

**Open**

# **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

## **Agenda**

**6pm**  
**Thursday, 2nd March 2017**  
**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](mailto:louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)**

Wyre Forest District Council

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2nd March 2017

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Appointment of Substitute Members</b>  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.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interests by Members</b>  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.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes</b>  To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd February 2017.	7
<b>5.</b>	<b>Worcestershire Partnership Plan</b>  To consider a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager on the consultation responses and amendments to the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan that has been developed by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership.	11
<b>6.</b>	<b>Initiating a Collective Energy Switching Scheme</b>  To consider a report from the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer which seeks permission for Wyre Forest District Council to initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme (CESS) on behalf of residents.	63



7.	<b>Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4</b>  To consider a report from the Planning Policy Manager which provides an overview of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 consultation documents.	68
8.	<b>Annual Crime and Disorder Review 2016/17</b>  To receive a report from the Community Safety & Partnerships Officer which provides an update on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) during 2016/17.	77
9.	<b>Changes to Community Housing Group Community Member Nominations</b>  To receive a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place which advises of changes that are expected which impact on the Council's approach to nominating Council Members to the Community Member positions on Community Housing Group (CHG).	90
10.	<b>Feedback from Cabinet</b>  To note the content of the Cabinet action list, following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2017.	97
11.	<b>Work Programme</b>  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.	98
12.	<b>Press Involvement</b>  To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.	
13.	<b>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.</b>	
14.	<b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b>  To consider passing the following resolution:  "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".	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

15.	<b>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.</b>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY 2017 (6PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), M Rayner (Vice-Chairman), J R Desmond, P Dyke, N Gale, K Henderson, A T Hingley, N Knowles, D Little and S J Williams.

**Observers**

Councillors: J Baker, I Hardiman, J A Hart, N Martin, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow and J D Smith.

**OS.60      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S J Walker.

**OS.61      Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor N Knowles was appointed as a substitute for Councillor S J Walker.

**OS.62      Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**OS.63      Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**OS.64      How Are We Doing? Performance Update**

The Committee received a report from the Business Improvement Officer which updated Members on the performance of the Council for quarter 3 (from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016).

Members were led through the report and considered each page of the appendices in turn. The additional update reports relating to Bewdley Museum and Anti Social Behaviour were welcomed. Members acknowledged the hard work undertaken by the team at the Museum.

Councillor T L Onslow entered the meeting at this point, (6.08pm).

**Agreed: The progress in performance for quarter 3 be noted.**

**OS.65**

**Treasury Management Strategy 2017-18**

The Committee received a report from the Chief Financial Officer which provided Members with background information on the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code), and sought approval for the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statements.

The Chief Financial Officer tabled an update to pages 44 and 70 of the report. The update reflected a revision to the limit for the Council's back, following advice from the Council's appointed external Treasury Management Advisors, Capita. The update was endorsed by the Treasury Management Review Panel at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017.

The Chief Financial Officer led Members through the report and advised that this was the final of the 3 statutory reports which would be presented to the Committee in the current municipal year.

The Chairman of the Treasury Management Review Panel, Councillor F M Oborski MBE, advised that the report had been fully scrutinised by the Panel and moved the recommendations for approval. She was pleased to report that there was an increase in the number of Members who attended the training which was carried out by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors, Capita.

A discussion ensued about the importance of Members attending the training sessions as the Council was facing a challenging financial future and was exploring different and innovative ways of working. Therefore, it was essential that Members who were charged with governance and scrutiny responsibilities took advantage of the training provided.

The Chief Financial Officer advised that additional training for Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be programmed in for the next municipal year.

**Agreed: Recommend to Council to:**

- 1. Approve the restated Prudential Indicators and Limits for the financial years 2017-18 to 2019-20 included in Appendix 3. These will be revised for the February 2017 Council meeting, as per paragraph 7.3 of this report, following any changes to the Capital Programme brought about as part of the budget process other than those proposed by Cabinet on 20th December 2016.**
- 2. Approve the updated Treasury Management and Investment Policy and Strategy Statements for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 (the associated Prudential Indicators are included in Appendix 3 and the detailed criteria is included in Section 10 and Appendix 5).**
- 3. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement that sets out the Council's policy on MRP included in Appendix 1.**
- 4. Approve the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator included in Appendix 3.**

**OS.66 Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation**

The Committee received a presentation from Worcestershire County Council's Transport Planning Manager and Transport Strategy Team Leader, on the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) Consultation.

Members were led through a power point presentation and advised that the LTP was a statutory document which all Local Transport Authorities were required to produce, deliver and maintain under the Transport Act (2000) and the Local Transport Act (2008).

The Transport Planning Manager advised that the LTP was a strategic document which contained high-level detail only. He added that the current plan was adopted in February 2011 and since that time there had been major political, social and economic change. The refresh would enable the LTP to be readjusted to match the County Council's growth ambitions and the District's Local Plan Review.

A robust and lengthy debate ensued and several Members expressed concern that issues including improvements to bus services, rail halts and traffic congestion were not being included. Members felt there was a need to engage with both Local Enterprise Partnership's to address concerns about the overall transport funding. The Transport Strategy Team Leader outlined a number of constraints and limitations of the LTP and advised that the County Council had limited influence over the provision of bus services as the majority of them were provided by private operators.

Councillor T L Onslow left the meeting at 7.33pm.

The Planning Policy Consultant advised that the District Council had a good working relationship with the County Council and a report setting out the Council's response to the consultation would be presented at the March meeting of the Overview and Committee, for approval by Cabinet. He added that the response would include concerns raised by Members and would support many of the strategic schemes to attract investment and partnership working within the District.

**Agreed:**

- **The content of the presentation be noted.**
- **The Principal Committee and Member Services Officer to circulate a copy of the presentation to Members.**

**OS.67 Lion Fields, Kidderminster – Development Proposals**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Economic Development & Regeneration – North Worcestershire, which set out the next steps for the Council in bringing forward re-development proposals for 'Parcel 1' of Lion Fields, which forms part of the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway Development Framework.

The Head of Economic Development & Regeneration led Members through the report and advised that the Council had taken active steps to demolish the former Glades Leisure Centre building and prepare the site for re-development. He added

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

that the demolition of the building would increase the attractiveness of the site to developers and give a clear message that the regeneration of Lion Fields was underway.

Members were reminded that the Council set out its aspiration to attract a cinema and leisure hub onto Parcel 1 in the Development Framework, and the developer procurement option would provide greater certainty and control to the Council.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:**

**The 'restrictive' procurement process be used to procure a developer to deliver the Council's ambitions for Parcel 1 of Lion Fields.**

#### **OS.68 Feedback from Cabinet**

**Agreed: The content of the Cabinet decision list following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016 be noted.**

#### **OS.69 Work Programme**

The Committee considered the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. Members were reminded to submit any suggestions for future scrutiny items to the Chairman.

**Agreed: The work programme be noted.**

#### **OS.70 Press Involvement**

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

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.13pm.



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Kate Bailey  
Date: Thursday 2 March 2017  
Open

### Worcestershire Partnership Plan

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report will consider the consultation responses and amendments to the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan that has been developed by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) brings together key strategic partners to oversee the delivery of housing services in their widest form. The group includes representatives from Clinical Commissioning Groups, Adult Social Care, the Childrens, Families and Communities directorate, Public Health, County Council Commissioning Officers, the 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 Partnership Plan that 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.
- 2.3 The plan went out to consultation to a wide range of partners and elected members in October 2016 with the consultation period finishing at the end of December 2016. 34 consultation responses were received and these are summarised in Appendix Two.

#### 3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The vision for the Partnership Plan is **“to create the *right* home environment for Worcestershire residents, that is essential to their 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 (early intervention and prevention)
- 3.2.2 Drive the growth of the right type of homes (to promote opportunity)
- 3.2.3 Improve homes and transform places

- 3.2 This vision has been broadly supported in all the consultation responses as have the high level actions, although the wording has been amended to make it clearer what we want to deliver and why.
- 3.3 High level aims previously included in the main body of the Partnership Plan have now been moved into the Memorandum of Understanding to make the WHPP clear and concise and remove duplication.
- 3.4 References to the Homelessness Inquiry have now been replaced with the Homelessness Reduction Bill as this has advanced significantly during the consultation period.
- 3.5 The actions in the WHPP remain unchanged. The consultation responses did suggest more detailed development of these actions to underpin the priorities.
- 3.6 Where required, data, wording and definitions have been amended to make the document easier to understand and more up to date and accurate.
- 3.7 20 respondents felt we had included the right information at a national and local level to reflect the reality with regards to housing in Worcestershire. There were suggestions to include or consider other documents such as the Fuel Poverty Strategy when it is available and this will be picked up through the action plans.
- 3.8 15 responses felt we needed to take other local or national strategies into account such as the Fuel Poverty Strategy, Empty Homes etc as well as some detailed comments around other activities that can be included in the action plans.
- 3.9 24 of the respondents agreed with the high level actions with 10 disagreeing. Of those disagreeing with the actions there was still broad support but respondents wanted actions to be more concise or the action plans to be more developed.
- 3.10 21 respondents took the opportunity to make further comments around issues such as affordable housing delivery, homelessness, fuel poverty and wider issues around planning for infrastructure and government policies.
- 3.11 The SHP will organise an event to bring all the partners together to work on each action and to bring forward more detailed action plans for all organisations to support.

#### **4. Options**

- 4.1 To recommend to Cabinet that the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan is approved.

#### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The draft WHPP has been developed in consultation with a number of statutory and non-statutory bodies, following an event held in June 2016. In October the WHPP went out to consultation until the end of December. The WHPP has now been amended to reflect the views of the partners and respondents.



**6. Related Decisions**

6.1 Not applicable.

**7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

7.1 The WHPP 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 Housing Partnership Plan 2017.

11.2 Appendix Two: Consultation Responses to the WHPP.

**12. Background Papers**

12.1 Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding.

**Officer Contact Details:**

Kate Bailey

Strategic Housing Services Manager

01562 732560

# Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2017

## About the Plan

The Housing Partnership Plan is the overarching document setting the strategic direction for housing across Worcestershire. It recognises that to maximise the health, wealth and wellbeing of the residents of Worcestershire and make the most effective use of existing resources, we need to work very closely with partner organisations across a range of sectors.

Creating the right home environment is not only essential for residents, but is vital to enable many other organisations to achieve their ambitions, policy objectives and duties, such as improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children and young people, employment, crime reduction and sustainable, resilient communities.

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 Memorandum of Understanding (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. The aims in the local MoU underpin this Partnership Plan.

## Members of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership



## The Vision

To create the *right* home environment for Worcestershire residents that is essential to their health, wealth and wellbeing, throughout life

**DEFINITION:** the 'right home environment' is not the same for all. However, generally it should be:

- Affordable
- In good repair
- Well insulated and energy efficient
- Accessible, well planned and designed
- Not overcrowded
- In a safe neighbourhood with good infrastructure and access to amenities

The right home environment will:

- Meet local housing need and prevent homelessness
- Improve health and wellbeing and prevent ill-health
- Enable people to manage their health and care needs
- Enable 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
- Create family stability
- 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

## Current and Future Issues

The following are the headline issues affecting Worcestershire. Please see Section 2 National and Local Picture for more detailed information.

### Welfare reform and changing legislation

(For more detailed information Welfare Reforms please see Section 3)

We are in the midst of large-scale changes to the welfare system and the implementation of new legislation nationally. Many of these will have a significant impact on local people on low incomes, many of whom will be in work. We are yet to feel the full affect in Worcestershire of some these welfare reforms and legislation. The key areas are highlighted below.

- **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, making self contained accommodation unaffordable. Worcestershire has 1395 people 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.
- Due to the **1% reduction in rent levels**, the implementation of **Universal Credit**, the **future funding of supported housing** and the de-regulation of their activities, Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) need to focus on the financial viability of their business plans, whether they will keep developing and whose housing needs they will be meeting.
- The **Homelessness Reduction Bill** will significantly reform England's homelessness legislation. It places a duty on local authorities to help all eligible people at risk of homelessness to secure accommodation, and at a much earlier stage (56 days before they are threatened with homelessness).

#### Inadequate supply of housing including affordable housing

- Worcestershire RSLs are committed to current delivery and investment plans. Stock Transfer RSLs delivered 1343 new homes over the past two years, and have plans to develop a further 638 this year, and a further 695 in 2017/18. They face a changing environment with a number of delivery challenges. These challenges to increasing housing stock will further be compounded by the Voluntary Right to Buy for housing association tenants which will be implemented in 2017.
- We need to ensure that there are a sufficient number of good quality homes for the population to address the housing shortage and support economic growth ambitions. **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.
- 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.

#### Supporting vulnerable groups and preventing homelessness

- There is **rising homelessness across Worcestershire**, with a 10% increase in people seeking homeless assistance from their local authority since 2010 and a 25% increase in homelessness acceptances.
- Local Authorities aim to prevent homelessness where possible and the numbers prevented from becoming homeless have been increasing over recent years. However, the results of the Worcestershire homelessness review show that **the overall increase in homelessness is between 15% and 55%** with the highest increases in Wyre Forest and Wychavon and the smallest increases in Bromsgrove and Malvern.

- 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. This is compounded by the identified current gaps in services for some vulnerable groups both generally and in terms of geographical inconsistencies. It should also be highlighted that some services may be at risk due to uncertainty around future funding.
- Of huge significance is the **Government's new housing costs funding model for supported housing**. The Government is currently consulting on the design of the new model of funding for supported housing which will be critical in continuing to meet the housing and support needs of vulnerable people locally and nationally.

### **Poor condition and affordability in the private rented sector**

We have increasingly relied on the growing private rental sector to meet housing need, but it can be an insecure tenure, properties can be in poor condition and affordability is an issue. These issues make it a sector that needs to have the focus of our attention.

- 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.
- At 29%, national figures show that the private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (ie is in a reasonable state of repair, has reasonably modern facilities and a reasonable degree of thermal comfort) while the social rented sector had the lowest (14%)<sup>1</sup>
- Some 9% of private rented dwellings had some type of damp problem, compared with 5% of social rented dwellings, and 3% of owner occupied dwellings.
- It is the least affordable tenure (housing costs) with 35% of the Worcestershire population unable to afford the rent for one bedroom accommodation.

### **Housing and Health**

- 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 employment<sup>2</sup>.
- Fuel poverty (where a low income household is struggling to pay heating costs - this may be due to an inefficient heating system and/or poor insulation) 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.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English Housing Survey Headline Report 2014-15

<sup>2</sup> BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS

<sup>3</sup> Public Health Outcomes Framework

## Priorities

These jointly identified priorities will be delivered to provide a cost effective solution which will focus on system change to meet customer need in the best way.

- Drive the growth of the *right type* of homes (to promote opportunity)
- Improve homes and, "transform places"
- Create a partnership approach to enable people to live as independently as possible (prevention/early intervention)

## 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 by the Partnership 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.
  - Build new homes
  - Investigate alternative models of affordable housing delivery to meet the housing and support needs of specific groups and sectors of the housing market.
  - Attract funding opportunities to support delivery of identified housing development priorities.
- **Improve 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 also services that focus on early intervention.
- **Develop an integrated approach to enable people with multiple and complex needs** to receive the services they need (not limited by existing practice or legislation) 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 for all matters relating to disability and vulnerability**, empowering people to make the right choices to enable them to live independently.



- **Promote the strategic and operational impact of the housing sector** and ensure it influences key business planning processes in Worcestershire.

Please see Section 6 for information on what are we doing now and Section 8 on current resources.

## 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. 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.

A refresh of the Plan will take place annually. This will also be overseen and approved by the Partnership.

## SECTION 1 – LOCAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

#### 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, or any successor bodies and the Local Enterprise Partnership. .
- 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, Children's Services, Quality Leads from the Clinical Commissioning Groups, CRC, Homes & Communities Agency, 2 reps from Registered Social Landlords, Local Authorities Strategic Housing Officers, Community Safety Partnership Lead, Chair of the Worcestershire Delivery Group, Third Sector representative, 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**

- 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

##### **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

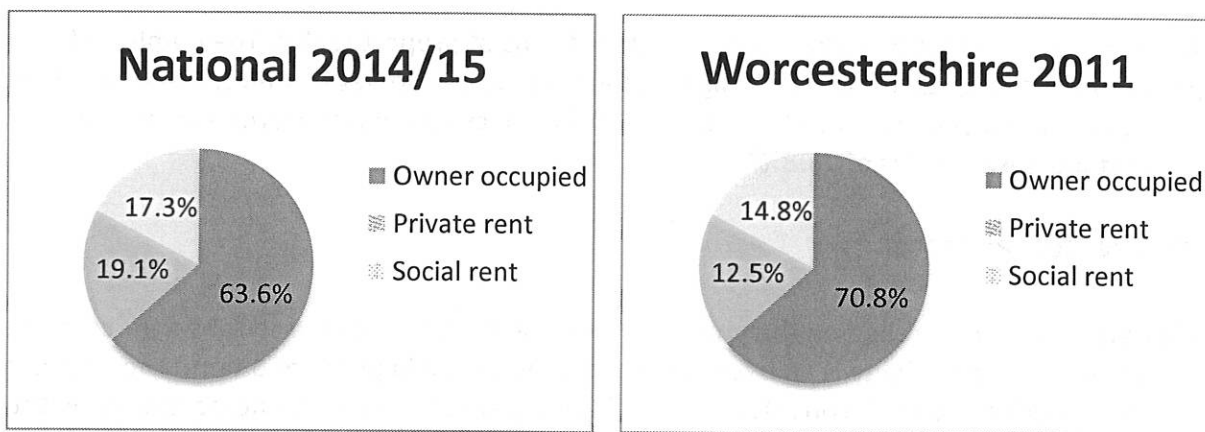
## SECTION 2 - NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE

### THE POPULATION

There is a population of 575,400 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 higher proportion 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"> <li>• 14.8% homes in Worcestershire</li> <li>• Shrinking tenure &amp; will continue</li> <li>• Healthiest homes</li> <li>• Highest % accessible homes</li> <li>• Most overcrowded &amp; least under-occupied</li> <li>• Second most affordable tenure (housing costs)</li> <li>• Higher proportion of older households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12.5% of homes in Worcestershire</li> <li>• Growing tenure &amp; expected to continue</li> <li>• Highest prevalence of unhealthy homes</li> <li>• Second most accessible homes</li> <li>• Second most overcrowded &amp; least under-occupied</li> <li>• Least affordable tenure (housing costs)</li> <li>• Higher proportion of working age and family households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70.8% homes in Worcestershire</li> <li>• Shrinking tenure: future unknown?</li> <li>• Highest number of unhealthy homes</li> <li>• Least accessible homes</li> <li>• Least overcrowded &amp; most under-occupied</li> <li>• Most affordable tenure – if you are able to put down a deposit or are if you are already a home owner</li> <li>• Highest number of older households</li> </ul>

## Owner Occupation

The Government's drive is towards affordable home ownership, using the rented sector as a short term solution. However, home ownership is not an option. In Q4 2014, the mean house price in the county had increased by 7.6% on the previous quarter to £226,259.<sup>4</sup> The average household income in Worcestershire is £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%<sup>5</sup>.

## 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 <sup>6</sup>	£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.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Land Registry, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Source: LandRegistry, 2015

<sup>6</sup> 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.

Annual Income - Worcestershire	Proportion of Population
Less than £10,000	12%
Between £10,000 and £20,000	23%
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 <sup>1</sup>	£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 <sup>1</sup>	£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 private rented 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 (this warrants further research), a drop of 5% of the proportion of lettings to households in receipt of Housing Benefit since 2010 throughout Worcestershire. This may force 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 employment<sup>7</sup>.

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 hypothermia<sup>8</sup>

- 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.<sup>9</sup>

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).

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<sup>7</sup> BRE, Briefing Note: The cost of poor housing to the NHS

<sup>8</sup> JSNA: Fuel Poverty 2016

<sup>9</sup> Public Health Outcomes Framework



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 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

## **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 locked in step down accommodation into supported living.

## SECTION 3 - 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 outside of London 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. The two child limit on benefit payments will also have a huge impact on larger families.
- **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.

### HOUSING & PLANNING ACT 2016

Further reforms within the Housing & Planning Act 2016 such as the **-1% rent reduction** per year to social housing rents over the next four years, that housing associations are required to make, will have a positive short term affect on low income tenants. However, due to 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.

## SECTION 4 - 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.



On 28th October 2016 the **Homelessness Reduction Bill** was voted through to the next stage in Parliament, winning unanimous support from MP's across political parties. The private members bill is now one step closer to becoming law, likely by Spring 2017 with enactment from September 2017. It places a duty on Council's to prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage and expands the categories of people eligible for support.



The way we work together and 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 about providing care in people's own homes, with a focus on prevention, promoting independence and support to stay well.

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

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:-

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



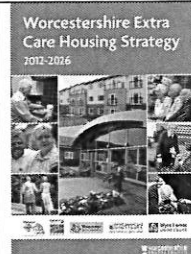
**BETTER CARE  
FUND PLAN  
2016/17**

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".

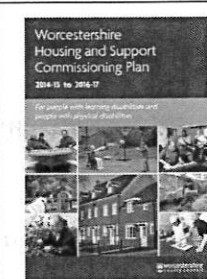


**Worcestershire Strategic Economic Plan** sets out the strategic ambitions to consolidate business growth and create jobs in Worcestershire over the next 20 years.

"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.

The HCA/CIH Accelerating Prosperity through Housing in the West Midland (due mid Jan 2017)

Warmer Worcestershire – Fuel Poverty Plan for Worcestershire (available soon)



## SECTION 5 - 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.

- **JOINT WORKING AROUND YOUNG PEOPLE AND HOMELESSNESS:**

1. **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 homeless teams across the County, 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.

2. **Nightstop schemes** across the county work closely with the young people's pathway workers, Children's Services and the local housing authorities in crisis intervention: it provides homeless 16-25 yr olds with emergency accommodation until more suitable accommodation can be found and also in prevention: It provides a mediation service for young people and their parent/ carer to improve their relationship thus preventing homelessness.

3. **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 focused on helping them to remain living independently in their own home.

**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. Homelessness is not a situation anyone would wish to find themselves in, but 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. There is also concern around the ability to re-house single people who have housing related debt, particularly as a result of the benefit cap and shared accommodation rate.

- **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 meeting their needs.

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

## SECTION 6 - 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
- Wyre Forest Objectively Assesses Housing Needs
- Homelessness P1Es and Rough Sleeper Data 2010 onwards
- English Housing Survey Headline Report 2014-15

## **SECTION 7 - 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 central funding to tackle homelessness over the next 4 years (2016 onwards) to £139 million and protected homelessness prevention funding for local authorities at £315 million by 2019 to 2020.
- Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme 2016-2021 £4.7bn; Starter Homes: Unlocking the land fund 2016-2020 - £1.2bn.
- 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 2018, 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.

## **Appendix Two – Consultation Responses**

Some organisations chose to respond directly without using the survey monkey tool and these are included first. The survey monkey responses are then included (1 – 20) which were anonymous.

Responses that were received that just agreed with the WHPP questions and didn't include any comments summary of responses to the questions have not been included below .

<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Questions (if specified)</b>	<b>Consultation response</b>	<b>Comments</b>
BDHT, CHG, Rooftop and Fortis Living joint response	General comments	<p>The following note is made on behalf of the stock transfer housing associations in Worcestershire (Fortis Living, Rooftop Housing Group, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and Community Housing Group) and is in response to the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan (WHPP). We are the largest social housing landlords in Worcestershire and collectively own the majority of the c34k housing association homes in the County.</p> <p>In summary our comments to the WHPP are as follows:</p> <p>(i) We welcome the initiative to develop a Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan with other key partners.</p> <p>(ii) The key to extending the housing options and choices for our communities is to increase the investment in new and</p>	<p>This is a summary of the Registered Provider response – only included are elements pertinent to the consultation regarding the Partnership Plan and other issues raised will be dealt with separately.</p> <p>This is a key priority included within the plan. Detail about delivery will be included in the action plans.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>existing housing stock and we are disappointed that the WHPP doesn't reflect the contribution made by the housing association providers and hasn't set more ambitious plans for the delivery of new homes.</p> <p>(iii) We particularly support the proposal to work closely with partners in social care and health and believe the stock transfer housing associations as the main delivery partners and the largest providers of social housing in the County should have a key role in these discussions and the development of joint strategies and policies.</p> <p>(iv) We are disappointed that the proposed actions and outcomes lack ambition, meaningful targets and don't clearly identify the key role for local authorities and other partners in achieving these objectives.</p> <p>In addition to this joint response, each housing association will individually respond to the consultation on the WHPP.</p>	<p>The Registered Providers are represented at the SHP by Fortis Living and CHG.</p> <p>This will be picked up through the development of the detailed action plans.</p>
St Pauls Hostel	General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As I read the document I keep trying to be clear of the purpose of it? Are you clear on the purpose of the document? Seems to me</li> </ul>	Agreed although this is a countywide plan.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	Specific comments	<p>you are trying to do three things;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sets the context of national policies</li> <li>○ Provides the analysis that underpins the argument good housing contributes to healthy population</li> <li>○ Gives a framework for 'collective' local action of organisations that City Council does not control but need to be 'on the same song sheet'</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness Does it have to blur the line between Statutory and non-statutory homeless? They are both important but the legislation (and resources) and different for each category. I'd much rather see the delineation made much clearer.</li> <li>• I thought the Single Person's Homeless Service was £250k per year (2 years with 1 year option) not £300k.</li> <li>• Owner occupation. It's not clear what point is being made here? The Government emphasis on owner occupation is not a good strategy (yes..)?</li> <li>• PRS The document talks of PRS requiring 'focus of our attention' – possibly – but it would be helpful to say more precisely what?</li> <li>• Diagram on p14 This diagram is a bit fiddly</li> </ul>	<p>This will be picked up in the more detailed action plans.</p> <p>The £300k relates to the overall funding received.</p> <p>Owner-occupation doesn't meet all housing need due to affordability.</p> <p>This will be covered by the more detailed action plans.</p> <p>Now removed</p> <p>Agreed.</p>



Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>and I am not sure this add value to the document</p> <p>Outcomes These seem fair enough outcomes but might be better placed higher up in the document (following the analysis) to allow the reader to focus on them from the get-go?</p> <p>Help. Homelessness people that we serve are at the nexus of 'complex needs', poor physical and mental health. The partnership does not have a specialist like St Paul's amongst its numbers. I can envisage my Trustees agreeing to St Paul's taking a role in the partnership – if that's an offer you want to make then just ask.</p>	
Worcestershire County Council (Public Health)	<p>1. Have we included the right information on the National and Local Picture to reflect the reality with regards to housing in Worcestershire?</p> <p>2. Are there any other National or Local strategies/policies that we need to</p>	<p>Yes but see 2 below in terms of keeping information up to date.</p> <p>Yes (Please provide more information about these)</p> <p>There is a constant stream of legislation and guidance that affects housing and related areas</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	take into account?	<p>and very broad strategic documents such as the plan need to be kept refreshed as they can become dated quite quickly. I would have thought a quick annual refresh by officers via the housing partnership (without needing to consult wider) would be useful in that regard. This equally applies to the data in the document which will be changing.</p> <p>Under Housing and Health, the STP has developed since the drafting of the Plan and although there is a debate about how housing should be reflected in this, it is probably worth a couple of sentences stating something along the lines that housing will support this work as necessary (its all still evolving). You have of course noted STP on page 12, but maybe this should now go into the "Local Direction" section as initial outline plans are developed?</p> <p>It may also be worth specifically referencing that housing has a strong role to play in supporting Public Health ambitions and duties and that would for instance include supporting the JSNA process (you have referenced this) and taking account of the annual reports by the Director of Public Health.</p>	<p>Agreed and PP now restructured to take these comments into account.</p> <p>Agreed</p>
	3. Do you agree with the joint high level Actions for	<p>Yes.</p> <p>However would note - there are "our aims" on page 3; the "vision" p 14 ; "key priorities" p 17; followed by "high level actions" p18 and then</p>	

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>this Partnership Plan?</p> <p>4. Do you have any further comments to make on the Plan, which are not covered in the previous questions?</p>	<p>outcomes on p19. Looking at these together it might be getting a bit clunky and overlapping? It needs to provide some clear overarching messages that all partners can easily understand and relate to.</p> <p>Last bullet –perhaps change of wording to for example?</p> <p>"Promote the strategic and operational impact of the housing sector and ensure its influence in key business planning processes in Worcestershire.</p> <p>Before publication you may want to refresh any data that has been superseded – only if it can be done easily and quickly!.</p> <p>The resulting action plan needs to be short and sharp and its much better to hit a smaller number of outcomes than try to do too many. A lot of work is business as usual and doesn't necessarily need to be captured in action plans and will be reported elsewhere.</p>	
1.	1. as above	No. More statistics Yong homeless people- what about Vulnerable people that have been evicted ? they are not then classed as Priority- high level of vulnerable people not been counted on homeless statistcs- Numbers of people sofa surfing in Worcestershire? need information on	This data is not currently collected locally or nationally other than through the P1Es.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	2. As above  3. As above  4. As above	them  Yes  No need to consult more with front line staff-partners about the issues & barriers that homeless people face. Supported housing, we need more in the areas-why is this not on the action plan and increased amounts of Supported housing for all vulnerable groups.	This will be addressed in the Partnership event to develop more detailed action plans. Please see above.
2.	1.           2.  3. 4.	No. Mention is made of Worcestershire Young Persons Pathways Workers. South Worcestershire Nightstop also works very closely with Pathways Workers, Children's Services and the local housing authorities in crisis intervention: it provides homeless 16-25 yr olds with emergency accommodation until more suitable accommodation can be found and also in prevention: It provides a mediation service for young people and their parent/ carer to improve their relationship thus preventing homelessness.  No  Yes I would love the opportunity to explain more about the services of South Worcestershire Nightstop and how we work collaboratively at present, with a view to expanding this.	Nightstop reps will be invited to the Partnership event.
3.	1	No. Statistical section needs amending for	Amended.

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**Appendix 2**

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>accuracy and timeliness throughout. need clear data on key stats with time and national comparison.</p> <p>Yes more reference needed to strategies from organisations that deal with rurality and to specific VCS organisations</p> <p>No - need to be clearer and focused. Smaller number with clear accountability and targets.</p> <p>Too long. Would be great to a short data-driven and accurate statement of the local problem, with a sharp actions section including accountabilities and next steps.</p>	<p>Please let us know what strategies should be included.</p> <p>Amended &amp; will be picked up in Partnership event.</p> <p>Amended &amp; will be picked up in the action plans.</p>
4.	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>No. Action on private landlords, living conditions, caps on rents and an extension to right to buy in to the private sector. Overall cap on the number of properties a private landlord can buy up. Cap on house prices, conversion of spaces above shops to become homes.</p> <p>Less planning more action be bold and ambitious, deliver fairness.</p>	<p>More detail on tackling conditions will be picked up in the action plans but many of the issues here are beyond the scope of local government.</p> <p>Amended.</p>
5.	1.	No. I am getting the impression that this is the way of going away from council owned firstly partner then agency	Not sure what this point relates to.

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**Appendix 2**

<b>Name of organisation</b>	<b>Questions (if specified)</b>	<b>Consultation response</b>	<b>Comments</b>
	2.	Yes Better policing more actual action	Noted
	3.	No. If you want a job done right do it yourself	Noted
	4.	Use the budget wiser less waste info on what it is being used for.	Noted
6.	1.	Yes	School places are a WCC issue and not covered by the plan.  Infrastructure is WCC issue / National Government issue and not covered by the plan
	2.	Yes. Schooling, we need new local schools where larger estates are built and these should be included in the planning. Our present schools are already over subscribed at all levels.	
	3.	Yes	
	4.	Infrastructure, our current road system isn't coping.	
7.	1.	Yes	Noted
	2.	Yes Improved delivery of housing through increased funding, tax relief, and streamlined planning process.	
	3.	Yes	
		Respondent didn't answer 4	
8.	1.	Yes	Noted
	2.	Yes. Accessible Housing by Design New	

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	3.	housing should be visitable, adaptable, accessible, universal planning for a longer term of usage for people as they age  Yes  Respondent didn't answer 4	
9.	1.          2.          3.	No. You make it clear in the plan what the required new build programme is ie 2228 to 2408, but make no reference to what the current annual build programme is ie how much of an increase it is? I feel the importance of housing to the growth of the economy is downplayed.  Yes. The answer is probably no as so many are listed. Although I cant see reference to any HCA plans. However, is it really possible to deliver a housing programme that meets all of these? Surely the focus needs to be on building new homes and improving existing ones.  No. I don't think the Vision is a Vision at all. It is more a statement of intent. Surely a vision would be something along the lines of "A quality home for all". The actions need to focus on an action rather than a perfectly reasonable ambition like 'maximise the delivery of good quality housing..'. The question should be how will this be achieved, by whom and by when? What is being done to address the unhealthy homes being run by private landlords?	This number refers to housing need rather than new build numbers.          Noted          Amended  These will be picked up in detailed action plans

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	4.	You need to examine why we appear to have poor fuel poverty and excess winter death indicators rather than simply state the fact. I would also like to see more challenge to national housing policy, particular around affordable rent. The Plan appears to focus more on the social side of the housing equation, which is hugely important, but appears to play down the importance to the economy of building new homes for sale. Is this being driven elsewhere? Also how are welfare reforms affecting Worcestershire? Are we suffering disproportionately? If so why and what is being done to address this.	Noted.
10.	1.  2.  3.	Yes  Changes to funding will impact on services stated in the report for tackling and/or preventing homelessness  Yes  Respondent did not reply to question 4	Noted
11.	1.	No. The number of homeless people in each council are missing. The failure of all county councils to provide sheltered/community housing to old people so they could vacate 2, 3 & 4 bedroom houses missing. The identification of Brown Field sites to allow the use of quick fix solutions such as affordable mobile homes.	Noted. More information on Homelessness is contained in the Worcestershire Homeless Strategy.  The majority of these issues are covered by Local Plans.



Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Brown Field sites could also be used for new housing. The use of district heating schemes in Worcestershire missing, opportunity lost with new Hartlebury incinerator. Wrong people in jobs within council they should be replaced by people with vision. Promote infill building in towns &amp; villages.</p> <p>Yes (and repeat of above)</p> <p>No. Lots of words but will lack results new fresh ideas required.</p> <p>(repeat of answer from Q1)</p>	
12.	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>The entire housing strategy is driven by the change in population (I'm not referring to migration or immigration, but 'population') and it's going to take a brave politician to be robust enough to drive a policy where population should stop growing: as a Biologist, I can categorically tell you that we will soon approach the point of no return, where the population will become unsustainable. I suggest you engage with 'Population Matters', London E4 for some ideas.</p>	<p>This is beyond the scope of the WHPP.</p>

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
13.	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>No . Generally yes but in the table on P4 of the different tenure you have stated owner occupation (if you have sufficient deposit) is the most affordable. I do not (think) that is correct. You later talk about how the average price is over six times average income so it isn't affordable as people can't access it. If people can't access homeownership because it's too expensive how can it be the most affordable.</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>It is concerning to see that the number of housing associations taking tenants on HB has declined especially when the number of working people having to have support from HB is increasing. I think this shows a concerning trend of Housing Associations moving away from being social housing providers and if this trend continues it increases the difficulty for people to access housing if on lower incomes.</p>	<p>Affordable once you have accessed it e.g. mortgages are cheaper than LHA rent levels.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
14.	1.	No. National Policy Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm: the government's fuel poverty strategy for England, with a target 'to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C, by 2030.' Also, the fuel poverty figures in the Housing and Health are a bit out of date (Latest available are for 2014- may have	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		been released since the plan was drafted. The latest figure for Worcestershire is 10.8% and England 10.6%.	
	2.	Yes. Local Direction Worcestershire Fuel Poverty Plan, which highlights the issue of fuel poverty and the impacts of cold, damp homes on the health of Worcestershire residents and identify actions to tackle fuel poverty in the County. What are we doing now Include WARMER WORCESTERSHIRE Heather Lammas from County is going to draft something and send in a response separately on behalf of the WW network. Wonder if the stats page 4 would be helped if had (difference from) local housing allowance available included? Is it worth including the WFDC Health Impact Assessment in the evidence base on page 13?	Not available in time to be included.
	3.	No. Page 12 “Develop a strategy to address health consequences of cold homes including: identifying people whose health is at risk from cold and damp homes. “ Shouldn’t this be identifying vulnerable people and addressing cold homes that lead to health consequences ?	Amended.
	4.	The PP now needs to include more detail around the Homeless Reduction Bill and impact on LHAs	Amended.
15.	1.	No. More detail is needed on how funding cuts	Included where known.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>at County and District level will impact on Housing. Also: how does Worcestershire perform against national DFG targets? Worcs spent £2 million on DFGs, what is this as a percentage of the overall budget? I would like to know the waiting time from the customers first enquiry, not length of time from the OT assessment. What plans have Worcestershire to respond to the increased demand in DFGs. Would you consider joint- funded OT posts to carry out assessments and decrease waiting time?</p> <p>Yes. NHS Alliance</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I'd like to see some emphasis on pooled budgets and how these can be used to evidence a joint strategy involving Housing and Health which could address some Health Inequalities.</p> <p>What plans and priorities do you have for the £2.5 million currently unallocated?</p>	<p>No national targets exist.</p> <p>OTs are being recruited funded by the Local Housing Authorities.</p> <p>Please provide more details..</p> <p>This will be considered further as action plans are developed.</p> <p>Please clarify.</p>
16.	1.	<p>No. More information needed on the condition of UK housing. the variance in health outcomes, particularly excess winter deaths, between UK and much colder European countries is stark. The fact that the UK has the oldest housing stock in Europe is a real problem (The Cold Man of Europe) The UK has among the highest rates</p>	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		of fuel poverty and one of the most energy inefficient housing stocks in Europe." Countries with more energy efficient housing have lower excess winter deaths even those with colder climates. (the health impacts of cold homes and fuel poverty) Worcestershire is predominantly rural county. Rural properties are more than twice as likely to have poor levels of energy efficiency.	
	2.	Yes. Warmer Worcestershire will shortly be publishing a fuel poverty plan for the County which links to the NICE guidance quality symbols to target delivery. the aim is to improve home energy efficiency in line with the National Fuel poverty plan to get as many properties as reasonably practicable to an EPC C rating.	Noted
	3.	No reference to working with to Warmer Worcestershire network for housing when considering cold homes. Existing work already ongoing around discharge from hospital to a warm setting.	Noted
	4.	Respondent didn't add anything for Q4.	
17.	1.	No. There does not appear to be any mention of vacant homes.	Empty Homes will be addressed in the detailed action plans.
	2.	Yes. Bringing vacant homes back into use could	Noted

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>be quicker and cheaper than building new and this potential needs to be quantified.</p> <p>No. I do agree with everything that has been stated, but I believe there is more that can be done. For instance, most poor housing is in the private sector, but apart from assistance through Care &amp; Repair for the elderly, there is nothing to assist private owners to improve their homes. Now that renovation grants have gone how is this to happen? Maybe this comment should be directed at national level, but at the local level some practical advice and guidance is needed even if finance is not available from the public bodies</p> <p>Extension of the right to buy is detrimental to the retention and future provision of affordable social housing and should be strongly resisted</p>	<p>Noted. Advice and guidance is available through Private Sector Housing teams.</p> <p>This is a government policy issue.</p>
18.	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Gives a clear overview of the local and national position</p>	
19.	1.	No. The report gives at best a very sketchy overview of the current housing position in Worcestershire and the implications for the future. It uses a mix of national and local	Detailed action plans will be developed.

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		information and data some of which is out of date, used in an inconsistent way and in some areas it makes broad statements without any evidence, data or forecasts. As a result the report fails to provide a reasoned argument about the current problems, what is currently being done, the future implications, options, potential solutions and who the lead organisations are.	
	2.	Yes. The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment  The WCC Extra Care Strategy The NHF Homes Truths report 2015/16 The HCI/CIH report 'Accelerating Prosperity through Housing in the West Midlands' - Jan 2017 The Worcestershire Next Generation Plan	The SHMA have been replaced by OAHN within each District Noted.
	3.	No. One of the problems with the report is that it contains too many key priorities, outcomes, high level actions and 'other' actions. Fewer more ambitious aims and targets with clear organisational leads is needed. While I broadly support the high level actions (pages 15/16), I don't think they address the key issue which is the need to provide more affordable housing and include the delivery providers who are critical to its success.	This will be picked up by the detailed action plans.
	4.	One of the fundamental omissions in the report	This is an action included in

**Agenda Item No. 5**  
**Appendix 2**

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>is that it doesn't make the need for more affordable housing its key priority. If you deliver more homes this will go some way to address many of the other issues, including homelessness. It also needs to recognise the key role for the housing providers in delivering this.</p> <p>The proposals to work more closely with social care and health is welcomed but its similarly important that the housing associations are involved in these strategic discussions as equal partners.</p> <p>I also have concerns a regarding the accountability of the WHP and its ability get the district councils and councils to support the plan.</p>	<p>the WHPP.</p> <p>Housing Associations are represented on the Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) who developed the WHPP.</p> <p>These organisations developed the plan and are represented on the SHP.</p>
20.	1.	<p>No. P3. Aims - promotion of the housing sector towards addressing.... should include family stability. P4.The Population - I think this should say 'higher proportion' not greater number of older people. P4. Reference is made to 'unhealthy homes' can you define what this means? P4. Owner occupation is referred to as affordable - how if you need 6 x average salary? P6. Do you need to put an Affordable Rent heading halfway down? Does the table refer to Affordable Rents at 80% or social housing rents? P7. Under Homelessness in Worcestershire 2nd Para - proportion of people becoming homeless due to tenancies ending is this the PRS or Social Housing or both...just</p>	Noted



Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
		<p>need to clarify. P7 Final paragraph - I think you also need to look at other reasons why RPs are letting a smaller number of properties to households in receipt of HB - are they on UC and therefore not able to claim HB - are more households generally more likely to be in some form of employment because of welfare reform? The final sentence here about forcing families to live in poor, unsuitable or unstable homes needs to be substantiated or watered down as 'This may...' P9 Need to clarify that the overall benefit cap of £20k applies outside of London. Also need to add something about the 2 child limit as this will impact on child poverty and affordability and potential homelessness from the PRS. P10. The Transforming Care Agenda expects....'locked step' down...what does this mean? P10. Housing and Planning Act 2016</p> <p>- First paragraph needs re working as it is saying that it will impact on people on low incomes - how and also isn't the 1% reduction a good thing for tenants? But a bad thing for RP's who may find it harder to grow due to changing financial projections. P11. Need to make reference to the homeless reduction bill. P14. The right home environment will.... Can you replace 'allow' for Enable? P15 under 'Worcestershire Joint Protocol...can you include some clarity around the role of the Young</p>	

Name of organisation	Questions (if specified)	Consultation response	Comments
	<p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>Persons Pathway Worker. P16. Homelessness is not a situation anyone would wish to find themselves for the majority of families....this needs re-wording or removal of the last 5 words. P.16</p> <p>Homeless Services - Challenge - I think we need to include a reference to the issues of Intentionality relating to the Benefit Cap and Spare Room Subsidy.</p> <p>It is going to be difficult to secure housing solutions for those with housing related debts.</p> <p>P16 and 17 - Private Rented Housing - Challenge - need to refer to affordability issues relating to the Benefit Cap and 2 Child Limit</p> <p>P20 homeless has increased to 33% - where (national, local) and when. Need to include date as this figure will be out of date very quickly.</p> <p>Yes. Homeless Reduction Bill</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>I would prefer a vision statement that includes the word home..'An affordable home with the right environment for health, opportunity and well being throughout life'... or similar.</p>	<p>Amended</p> <p>Vision amended</p> <p>.</p>



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Jennifer Moreton  
Date: Thursday, 8th November 2012  
Open

### Initiating a Collective Energy Switching Scheme

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to advise on an initiative for Wyre Forest District Council to initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme (CESS) on behalf of residents.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Many people are not on the best value energy tariff and pay more than they need but are reluctant to switch. Collective energy switching is promoted as a way of helping to address this situation.
- 2.2 Ofgem allow energy companies to offer special tariffs for CESSs and supports them as a way of 'activating' people who are unlikely otherwise to switch. A CESS provides one of the few opportunities energy suppliers have for creating bespoke tariffs. Ofgem promote the involvement of Local Authorities in this process for enabling customers to be helped and supported through the process by an organisation that is already known to them and with whom they have an existing relationship.
- 2.3 Many LAs are now supporting the development of such groups with the help of a specialist switching partner who negotiates a favourable tariff for participating consumers by carrying out a 'reverse auction' with energy suppliers. This one day event provides interested suppliers with an opportunity to bid with their best offer of an energy tariff for the collective. Throughout the day, suppliers can improve their offers until the auction closes at the end of the day. The supplier with the best offer for the collective is then chosen. There may be different winning suppliers for the best dual fuel, best prepay and green tariffs etc. Individual consumers can then decide if they want to accept the offered tariff and the switching partner then arranges this on their behalf.
- 2.4 Such a scheme can provide a cost effective way for LAs to help people lower their fuel bills and reduce fuel poverty. A referral fee is paid to the specialist switching partner by the energy supplier for each person who switches to the newly agreed tariff and there are no costs to the Council for the support and services they receive from the switching company. Furthermore, specialist switching companies will often pay a proportion of their commission to the LA. The switching partner provides an online system for people to use to sign up

to the scheme, carries out the negotiation process with energy suppliers, and arranges the actual switch of supplier for the customers. The LA is responsible for publicising the scheme and providing support for residents without internet access or ability to register for the scheme (if they so choose).

**2.5 Potential Switching Scheme Partner :iChoosr and the process followed**

- 2.5.1 iChoosr is an established collective energy switching operator that currently works with over 160 LAs in the UK. Locally this includes Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and the Health and Sustainability team have received positive feedback from them regarding both the operator and the scheme itself. iChoosr was founded in the Netherlands in 2008 and has been running CESSs in the UK since 2012. iChoosr appear to be the only company offering this model of switching service and also appear to be involved with all the schemes in England that involve LAs, despite these sometimes being promoted under different banners.
  - 2.5.2 iChoosr's auction cycle is typically 1-2 months to allow people to register, the actual auction is always a day, and registrants have about a month to decide whether to accept their offer. Relevant dates are set by iChoosr to benefit from the joint bargaining power of the sum of all the involved LAs participants. Their 2017 auctions will take place in February, May and October. Registration to participate is free and it is up to the individual to decide whether to accept the collective energy switch offer that is made. The Council is able to apply on behalf of those who do not have access to the internet or family or friends who are willing to do this on their behalf, and support in the registration process can also be provided. Each individual receives an offer which compares their estimated current spend with estimated future spend after switching. People with pre-payment meters can apply, as can those who are renting properties, as long as the bill is in their name. The deal offered is a minimum one-year fixed price contract.
  - 2.5.3 iChoosr's freely provided services include an IT platform, project management, supplier management, communication support and a customer helpdesk. They create a council-branded environment for interested customers to access that contains a Council logo etc so that it is clear they are involved. Individual councils are provided with an analysis of results data after each auction cycle.
  - 2.5.4 The winning utility company pay a fee to iChoosr and a percentage of this is passed on to the council. Reports compiled on behalf of other councils suggest that iChoosr might receive in the region of £20 for each consumer that switches iChoosr's standard agreement indicates that the council will receive £11 (eleven pounds sterling) in respect of each resident that enters into a dual fuel contract or two single fuel contracts with the energy supplier that wins the auction, or £5.50 in respect of each resident that enters into a single fuel contract.
- 2.6 To date, 650,000 households in the UK have taken part in iChoosr's collective switching schemes, with an average potential saving of £243 per household. The onus is on the applicant to provide information on their current energy use/ tariff and decide whether switching through the scheme will be a better option. Around a third of applicants registering typically go on to switch tariffs

through the scheme. Just by way of example, if 600 Wyre Forest residents registered and 200 went on to switch, this could generate an income of approximately £1-2k for WFDC and collectively save participants around £50k on their energy bills. No minimum number of applicants from the Wyre Forest would be required to progress the scheme as the same offer applies nationally across all participating Councils. Councils participating in an auction are also able to participate in future auctions.

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 According to the latest government figures, 11.1% of Wyre Forest's households (4830 households) are thought to be in fuel poverty. Fuel poverty is usually a result of three interacting factors: low incomes, high energy prices and energy inefficient housing. Action on fuel poverty can improve people's lives and the links between poor health and fuel poverty (such as exacerbation of cardio-respiratory illness) are well documented. Helping households to reduce their energy bills by switching tariffs is one way that councils can help those at risk of fuel poverty.
- 3.2 Many energy customers don't change suppliers for a variety of reasons, including the perception that switching is too much hassle and that all suppliers/ tariffs are the same. In England, 21% of energy customers have had the same energy supplier for ten years or more. People who wouldn't otherwise consider switching may be encouraged to do so through a council promoted scheme.
- 3.3 **WFDC's role in the process**
  - 3.3.1 If WFDC agree to set up a CESS with iChoosr a contract will need to be signed by both parties. A copy of the standard agreement is currently being reviewed by the legal section. Once in place, the main role for WFDC will be in publicising the scheme and dealing with any queries. Health and Sustainability officers would co-ordinate this with Media team colleagues to promote the scheme through channels such as Wyred In, Wyred Weekly, press releases and through social media. Participating councils can also apply to iChoosr for resources to support the promotion of their schemes (e.g. posters, leaflets, newspaper adverts, prize draw). WFDC works closely with the charity Act on Energy on energy schemes and would also engage them in promoting the scheme through their helpline, at energy advice surgeries and via front line worker training, as part of an existing service level agreement. iChoosr have customer helpdesks (telephone and email) which would be promoted as the first point of call for any queries. Relevant colleagues (e.g. Hub staff) and Members would be briefed on the scheme in case they receive any queries about the scheme. The whole process, from registration to actually switching, can be carried out online and it is anticipated that the majority of participants would take this approach. Opportunities for assistance with the scheme for those not able to take part online (e.g. at energy advice surgeries) would also be promoted. Whilst promotions would be aimed at Wyre Forest residents, participants do not have to live within the

district's administrative area. This would allow others to benefit from the scheme, for example WFDC staff who live outside of the district.

- 3.3.2 The Council would be required to contribute £1.50 per participating individual who registers using the 'offline' process towards the cost of printing offer letters and documents by post to, checking responses and amending / processing the confirmation forms (including calls backs). This contribution would be deducted from the Council's commission for the corresponding switch.
- 3.3.3 The Council would primarily have a signposting role and helping those, without internet access, to utilise iChoosr. The Council would not be responsible for the decisions individuals might take to switch to an alternative provider or for the service provided by the new utility company and this will be made clear on publicity materials

#### **4. Options**

- 4.1 To recommend to Cabinet that they decide to initiate a Collective Energy Switching Scheme on behalf of residents

#### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The CES has been discussed with the legal section and other Council's in the County.

#### **6. Related Decisions**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

#### **7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

- 7.1 Climate Change Strategy 2014 - 2020

#### **8. Implications**

- 8.1 Resources: Promotion of the CES will be done within existing budgets. There may be an opportunity for the council to earn a small income from taking a share in the fee paid to iChoosr by the utility company.
- 8.2 Equalities: N/A
- 8.3 Partnership working: N/A
- 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.

#### **10. Wards affected**

10.1 All wards.

**11. Appendices**

11.1 N/A

**12. Background Papers**

12.1 N/A

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## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Rebecca Brown, Planning Policy Manager  
Date: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017  
Open

### Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4 consultation documents. The Committee is asked to consider the draft response as set out at Appendix 1 to this report prior to approval by Cabinet.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Worcestershire County Council (WCC) is required to maintain a valid Local Transport Plan (LTP) under the Transport Act 2000. The role of the LTP is to set out local transport policies and a strategy for investment in transport infrastructure, technology and services to deliver against a wide range of objectives.
- 2.2 Worcestershire's fourth LTP will cover the time period from 2017 to 2030. The consultation documents are split into 3 sections:
- The LTP itself which includes the proposed transport investment schemes grouped into three strategic areas: North East Worcestershire; South Worcestershire and the Wyre Forest.
  - The transport policies which set out the various policies which underpin the delivery of the LTP.
  - The Network Management Plan which sets out WCC's approach to managing its transport networks.
- 2.3 WCC Officers attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February to provide a presentation on the LTP4 Consultation. Members raised a number of concerns which have been captured in the draft response.

#### 3. Key Issues

- 3.1 LTP4 sets out the issues and priorities for investment in transport infrastructure, technology and services to support travel by all relevant modes of transport. As increasing transport network capacity is extremely expensive, Worcestershire County Council will aim to target investment in three broad areas as follows:



- Transport technology: opportunities to help manage demand on our networks to tackle congestion and support growth.
- Travel choice: enhance access to travel information and prioritise investment in alternative modes of travel. LTP4 emphasises the potential for the rail network to accommodate and support economic diversification and planned growth. In addition, investment in high quality, continuous corridors for active travel modes and improvements to public realm in urban areas to help provide realistic alternative travel choices for shorter trips.
- Capacity enhancement: where suitable business cases can be identified to support investment, WCC will aim to fund and deliver capacity enhancements at key pinch points to support development growth, address poor air quality issues and tackle congestion.

**3.2 The Wyre Forest Package**

LTP4 contains a Wyre Forest package at pages 50-58. Transport challenges for the District during the LTP4 period will be to relieve congestion; to improve journey time reliability; to deliver transport schemes to accommodate development growth associated with the Local Plan Review.

**3.3 The following strategic schemes are identified for delivery during the LTP4 timeframe:**

- Kidderminster Transport Strategy Major Scheme – phased investment programme to support regeneration, economic diversification and growth associated with the Local Plan Review
- Transport Telematics Investment Package: To include variable messaging signs, real time information systems and signalling improvements.
- Bewdley to Wyre Forest Active Travel Corridor – systematic investment in walking and cycling along the Dowles corridor.
- Mustow Green Junction Enhancement Scheme – improve efficiency of this busy junction.
- Blakedown Rail Station Enhancement Scheme – station enhancements to include passenger information and station facilities; set down and pick up facilities and improvements to car parking.

**3.4 Specific packages are included for the District's three main towns as follows:**

**Kidderminster**

- Bewdley Hill (A456) improvements including major junctions review
- Kidderminster Rail Station Enhancement Scheme – upgrading the railway station
- Ring Road junction and public realm improvement schemes with the particular aim to mitigate poor air quality.
- Active travel network investment programme to include surfacing, signage and lighting improvements.
- Chester Road Improvements including major junctions review.
- A456 Birmingham Road/Hurcott Lane junction/Sion Hill/A449/Stourbridge Road junction; A451 Stourbridge Road/B4189 Park Gate Road junction; A449 Stourbridge Road/B4189 Wolverley and Park Gate Road junction – comprehensive review of junctions to identify whether capacity and/or safety improvements are required.

- Stourport Road Improvements – include new technology surfacing; lighting; enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure.
- B4190 Habberley to Wolverley improvements (as above)

Stourport-on-Severn

- Stourport-on-Severn Transport Strategy – a comprehensive multimodal review of network efficiency and infrastructure, public realm and wider access.

Bewdley

- Bewdley Transport Strategy – review access arrangements to the town with a particular focus on improving air quality.

- 3.5 It is recognised that the LTP4 consultation document clearly raises issues with funding availability and that increasing the local transport network's capacity is a very expensive option. Generally the overall content of LTP4 is to be supported and in particular the Wyre Forest Package and its identified schemes. Taken all together, these Wyre Forest Strategic Delivery Packages address a number of the key issues in the District, especially in and around Kidderminster.
- 3.6 Clearly there will be a strong relationship between LTP4 and the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review and an iterative dialogue between WCC and WFDC will need to continue to ensure the infrastructure needs associated with future planned development will be met. The District Council is producing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to inform the Local Plan Review Preferred Options consultation. LTP4 and the identified transport schemes will form an important element of the IDP. There are positive references to the further transport investment which might be needed in connection with the emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review. Collectively, these packages should all be fully supported by WFDC with inputs into the bidding for funds, wherever necessary.
- 3.7 Appendix 1 sets out the draft response from Wyre Forest District Council for the Committee's consideration and recommendations to Cabinet. This has been formulated by Officers following discussion of the LTP4 at Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> February and at Local Plans Review Panel at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February.

**4. Options**

4.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Make comments and observations on the draft response to the Worcestershire LTP4 Consultation as set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

- Recommend that Cabinet approves the consultation response as set out at Appendix 1, for submission to Worcestershire County Council by the deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

**5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation on the draft response has been undertaken with the Local Plans Review Panel at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February.

**6. Related Decisions**

- 6.1 Local Plan Review Panel (13/02/2017)

**7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

- 7.1 Adopted Core Strategy (2010)
- 7.2 Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (2013)
- 7.3 Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (2013)

**8. Implications**

- 8.1 Resources: There are no resource implications to the Council arising from the LTP4 Consultation.
- 8.2 E-Government: N/A

**9. Equality Impact Needs Assessment**

N/A

**10. Wards affected**

- 10.1 All wards.

**11. Appendices**

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Wyre Forest District Council Response to LTP4 Consultation

**12. Background Papers**

- 12.1 Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation documents ([www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk))

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**DRAFT Wyre Forest District Council Response to the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan(LTP4) Consultation: 2017-2030.**

**MAIN LTP4 DOCUMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

This recognises the role of Infrastructure Delivery Plans in setting out a strategic approach to investment in transport infrastructure, technology and services to support growth

**Comment:** Support. The summer 2017 Wyre Forest Infrastructure Delivery Plan (WFIDP) will have an important role in supporting the proposals contained in the emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review. The WFIDP will also consider the potential role of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as one potential funding source. It is recognised that funding from developers will have an important role to play in funding transport schemes but it is important that the LTP4 explains that this is not always on a site specific basis. The Potential Funding Sources column in all of the Transport Packages is open to mis-interpretation.

**OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE**

Countywide approach which recognises the role of both the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

**Comment:** Support emphasising the role of both the LEPS and the context set by Midlands Connect – a strategy covering all of the Midlands.

**SETTING THE SCENE**

**Comment:** Recognises the growth envisaged in Wyre Forest to 2026; and the role of the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park. Support.

**FUNDING OUR AMBITION**

WCC will bid for major transport funding for major transport schemes including:

- Kidderminster Transport Strategy
- Blakedown Railway Station Parkway enhancement.

In Worcestershire prominent Local Growth Funded projects include:

- Hoobrook Link Road, Kidderminster
- Kidderminster Railway Station.

In July 2016, North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration (NWEDR) in association with WCC submitted applications for Growth Deal funding for schemes such as:

- Churchfields , Kidderminster.

**Comment:** These funding bids should all be fully supported by WFDC as they benefit the District. See also the details in the Wyre Forest Programme (see below).

**STRATEGIC DELIVERY PROGRAMME: THE WYRE FOREST AREA (pp. 50-58).**

**The Area Profile** is a succinct summary which gives a fair description of the District and highlights the following issues:

- The area is well connected to Birmingham, the Black Country & Worcester but lacks local access to the motorway network.
- Two Air Quality Management Areas at Welch Gate, Bewdley & Horsefair, Kidderminster.
- Two railway stations at Kidderminster & Blakedown.
- The poor quality of Kidderminster Town Centre Bus Station.
- Top tourist attractions at the Severn Valley Railway & the West Midlands Safari Park.

**Comment.** Most of this area profile can all be supported but some key points need to be made:

- i) The references to buses need to be amended. The key problem is the poor quality of bus services in the District. Work does need to be done in respect of the bus station. It is important that the County Council undertake a Study to determine the need for a bus station and then to advise on an appropriate location.
- ii) It is good to give prominence to the role of the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) but it has potential not only to serve a tourism purpose but also a transport/commuter service purpose too. It is important that some reference is made to the potential for connections to Silverwoods (and The South Kidderminster Enterprise Park) and the West Midlands Safari Park. This would then provide a basis for SVR to be approached to reconfigure its service to be a more commercial one at peak periods.

**Transport achievements** highlighted are:

- Hoobrook Link Road.
- Major investment in local streets via the “Driving Home” project.
- Strong business case for investment in Kidderminster Railway Station

**Comment.** This can all be supported.

### **Challenges**

Availability of public funding is limited and therefore need to make a business case for improvements.

These are structured into the following packages:

- Wyre Forest Strategic Transport (WFST) schemes.
- Kidderminster (K) Package.
- Stourport-on-Severn (S) and Bewdley (BE) schemes.

These are considered in turn:

### **Strategic (WFST) Schemes**

- WFST 1: Kidderminster Transport Major Scheme. Phased programme, especially in Kidderminster Town Centre, and linked to WFDC Development Plan (emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review).
- WFST 2. All towns. Telematics. Smarter information and signalling.
- WFST 3. Active Travel Corridor : Bewdley to Wyre Forest : Dowles Link : walking , cycling etc.
- WFST 4. Mustow Green Enhancement Scheme (A448 /A450).
- WFST 5. Blakedown Railway Station Enhancement Scheme.

### **Kidderminster Package**

- K1. Bewdley Hill (A456): Key corridor of improvement.
- K2: Kidderminster Station Enhancement Scheme.
- K3: Ring Road: Junction and Public Realm Improvement Scheme.
- K4: Active Travel Network Investment Programme.
- K5: Chester Road (A449): Key corridor of improvement.
- K6: A456 Birmingham Road/Hurcott Lane junction.
- K7: Sion Hill/ A449 Stourbridge Road junction.
- K8: A451 Stourbridge Road/ B4189 Park Gate Road junction.
- K9: A449 Wolverhampton Road / B4189 Wolverley Road / B4189 Park Gate Road junction.
- K10: Stourport Road: Key corridor of improvement.
- K11: B4190: Key corridor of improvement: Habberley to Wolverley.

### **Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley Package**

- S1: Stourport–on-Severn Transport Strategy. Comprehensive review of the network.
- BE1: Bewdley Transport Strategy. Review access arrangements into the town.

It is relevant to mention also that the South Worcestershire Travel Corridor Package includes the following scheme:

- SWAT 10: Stourport to Hartlebury Station (Leapgate Line) Active Travel Corridor.

**Comments:**

- i) Taken all together, these Wyre Forest Strategic Delivery Packages address a number of the key issues in the District, especially in and around Kidderminster. There are also the positive references to the further transport investment which might be needed in connection with the emerging Wyre Forest Local Plan Review. Collectively, these packages should all be fully supported by WFDC with inputs into the bidding for funds, wherever necessary.
- ii) Whilst it is accepted that this is a strategic document, greater clarity could be provided in some cases where there is particular public interest:
  - a) Greater clarity could be provided on the roles of 20mph zones, especially in Town Centres.
  - b) The origin and nature of the Blakedown Railway Station Enhancement Scheme (WFST5) could be helpfully provided. Kidderminster Rail Station is the second busiest in Worcestershire and should rightly be the main focus of an enhancement scheme to include improved parking provision. The focus on Blakedown Rail Station and the trip generation associated with the proposal needs further explanation in order for the benefits to be better understood.
  - c) In respect of S1, it is understood that a bridge over the River Severn as part of a Stourport Relief Road is undeliverable due to escalating costs; it would be helpful to explain if the route of key sections of this proposal are going to be maintained in terms of the delivery of key sites and the formation of a partial relief road linking the A451 with Worcester Road, Stourport.
  - d) There should be some specific references in the main LTP4 document to the issue of dealing with Air Quality Management Areas in Wyre Forest . It should not just be left to the general statements in the Transport Policies document.

**LTP4 : TRANSPORT POLICIES**

This consists of a series of standardised County-wide policies under the following main headings:

- Transport Engagement.
- Public Realm

- Cycle Infrastructure
- Integrated Passenger Transport
- Transport and Air Quality
- Motorcycling.
- Climate Change.

**Comment:** All of these policy areas are described in Worcestershire-wide terms so it is not appropriate to comment in detail but all should be supported by WFDC.

### **THE WORCESTERSHIRE NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This consists of a number of topics, all dealt with on a County-wide basis, including:

- Tackling congestion
- Management of Road Works
- Freight
- Transport Telematics
- Travel choices.

**Comment:** Again, all of this assessment is done on a Worcestershire wide basis so that is not appropriate to comment in detail but the Management Plan should be supported by WFDC.

10<sup>th</sup> February 2017





## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### Briefing Paper

Report of: Kathryn Underhill, Community Safety & Partnerships Officer

Date: Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017  
Open

### Annual Crime and Disorder Review 2016/17

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) during 2016/17.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The NWCSP has been in existence since May 2013, following the merger of the three district CSPs in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. The community safety teams have continued to remain with the respective local authorities.
- 2.2 Local representation on the NWCSP is fulfilled through a number of positions. Wyre Forest District Council's Elected Member representative is the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Housing, Councillor Juliet Smith. Linda Draycott, Director of Community Wellbeing and Environment is the Council's Responsible Authority representative and is also the Vice Chair of the NWCSP. The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer provides support to the NWCSP and is also Chair of the Safer Wyre Forest Group.
- 2.3 Scrutiny arrangements for the CSP currently remain unchanged with local authorities having a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of its local CSP, under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- 2.4 Alongside the relationship the Council has with the CSP, there is also a direct role in holding the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account through the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP). Wyre Forest District Council's representative on the PCP is the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Housing, Councillor Juliet Smith.

#### 3. Key Issues

##### 3.1 Partnership Structure

District Operational Groups are identified as Safer District Groups and are known as Safer Bromsgrove Group, Safer Redditch Group and Safer Wyre Forest Group. There are also a number of other sub groups and these are best illustrated by the diagram below.

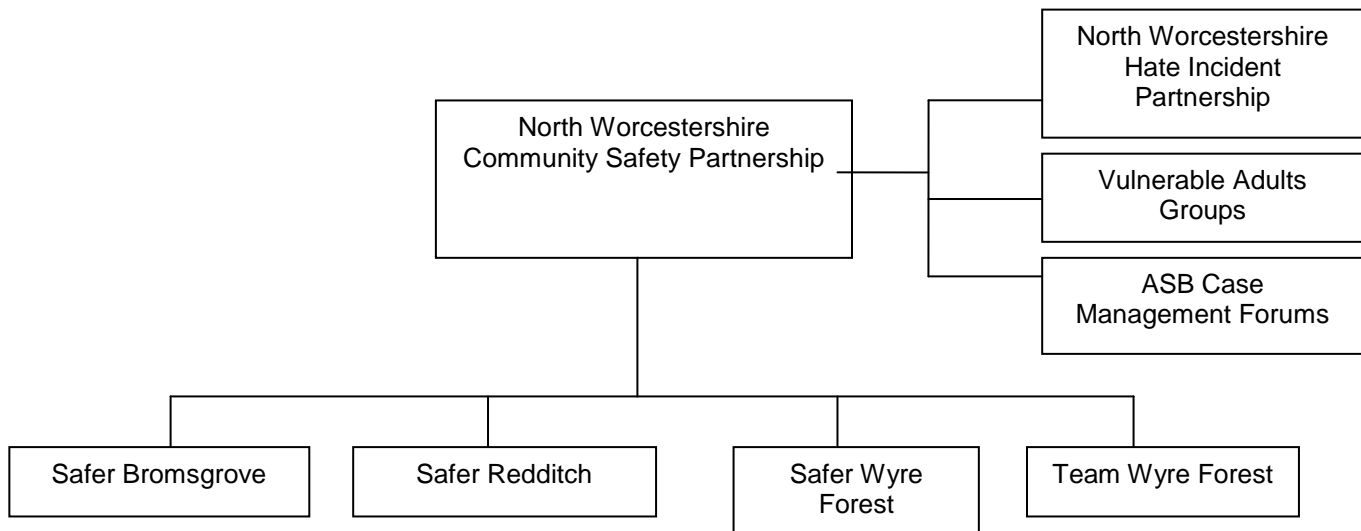


Diagram 1: Structure of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership

### 3.2 Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan

NWCSP has a statutory duty to produce a three year rolling plan outlining how the Partnership intends to address key crime and community safety priorities, as identified through its annual Strategic Assessment. A list of the partners is available at **Appendix One**.

The Strategic Assessment gathers research, evidence and intelligence from national and regional sources, as well as drawing on professional expertise of those working locally. It is designed to be a point of reference and guidance to resource community safety initiatives among partner agencies across the area.

The Strategic Assessment is currently being developed ahead of a refreshed Partnership Plan being produced for 1 April 2017. The Strategic Assessment has already identified priorities for the partnership to focus on and these were agreed in December 2016. They are:

- I. Violence and abuse: including sexual offending and domestic abuse (to include Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE))
- II. Theft and Acquisitive crime: including shoplifting, thefts and burglaries
- III. Protecting vulnerable communities: including harassment and threatening behaviour
- IV. Anti Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance: including criminal damage, environmental issues and deliberate fires/arson
- V. Reducing Offending and Drug and Alcohol Misuse are cross cutting themes which impact on all priorities

The Strategic Assessment will provide detailed analysis on each of these priorities, identifying locations, victims and offenders. The Partnership Plan

will detail the priorities that the Community Safety Partnership will tackle. The Plan will include details on how these priorities will be achieved, clear actions to be undertaken in each district and across North Worcestershire and how performance will be measured.

**3.3 John Campion, Police and Crime Commissioner, West Mercia**

John Campion was elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia on 5th May 2016. The PCC has a duty to co-operate with CSPs to reduce crime and disorder. There is a reciprocal duty on CSPs to work with the PCC. The PCC and the CSP must have regard to each other's priorities within their respective plans. The PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan was published in October 2016 and his vision will be reflected in the NWCSP Partnership Plan, which the partnership will contribute to delivering at a local level. The PCC's vision is focused on four key areas:

- I. Building a More Secure West Mercia: CSE, domestic abuse, vulnerable people, sexual offences, ASB, drugs and alcohol, reducing reoffending, road safety
- II. Reassuring West Mercia's Communities: feeling safe as well as being safe, engaging with the public, protecting from cyber crime, making voices heard around rural crime
- III. Putting Victims and Witnesses First
- IV. Reforming West Mercia

Tracey Onslow was appointed as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner in July 2016. Her role is to represent the PCC in communities across West Mercia. Her portfolio includes cyber, rural and business crime, victims' services and commissioning. CSPs will be working closely with the Deputy PCC as the commissioning model is developed and put into operation. To assist with the development, CSPs have been advised that the Deputy PCC is undertaking a review of CSP funding with a focus on outcomes.

**3.4 Grant Funding from the PCC 2017/18**

CSPs in West Mercia have been advised of their respective funding allocations for 2017/18 but they still have to apply to the PCC with details of how each CSP would like to use their allocation. On 7th February 2017, an extraordinary meeting of the NWCSP was held to agree which projects and areas of work partners would wish money to be allocated to. The funding available is based on previous year's allocations. The table below shows projects which NWCSP will be applying to use their funding allocation for. It should be noted that this funding is only for 2017/18. The NWCSP will be advised in March if successful or not.

A table of the funding requests made to the PCC for 2017/18 can be found at **Appendix Two**.

On behalf of the three Local Authorities, the NWCSP is also making an application to the PCC for funding towards CCTV. This is for a capital contribution to modernise the CCTV infrastructure to Internet Protocol Recording alongside the cameras. This is separate to the NWCSP's funding allocation and if successful the funding will go to the respective local authorities.

### **3.5 Future funding from the PCC**

As stated at 3.3, the Deputy PCC will be conducting a review of CSP funding ahead of a new outcomes-based commissioning framework being implemented in April 2018. We are waiting on detailed information regarding the framework but we understand that it will help CSPs and the PCC to further our understanding of local need, crime patterns and trends. It will enable the PCC to commission projects and services alongside the CSPs that focus on needs, address gaps in provision and meet outcomes.

### **3.6 Local Delivery, Key Projects and Progress**

Local delivery of community safety projects and initiatives falls under the remit of the Community Safety Operational Groups. In Wyre Forest, Safer Wyre Forest Group meets on a bi monthly basis to monitor district performance and review local operational delivery. This group is the first point of contact for any local crime and community safety issues or concerns that may require a multi agency response.

Progress of grant funded projects is reported to the PCC. At the end of the financial year there is a requirement to provide a comprehensive report to the PCC reviewing all projects funded in 2016/17, this will include a breakdown of expenditure and demonstrate the difference the projects have made. This report can be shared with Members once it has been tabled at the NWCSP. The next part of the report provides an update regarding some of our key projects.

#### **Community Ambassadors**

This is the third year of our ground-breaking local citizenship project between the Safer Wyre Forest team and the ContinU Trust. There are currently 60 Community Ambassadors in our high schools which are broken down as below:

Bewdley High School - 8  
Baxter College - 5  
Stourport High School - 20  
Wolverley CE Secondary School - 9  
King Charles 1 High School - 8  
Hagley Catholic High School - 10

Safer Wyre Forest requires the Community Ambassadors to support specific community safety initiatives such as national Personal Safety Day, the White Ribbon Campaign and seasonal crime prevention campaigns.

Bewdley High School created a presentation focusing on the key issues regarding personal safety and this included acting out interactive scenarios on

how to keep safe. This was delivered to 300 pupils across Years 7 and 8; this was followed up with a personal safety quiz testing their learning. Feedback from the teachers and the Community Ambassadors indicated that the year groups found it interesting and liked the way the information was presented which made them consider their own personal safety and what they could change to keep themselves safe.

All Community Ambassadors were involved in the White Ribbon campaign, raising awareness and understanding of domestic abuse and healthy relationships. They focussed on delivering assemblies, sharing information and encouraged students to get involved via artwork activities and pledges. From our experience this type of interaction encourages discussions amongst the students and staff on this difficult topic. The Community Ambassadors also distributed white ribbons to students and staff to wear to show their support, leadership and commitment to the campaign. Overall this campaign reached over 7000 students.

In early December, King Charles 1 High School and Baxter College worked together to hold an information stand in the Swan Centre, Kidderminster. The aim was to provide crime prevention and personal safety advice to residents. The accompanying teachers and PCSOs informed Safer Wyre Forest that the shoppers had enjoyed speaking with the young people and learning about crime prevention. The Community Ambassadors felt that they had gained confidence by speaking to the public on these important and sometimes sensitive subjects.

A new website has been created enabling Safer Wyre Forest to showcase the work of the Community Ambassadors. It also provides information and links to various help and support organisations that are available for young people. The Community Ambassadors are able to download resources and upload their work which other Community Ambassadors can use or adapt. The website [www.communityambassadors.org.uk](http://www.communityambassadors.org.uk) receives 2000 visits a month. Safer Wyre Forest has commissioned a film, which coupled with the website will form part of the evaluation process and will demonstrate the difference being involved in the Community Ambassadors initiative makes to young people, their schools and the wider community.

### **Safe Place Scheme**

The Safe Place Scheme is a successful scheme which was set up across Wyre Forest in 2014 and now operates across Worcestershire. It offers vulnerable people a safe place to go if they have a problem or worry when out and about in the town centres. All safe places are identified by a Safe Place sticker and have trained staff that are able to give reassurance and help people contact the appropriate support, if needed. There is now a free Safe Place Scheme app available for your mobile phone, download "My Town Worcestershire" from the App Store, this will show you your nearest "Safe Place" and can guide you to it through Google Maps. A directory of the Safe Places in Wyre Forest and across the county is available at [www.ourway.org.uk](http://www.ourway.org.uk)

Community Safety teams in Worcestershire are working in partnership with West Mercia Police and Our Way to support, develop and maintain the scheme across the county. A Safer Wyre Forest Project Officer is assisting in the promotion of the scheme via social media, events and working with the Community Ambassadors to promote the scheme in their high schools.

### **Hate Crime**

As part of the national hate crime awareness week in October, the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership organised a number of events. Specifically in Wyre Forest, an awareness stand was held outside the Kidderminster Town Hall to engage with residents and over 200 information bags were handed out. Residents felt comfortable approaching the stand and engaging with staff to find out more about hate crime and, in some instances, people also offered their own personal experiences of how they had been a victim and how services could be improved. Information was displayed in the Worcestershire Hub and at Wyre Forest House. Articles were published in the Kidderminster Shuttle, Member's Bulletin, Wyred Weekly and promoted via the Safer Wyre Twitter and Facebook pages.

### **Managing Harm**

As part of West Mercia Police's Managing Harm initiative, a Safer Wyre Forest Project Officer helped to deliver 40 interactive awareness sessions on domestic abuse and healthy relationships to 800 year nine students in three Wyre Forest high schools. As a result of the sessions students said that they felt more able to identify what a healthy relationship is, had increased their knowledge about the local support available and would feel more confident in being able to ask for help for themselves, friends or family members.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Together with an officer from the District Council's Sanctuary Scheme, a Safer Wyre Forest Project Officer has helped to support nine victims of domestic abuse by providing home security advice and security products. These actions help people to stay in their own homes, provide reassurance and increase feelings of safety and security for vulnerable residents at a traumatic time in their lives.

### **Media and Community Engagement**

Safer Wyre Forest has a website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts, which are used regularly to raise awareness of campaigns, promote projects and provide information to residents. Twitter (@saferwyreforest) has nearly 500 followers and is steadily increasing; Facebook (Safer Wyre Forest) has over 178 page likes with some postings being shared by hundreds of visitors; [www.nwcsp.org](http://www.nwcsp.org) (April 2016 to February 2017) had over 2000 users, over 5000 pages viewed.

Over the year, a Safer Wyre Forest Project Officer has attended a number of events in order to speak to local residents, provide crime prevention advice and raise awareness of campaigns. The Project Officer estimated that they had spoken to over 200 people at various events, for example talking to students at Kidderminster College, the Over 55s Retirement Roadshow, the Showcase of Services for Older People, our White Ribbon campaign stand

and a Christmas event held in the Horsefair, Kidderminster. Purse bells and cables remain popular as a method for helping to keep purses safe.

### **ASB Case Management Group**

The Wyre Forest ASB Case Management Group was established in June 2016. The Group assesses repeat victims of ASB, considers offenders and locations of concern and puts actions into place. The Group is chaired by the North Worcestershire Harm Hub Sergeant from West Mercia Police and has multi agency membership including Wyre Forest District Council and three Housing Associations. High risk victims of ASB have their risk management plans discussed at the Group and partners offer additional support, where appropriate.

### **Team Wyre Forest**

Team Wyre Forest is a co-ordinated partnership based on established models in Shrewsbury and Worcester. It has been set up to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, environmental and other issues focussing on our three town centres. The Partnership includes a range of organisations all working together and includes Wyre Forest District Council, West Mercia Police, town councils, Swanswell Drug and Alcohol Service and others. It enables issues to be dealt with promptly and duplication of effort is avoided by sharing knowledge, information and ideas. Partners are able to share resources and support each other and services are made more efficient and responsive to our town centres' needs.

## **3.7 Crime and Anti Social Behaviour Data**

Moving forward the NWCSP will be assessed on its performance by how it achieves certain outcomes. CSPs have moved away from the traditional method of only considering police recorded crime and ASB data to focusing on delivering outcomes, this is particularly being driven by the PCC and the outcomes-based commissioning framework. This is a new way of working for CSPs and the Research and Information Officer will be instrumental in assisting partners to ensure it is measuring the right things in the right way in order to assess if its activities are making a difference.

Levels of crime and disorder are assessed using a range of data sources (recorded crime, anti social behaviour, deliberate fires) and is used at a range of groups at varying geographical and decision-making levels.

See **Appendix Three** for year to date figures for total recorded crime, crime types and anti social behaviour. Year to date performance for all recorded crime in Wyre Forest currently illustrates an 11% increase or 672 more offences, compared to the same period last year. This percentage increase in total recorded crime is the same as North Worcestershire as a whole. Bromsgrove has seen an 8% increase and in Redditch it is a 13% increase in total recorded crime. The North Worcestershire CSP is due to meet on 8<sup>th</sup> March and these figures will be discussed in further detail.

**4. Options**

- 4.1 That progress made by the North Worcestershire CSP be noted.

**5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Housing.

**6. Related Decisions**

- 6.1 None.

**7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies**

- 7.1 Wyre Forest District Council Corporate Plan 2014/19

**8. Implications**

- 8.1 Resources: Staff time and funding from external budgets.
- 8.2 Equalities: There are no negative impacts on equality, which arise as a result of the NWCSP and its associated activities.
- 8.3 Partnership working: The NWCSP Strategic Group and its delivery groups involve a number of partners at a strategic and operational level.
- 8.4 Human rights: No direct implications from this report.
- 8.5 E Government: No direct implications from this report.
- 8.6 Transformation: No direct implications from this report.

**9. Equality Impact Needs Assessment**

- 9.1 As this is an update report, no equality impact needs assessment is required.

**10. Wards affected**

- 10.1 All wards and across the administrative boundaries of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest.

**11. Appendices**

Appendix One: Membership List

Appendix Two: Table of Funding Requests made by NWCSP to the PCC 2017/18

Appendix Three: North Worcestershire Crime and ASB Data April 2016 - January 2017



**12. Background Papers**

North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013/16 (refreshed 2015/16)

Safer West Mercia Plan 2017/21

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## **Appendix One - Membership**

Organisations should:

- Be a 'responsible authority' (RA) a 'co-operating body' (CB) or an 'invitee to participate' (IP) as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) or subsequent legislative amendments or have a strategic responsibility for community safety related issues.
  - Bromsgrove District Council (RA)
  - Chairperson of the Community Safety Operational Group for Bromsgrove (IP)
  - Chairperson of the Community Safety Operational Group for Redditch (IP)
  - Chairperson of the Community Safety Operational Group for Wyre Forest (IP)
  - Chairperson of the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership (IP)
  - Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority (RA)
  - HMP Hewell (IP)
  - Magistrates Bench Chairs (IP)
  - National Probation Service (RA)
  - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety for Bromsgrove District Council (IP)
  - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety for Redditch Borough Council (IP)
  - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety for Worcestershire County Council (IP)
  - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety for Wyre Forest District Council (IP)
  - Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (RA)
  - Redditch Borough Council (RA)
  - Victim Support (IP)
  - Warwickshire and West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company (RA)
  - West Mercia Police (RA)
  - West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (CB)
  - West Mercia Youth Offending Service (IP)
  - Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (IP)
  - Worcestershire County Council (RA)
  - Worcestershire Regulatory Service (IP)
  - Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (RA)
  - Wyre Forest District Council (RA)

**Appendix Two - Table of Funding Requests made by NWCSP to the PCC 2017/18**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Violence and abuse  Theft and Acquisitive crime  Protecting vulnerable communities  Anti Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance  Reducing Offending and Drug and Alcohol Misuse	Research and Information Officer	<p>Development of data collection strategies and protocols/data sharing agreements with partners and in order to create analytical products to support senior decision makers within the CSP.</p> <p>Development, maintenance and analysis of a robust evidence base of quantitative and qualitative data to inform the production, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the Community Safety Partnership's priorities, plans and activities</p> <p>Assisting with the statutory obligations of the CSP including production of the CSP Strategic Assessment, partnership plan and strategies to reduce reoffending, tackling domestic abuse and reducing anti social behaviour.</p> <p>Continually analysing crime trends across the CSP, highlighting key trends and recommendations through reports, documents and presentations.</p>	£35,000

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Violence and abuse  Theft and Acquisitive crime  Protecting vulnerable communities  Anti Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance  Reducing Offending and Drug and Alcohol Misuse	Safer Bromsgrove Safer Redditch Safer Wyre Forest	This funding is flexible to allow the Safer Groups to take a proactive and responsive approach to delivering the Partnership Plan throughout the year. Examples of projects the Safer Groups will deliver:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alcohol/substance misuse campaigns</li> <li>- Community Ambassadors</li> <li>- Community safety events and engagement opportunities</li> <li>- Crime prevention/ personal safety information, tools, equipment</li> <li>- Domestic Abuse Projects</li> <li>- Hate Crime Awareness Week</li> <li>- Hate Incident Reporting Scheme</li> <li>- Home Security Schemes</li> <li>- Personal safety campaigns</li> <li>- Safe Place Scheme</li> <li>- School Mentoring Scheme</li> <li>- Town centre based activities - day and night time economy</li> <li>- Website, social media and communications</li> <li>- Youth ASB diversionary projects</li> </ul>	£30,595 £44,406 £45,249
Reducing Offending	Interventions and services to be determined by the Worcestershire Reducing Offending Strategy Group	Activities will be focused on developing services across Worcestershire.	£40,700
Reducing Offending	North Worcestershire One Day One Conversation Activities	Work to address offenders needs within North Worcestershire to support them from reoffending, examples include rent deposits, clothing for job interviews, short term 1-2-1 support.	£4,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>£199,250</b>

Appendix Three - North Worcestershire Crime and ASB Data  
April 2016 - January 2017

	North Worcestershire				Bromsgrove District				Redditch Borough				Wyre Forest District			
	PREV YTD (Apr-Jan) 2015/16	YTD (Apr-Jan) 2016/17	Change	% Change	PREV YTD (Apr-Jan) 2015/16	YTD (Apr-Jan) 2016/17	Change	% Change	PREV YTD (Apr-Jan) 2015/16	YTD (Apr-Jan) 2016/17	Change	% Change	PREV YTD (Apr-Jan) 2015/16	YTD (Apr-Jan) 2016/17	Change	% Change
Total Recorded Crime	14640	16219	1579	11%	4215	4552	337	8%	4560	5130	570	13%	5865	6537	672	11%
All Other Theft Offences	1557	1653	96	6%	473	536	63	13%	493	473	-20	-4%	591	644	53	9%
Bicycle Theft	146	135	-11	-8%	38	31	-7	-18%	46	47	1	2%	62	57	-5	-8%
Burglary Other	929	1051	122	13%	323	335	12	4%	208	223	15	7%	398	493	95	24%
Criminal Damage & Arson	1837	1889	52	3%	475	505	30	6%	618	626	8	1%	744	758	14	2%
Domestic Burglary	609	749	140	23%	243	323	80	33%	171	188	17	10%	195	238	43	22%
Other Crimes Against Society	1512	1716	204	13%	513	536	23	4%	460	553	93	20%	539	627	88	16%
Other Sexual Offences	289	379	90	31%	63	88	25	40%	116	145	29	25%	110	146	36	33%
Business Robbery	12	28	16	133%	8	11	3	38%	1	9	8	800%	3	8	5	167%
Personal Robbery	86	137	51	59%	24	36	12	50%	32	55	23	72%	30	46	16	53%
Rape	171	218	47	27%	40	47	7	18%	68	82	14	21%	63	89	26	41%
Shoplifting	1260	1371	111	9%	206	295	89	43%	380	482	102	27%	674	594	-80	-12%
Theft from Person	112	143	31	28%	21	31	10	48%	46	58	12	26%	45	54	9	20%
Vehicle Offences	1822	1568	-254	-14%	799	563	-236	-30%	405	296	-109	-27%	618	709	91	15%
Violence With Injury	1779	2046	267	15%	413	499	86	21%	587	721	134	23%	779	826	47	6%
Violence Without Injury	2519	3136	617	24%	576	716	140	24%	929	1172	243	26%	1014	1248	234	23%
VAP With Injury - Alcohol Related	667	774	107	16%	132	160	28	21%	215	283	68	32%	320	331	11	3%
VAP With Injury - Drug Related	84	105	21	25%	16	21	5	31%	18	36	18	100%	50	48	-2	-4%
VAP With Injury- Domestic Abuse Related	637	660	23	4%	130	148	18	14%	220	240	20	9%	287	272	-15	-5%
Rape- Domestic Abuse Related	39	51	12	31%	10	9	-1	-10%	20	20	0	0%	9	22	13	144%
Other Sexual Offences- Domestic Abuse Related	19	12	-7	-37%	7	3	-4	-57%	8	4	-4	-50%	4	5	1	25%
Hate Offences & Crimed Incidents	216	291	75	35%	47	49	2	4%	95	154	59	62%	74	88	14	19%
Business Crime	2717	2881	164	6%	0	833	N/A	N/A	0	872	N/A	N/A	0	1176	N/A	N/A
ASB Incidents	8658	8935	277	3%	2131	2118	-13	-1%	2983	3029	46	2%	3544	3788	244	6.9%

RAG Assessment Coding

Red= an increase of 10% or more

Amber = an increase of between 1% and 9.9%

Green = no change or a decrease



### Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Mike Parker  
Director of Economic Prosperity & Place

Date: Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017

### Changes to Community Housing Group Community Member Nominations

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of changes that are expected which impact on the Council's approach to nominating Council Members to the Community Member positions on Community Housing Group (CHG).

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Since the Council's housing stock was transferred in 2000 to the then newly established Wyre Forest Community Housing Ltd there have been Council Members on the boards and committees of what is now CHG. Every year at the Council's AGM in May, Members would be nominated to be on the CHG's boards and committees.
- 2.2 Historically Members carried what was referred to as the 'golden vote'; a single collective Council vote on significant constitutional issues such as re-structures and governance reviews. This is because the balance of representation on such matters (currently carried by the CHG Membership – see attached structure chart at Appendix 1) is three representatives from each of the District Council, tenants and parent board (independent) members. The District therefore holds a third of the voting share and in order for any Special Resolution relating to important issues to be passed it requires 75% approval; the Council therefore holds the key to constitutional changes of any significance being agreed (such as those that were proposed in 2012 for example (see below).
- 2.3 In 2012 CHG implemented changes to their structure following recommendations from their Regulator, the Homes & Communities Agency, to ensure that they complied with new regulatory framework that came into effect in April 2012. This brought about changes to the way in which the Council placed its Members on their boards and committees. Since that time the Council has had the right to propose three Members to sit on the CHG Membership but has been invited to propose up to six Members to sit on other committees in the newly created position of Community Members. Beyond the CHG Membership the same 'mandating' does not apply to Community Members, they sit in their own right and not as Council representatives.
- 2.4 The creation of the Community Member role recognised the value of the potential contribution of a wider group of people within the local community.

Although the Council secured the rights to first nomination of its Members to fill six of these of these Community Member roles, they were not exclusive to Council Members and could be taken by non elected individuals if the Council chose to nominate such people or indeed could be filled by other people if the Council chose not to make any nominations.

- 2.5 CHG sought three year memberships of their committees based on the suitability of candidates to meet a specific job specification. This opened up the possibility that CHG could reject a nomination from the Council if it was not appropriate for a particular Community Member role (although this has never happened). In response to these changes the Council adopted a rolling programme of nominations on a three year cycle so that CHG could have more certainty of longevity of role to assist with training and developing expertise within its members (see attached at Appendix 2 which shows memberships since the new structure was put in place). There are currently two vacancies for Community Members on the Wyre Forest Community Housing and Oakleaf Committees.
- 2.6 However, there are now new drivers for change that will in all likelihood affect the current arrangements.

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 In 2015 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) undertook a review of the statistical classification of "private registered providers" i.e. Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) of social housing in England (PRPs). The conclusion of this review, announced on 30 October 2015, was that PRPs should be reclassified as Public Non-Financial Corporations rather than Private Non-Financial Corporations as formerly. The review focused on the existing legislative and regulatory environment, specifically measures introduced in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.
- 3.2 The Government began to address the ONS concerns through the Housing and Planning Act which received royal assent on 12 May 2016, but the deregulatory measures would not have effect until the necessary commencement order was laid before Parliament.
- 3.3 On 30 January 2017 a commencement order was laid (SI 2017/75) which brings into effect most of the deregulatory provisions of the 2016 Act; including that from 3 February 2017, the Secretary of State is formally empowered to issue regulations limiting the influence of local authorities over RSLs.
- 3.4 In considering its response to the ONS concerns, the Government identified particular concerns relating to large-scale voluntary transfer organisations (LSVTs). The risk is that if these issues are not addressed, it is possible that ONS may continue to regard these associations as public even if the rest of the sector is reclassified as private.
- 3.5 Accordingly, the Government included measures in the Housing and Planning Act to address these concerns. Although these provisions apply in theory to

the sector as a whole, they are unlikely to have any practical impact except for LSVTs.

**3.6 The Act gives the Secretary of State power to make regulations in the following areas:**

**3.6.1** Reservation of board places for persons nominated by the local authority. This is significant because one of the main tests applied by ONS is whether a state body (such as a local authority) can make appointments to the board. Section 93 of the Housing and Planning Act allows the Secretary of State to issue regulations restricting the ability of local authorities to make appointments, possibly that the proportion of council nominees on a registered provider's board should not exceed 24%. Any limit will not prevent RSLs from recruiting members or officers of local authorities to the board, but anyone recruited in this way would serve on the board purely in an individual capacity like any other board member. The power relates to appointments (including reappointments) so it will not stop a local authority appointee from serving out his or her current term of office, but the Secretary of State has a further power to make regulations allowing an association to remove a local authority appointee before the end of his or her term.

**3.6.2** Local authority voting rights and constitutional veto. Some LSVT constitutions confer special voting rights on the local authority, potentially including a veto on constitutional changes. By virtue of the Council's representation on the CHG Membership (see 2.2 above) this applies to the District Council. The Secretary of State has power to require local authorities to reduce or eliminate these rights, and to refrain from obtaining them in future.

**3.7** Hitherto, Registered Social Landlords (RSL) have generally required consent from their regulator, the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) before undertaking certain organisational changes, including mergers, acquisitions and restructures. With effect from 6 April 2017, this requirement will no longer apply but there will be a requirement for them to notify the regulator of significant changes.

**3.8** In the light of all of the above the CHG commissioned an independent review in November 2016 and appointed consultants Campbell Tickell to undertake the work. Part of their brief is to review the corporate structure of CHG, their boards and committees as well as the membership of them. The outcome from this review is not anticipated to be available until late spring 2017.

**4. Proposals**

**4.1** Whilst it is not known when the Regulations will be issued or what exactly they will say, it appears that in all likelihood the Secretary of State is going to bring about changes that will mean the Council's relationship with CHG and the



District Council Members role on CHG is going to change such that the ties through Council nominations will most likely come to an end. CHG is already preparing for change and has initiated its own Review. It is to be hoped that by the time of the Council's AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017 there will be greater clarity on the matter from one or both of these sources.

- 4.2 Until such time as there is any definitive direction from the Secretary of State and or the CHG Review it is not possible to say whether there will be any decision making role for the Council to undertake in this change process. It is conceivable that the Regulations will override existing nomination rights and prevent future nominations (or even allow existing ones to be ended early).
- 4.3 As Community Member positions are positions open to Councillors to apply for without needing to be nominated by Council; the role of a District Councillor is de facto one of a representative of the community which has elected her or him and therefore will carry with it many of the skills to meet the job description of the Community Member. Councillors, along with any other community representative can be considered for these roles, it shouldn't require Council to nominate them as the position should be based on the "best person for the job".
- 4.4 In anticipation of the changes anticipated to come with the new Regulations, it seems pragmatic for the Council to make no further nominations to the roles of Community Members as it would normally expect to do in May at the AGM.

## **5. Options**

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider this report and:
  - 5.1.1 Recommend to Cabinet that no further nominations to the roles of Community Member are made to any of the vacancies on CHG;
  - 5.1.2 To recommend to Cabinet any other proposals that the Committee deems appropriate.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Corporate Leadership Team.  
Cabinet Member for Health, Well-being & Housing.

## **7. Equality Impact Needs Assessment**

- 7.1 There are no issues to be addressed.

## **8. Wards affected**

- 8.1 All

**9. Appendices**

**Appendix 1 – Current CHG Structure**

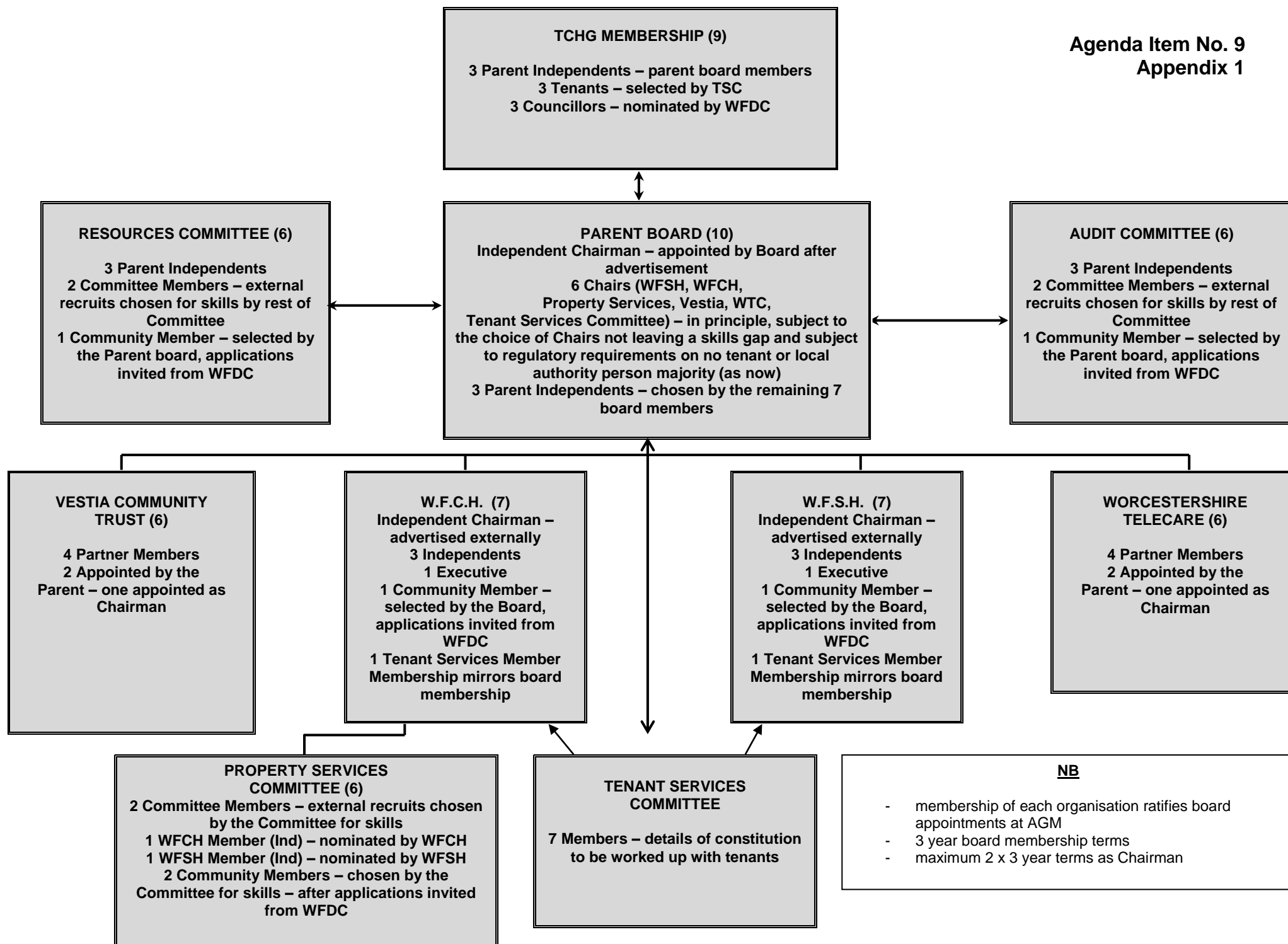
Appendix 2 – Current CHG Memberships

**10. Background Papers**

**Officer Contact Details:**

**Name:** Mike Parker  
**Title:** Director of Economic Prosperity & Place  
**Contact Number:** 01562 732500

**Agenda Item No. 9**  
**Appendix 1**



**Wyre Forest District Council Member Nominations to CHG Boards**

	2012	2013	2014	2015 All Council Elections	2016	2017 No District Elections	2018	2019 Change to 4 Yearly Elections
CHG Membership	<b>Barry McFarland</b> (1 year)	<b>Barry McFarland</b> (3 years)		<b>Nigel Knowles</b> <sup>(0)</sup> (1 year)	<b>Shazu Miah</b> <sup>(0)</sup> (3 years)			Cllr to be appointed (3 years)
CHG Membership	<b>Mary Rayner</b> (2 years)		<b>Mary Rayner</b> <sup>(2)</sup> (3 years)			Cllr to be appointed (3 years)		
CHG Membership	<b>John Hart</b> (3 years)			<b>John Hart</b> <sup>(3)</sup> (3 years)			Cllr to be appointed (3 years)	
Audit	<b>Nicky Gale</b> Community Member (1 year)	<b>Nicky Gale</b> (3 years) Held office to May 2014	<b>Chris Rogers</b> <sup>(0)</sup> (2 years)		<b>Chris Rogers</b> <sup>(2)</sup> (3 years)			Community Member to be appointed (3 years)
Resources	<b>Douglas Godwin</b> Community Member (3 years)			<b>Juliet Smith</b> <sup>(0)</sup> (3 years)			Community Member to be appointed (3 years)	
Wyre Forest Community Housing	<b>Fran Oborski</b> Community Member (3 years)			<b>Tony Muir</b> (2 years) <sup>(0)</sup> } M E R G E D	<b>Vacant</b>	Community Member to be appointed (3 years)		
Wyre Forest Sheltered Housing	<b>Jenny Greener</b> Community Member (2 years)		<b>Jenny Greener</b> (3 years)					
<i>Oakleaf (formerly Property Services)</i>	<b>Gordon Yarranton</b> Community Member (2 years)		<b>Gordon Yarranton</b> (3 years)	<b>Helen Dyke</b> <sup>(7)</sup> (2 years)	<b>Vacant</b>	Community Member to be appointed (3 years)		
Vestia	<b>Steve Clee</b> Community Member (1 year)	<b>Steve Clee</b> <sup>(2)</sup> (3 years)			<b>Steve Clee</b> <sup>(5)</sup> (1 year)	Community Member to be appointed (3 years)		Community Member to be appointed (3 years)

NB: <sup>(x)</sup> = no. of years served at that date

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

FEEDBACK FROM CABINET MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2017

Agenda  
Item No.

DECISION

8.1 Disposal of Land at Lion Fields

In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017.

Decision:

- 1.1 To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration, Solicitor to the Council and Chief Financial Officer, authority to take all necessary actions to procure a developer and to enter into a development agreement that includes, but isn't limited to, the detail as set out in paragraph 4.7 for the disposal of Parcel 1 of the Lion Fields re-development ensuring that the procurement process complies with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 including the finalisation of evaluation criteria to select the preferred developer following the Restricted procedure;
- 2.2 To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration, Solicitor to the Council and Chief Financial Officer authority to agree the terms of a land owners' agreement between the Council and Worcestershire County Council which sets out the sharing of costs between both parties in bringing Parcel 1 to the market and returns a capital receipt to both parties in a fair and equitable way.

**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  
Town Centres Busking Policy

**January 2017 – Cancelled**

**February 2017**

Treasury Management Service Strategy 2017/18  
“How are we doing?” Q3 update (Place)  
Disposal of Land at Lion Fields  
Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation (presentation from WCC)

**March 2017**

Annual Crime & Disorder Review  
Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan  
Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation Response  
Community Housing Group - Review of Nominations  
Collective Energy Switching

**April 2017**

Establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC)  
Draft comments on the Housing White Paper  
Industrial Strategy Document

**Work Programme 2017-2018**

**June 2017**

Open Space, Playing Fields and Built Facilities Strategies  
Local Plan Preferred Options  
Part EXEMPT Industrial Unit Investment Business Case  
EXEMPT Residential Unit Investment Business Case