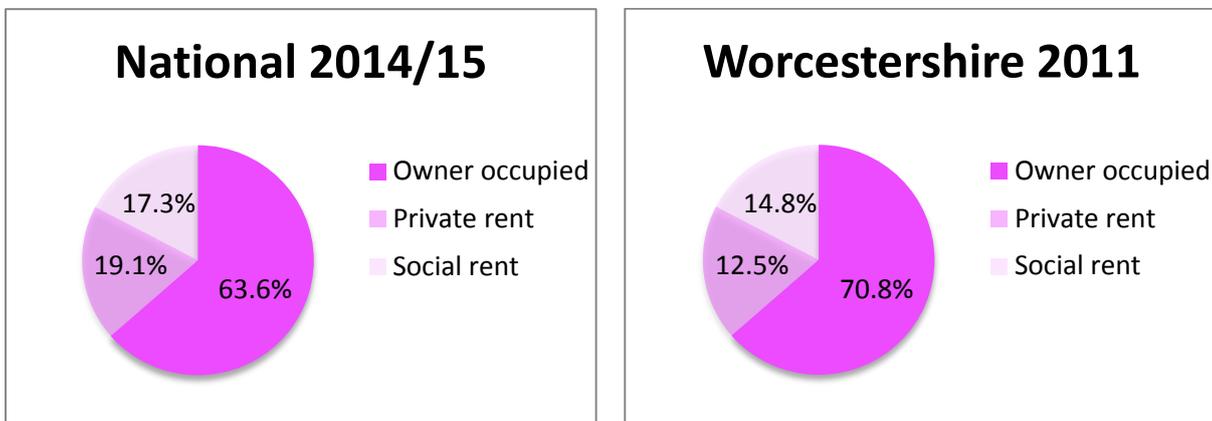
NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE

THE POPULATION

There are around 575,400 households in Worcestershire and this figure is expected to increase by a further 21,579 over the next 10 years with the biggest increase in the older population. The County has a greater number of older people than nationally which presents some on-going challenges.

HOUSING STOCK AND AFFORDABILITY

The charts below illustrate the breakdown of property by tenure nationally and the comparison in Worcestershire. Worcestershire has a significant proportion of households within the private sector, which has the highest number of unhealthy homes.



As can be seen below, the quality and affordability of housing varies between the different tenures.

Social/Affordable Rent	Private Rent	Owner Occupation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.8% homes in Worcestershire • Shrinking tenure & will continue • Healthiest homes • Highest % accessible homes • Most overcrowded & least under-occupied • Second most affordable tenure (housing costs) • Higher proportion of older households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12.5% of homes in Worcestershire • Growing tenure & expected to continue • Highest prevalence of unhealthy homes • Second most accessible homes • Second most overcrowded & least under-occupied • Least affordable tenure (housing costs) • Higher proportion of working age and family households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70.8% homes in Worcestershire • Shrinking tenure: future unknown? • Highest number of unhealthy homes • Least accessible homes • Least overcrowded & most under-occupied • Most affordable tenure – if you are able to put down a deposit • Highest number of older households

Owner Occupation

The Government’s drive is towards affordable home ownership, using the rented sector as a short term solution. However, homeownership is not an option for all. In Q4 2014, the mean house price in the county had increased by 7.6% on the previous quarter to £226,259.¹ The average household income in Worcestershire £37,000 (2013) which makes average house prices more than six times the average income.

Although house prices had increased across Worcestershire there were some district variations. For example;

- The greatest increase in house prices was in Wychavon, which saw a rise of 12.0%.
- There was a decrease in house prices in Malvern Hills of -1.6%.

There were also variations across the districts in terms of property sales. The number of property sales in Q4 2014 was 3.4% higher than in Q4 2013. However Malvern Hills and Wyre Forest saw a decrease in sales of -5.6% and -7.0% respectively whilst Worcester saw the greatest increase in sales of 13.8%².

Private Rental Sector

We have increasingly relied on the growing private rental sector as the social sector continues to decline, but affordability is an issue and properties can be in poor condition. The ending of private rented tenancies is consistently one of the top three reasons for homelessness in the County, which is comparative to the national picture. These issues make it a sector that needs to have the focus of our attention.

The average rents per month nationally are shown below.

Private Rents monthly	Room	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Worcestershire	£355	£346	£452	£578	£699	£1,064
Annual Income needed ³	£17,040	£16,608	£21,696	£27,744	£33,352	£51,072
England	£362	£555	£606	£677	£771	£1,348

Source – Private Rental Market Statistics 2013/14

The annual income for Worcestershire shown below highlights how at least 12% of the population would not be able to afford to rent a room at average rent in the private rental sector and, 35% of the population could not afford to rent one bedroom accommodation.

Annual Income - Worcestershire	Proportion of Population
Less than £10,000	12%
Between £10,000 and £20,000	23%

¹ Source: Land Registry, 2014.

² Source: LandRegistry,2015

³ The annual income required to be able to afford to access this sector has been calculated so that the rent makes up no more than 25% of the annual income including benefits.

Between £20,000 and £30,000	17%
Between £30,000 and £50,000	24%
Over £50,000	24%

Source – Worcestershire Atlas (2013)

Social Sector

Social housing is affordable housing provided by either registered providers e.g. Fortis Living and Wyre Forest Community Housing or local authorities who have retained their own housing stock – within Worcestershire this is only Redditch Borough Council. A key function of social housing is to provide accommodation that is affordable to people on low incomes.

Social Rents (housing association) monthly	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Worcestershire	£299	£331	£356	£393
Annual Income Needed ¹	£14,352	£15,888	£17,088	£18,864
England	£328	£375	£419	£504

Source – RSR Guide to Local Rents 2011 for Worcestershire and Core Data 2014/15 for England

As well as open market housing being unaffordable to many, we are finding it increasingly difficult to ensure that social housing for rent remains affordable to those on low incomes. Government wants to increase the rate of new house building and housing associations have an important role in contributing to this. Funding the delivery of more affordable homes for rent and homeownership, whilst maintaining affordable rent levels, is a continuing challenge. As can be seen in the table below, affordable rents are becoming increasingly unaffordable to those working and non working households on lower incomes.

Affordable Rents monthly	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Worcestershire	£364	£455	£540	£733
Annual Income Needed ¹	£17,472	£21,840	£25,920	£35,184
England	£508	£519	£567	£709

Source – RSR Guide to Local Rents 2011 for Worcestershire and Core Data 2014/15 for England

Housing Shortage

In order to address the housing shortage within Worcestershire and ensure there are a sufficient number of good quality homes for the population, Worcestershire needs to develop between 2228 and 2408 homes a year according to the South Worcestershire Development Plan, North

Worcestershire Housing Needs Assessment and the Wyre Forest Objectively Assessed Housing Needs document.

This mismatch in supply and demand contributes to:-

- Affordability and suitability issues nationally and locally.
- Migration from more expensive areas.
- Increasing number of working households across Worcestershire needing Housing Benefit. The number of claimants has risen from 30,837 in April 2009 to 34,139 in April 2016.
- Rising homelessness across Worcestershire, experienced by all households with a 10% increase in people seeking homeless assistance from their local authority since 2010 and a 25% increase in homelessness acceptances.
- Lack of specialist independent living e.g. people with learning and other disabilities who are placed out of county or remain living with families.

HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTERSHIRE

- Results from the Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016 confirmed that levels of homelessness applications have increased over the last 5 years. However, the top three reasons for homelessness remain unchanged:-
 - Family and friends being unable to accommodate
 - End of assured short hold tenancies
 - Breakdown of relationships, both violent and non violent
- The proportion of people becoming homeless due to tenancies ending has increased over the past 5 years and if trends continue it will become the biggest cause for homelessness. Previously it has been breakdown of relationships with family and friends.
- Local Authorities aim to prevent homelessness where possible and the numbers prevented from becoming homeless have been increasing over recent years. However, the profile has changed and it has been reported that there is a higher number of households with more complex needs including mental health, physical health and other support needs. These households are typically harder to sustainably rehouse.
- The Review also highlighted how choice is being limited as the private rental sector is becoming more risk averse towards clients on low income or on housing benefit. This is compounded by the data which shows that Housing Associations are letting a smaller proportion of their properties to households in receipt of Housing Benefit, a drop of 5% of the proportion of

lettings to households in receipt of Housing Benefit since 2010 throughout Worcestershire. This forces households to move or live in poor, unsuitable, unstable homes.

HOUSING AND HEALTH

In addition to the complexities above, it should be highlighted that one in five homes presents a risk to health, the majority of these are in the private sector with 15% homes nationally in poor condition with a cost to the NHS of £1.4bn p.a. The cost to society is estimated to be £18.6bn including costs to education and employment⁴.

A household is in fuel poverty and lack thermal comfort if they are on a low income and struggle to pay heating costs e.g. this may be due to an inefficient heating system and/or poor insulation. This consequently contributes to health and social inequalities. It has a direct effect on heart attack, stroke, respiratory disease, flu, falls and injuries and hypothermia⁵

- Fuel poverty is significantly worse in Worcestershire than the England average affecting around 11.2% of households compared with only 10.4% of households in England as a whole.
- Excess winter deaths (all ages) 2010-2013 are again higher in the County. There are 17.4 deaths for England compared to 18.6 for Worcestershire.⁶

There is strong evidence for the positive social impact of better housing (Friedman 2010); for example, the Marmot Review (2010) cites housing as one of the key social determinants of health inequalities alongside education, employment and standard of living.

The highest risks to health in housing are attached to cold, damp and mouldy conditions; cold conditions are statistically associated with early winter deaths, being four times more likely in the coldest homes (Marmot, 2011).

Tackling fuel poverty and cold and damp homes is important for improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities. Local housing authorities and Health and Well-being Boards should provide partnerships which can work together to tackle these issues effectively, in line with the recommendations of the Worcestershire Fuel Poverty Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016.

DISABILITY ACCESS

Government statistics show that there are currently more than 11 million disabled people in Great Britain. Our ageing society means that there will be an increase in the number of older disabled people as time goes on, rising from 2.3 million in 2002 to 4.6 million in 2041.

The vast majority of existing housing has poor access standards: government research shows that 91.5% of homes are not even fully 'visitable' by disabled people (including wheelchair users) as they don't have four very basic features that would allow adequate access. These four basic features are

⁴ BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS

⁵ JSNA: Fuel Poverty 2016

⁶ *Public Health Outcomes Framework*

level access, flush threshold, toilet at entrance level and sufficiently wide doors and circulation space.

The legacy of building properties with poor accessibility means that many people are faced with the need to adapt their home if they are disabled or become disabled. The demand for Disabled Facilities Grant’s (DFG’s) is increasing with more than 1 in 10 adults saying that they are either unable, or find it difficult, to move, walk or stand independently and a further 1.25 million people in England are living with significant sight loss. As the population ages the number of people with disabilities is rising. However, only 5% of the housing stock is fully accessible and few accessible homes are being built. This means that potentially demand is more than ten times greater than the funding available.

Analysis shows that on average DFG’s help about 40,000 people a year with adaptations to their homes on a national basis. Within Worcestershire 408 DFG’s were completed during the financial year 2015/16. This equates to a total spend on completed adaptations of just over £2 million. The value of cases diverted to another solution or decided not to proceed was £2,291,312. The majority of grants were paid to 60+ households and, with Worcestershire’s growing number of ageing people this figure is predicted to increase.

Age	Number of grants
60+	257
20-60	116
Children and young people	35
Total	408

WELFARE REFORMS

We are in the midst of large-scale changes to the welfare system nationally, and significant reductions in welfare related spending, which is having an impact on local people on low incomes – many of whom will be in work. For example:

- **Local Housing Allowance** rates - on which housing benefit is calculated - are based on the lowest 30% of rent levels across Worcestershire and will be frozen for 4 years.
- The **spare room subsidy** was introduced in April 2013. Working age social housing tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit with one spare room had their housing benefit cut by 14% and those with two or more spare bedrooms have seen a reduction by 25%.
- An **overall benefit cap** was also introduced in July 2013, and from November 2016 this will be reduced to £20,000 in benefit nationally (£13,400 for single adults with no children). This puts particular pressure on larger families who have much higher housing and living costs.
- **People aged 35 and under** will only be able to claim housing benefit at the single room rate in both social and private rented housing.

- The introduction of **universal credit**, which is currently being rolled out across the country, will see all working age benefits, (excluding Disability Living Allowance and Carer's Allowance) made in one single monthly payment, paid directly to the tenant. Tenants will be responsible for paying their rent to their landlord themselves, with exceptions made for some vulnerable tenants on a case by case basis.

EXTRA CARE HOUSING

The Extra Care Commissioning Strategy 2012-26 has identified a need for 4703 units of extra care accommodation of which 3450 are for sale and 1253 for rent. To date 709 units for sale and 688 units for rent are either in use or under development. There remains a gap of 2676 units. Extra Care provides a cost effective way of maintaining an individual's independence for longer and reducing isolation.

Supported living for people with learning and other disabilities is a key priority, enabling people to live independently close to families and social circle. Housing needs to be varied and include cluster flats, shared houses and specialist ground floor accommodation for people with complex physical needs.

The Transforming Care Agenda expects local authorities to work to move people currently in locked step down accommodation into supported living

HOUSING & PLANNING ACT 2016

Further reforms within the Housing & Planning Act 2016 will also impact on local people on low incomes. Housing associations are required to make a **-1% rent reduction** per year to social housing rents over the next four years.

Due to the 1% reduction in rent levels, the implementation of Universal Credit and the de-regulation of their activities, Housing Associations need to focus on the financial viability of their business plans, whether they will keep developing and whose housing needs they will be meeting.

There has been a clear message from Housing Associations that single person's accommodation will continue to be delivered. However, due to Welfare Reform changes, the level of benefits for people under 35 will make self contained accommodation unaffordable for people under 35 without employment or on a low income. Housing Associations will continue to support needs of the community but they will need to look at the impact of these changes as there will be risks and challenges to providing accommodation to under 35s. Worcestershire has 1395 under 35 on the housing waiting list and 331 of which are homeless as of May 2016, making up 33% of the homeless households on the waiting list.

All of the above issues will create a significant gap in provision for affordable housing in general. It is therefore essential that a new and alternative model of delivery to meet housing and support needs is created.

NATIONAL POLICY DIRECTION

The national direction is being driven by a range of Government strategy, legislation and new requirements. The most significant to this Plan are identified below:



Care Act
2014

The **Care Act 2014** introduced a general duty on local authorities to promote an individual's well being. Under the Act, there is an expectation that well being should be supported in a more 'joined up' way, through greater integration of health and care provision.

The suitability of living accommodation is clearly listed as part of the definition of well being.



Welfare Reform Act
2012

The **Act** Introduced major changes to the social welfare system. It has a huge impact on tenants who claim benefits, their landlords, local housing markets and a range of agencies including strategic housing authorities and those providing money and benefits advice.

Please see the Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016 for detailed information on the impacts of these changes for Worcestershire.



Housing and Planning Act 2016

The **Housing and Planning Act 2016** has now received Royal Assent. It provides the necessary legislation for Government to implement the sale of higher value local authority homes, starter homes, pay to stay and a number of other measures, mainly intended to promote homeownership and boost levels of housebuilding in England.



The **Homelessness Inquiry** was launched in light of evidence that homelessness is increasing throughout the UK. A number of recommendations were made including;

- The development of a cross departmental government strategy, recognising that all Departments need to contribute to the ending of homelessness by subscribing to a common approach.
- Support for Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-17 which looks to put a duty of prevention upon local authorities to ensure *every* homeless person receives the support they need and a potential change in the homelessness legislation.
- Enhanced monitoring of local authorities' homelessness reduction work and the statutory code of practice.
- In areas where there is a clear local need, homes for affordable rent must be built.
- Action plans and resources targeted to assist vulnerable groups and people with multiple complex needs.



The way we work together and how the lack of suitable housing can influence, and impact on health, the **NHS 5 Year Forward View published in October 2014** noted that a key condition for transformation across local health economies is a strong primary and out-of-hospital care system, with well-developed planning about how to provide care in people’s own homes, with a focus on prevention, promoting independence and support to stay well.

Home adaptations for disabled people and access to community equipment meet this condition as they can:-

- enable independence at home
- speed up hospital discharge/reduce readmission
- prevent escalation of need e.g. accidents and falls
- support maintenance of physical and mental well-being



The **Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP)** are a key element on the NHS Shared Planning Guidance and the local implementation of the **Five Year Forward View**. It outlines a new approach to help ensure that health and care services are built around the needs of local populations. To do this, every health and care system in England will produce a multi-year STP.

The STP will cover better integration with local authority services, including, but not limited to, prevention and social care, reflecting local agreed health and wellbeing strategies.

Supporting people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition

October 2015

The Transforming Care National Service Model (2015) provides guidance to Councils and partners on supporting people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including people with a mental health condition.

LOCAL DIRECTION

Delivering on the national agenda, the key Worcestershire wide local documents are set out below:-

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support joint action on improving health through the home

As part of a drive for more integration, a pioneering **Health and Housing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has been signed up to between government departments. It includes agencies such NHS England, Public Health England and the Homes and Communities Agency.

A Worcestershire MoU also sets out this shared commitment, but to an extended range of agencies.



Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board have signed up to the Charter for Homeless Health which works towards tackling health inequality among people who are homeless. In summary, the Charter will:

- Provide leadership to address homelessness health
- Work with homelessness services and people to ensure the needs of homeless are included in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Provide local health services meet the needs of people who are homeless



BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2016/17

Since 2014, all local areas are required to pool elements of health and social care funding into a **Better Care Fund Plan** which includes funding for disabled facilities grants. This is to enable local areas to work more closely based on a plan agreed between the NHS and local authorities'. Its aim is to move "away from a 'sickness service', and towards one that enables people to live independent and healthy lives in the community for as long as possible by joining up services around the person and their individual needs".



Worcestershire Strategic Economic Plan sets out the strategic ambitions to consolidate business growth and create jobs in Worcestershire over the next 20 years.

"To enable business growth will require good quality, reasonably priced housing to enable a thriving sustainable economy."



Worcestershire's Extra Care Strategy sets out the strategic direction for the development of a range of extra care housing across Worcestershire



Worcestershire County Council's Housing and Support Commissioning Plan sets out the range of housing required in Worcestershire for people with learning and other disabilities.

OUR VISION

The right home environment is essential to health, wealth and wellbeing, throughout life

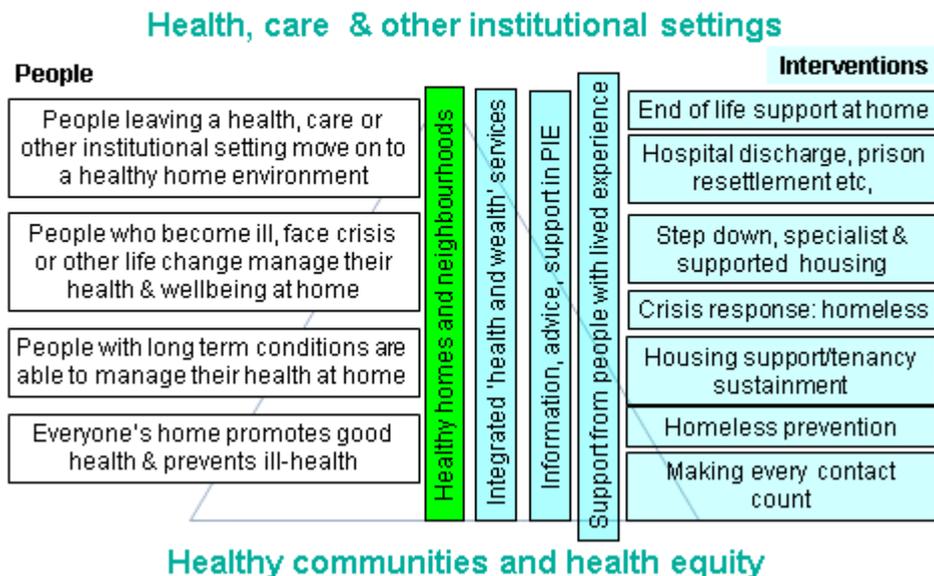
DEFINITION: the ‘right home environment’ is not the same for all. However, generally it should be:-

- in good repair
- well insulated and energy efficient
- well planned and designed
- in a safe neighbourhood with good infrastructure and access to amenities
- affordable

The right home environment will:

- Improve health and wellbeing and prevent ill-health
- Allow people to manage their health and care needs
- Allow people to remain in their own home for as long as they choose
- Delay and reduce the need for health care and social care interventions
- Enable timely discharge and reduce hospital re-admissions
- Prevent homelessness
- Create the foundations required for all people to access education training and employment
- Create thriving communities with attractive localities which draws in investment to the local economy
- Reduce the dependency on the welfare state

What this might look like locally



WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW

Below are some highlighted areas of current work being undertaken and challenges/plans for the future.

- **JOINT WORKING AND WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP:** Our joint working relationships are being continually developed and improved to deliver services more effectively and efficiently. There are some excellent examples of effective partnership working in the County. For example, the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP) brings together a wide range of organisations at a strategic level and will oversee the work on this Plan.

Challenge: To continue to work in an integrated way across health, social care, housing and other agencies.

- **WORCESTERSHIRE YOUNG PERSONS PATHWAY WORKERS:** District councils and Children's Services jointly commission a housing support model, known as the Positive Pathway, to prevent young people from becoming homeless.

Young Persons Pathway Workers, based in county homeless teams, provide an integrated advice, mediation, referral and assessment service in conjunction with Children's Services. The model also includes supported accommodation for 16 to 17 year olds, young families and 18-23 year olds and a floating support service.

- **WORCESTERSHIRE JOINT PROTOCOL FOR YOUNG HOMELESS PEOPLE (16 and 17 year olds and Care Leavers):** District Councils and Children's Services have an extensive history of working together on a young persons protocol to prevent homelessness and secure positive outcomes for young people. The Protocol enables all partners to understand their roles and responsibilities and to engage more effectively in joint working to safeguard young people.

It ensures that young homeless people do not fall through the net of statutory agencies and do not become vulnerable to street homelessness or exploitation.

Challenge: To continue to align existing statutory services to provide better outcomes for young people

- **CARE AND REPAIR AGENCY:** Worcestershire has a jointly commissioned Care & Repair service to provide a range of assistance to enable independence for older and vulnerable people including benefit and energy advice, a handy man service, minor adaptations and disabled facilities grants. This type of service is essential to meeting the needs of the changing population and provides a range of assistance for older and vulnerable people across the different health, housing and social sectors.

Challenge: We are working to deliver this service in a more timely way and via a much simpler process to access the different services available.

- **HOMELESS SERVICES:** The Homeless Services across the county have been providing early intervention, identifying the root causes and working to prevent as many households as possible from becoming homeless for a number of years. This has also been enhanced with a new service preventing single people from spending more than a single night out on the street and ensuring that they do not become the entrenched rough sleepers of the future. Although homelessness is not a situation anyone would wish to find themselves for the majority of families, the system is straightforward and either prevents them from becoming homeless or seamlessly takes them through the homeless system.

Challenge: The countywide Homelessness Review 2016 highlighted that the homeless service does not adequately meet the needs of families and single people with complex needs. The number of single people approaching as homeless with an identified vulnerability has now exceeded the number of families. A different and more integrated approach needs to be developed to address the needs of these households. We need to work together better to end homelessness and the on-going impact this has on people's lives.

- **MODELS OF HOUSING WITH SUPPORT:** The Worcestershire local authorities have always worked with partners who commission housing support services or, they have directly commissioned the services themselves.

Challenge: With no revenue funding following the demise of Supporting People, reduced levels of supported accommodation and, higher access thresholds for social care support provision this creates the "perfect storm" along with the changes imposed by welfare reform. This will be further impacted by the changes to the benefit system. From 2019/20 core rents and eligible service charges for supported housing will continue to be funded in the same way, but both new and existing tenants will be subject to the LHA cap. Supported housing will be exempt from the shared accommodation rate for single people under 35. However local authorities will be given control of a 'top up' fund to cover the additional costs associated with providing supported housing, over and above LHA,

There is currently limited ability to deliver new models of housing with support or even sustain existing support for a need that will continue to exist. Therefore a cohesive and co-ordinated approach is required to maximise funding opportunities and continue to develop a range of housing with support across the county.

- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** We work with our partners including housing developers to deliver new affordable housing for rent and homeownership.

Challenge: It is becoming more difficult to deliver affordable rented housing in the traditional way e.g. local authority enabling. At the end of 2015/16, 454 new affordable homes had been delivered across Worcestershire. The future supply of affordable homes for rent will be impacted by the government emphasis for affordable homeownership which is the tenure prioritised to receive Homes & Communities Agency funding. New housing for homeownership and rent needs to be more affordable, maximising Worcestershire's share of national affordable housing funding.

- **PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING:** All the Worcestershire local housing authorities are using the private rented sector to house homeless households and many have set up their own in-house

local lettings agencies to provide private rented accommodation. They also support deposit bond schemes by working with the voluntary sector and work with private landlords and letting agencies.

Challenge: Direct to landlord payments were used as an incentives to the landlords providing their properties to the local authority. The ability to use these as an incentive will no longer be possible due to Universal Credit being paid direct to tenants and therefore the ability to meet housing need using private rented sector accommodation is going to be far more difficult.

- **CONNECTING FAMILIES:** Connecting Families is a county wide approach to build relationships to influence systems to change from the service users point of view. Within the Connecting Families approach is the Connecting Families Family Support Team, who provide targeted family support following the same of approach of listening to the customer’s needs and providing a bespoke package of support. Directly linked to the family support team are experts from outside services, called change champions, who support the family with their areas of expertise, and help the Connecting Families team understand and break down blockages within their own services which are preventing the families from reaching their needs.

Challenge: It will require significant transformation to the way in which public services are delivered.

KEY PRIORITIES - AND WHY

Following consultation and taking into account national and local evidence, Housing and their partner organisations identified the following three key priorities. These will be jointly delivered to provide a cost effective solution which will focus on system change to meet customer need in the best way.

We will

Create a partnership approach to enable people to live as independently as possible (prevention/intervention)

Drive the growth of the *right type* of homes (to promote opportunity)

Improve homes and, "transform places"

By further developing our partnership working to ensure that we are providing the right care and support to people at the right time in their life, a whole raft of damaging and costly consequences can be avoided, both for individuals and services. Good quality early intervention will increase independence and reduce the future need for social care and health services. This reduces stress on our already pressurised resources. In addition, empowering people to take responsibility for their own situations when armed with the right knowledge, tools and access to services is a lifelong skill, further reducing the impact on services. People are far more likely to be able to find employment if their housing needs are met in suitable housing, therefore they are healthy both mentally and physically.

It is also key that we have a supply of good quality housing across all tenures as the consequences of an under provision of housing generally is rapidly increasing housing prices, insufficient affordable housing, rising levels of homelessness and increased skills shortages as potential employees move away. The Economic Strategy for Worcestershire 2010 – 2020 acknowledges that “failure to meet future housing need/demand, including affordable housing will have an impact on the county's economy” and will impact on the housing growth targets for the County.

ACTIONS - WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

The following high level actions set out how we will deliver on the priorities identified above. Project plans and/or proposals will be developed to deliver on the actions below, adding value and targeting gaps, whilst recognising that customer needs will continue to be addressed within a range of other plans and strategies.

- Maximise the delivery of good quality housing *of the right type and tenure* by co-ordinating the activities of housing developers, providers and support agencies to meet existing and future housing need in a sustainable way.
- Investigate alternative models of affordable housing delivery to meet the housing and support needs of specific groups and sectors of the housing market.
- A partnership approach to improving existing homes to tackle the personal, social, economic, mental and physical health, and community impacts of poor quality and inaccessible housing (and cold homes) across the private sector.
- Improve collaboration, coordination and integration of healthcare and housing in the planning, commissioning and delivery of homes and services.
- Attract funding opportunities to support delivery of identified housing development priorities.
- Develop an integrated approach (not limited by existing practice or legislation) to enable people with multiple and complex needs to receive the services they need to change and support them to achieve resilience, health and well being and independence within their communities in Worcestershire.
- Create a simpler and more accessible pathway providing independent help and advice on *all matters* relating to disability and vulnerability, empowering people to make the right choices to enable them to live independently.
- Promote the importance of the housing sector contribution.

OUTCOMES

A good supply of the right housing;

- helps people to live as independently as possible
- helps people to live close to family and community support
- enables choice
- reduces unnecessary demands on services, both business as usual and crisis
- prevents homelessness
- improves peoples health and wellbeing, especially those with the poorest health outcomes
- supports educational attainment, access to employment and the development of a healthy workforce

EVIDENCE GATHERING/CONSULTATION

This Partnership document, the priorities, and actions have been developed through consultation with partner organisations, service providers and through other forms of consultation with residents e.g. Homelessness Customer Survey and the Worcestershire View Point Survey.

Our Evidence

The following background documents contain a detailed analysis of the issues affecting housing and health and were the key documents used to support this Partnership Plan.

- JSNA: Briefing on Homelessness 2015
- JSNA: Briefing on Fuel Poverty 2016
- JSNA: Domestic Abuse and Violence Needs Assessment 2016
- Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016
- Worcestershire Health and Well-being Board Draft Joint Health and Well-being Strategy 2016-2019
- Housing Authority Stock Condition Surveys and Tenancy Strategy Frameworks
- South Worcestershire Development Plan 2016
- North Worcestershire Housing Need Assessment 2014
- Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey May 2015
- Stakeholder Engagement Consultation

- Housing Britain's Future - Some Home Truths: National Housing Federation – 2013 report on the consequences of not providing enough housing to meet the needs of our young people.
<http://www.housing.org.uk/publications/browse/housing-britains-future-somehome-truth>
- Census Data 2011
- <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk>
- An Economic Strategy for Worcestershire 2010 – 2020
- Private Rental Market Statistics 2013/14
- CORE Data 2014/2015
- BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS (2015)
- RSR Guide to Local Rents 2011
- Worcestershire District Profiles
- Housing Benefit Case Load Statistics

RESOURCES

Detailed below are current and future funding sources identified for the provision of housing and housing related support both nationally and locally. This funding is in addition to the core housing/homelessness function provided through the six district housing authorities.

National Funding

- The recent comprehensive spending review has promised a continued Disabled Facilities Grant funding stream through the Better Care Fund for the next 5 years, from £395m in 2015/16 right through to £500m in 19/20, providing a vote of confidence and trust in that what we are doing is preventing pressure on acute services and supporting independent living. With this investment there is a duty amongst stakeholders to administer the fund in an efficient and customer friendly way.
- Since 2010 the number of people regarded as homeless has increased by 33%, 69,000 people are living in temporary accommodation, with more than a million on local authority waiting lists. To help overcome this Government has increased funding to £139m, allocating a further £30m to councils and establishing a £5m fund for the 25 local authorities facing the greatest pressure.
- Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-2021 £4.7bn; Starter Homes: Unlocking the land fund 2016-2020 - £1.2m.
- In October 2016, The Department of Health has announced an investment of £25m over the next two financial years (£10m in 2016/17 and £15m in 2017/18) in technology and housing for people with learning disabilities.

Worcestershire Funding

- Single homeless and childless couples support service funding of £300,000 per annum over three years (subject to future resources).

- Fusion - a housing led Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium, was successfully awarded a £965,200 contract aimed at producing better outcomes for residents in need of help moving into secured paid employment (many of which live in social housing). This programme will commence on the ground in October 2016.
- Worcestershire Young Persons Pathways Workers are jointly funded, until 31 March 2017, by the local housing authorities and Worcestershire County Council who provide a match funding contribution of £70,000.
- With funding via the DCLG, a hospital and prison leavers' project currently operates across the county. In total the project received £242,968 in funding and is due to continue through to April 2017.
- £5M capital funding available from Worcestershire County Council to develop Supported Housing, of which £2.3M currently remains unallocated.

FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

The Plan is a high level document setting out how we will work together to meet the housing and housing related support needs of households in Worcestershire. The Aims have been established within a Government led Health, Housing and Social Care Memorandum of Understanding which has been widened and supported by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership.

This new approach is conditional to the way we work together and the development of a truly integrated approach. Housing has to be recognised as a fundamental component of creating a whole systems approach. The high level strategic actions contained in this plan will be owned and led by the Partnership and identified organisations to create detailed action plans setting out how we will achieve the high level actions and the desired outcomes. The appropriate links will be inserted into this document taking you to each of the project plans relating to the high level actions. The Plan and delivery of the associated actions will be monitored through the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership and through other relevant strategic groups as required.

Appendix Five: Consultation questions and link to survey

We are asking for your views on the new Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan. The new Plan sets out how Housing will work with other organisations to deliver shared priorities.

We need to ensure that our housing is affordable, safe, warm, in good repair and, adapted where necessary to meet the needs of people across the County. The Plan seeks to address the needs of our diverse population who have individual housing and support requirements. Providing the right housing will have other benefits, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children, employment, crime reduction and sustainable communities.

Please take a look at the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan and let us know your views in a short questionnaire using this link:-

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Worcs_Housing_Partnership_Plan.

(Please note, the document is currently in draft format)

The consultation period runs from 13 October 2016 until 22 December 2016. We would ask that you return your comments to us, no later than 9.00am on 22 December 2016.

Questions

Q1 Have we included the right information on National and Local Picture to reflect the reality with regard to housing in Worcestershire? If not, please provide examples of what we have missed.

Q2 Are there any other national or local strategies/policies that we need to take into account? If so, please provide more information about these.

Q3 Do you agree with the joint high level Actions for this Partnership Plan? If not, please provide examples of Actions which you would like to see contained within it.

Q4 Do you have any further comments to make on the Plan, which are not covered in the previous questions?



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Kate Bailey
Date: Thursday 3rd November
Open

Alternative Temporary Accommodation Provision

1. Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider a proposal to deliver alternative temporary accommodation provision for households who are in housing need or homeless within a Council owned empty property.

2. Background

2.1 Where possible, the Council in conjunction with Community Housing Group (CHG) and other third sector providers, seeks to prevent homelessness either by keeping someone in their own home or finding them an alternative. In 2015/16 1169 households were prevented from becoming homeless through a variety of methods. However not all incidences of homelessness can be prevented and in the same period the Council accepted a legal duty to assist 174 households of which 116 households were placed in emergency accommodation.

2.2 The Council has a duty to provide emergency and interim (temporary) accommodation to households where they are eligible, homeless and in priority need, under the Housing Act 1996, Part VII. It also has discretionary powers to accommodate households who are homeless or potentially homeless but not in priority need.

2.3 The Council currently fulfils the duty to provide emergency and interim accommodation through the use of bed and breakfast style facilities in the Wyre Forest, Droitwich and Birmingham. Arrangements are also in place with other accommodation providers including the YMCA in Worcester to accommodate households during prolonged periods of cold temperatures and to fulfil our 'No Second Night Out' provision.

2.4 The accommodation used is procured by the Council to ensure it meets basic standards and is as cost effective as possible, however occasionally where no accommodation is available within the locations mentioned or it isn't suitable to the applicant's particular needs then the Council must use more expensive commercial options. Once procured the accommodation operates on a framework basis with no commitment to a set amount of usage.

2.5 As the current procurement arrangements were coming to an end the Council has recently sought to re-procure B&B accommodation. The Council has difficulty finding private sector providers willing to take on this service and at a

suitably satisfactory condition (only 3 suitable providers eventually came forward). This is due to the impact of welfare reform making it less financially attractive to private landlords to provide this type of accommodation. The B&B accommodation we do use is also used by other Councils and members of the public and therefore demand often outstrips supply. The Council then has to look to more costly and/or out of district placements. Placing households out of district is not ideal for homeless families and can potentially expose the Council to legal challenge if the accommodation is deemed to be unsuitable.

- 2.6 In 2012 the Council took back into its ownership a property at 2 – 3 New Street, Stourport, following the end of a long term lease. The property is vacant but the ground floor was let until recently to a tenant as an art gallery and cafe. Since the property was returned to the Council it incurred an annual cost through Council Tax, utilities and property inspection however the Private Sector Housing team have taken over inspections and served a prohibition notice on the property reducing the ongoing liabilities..
- 2.7 The property is a Grade II listed building and is poorly constructed by modern standards but it does have the potential to support the Council's need for temporary accommodation if converted appropriately.
- 2.8 It is proposed that this accommodation could be used for the provision of short-term accommodation for both statutory and non-statutory households in housing need, thus relieving the situation described above as the Council would have exclusive use of the New Street property and the need for (and cost of) additional units of B&B would be greatly reduced.
- 2.9 Planning permission is required for the change of use of the ground floor to residential and Listed Building Consent is required for the internal works.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Where households are placed in temporary accommodation the Council currently pays around £26.09 for a single person and £52.17 for a family per night (£182.63/365.19 per week). Although a Housing Benefit (HB) claim is made and the household is charged for non-eligible items the current HB subsidy regime only enables the Council to recover approximately 35% of the costs.
- 3.2 The Government's further reforms to welfare benefits from 2018 will cause a further funding gap for council's using B&B in the future. The introduction of the Local Housing Allowance cap may mean the Council gets less than the 90% of the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for the size of the property required by the household.
- 3.3 The roll out of Universal Credit provides further cause for concern in that the housing costs (This replaces the HB applicants receive when they go onto Universal Credit) will be paid directly to the applicant rather than the landlord. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) also don't pay Universal Credit for the first week of a claim and then pay four weekly (in arrears) which means there is a five week delay on the claim.

- 3.4 In the future the claim will only pay the Housing Costs at the value of the accommodation the household was in on the last day of the five weeks and therefore if the claimant has moved within the five week period to cheaper accommodation (e.g. a social rent) then the housing costs will be paid at the lower level.
- 3.5 There is currently a financial gap therefore between what the Council pays in Housing Benefit and what we receive in subsidy (shown below in the column entitle current cost. In addition there will be a potential financial risk to the Council if we are unable to recover costs for emergency accommodation through Housing Costs being paid to an applicant at a lower level than the costs of the accommodation or not paid to the Council by the applicant and this impact is shown in the table below under the Do Nothing column. The final column illustrates the income that could be generated by the proposal.

Table one: The costs of staying the same, doing nothing post 2018 and the alternative proposal to use New Street as temporary accommodation.

	Current cost (if no changes to HB)	Do nothing costs	Proposal – Exp (Income)¹
2017/18	29,900	29,900	(10,820)
2018/19	29,900	51,000	(44,200)
2019/20	29,900	51,000	(41,200)

- 3.6 At the present time some councils also receive a Temporary Accommodation Management Fee for certain types of temporary accommodation other than Bed and Breakfast. This funding is being phased out but the Department of Communities and Local Government have indicated that there may be the possibility of additional grant funding to contribute to the revenue costs of temporary accommodation. This grant funding is potentially available to all Local Housing Authorities for a wider range of homeless and homeless prevention related services/activities and will be paid directly on an annual basis, rather than through Housing Benefit claims. The distribution formula and allocation is likely to be announced in November. For the purposes of the financial modelling we have assumed a continuation of the temporary accommodation management fee at the current rate.
- 3.7 The Private Sector Housing team have undertaken a survey of the property and developed an outline specification for the building to be converted into 11 units of bedsit style rooms with a shared kitchen, dining and office area. This proposal has been costed up to get an estimate for the capital works and Snape, the Council’s contractors, have also produced an estimate based on original plans not including the ground floor and basement .Officers will liaise with Snape for a further quote.
- 3.8 In addition to capital works there will be architect fees, planning application related expenses and project management costs estimated at

¹ Gross of any other indirect costs arising from the Council’s overheads

£10,000 which will be capitalised. The total cost shown in table two below and includes a contingency budget.

- 3.9 The cost of furnishing and providing floor coverings for the property will be met from an existing budget for welfare funding which includes an element for furniture etc for residents who move into a new home.
- 3.10 Officers will also need to explore the need to purchase/use of an appropriate financial software package to manage and monitor rent payments and are currently working with IT to procure an appropriate system (the costs included in the model are based on initial soft market testing).
- 3.11 The accommodation will be managed by staff within the Strategic Housing Services team, with costs met through reallocation of existing budgets.
- 3.12 Officers have considered alternative proposals for the building including the alternative of borrowing capital to finance the project, the “do nothing” proposal and converting the property into three, two bedroom flats for rent. These alternatives have been ruled out as they are not financially advantageous to the Council.
- 3.12 The income for the scheme has been based on a 75% occupancy rate. This rate has been identified by considering previous usage of B&B. However it may be possible for the Council to “sell” spare capacity to neighbouring authorities who currently use B&B in Wyre Forest. There will be a continued requirement to use B&B for placements that are required out of the district due to personal circumstances / requirements or when demand outstrips supply but these costs have been included. A full breakdown of income and expenditure is shown in Appendix One.

4. Options

- 4.1 The committee may wish to:
 - 4.1.1 Recommend to Cabinet that they approve the provision of alternative temporary accommodation at 2-3 New Street, Stourport
 - 4.1.2 To recommend any amendments that should be made to this proposal.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Corporate Leadership Team, Chief Finance Officer and Solicitor to the Council have been consulted with regarding this proposal.

6. Related Decisions

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 7.1 Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2010 - 16

8. Implications

8.1 Resources: It is proposed that the cost of undertaking the conversion work is met in the following way;

Table two: Source of capital for the project

Value (£)	Source
69,000	Existing capital programme for affordable housing
50,000	Evergreen Investment Fund
40,000	Discretionary Housing Pot (including project management costs)
43,060	Right to buy receipts received in 2015/16
65,000	Better Care Fund (for level access showers / kitchens)
267,060	Total Capital Funding

8.2 Equalities: Not applicable

8.3 Partnership working: We have made CHG aware of our plans as their staff will be responsible for identifying suitable households for the scheme.

8.4 Human Rights: Not applicable

8.5 E-Government: Not applicable

8.6 Transformation: Not applicable

9. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken. There are no negative impacts as a result of this policy on any of the protected characteristic groups.

10. Wards affected

10.1 All wards.

11. Appendices

11.1 Proposal showing income and expenditure if using existing capital

12. Background Papers

N/A

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Appendix One: Proposal utilising existing available capital (no borrowing)

	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
Revenue Costs				
Expenditure	0	5,000	7,500	10,000
Furnishing	0	15,000	1,500	2,000
Project Manager	*4,000	*6,000	0	0
Council Tax	0	6,300	0	0
Utilities	0	5,250	9,000	9,000
Staffing costs to run facility	0	7,500	10,000	10,000
Loss of Interest on Capital Receipts	200	1,580	1,580	1,580
Software - TA income recovery module	0	5,000	1,500	1,500
Costs of emergency B&B (HB unrecoverable subsidy)	29,900	18,880	5,000	5,000
Total Expenditure	34,100	70,510	36,080	39,080
Income/Funding				
Earmarked Reserve (Furniture)	0	(15,000)	0	0
Rental Income	0	(31,530)	(42,040)	(42,040)
Additional top-up if available	0	(19,300)	(25,740)	(25,740)
Service Charges (non-HB eligible)	0	(2,000)	(2,500)	(2,500)
Base budget contribution to staffing costs	0	(7,500)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Capitalisation	*(4,000)	*(6,000)	0	0
Total Income	(4,000)	(81,330)	(80,280)	(80,280)
Net Revenue Position	30,100	(10,820)	(44,200)	(41,200)
Existing Budget Including Effect of Welfare Reform	29,900	29,900	51,000	51,000

Net Savings/Additional Income	200	(40,720)	(95,200)	(92,200)
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* These pay costs will be capitalised, but are shown above for completeness. They will be coded direct to the Capital Programme



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Paul Bayliss
Interim Planning Policy Manager

Date: 3rd November 2016
Open

Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review: Revised Local Development Scheme (Project Plan 2016 - 2019)

1. Recommendation

1.1 The Committee may wish to:

- a. endorse and recommend to Cabinet for Adoption the proposed Revised Local Development Scheme 2016-19 (November 2016) set out in Appendix 1;

or

- b. provide comments on or amended proposals on the Local Development Scheme (November 2016) for the Cabinet to consider with view to subsequent Adoption.

1.2 Upon Adoption the Revised Local Development Scheme 2016-19 (November 2016) is placed on the website

2. Summary

2.1 In June 2016 Cabinet approved a Revised version of the Local Development Scheme which anticipated the Preferred Option consultation taking place in January/February 2017 and Adoption of the Revised Local Plan in September 2018.

2.2 Even though the current LDS has only recently been adopted by the Council it has now become apparent that due to the implications of the emerging evidence base and recent legislation (particularly the Housing and Planning Act 2016) more time will be required to fully assess the implications of these factors into the preparation of a consultation-ready Preferred Option for the Plan which addressed the Districts needs in a sustainable manner.

- 2.3 This paper sets out to inform Committee Members of proposals for the revision of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Project Plan) which guides the future production of the District's Local Plans. This will require Cabinet approval in November 2016.
- 2.4 This paper is based on a briefing paper presented to the Local Plans Review Panel on 31 October 2016 who recommended that it should proceed for Cabinet approval.

3. Background

- 3.1 Councils are required to publish up-to-date information on their progress in preparing their Local Plans against the LDS. Wyre Forest District Council publishes its LDS on the Planning Policy web pages of the Council's website.
- 3.2 The LDS was last reviewed in June 2016. Since then the following key areas of progress have been:
- i. The collation and interpretation of the necessary evidence base for the Plan Review to be considered sound is still in progress. This includes early non-published findings from, for example, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Green Belt Review.;
 - ii. The policy implications of the Housing and Planning Act (2016) have been considered particularly in respect of the model of provision of affordable housing and opportunities that the Act may offer for the regeneration of the District;
 - iii. A comprehensive assessment of sites (including site visits) has taken place;
 - iv. Early engagement with external partners on site viability has been undertaken;
 - v. The examination of the Churchill and Blakedown Neighbourhood Plan is in progress;
 - vi. Early conversations with Bewdley Town Council and their consultant have taken place resulting in the publication of a timetable for the Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan being published.
 - vii. The Development Obligations SPD has been Adopted by Cabinet.
- 3.3 Officers therefore consider it is timely to reassess the project plan to focus resources on new priorities for reviewing our Development Plan during the 2016-19 time period. It is important to keep the LDS up-to-date to help provide certainty to local stakeholders, developers and communities to assist in District wide regeneration.

4. Key Issues

- 4.1 These remain largely as described in the June 2016 paper to Cabinet.
- 4.2 There are however two key areas which have led officers to the conclusion that, whilst far from ideal, a short delay in the Preferred Option stage should be implemented. These are described below.

- **Housing and Planning Act (2016)**. The whole area of Government's Housing and Planning Policy is in a degree of flux. It is therefore especially important that the policies proposed, are consistent with Government Policy and are sufficient to satisfy the full housing requirement of the District;
- The Housing and Planning Act (2016) additionally proposes a number of new policy tools which need to be fully integrated into the District's policies in order to help facilitate the regeneration of the Wyre Forest.
- The **evidence base** coming forward is demonstrating that there are a number of significant challenges to the District along with some very significant opportunities. It is therefore necessary to ensure sufficient time for these to be properly considered before the Council's Preferred Option is published and consulted upon.

4.3 As before the need to avoid main holiday seasons (particularly Christmas/New Year and Summer holiday period) in the timing of consultation periods (Preferred Option, Pre-submission and Main Modifications) has been considered.

5. The Revised Local Development Scheme 2016-19

5.1 A Draft Revised LDS (which covers the 2016-19 time period), is attached at Appendix 1 to this report and the current LDS (2016) can be viewed on the Council's website at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/planningpolicy.

5.2 The key proposed changes in this Revised LDS are in summary:

- Progress the review of the Core Strategy and production of a District Wide Local Plan with the publication of a Preferred Option for a 6-week consultation in June 2017.
- The inclusion of a timetable for progressing the Bewdley Neighbourhood Development Plan
- All changes in the document (compared to the June 2016 version) are detailed at paragraph 1.2 of the LDS document.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Officers consider that the revised Project Plan attached at Appendix 1 to this paper provides a realistic programme on which to focus the Council's objectives for development planning over the next three year period. There will be some significant challenges ahead, particularly with regard to the delivery of the objectively assessment housing need along with the necessary and commensurate development required to ensure balanced growth. Additional challenges for the Council may also arise from the Duty to Co-operate requirements. The increasing

interest in developing Neighbourhood Development Plans within the District also has implications for resources within the Planning Policy Team.

7. Next Steps

7.1 Subject to Cabinet approval in November, the Revised LDS will be published on the District Council's website.

8. Options for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8.1 The Committee may wish to:

- a. endorse and recommend to Cabinet for Adoption the proposed Revised Local Development Scheme 2016-19 as set out in Appendix 1; or
- b. provide comments on or amended proposals on the Local Development Scheme for the Cabinet to consider with view to subsequent Adoption.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Revised Local Development Scheme (Project Plan) 2016-19 (November 2016)

10. Background Papers

- Wyre Forest District Revised Local Development Scheme (June 2016)

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Wyre Forest District

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REVISED PROJECT PLAN

(LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME)

2016-2019

November 2016

(Revised version of the June 2016 edition)

For more information contact:

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Planning Policy Section

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Wyre Forest District Council

JARGON GUIDE

AMR **Authority Monitoring Report**

An annually produced document which sets out the progress made in achieving the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme as well as measuring the effectiveness of the development plan policies.

CIL **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The Planning Act 2008 enables local planning authorities to charge a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in its area. The CIL must be set at an appropriate level to help fund strategic infrastructure for the Council and the local community to support planned growth, but not too high to render growth commercially unviable.

CS **Community Strategy**

Local Authorities are required by the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare this, with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of their areas.

LP **Local Plan**

Collective term given to all statutory documents that form the Development Plan for the District. These currently comprise of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan, Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and a Policies Map. This portfolio of documents will be replaced by a single (integrated) Local Plan document when the Review is completed.

SA **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**

A tool for appraising policies to ensure that they balance social, economic and environmental development objectives which incorporates the requirements of the 2001 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. The 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires SA to be undertaken for all Local Development Documents.

SCI Statement of Community Involvement

This sets out the planning authority's proposals for involving the local community in plan-making. It is not a DPD but it is, however, subject to independent examination.

SPD Supplementary Planning Document

These will cover a range of issues and expand on the policies contained within Local Plans. They are, however, not part of the development plan and will not be subject to independent examination.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT PLAN

1.1 This project plan (the Local Development Scheme) provides up to date information for stakeholders and the general public about the status and coverage of Development Plan Documents and the Council's intention for their future preparation. It sets out:

- a) Which Planning Policies are currently in force in the District
- b) What the Council's intentions are for the plan making framework over the next three years to 2019

1.2 Since the previous version of this document was only prepared and published six months ago the bulk of the document remains unaffected. There are however updates to this document in respect of :

- Table 1: Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents
- Paragraphs 3.2 - 3.3 – Progressing the Local Development Framework
- Paragraph 5.1 – District wide Local Plan
- Paragraph 6.1 – Supplementary Planning Documents
- Paragraph 8.6 – Churchill and Blakedown Neighbourhood Plan
- Paragraph 8.7 – Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan
- Appendix A – REVISED Programme for the preparation of the Local Plan
- Appendix A – Programme for production of Developer Contributions SPD – DELETED
- Appendix A – Programme for preparation of Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan - NEW

1.3 The project plan includes information relating to timescales and resources, the content of new plans and their scope and coverage.

Background

1.3 Councils should continue to prepare and maintain a "Local Development Scheme"(project plan), specifying the documents that will make up their

Development Plan; their subject matter and area and the timetable for their preparation and revision.

- 1.4 Under changes brought about through the Localism Act 2011, aimed at simplifying the planning system, Councils are no longer required to submit the Local Development Scheme to the Secretary of State, but they must publish up-to-date information on their progress in preparing Local Plans against the project plan.

Key changes introduced to the LDS in this review

- 1.5 The District Council's first LDS was formally submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2005 and came into effect on 27th March 2005. Since then the Project Plan has progressively been refined through a process of monitoring and review. The last review was undertaken during July 2015; this document provides a review of timescales to focus on the production of a single Local Plan for the District.
- 1.6 The key changes introduced as part of this review are the reprogramming of the timetable to take account of the updating of the evidence base, the review of the Core Strategy and the production of the District's new Local Plan. It also provides an update on the Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 1.7 Since the last LDS Review, the Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan has been made. Three more Town and Parish Councils are now progressing a Neighbourhood Plan and further information is included on these.

2. CURRENT DISTRICT LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 2.1 At present the main Planning Policies for the District are contained in the following documents:

- ❖ Wyre Forest Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010)
- ❖ Wyre Forest Adopted Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (July 2013)
- ❖ Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013)
- ❖ Worcestershire Adopted Waste Core Strategy (2012)

- ❖ Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Saved Policies
- ❖ Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan (September 2014)

Wyre Forest Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010)

2.2 The Core Strategy was formally adopted by the Council in December 2010 following an Independent Examination by a Planning Inspector. This is the key strategic level document for the District and sets out the broad strategy and vision for development within the District up until 2026. The Core Strategy was adopted prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework and carried forward the housing, employment and retail targets allocated to the District in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The WMRSS was revoked in 2013 and Local Authorities are now required to set their own development plan targets.

Wyre Forest Adopted Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (July 2013)

2.3 The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan was formally adopted by the Council in July 2013 following Independent Examination which included a consistency assessment against the National Planning Policy Framework policies. This contains the detailed site allocations and their associated policies in order to meet the overarching Development Strategy. It also contains a number of generic Development Management policies.

Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013)

2.4 The Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan was formally adopted by the Council in July 2013 following Independent Examination which included a consistency assessment against the National Planning Policy Framework policies. This contains detailed policies for sites within the central area of Kidderminster and has a strong focus on regeneration.

Supplementary Planning Documents/Supplementary Guidance

2.5 The District Council has found it helpful to prepare additional guidance to further clarify some of the Local Plan policies. These documents have been formally adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and as such can be afforded material consideration.

2.6 Worcestershire County Council has also produced Supplementary Guidance in relation to Education Contributions, Landscape Character Assessment and a Green Infrastructure Strategy. These have been endorsed by the District Council and are therefore a material consideration against which planning applications should be assessed.

2.7 The table below relates to existing Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents for the Wyre Forest District. They are capable of being a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Table 1: Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Document Title	Current Status	Brief Description	Relevant DPD
Wyre Forest Cycling Strategy	Adopted SPG (2002)	Proposed cycle route network & promotion of cycling	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP
Shop Front Design Guide within Historic Areas	Adopted SPG (2004)	Design Guidance for new, replacements or alterations to existing shop fronts in historic settings.	- Site Allocations
Severn Road Development Brief	Adopted SPG (2001)	Redevelopment Proposals for three sites on the eastside of Stourport on Severn town centre.	- Site Allocations
Bridge Street Basins Link Development Brief	Adopted SPD (2005)	Redevelopment proposals for a site on the east side of Stourport-on-Severn town centre linking Bridge Street and the Canal Basins.	- Site Allocations
Planning Obligations	Adopted SPD (September 2016)	Sets out the District Council's requirements for developer contributions.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP
Churchfields Masterplan	Adopted SPD (2011)	Development brief for Churchfields area of Kidderminster as a key regeneration opportunity.	- Core Strategy - KCAAP
Landscape Character Assessment	Adopted SG (Dec 2011)	Detailed guidance on landscape character assessment for Worcestershire produced by WCC.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations
Affordable Housing	Adopted SPD (July 2014)	Detailed guidance on applying the District's Affordable Housing policies.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP
Design Guidance	Adopted SPD (June 2015)	Guidance for applicants and developers on design and local distinctiveness.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP

3. REVIEW OF THE ADOPTED CORE STRATEGY AND PREPARATION OF A DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

3.1 The remainder of this Project Plan will consider the preparation of new Local Plans which will form the Development Plan and these are set out in more detail in Appendix A (Programme Management Timetable) and Appendix B (Profiles & milestones). The proposed Documents that follow are sub-divided into five main categories, namely:

- ❖ Statement of Community Involvement
- ❖ Local Plans;
- ❖ Supplementary Planning Documents.
- ❖ Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule
- ❖ Neighbourhood Development Plans

Progressing the Local Development Framework.

3.2 Since the last review of the Local Development Scheme in July 2015, the Council has made the following progress in meeting its milestones:

- Completion of the Local Plan “Issues and Options (September 2015)” public consultation;
- “Issues and Options” consultation responses analysed and considered alongside Objective Assessment of Housing Needs and Employment Land Review outputs;
- Retail Needs Study received;
- Strategic Flood Risk and Water Cycle Study commissioned;
- Development of Preferred Option commenced;
- Need identified for further evidence work to be initiated;
- Facilitating progress on Neighbourhood Plan for Churchill and Blakedown;
- Bewdley Town Council and Upper Arley Parish Council designated as lead bodies
- Planning Obligations SPD public consultation completed in February 2016. This was Adopted by Cabinet in September 2016.

3.3 During 2016-19 we anticipate that our resources will be concentrated on:

- Preparation of the Local Plan “Preferred Option” to involve the review and revision where necessary of core strategy and all policies and allocations in the current Local Plan portfolio. Anticipated consultation to commence in June 2017. .
- Progressing work on evidence base studies during 2016/17 to inform the Core Strategy Review and production of the Local Plan. This is likely to include a review of the Green Belt, a revised Infrastructure Delivery Plan and an updated assessment of open spaces, playing pitch and built facilities (eg swimming pools, sports halls) arising from and required to support any additional proposed development contained within the Preferred Option.
- Early analysis of Preferred Option consultation responses and initial preparation of proposed submission document;
- Continue to facilitate progress on Neighbourhood Plan for Churchill and Blakedown. The Plan was submitted in April 2016 with the examination commencing in summer 2016. The Referendum date has yet to be set.
- Facilitate progress on the Neighbourhood Plans for Bewdley and Upper Arley.
- Complete the Planning Obligations SPD in 2016/17
- Undertake further viability assessment work and consider potential impacts of a CIL Charging Tariff within the District.

4. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)

4.1 The District Council’s first Statement of Community Involvement was formally adopted by the Council in April 2006. In February 2013 the District Council adopted a Revised Statement of Community Involvement in order to reflect changes to the regulations governing the preparation of Local Plans, the introduction of neighbourhood planning and changes to consultation on planning applications. The Revised Statement of Community Involvement provides a set of clear guidelines and minimum standards that the community and interest groups can expect when Local Plans are being prepared. It provides guidance on how bodies carrying our neighbourhood planning should undertake consultation and sets out the methods of consultation the District Council will use

when undertaking its statutory duties in relation to neighbourhood planning. The document also clarifies the community participation and public consultation arrangements for the determination of Planning Applications.

5. LOCAL PLANS

2016 to 2019

District wide Local Plan

5.1 During 2015 we commenced a review of the Adopted Core Strategy. This started with an Issues and Options consultation in September 2015: this workstream will take the opportunity to include the Site Allocations and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and combine into a single District-wide Local Plan rather than continuing with three separate Development Plan Documents. This work, along with the fresh evidence generated within this process, will directly influence the development of a Local Plan “Preferred Option”. The original intention had been to consult upon this document in early 2017; however, due to the complexity of the emerging evidence base and implications of new Government legislation (especially arising from the Housing and Planning Act 2016) it has been necessary to slightly defer the publication of the Preferred Option for consultation until June 2017. The key amendment to this document (Appendix 1) reflects this.

6. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SPDs)

6.1 SPDs provide further detail, guidance and clarification on specific areas of planning policy and development management within the Wyre Forest District. Planning Policy Section has co-ordinated a review of the Planning Obligations SPD the revised version being Adopted by Cabinet in September 2016.

6.2 The need for further SPDs will be monitored and kept under review during the 2016-19 time period and up to date information will be included in the Project Plan as and when necessary. Some of the Supplementary Planning Guidance relates to sites which are currently being developed out and will therefore be subject to review in the next LDS as developments are completed and they are no longer required.

7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 7.1 The District Council is currently still considering the potential to bring forward a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule for the area in consultation with the other Worcestershire Authorities. CIL would allow the authority to raise funds from new developments and rates should be set in consultation with local communities and developers and will provide certainty up front about how much money developers will be expected to contribute.
- 7.2 Charging Authorities must produce a charging schedule setting out the levy's rate in their area, which must strike an appropriate balance between the desirability of funding infrastructure and the potential effects of the levy upon the economic viability of development across their area.
- 7.3 To progress a tariff we will require up to date evidence about the effect of the levy on economic viability to demonstrate that any proposed rate strikes an appropriate balance. The level of CIL charge must only be set on the basis of viability. A decision was made by Cabinet in 2013 to postpone progression on CIL and to consider it in line with the Local Plan Review. This position will be reviewed alongside the on-going development of the Preferred Option of the Local Plan throughout 2016.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- 8.1 Neighbourhood Planning is central to the Government's Localism Agenda. The right to produce Neighbourhood Development Plans is introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
- 8.2 As the Local Planning Authority we must provide advice and assistance to Parish and Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums in unparished areas, should they wish to bring forward a Neighbourhood Development Plan/Order for their area. We will take an active role in advising and supporting community groups, sharing evidence and information. This is proving to be a considerable draw on the

resources of the Planning Policy Section going forward and will need to be kept under review with regard to allocating additional staff resources to this function.

8.3 Under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations it is the District Council's role to:

1. Determine applications for neighbourhood areas
2. Publish Neighbourhood Plans which are submitted to the District Council and notify relevant bodies of their receipt.
3. Organise an independent examination for a Neighbourhood Development Plan/Order
4. Organise a Local Referendum
5. Make the Neighbourhood Development Plan as part of our Local Plan if a majority "yes" vote is secured at the referendum.

8.4 The District Council has four designated Neighbourhood Areas within the District:

- Chaddesley Corbett Parish
- Churchill and Blakedown Parish
- Bewdley Parish
- Upper Arley Parish

8.5 Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council began work on their Neighbourhood Development Plan in 2012. The plan was subject to independent examination and a referendum in which a majority yes vote was secured. It was made in September 2014 and forms part of the District's Development Plan.

8.6 Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Neighbourhood Area was approved in April 2013. The Plan was Submitted on 25 April 2016. A date for the Referendum has yet to be set.

8.7 Bewdley Town Council has recently applied to have the area designated for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The opportunity provided by this LDS Update has enabled us to publish the proposed timetable for the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan and it is anticipated that the Town Council will work towards a referendum in May 2018.

8.8 Upper Arley Parish Council has also recently been designated as a Neighbourhood Area. No formal timetable has yet been produced however, it is anticipated that the Parish Council will work towards a referendum being held in May 2018.

APPENDIX A - Programme for the preparation and review of Development Plan

Local Plan – Revised November 2016

	2015												2016												2017											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Proposed LDS (2016)	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	6	6	7	7	7	7

	2018												2019											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Proposed LDS (2016)	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	11	12	12	12	13	13	14										

Key

No/Colour	Stage
1	Evidence Base preparation and assessment of needs
2	Cabinet approval for Issues and Options consultation
3	Issues and Options Consultation
4	Consideration of consultation responses and development of Preferred Option
5	Cabinet approval of Preferred Options consultation
6	Preferred Options consultation
7	Consideration of consultation responses and development of Publication Plan

No/Colour	Stage
8	Cabinet approval of Publication consultation
9	Pre-submission Public Consultation
10	Consideration of consultation responses and finalisation of submission plan
11	Submission to Secretary of State
12	Independent Examination and Proposed Modifications consultation
13	Receipt of Inspector's report
14	Council Adoption of local plan

APPENDIX A - Programme for the preparation and review of Development Plan

Churchill and Blakedown Neighbourhood Plan

	2015												2016											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Churchill and Blakedown Neighbourhood Plan											1				2	3	4		5		6			

No/Colour	Stage
1	Pre submission consultation (Reg 14)
2	Consultation on SA scoping report
3	Submission of Neighbourhood Plan to WFDC (Reg 15)
4	WFDC publicise Neighbourhood Plan (Reg 16)
5	Examination of Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 18)
6	Redraft plan in relation to Inspectors comments and arrange referendum
7	Referendum
8	Neighbourhood Plan adopted by WFDC (Reg 19/20)

At the time of publication of this timetable update the Inspector's Report and its implications for the timetable for subsequent stages were under consideration by the Parish. These details will be confirmed as soon as possible.

APPENDIX A - Programme for the preparation and review of Development Plan

Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan

	2016												2017												2018												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
Bewdley Neighbourhood Plan						1	1								2	2			3	3		4	5		6		7		8								

Key

No/Colour	Stage
1	Issues and Options Survey/Consultation
2	Policies and Sites – Initial Consultation
3	Pre-Submission Consultation (Reg 14)
4	Submission of Neighbourhood Plan to WFDC (Reg 15)
5	WFDC publicise Neighbourhood Plan (Reg 16)
6	Examination of Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 18)
7	Referendum
8	Neighbourhood Plan adopted by WFDC (Reg 19/20)

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

1. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Overview:

- ❖ Role & Coverage: Sets out how the District Council will involve stakeholders and the local community in the preparation of all Local Development Documents and the consideration of planning applications.
- ❖ Coverage: District-wide
- ❖ Status: Non Development Plan LDD
- ❖ Conformity: Regulations and requirements set out by Government and the District Council's Consultation Strategy 2004

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended

Key Milestones:

- REVIEWED: FEBRUARY 2013
- MONITOR THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT AND REVIEW IF SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES OCCUR.

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

2. CORE STRATEGY

Overview:

- ❖ Role & Coverage: Strategic document setting out the vision and spatial planning framework for the District up to 2026. Includes generic strategy and core policies on subjects including housing; climate change and the environment; economy, town centres, local distinctiveness and transport infrastructure.
- ❖ Coverage: District-wide
- ❖ Status: Local Plan
- ❖ Conformity: Regulations and requirements set out by Government National Planning Policy

Key Milestones:

- ADOPTED: DECEMBER 2010
- MONITOR AND REVIEW THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS.
- REVIEW TO COMMENCE IN 2015 FOLLOWING EVIDENCE BASE COLLATION AND RENEWAL IN 2014.
- ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION COMPLETED OCTOBER 2015.
- ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE BASE COMMISSIONS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT PREPARATION OF PREFERRED OPTION – COMPLETION OF PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT BY JUNE 2017

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

3. SITE ALLOCATIONS AND POLICIES LOCAL PLAN

Overview:

- ❖ **Role & Coverage:** Identifies the specific sites that will provide for the District's development needs in the period up to 2026, in conformity with the Adopted Core Strategy. It will also designate specific areas for protection/safeguarding during the plan period and include some generic development control policies.
- ❖ **Coverage:** District-wide
- ❖ **Status:** Local Plan
- ❖ **Conformity:** Regulations and requirements set out by Government
National Planning Policy
Core Strategy

Key Milestones:

- ADOPTED: JULY 2013
- MONITOR AND REVIEW THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS. INCORPORATE INTO DISTRICT WIDE LOCAL PLAN IN PARALLEL WITH CORE STRATEGY REVIEW.
- WILL BE REVIEWED AS INTEGRAL PART OF PREFERRED OPTION PREPARATION.

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

4. KIDDERMINSTER CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN

Overview:

Role & Coverage: To provide a detailed planning policy framework, which sets out the strategy and policies for the development of the town's central area, and helps to achieve this regeneration. The KCAAP will help to stimulate regeneration and investment in the town by providing certainty and confidence for potential investors, as well as providing the basis for co-ordinating the actions of a range of public and private sector partners.

- ❖ Coverage: Central Kidderminster including the Town Centre, Horsefair, Comberton Hill, Mill Street and Park Lane.
- ❖ Status: Local Plan
- ❖ Conformity: Regulations and requirements set out by Government National Planning Policy
Core Strategy

Key Milestones:

- ADOPTED: JULY 2013
- MONITOR AND REVIEW THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS. INCORPORATE INTO DISTRICT WIDE LOCAL PLAN IN PARALLEL WITH CORE STRATEGY REVIEW.
- WILL BE REVIEWED AS INTEGRAL PART OF PREFERRED OPTION PREPARATION.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

FEEDBACK FROM CABINET MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016

Agenda
Item No.

DECISION

7.1 Revised Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, September 8th 2016

Decision:

The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document as attached at Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be adopted.

9.1 Recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 8th September 2016

- Health and Wellbeing Plan 2016-20

Decision: The Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan 2016-20, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be approved.

- Climate Change Action Plan 2016-17

Decision: The Climate Change Action Plan 2016-17 as set out at Appendix 2 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be approved.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016-2017

June 2016

“How are we doing?” Q4 update (Housing and Planning)
Tracking Recommendations from 2015-2016
Temporary Accommodation Policy
A Strategy for Enabling Business Growth and Enterprise
Local Development Scheme

July 2016

Nominations for the Treasury Management Review Panel
Housing Assistance Policy
Kidderminster Eastern Gateway Development Framework

September 2016

“How are we doing?” Q1 update (Enabling)
Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Backward
Look 2015/16
Section 106 Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Health Action Plan
Climate Change Action Plan
Recommendations from S106 Monies Review Panel
DFG’s Presentation
Safer West Mercia Plan Consultation

October 2016 – Cancelled

November 2016

“How are we doing?” Q2 update (Business and People)
Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid Year
Report 2016/17
Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review 2017/18
Report on the Worcestershire Partnership Plan
Alternative Temporary Accommodation Provision
Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review: Revised Local Development Scheme (Project
Plan 2016 - 2019)
EXEMPT - Industrial Units Investment Business Case

December 2016

Review of District Car Parks 2016

January 2017

February 2017

Treasury Management Service Strategy 2017/18
“How are we doing?” Q3 update (Place)

March 2017

Annual Crime & Disorder Review

April 2017