

Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Guildhall,
Frankwell Quay,
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ

Date: Tuesday, 6 October 2026

Committee:
Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 14 October 2026

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: The Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ

You are requested to attend the above meeting. The Agenda is attached

There will be some access to the meeting room for members of the press and public, but this will be limited. If you wish to attend the meeting please email democracy@shropshire.gov.uk to check that a seat will be available for you.

Please click [here](#) to view the livestream of the meeting* on the date and time stated on the agenda

The recording of the event will also be made available shortly after the meeting on the Shropshire Council Youtube Channel [Here](#)

Richard Phillips
Director – Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Cabinet

Heather Kidd
Alex Wagner
Roger Evans
Andy Hall
Ruth Houghton
James Owen
Rob Wilson
David Vasmer
David Walker
Sarah Marston

Your Committee Officer is:

Ashley Kendrick Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01743 250893

Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk

When attending this meeting, Members are reminded of the three principles of the Jo Cox Foundation and Compassion in Politics Civility Pledge:

1. *Use a civil and constructive tone in debate*
2. *Act with integrity, honesty and compassion*
3. *Behave respectfully towards others, including those I disagree with*

*(Please note that while we strive to live stream meetings, technical issues may occasionally occur. In the event of a technical disruption, the meeting will be paused to try to resolve the issue. Should it not be possible to resume the live stream, the meeting will proceed as scheduled, and a backup recording will be made available after the meeting. Any disruption to the live stream does not affect the legality of the meeting).

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Interests

Members are reminded that they must declare their disclosable pecuniary interests and other registrable or non-registrable interests in any matter being considered at the meeting as set out in Appendix B of the Members' Code of Conduct and consider if they should leave the room prior to the item being considered. Further advice can be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2026.

4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 8 October 2026.

5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 8 October 2026.

6 Scrutiny Items

7 Adult Social Care Transformation Plan (Pages 13 - 24)

Lead Member: Councillor Ruth Houghton, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Public Health

Lead Officer: Natalie McFall, Service Director – Care & Wellbeing

8 Devolution and Strategic Partnerships (Pages 25 - 104)

Lead Member: Councillor Alex Wagner, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Economic Growth

Lead Officer: Kassandra Polyzoides, Interim Service Director – Place Shaping

9 Shropshire Traffic Management and Parking Consultation (formerly Shropshire Parking Tariff Proposal) (Pages 105 - 128)

Lead Member: Councillor Rob Wilson, Portfolio Holder for Transport & Regeneration

Lead Officer: Andy Wilde, Service Director – Infrastructure

10 Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan - Area Designation (Pages 129 - 140)

Lead Member: Councillor David Walker, Portfolio Holder for Planning

Lead Officer: Cassandra Polyzoides, Interim Service Director – Place Shaping

11 DWP Skills Bootcamps (Pages 141 - 206)

Lead Member: Councillor Alex Wagner, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Economic Growth

Lead Officer: Cassandra Polyzoides, Interim Service Director - Place Shaping

12 Highways Future Service Model

Lead Member: Councillor David Vasmer, Portfolio Holder for Highways & Waste

Lead Officer: Andy Wilde, Service Director – Infrastructure

Report to follow – the report has been delayed to allow further consideration of the extent of information that can be made available in public

13 Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve that, in accordance with the provisions of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 [3] of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items

14 Highways Future Service Model (Exempt Appendix)

Lead Member: Councillor David Vasmer, Portfolio Holder for Highways & Waste

Lead Officer: Andy Wilde, Service Director – Infrastructure

Exempt Appendix to follow.

15 Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 18 November 2026.



Committee and Date

Cabinet

14 October 2026

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2026

**In the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ
10.30 am**

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick

Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 250893

Present

Councillors Heather Kidd, Roger Evans, Andy Hall, Ruth Houghton, James Owen, Rob Wilson, David Vasmer, David Walker and Sarah Marston

In attendance

Group Leaders – Councillors Dan Thomas (Conservatives), Rosemary Dartnall (Labour), Dawn Husemann (Reform UK), Duncan Kerr (Green & Progressive Independents)

Tanya Miles (Chief Executive), Rachel Robinson (Interim Deputy Chief Executive), Duncan Whitfield (Interim Executive Director S151), Richard Phillips (Monitoring Officer), Paul Clarke (Service Director – Strategy & Change), Kassandra Polyzoides (Interim Service Director – Place Shaping), Mannie Ketley (remote) (Interim Director – Finance Improvement), Phil Weir (remote) (Revenue and Benefits Service Manager) Ashley Kendrick (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors Jamie Daniels, Chris Naylor

234 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Alex Wagner.

235 Disclosable Interests

In relation to agenda Item 16 – Whitchurch Civic Centre & Library – Asset Decision, Councillor Andy Hall declared that he was a member of Whitchurch Town Council. He is also Chair of Oversight which includes finance for Whitchurch Town Council which holds a current lease on the Civic Centre. It was confirmed that he would leave the room for this item.

236 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2026 be confirmed as an accurate record.

237 Public Question Time

At the discretion of the Chair, seven public questions had been received:

Maralyn Hepworth, in relation to Meole Brace Park and Ride.

Tony Burton, in relation to Meole Brace Park and Ride. In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder advised that said the 12-minute service increased passenger numbers and revenue, but rising contract costs meant it was no longer affordable to retain all three Park and Ride sites while also protecting essential bus services across Shropshire.

Mike Streetly, in relation to S106 and CiL receipts.

Chris Deaves, in relation to Income Tax revenue.

Rod Himsley, in relation to Whitchurch Library and Civic Centre. In relation to a supplementary question, the Leader and Portfolio Holder advised that the administration had inherited a worsening financial position and cannot afford the substantial investment needed to restore the building, so it is seeking community-led solutions while considering disposal options to avoid further costs. Members would be present at the community meeting later in the week.

John Palmer, in relation to housing.

Paul Wiseman, in relation to CIPFA External Assurance and Whitchurch Library and Civic Centre.

The full questions and responses can be found on [Response to Public Questions - Cabinet 9 September 2026.pdf](#)

238 Member Question Time

Three members' questions had been received:

Councillor Kate Halliday, in relation to Riverside Development.

Councillor Malcolm Myles-Hook, in relation to Whitchurch Civic Centre.

Councillor Jamie Daniels, in relation to Wier Hill S106 agreement. In response to a supplementary question seeking a clear timescale for action, the Portfolio Holder stated that any enforcement action must be considered carefully and be legally robust. Officers were reviewing the outstanding obligations with legal services and expect to provide a specific update on the position and potential next steps within the next couple of weeks.

239 Scrutiny Items

There were no scrutiny items.

240 Exceptional Financial Support: External Assurance Review

Cabinet considered the CIPFA External Assurance Review and the associated Best Value Notice issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Leader emphasised that the report was an independent assessment of the significant financial, governance and organisational challenges facing the Council and acknowledged the need for continued improvement.

Members noted that work was already underway to strengthen governance, financial management, leadership capacity and organisational accountability, alongside delivery of the Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy. It was further noted that the review reflected the Council's position in April 2026 and that progress had since been made, including reductions in the anticipated call on Exceptional Financial Support and the recruitment of senior leadership posts.

The Chair of the Finance and Improvement Scrutiny Committee reported the committee's consideration of the review and supported the findings, while recommending regular monitoring of progress against the report's recommendations, continued strengthening of financial controls and greater public accountability through the Improvement Board.

Members discussed the scale of the financial challenge facing the authority, the importance of maintaining momentum in implementing improvements, and the need for transparency with residents regarding the Council's financial position. Staff were thanked for their efforts in supporting financial recovery while continuing to deliver council services.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- (a) Noted and agreed the findings, conclusions and recommendations contained within the CIPFA External Assurance Review attached at Appendix A.
- (b) Noted that many of the recommendations align with priorities already being addressed through the Council's Improvement Plan and Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy.
- (c) Noted that progress against the recommendations will be reported quarterly to Cabinet as part of overall Improvement Plan update reports.

241 Annual Customer Feedback Report 2025/26

Cabinet received the Annual Customer Feedback Report covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Members noted that complaint volumes had continued to increase, with the most common issues relating to service standards, delays and decisions taken by the Council, although Ombudsman upheld rates remained below the average for comparable authorities and compliance with Ombudsman recommendations was 100%.

Members highlighted the importance of addressing the underlying causes of complaints, improving service capacity and learning from both complaints and compliments to support service improvement. It was acknowledged that increasing complaint numbers did not

necessarily indicate increasing dissatisfaction and could reflect improved accessibility of the complaints process. Members also welcomed improvements in some service areas, including highways, and recognised the positive feedback received by staff working in complex services.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet considered and agreed the recommendations and actions in the Annual Customer Feedback Report (pages 34 and 35), Appendix A, to support and improve customer feedback performance within Shropshire Council.

242 Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2026/27

Cabinet considered the Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring Report, which showed a favourable forecast position of £2.291m and projected savings of £5.238m against a target of £5m. Members were advised that the report provided the first evidence of progress in stabilising the Council's finances during the current financial year.

The Chair of the Finance and Improvement Scrutiny Committee advised that the committee welcomed the improved financial monitoring arrangements and the positive forecast position, whilst highlighting continuing financial pressures within Children's Services and requesting further scrutiny of this area. Members also discussed the reliance on asset sales, the impact of borrowing costs and Exceptional Financial Support, and the need to maintain progress through the Council's transformation and financial recovery programmes.

Cabinet noted the positive contribution of staff in improving financial management and recognised that significant financial challenges remained, requiring continued focus on savings delivery, service transformation and long-term financial sustainability.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the detailed position set out in this quarterly report which forecasts a favourable variation of £2.291m against the General Fund budget as set out in Table 1.
2. Noted that the s151 Officer continues to work with directorates in order to help them to ensure that their net expenditure is contained within their budgets and take appropriate mitigating actions where forecasts are exceeding budget.
3. Noted the risks identified as at 30 June 2026 as set out in section 13 of report including potential impact on the financial sustainability of the Council;
4. Noted the continued use of the Budget, Transformation and Change Panel (formerly the Operations Boards) and the Workforce Review Board with a view to enhancing the control of spend and authorisation of projects and the approvals to date of £ 3.127m for 2026/27 and £3.507m for 2027/28.

5. Noted the forecast level of savings achieved of £5.238m to date and a further £523k to be delivered by the end of the financial year, this against a target of £5m.
6. Noted the Capital programme and forecast outturn position as at quarter 1.
7. Noted the forecast General Fund Balance of £15m at 31 March 2027, in line with the Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy agreed by Cabinet in July 2026, which aims to increase reserves by £10m per year to £35m over the longer term.
8. Noted the reduced call for EFS in 2026/27 to £90m from the £121m set out in the MTFP report to Council in February 2026, the reduction being in line with the revised MTFP received by Cabinet in July 2026.
9. Noted that Cabinet will receive quarterly financial updates on the financial position during 2026/27, the Quarter 2 report scheduled for November 2026 and regular updates will also be available for the Budget Forum.
10. Approved the Capital and Revenue budget virements as set out in Appendix 3 and 5.

243 Whitchurch Civic Centre & Library - Asset Decision

It was agreed to bring this item forward to this point in the meeting.

After declaring an interest, Councillor Hall left the meeting for the duration of this item.

Cabinet considered a report on the future of Whitchurch Civic Centre and noted that, despite previous assumptions regarding potential capital investment, no funded scheme had been identified to undertake the necessary repairs. Members acknowledged the importance of the building to the local community but were advised that the Council's severe financial position meant it could not afford the significant capital investment required to bring the building back into use.

Members confirmed that community-led proposals would continue to be welcomed and that engagement with local councillors, Whitchurch Town Council and other stakeholders would continue as the disposal process progressed. It was emphasised that any future proposal would need to be fully funded, deliverable and legally compliant.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Declared the Whitchurch Civic Centre and Library site, edged red at Appendix A, surplus to the Council's operational requirements, for the reasons set out in sections 4 and 5 of this report, and having regard to the capital requirement and continuing maintenance and holding liabilities set out in section 4.
2. Approved its in-principle disposal, subject to the due diligence described in section 5, the financial and policy requirements in section 9, and the legal and statutory requirements in section 10, and in accordance with the Asset Disposal Policy within

the Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy approved by Cabinet on 8 July 2026.

3. Delegated authority to the Service Director for Place Shaping, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Assets, to determine and implement the disposal strategy and secure the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
4. Noted that officers and the Portfolio Holder will continue to engage with the Members for the Whitchurch electoral divisions, Whitchurch Town Council and other interested parties as the disposal strategy progresses.

244 Cornovii Developments Ltd

It was agreed to bring this item forward to this point in the meeting.

Cabinet considered a report on the future of Cornovii Developments Limited (CDL) and heard that the Council's financial emergency and reliance on Exceptional Financial Support meant it could no longer provide the borrowing required to support the company's existing business model. Members were advised that, whilst CDL had delivered 196 homes and made a positive contribution to housing provision, the recommended option represented the lowest-risk approach available and would limit further financial exposure to the Council.

The Chair of the Finance and Improvement Scrutiny Committee advised that the committee supported the recommended approach and emphasised the importance of keeping tenants informed and undertaking a 'lessons learned' review once the closure process is complete.

Members discussed the achievements of CDL, the implications for future housing delivery, the estimated financial impact of closure, and the need to protect existing tenants throughout the process.

Cabinet acknowledged that the decision was driven by the Council's financial circumstances rather than the housing needs of the county, which remain significant, and noted that alternative mechanisms for delivering affordable housing would continue to be explored.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the financial circumstances currently facing the Council and especially the limitations on borrowing arising from EFS commitments in at least the short and medium terms.
2. Noted the financial circumstances of CDL as illustrated by their most recent balance sheet and the need for the Council to act in order to maintain solvency of the company in the absence of Council funding for future development activity.

3. Approved the structured closure of the Company over a period of time (Section 4; Option 6) in order to minimise the financial exposure to the Council and to seek best consideration to the Council from any property and land disposals and transfers.
4. Noted that this decision is consistent with the requirements set out in the Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy agreed by Cabinet in July.
5. Authorised the s151 Officer with support from the Monitoring Officer to notify formally the CDL Board of Directors of the decision of the Cabinet to close the company.
6. Instructed the two statutory officers to bring together a governance structure which works together with CDL to ensure an orderly closure of the Company and the future management and ownership of land and property.
7. Approved funding for CDL to complete planning applications for London Road Phase 2 and for SUE West sites in order to maximise the future value of the sites, as housing developments as originally requested.
8. Authorised the s151 Officer to ensure that CDL has sufficient funding to remain solvent whilst completing planning on the schemes in progress and the sale or transfer of sites as set out in this report.
9. Noted the estimated cost to the Council arising from the closure of CDL and delegates to the s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to take actions necessary to ensure that the company remains solvent.
10. Noted that as estimated costs arising from the closure will be included within the next Medium Term Financial Plan to be presented to Cabinet in November.
11. Instructed officers to ensure that additional and appropriate professional support and advice as necessary throughout the period of closure to ensure full compliance with company law and local government regulation.
12. Instructed officers in consultation with the CDL Board of Directors to ensure that their tenants are kept fully informed of changes that will be made and that those tenants are in no way impacted adversely by the closure of CDL

245 Q1 Performance Report

Cabinet considered the Quarter 1 Performance Report, which provided an update on progress against the Shropshire Plan and corporate priorities. Members noted that delivery of commitments was largely on track, with only a small number of actions experiencing minor delays, and that the report provided a new framework for monitoring progress, performance and outcomes.

Members focused on key performance indicators, including transport, active travel, road safety, complaints, FOI performance, health inequalities, children's services, adult social care and housing. Members welcomed examples of positive progress while recognising

areas requiring further improvement and the need to understand the causes of underperformance where indicators were rated red.

Cabinet welcomed the improved reporting format, which links service delivery, performance measures and strategic priorities, and noted that future quarterly reports would provide a clearer picture of progress and outcomes over time.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Reviewed performance at quarter 1 and confirmed any areas in the report that need action to address them
2. Provided feedback on the performance report that can be taken into account to improve the report format.
3. Proposed emerging topics or issues as appropriate to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider for inclusion in their work programme.

246 Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2026/27

Cabinet received the Treasury Management Update Report, which provided an overview of treasury management activity and confirmed that borrowing, investments and cash management activities had been undertaken in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Members noted the report and the continuing work to manage the Council's financial resources prudently in a challenging financial environment.

The report was presented as a technical update detailing the implementation of previous treasury management decisions, and no significant issues were raised during discussion.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the summary of the wider economic environment and the Council's borrowings and investments set out in Appendix A
2. Noted the performance within prudential indicators for quarter 1, 2026/27 (Appendix B)

247 Business Rate Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy

Cabinet considered the annual review of the Business Rates Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy. Members noted that the report largely continued existing arrangements whilst introducing additional support for residents who are unable to occupy their homes due to unforeseen circumstances, such as flooding or other events beyond their control.

Members considered the balance between providing support for vulnerable residents and maintaining council income. The importance of the Crisis Resilience Fund and the proposed development of a hardship fund to support residents facing financial difficulties was highlighted, alongside the need for a consistent and transparent approach to discretionary relief decisions.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the existing policy for business rates discretionary rate relief set out at Appendix A;
2. Noted the updated Rural Settlement List at Appendix B;
3. Delegated the awarding of Hardship Relief, Discretionary Business Rate Relief and Part Occupied Relief to the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager in line with approved Council policy with any appeals to the Section 151 Officer;
4. Approved a separate policy document for Council Tax Discretionary Discounts as set out at Appendix C;
5. Continue to offer council tax discretionary discounts to care leavers leaving Shropshire Council care, up until the age of 25;
6. Introduced a new policy to support residents with their council tax where they have to move out of their homes due to an uninsured 'Act of God';
7. Delegated decisions concerning council tax discretionary discount awards to the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager in line with approved Council policy with any appeals to the Section 151 Officer;
8. Instructed the s151 Officer to plan for the creation of a Council Tax Discretionary Discount Hardship Fund to enable discretionary discounts to be awarded in circumstances that fall outside of the agreed policy or where support cannot be provided by the Crisis and Resilience Fund.
9. Committed to review both policies in 2029/30.

248 Council Tax Support Scheme

Cabinet considered the draft Council Tax Support Scheme and proposals to consult on changes to the scheme for 2027/28. Members noted concerns that households moving onto Universal Credit could face increased council tax liability because child benefit is treated differently within the benefit system.

The proposed changes would disregard child benefit income when calculating entitlement to Council Tax Support, helping to protect low-income families from additional council tax charges. Members recognised that the proposal would reduce council tax income but

considered it an important measure to support vulnerable households during the cost of living crisis.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet noted the proposed changes below which will be subject to a formal consultation of up to six weeks that will run from September 2026 to October 2026:

- Retain the current tapered scheme with following adjustments:
- Disregard Child Benefit as an income at an estimated cost of £750k - £800k per year
- Retain current 20% minimum payment and maintain current protections for vulnerable groups
- Continue to support those impacted by 20% minimum payment with a top up from the Crisis Resilience Fund as follows
 - 2026-27 (current year) – up to £80
 - 2027-28 – up to £90
 - 2028-29 – up to £100

249 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Cabinet considered the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Policy and 30-year Business Plan and agreed that both documents should be referred to Housing Scrutiny before returning for final approval. Members were advised that the HRA remained in a sound financial position and that the plan provided the framework for future investment, governance and budget decisions.

Members highlighted the significant investment required to meet future regulatory requirements, including property safety, housing quality and energy efficiency standards, while maintaining the long-term sustainability of the housing stock. Members recognised the opportunity for the HRA to support future affordable housing development once compliance and improvement programmes had been delivered, noting the continuing demand for affordable housing across Shropshire.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the HRA Policy at Appendix A developed as part of the HRA review undertaken in June 2026, and delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the relevant Service Director, to make any minor amendments required to support implementation and ensure alignment with the approved HRA Business Plan.
2. Approved the 30-year HRA Business Plan 2026 at Appendix A, including its financial strategy, investment programme, and statutory compliance measures.

3. Noted that provision has been made within the HRA Business Plan to support potential applications for Government grant funding to increase capacity within the HRA stock. This does not constitute approval to submit a bid. A further detailed report will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration and approval before any bid is submitted, setting out the proposed programme, financial implications, match funding requirements and associated delivery arrangements.

250 Fostering Payment Arrangement Policy

Cabinet considered proposals to enhance the fostering payment arrangements as part of the Council's strategy to recruit and retain foster carers and increase the number of children able to live in family-based care. Members heard that fostering provides better outcomes for children whilst reducing reliance on costly external residential placements.

The report highlighted recent success in recruiting additional foster carers and included proposals to strengthen the financial and wider support available to foster families. Members welcomed the ongoing work to develop partnerships with local businesses to provide additional benefits for foster carers and discussed the importance of supporting carers to help meet growing demand.

Cabinet recognised the valuable contribution made by foster carers and the positive impact they have on the lives of children and young people in care.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved uplift to fostering Skills Payment at 5% increase with effect from 01/04/26.
2. Considered and approved increasing mileage rate paid to internal foster carers from 0.45 per mile to £0.55 per mile from 01/04/26 as per the change in government agreed figure.
3. Considered and approved increasing amount of mileage that can be claimed, removing the requirement for foster carers to deduct the first 30 – 70 miles weekly before claiming mileage. To commence from 01/04/27.
4. Considered and approve paying approved carers beyond our Care Plus rate (£640.50 with uplift), with an additional Skills payment of £250 per week for first 12 months as part of Belonging and Stable Homes Scheme, where a child is assessed to need residential care, and support work has been completed by the team around the child, and the child is ready for a family care arrangement. This payment is to incentivise Foster Carers to transition children from residential care into supportive, stable homes and recognises the skill and commitment required during settling period.
5. Approved the proposal to pay annual National Trust Membership for up to 100 Fostering households

6. Considered and approved offering free parking to Shropshire Foster Carers at all our council parking venues. This is difficult to cost as this would reflect a small reduction in council income as opposed to direct cost. Should this be something that Council are prepared to support in principle a further survey can be completed to gather more data for exact car parks used by each foster carer.

251 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 [3] of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

252 Exempt Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2026 be confirmed as an accurate record.

253 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 14 October 2026.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:



Committee

Cabinet

Date and Time

14 October 2026

Public

Adult Social Care Transformation Programme

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ruth Houghton Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health	
Lead Director:	Natalie McFall	
Service Area:	Care and Wellbeing	
Report Author	Natalie McFall	
Officer contact details	Email: Natalie.mcfall@shropshire.gov.uk	
Electoral Divisions Affected	All	
Key Decision?	Not Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	Not Applicable	
Report considered by	One Shropshire Board – 1 October 2026 Cabinet – 14 October 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet endorsement of the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme as the strategic framework for delivering a coordinated portfolio of change across Adult Social Care in Shropshire.
- 1.2 The programme responds to rising demand, increasing complexity of need, workforce pressures and affordability challenges. It brings together 11 identified programmes across four strategic themes: Access, Prevention and Community Support; Independence and Recovery; Complex Care and Accommodation; and Commissioning and Financial Sustainability.
- 1.3 The programme is intended to enable people to live independently with greater choice and control, shift support upstream through prevention and earlier intervention, reduce or delay reliance on high-cost formal care and complex pathways, and improve outcomes while strengthening financial sustainability and managing the market.
- 1.4 The programme comprises projects at different stages of development and delivery. While some are already moving into delivery/implementation, others require diagnostic and discovery work to establish baselines, identify opportunities and define the most effective programme activity. This approach ensures that future transformation is

evidence-based, prioritised according to need and impact, and supported by clear delivery plans and benefits realisation measures.

- 1.5 This report provides an overview of the way forward, and Cabinet is recommended to endorse the overall approach, noting that aspects of the strategic framework may require specific decisions in future.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 endorse the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme as the strategic framework for delivering coordinated improvement across Adult Social Care pathways, service and outcomes for residents; noting that some individual workstreams may require future cabinet decisions.
- 2.2 endorse the proposed governance arrangements for the transformation programme.
- 2.3 delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health to take any decision necessary to implement this strategic framework, except for decisions requiring specific Cabinet approval.
- 2.4 note the requirement to provisionally earmark transformation funding of up to £4 million over the next three financial years in order to deliver the programme, and that this will be included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
- 2.5 note that a further report will be received in March 2027 on progress made with each of the 11 programmes following completion and recommendations from the Adult Social Care Diagnostic which will include estimates of potential outcomes and savings.

3. Background

- 3.1 Adult Social Care is facing sustained challenges both locally and nationally. In Shropshire, demand is increasing as more people live longer with frailty, dementia, disability and complex long-term conditions, alongside rising expectations of quality, choice and timely support. Shropshire's demographic profile is expected to intensify these challenges, with the population aged 65 and over projected to increase significantly over the next decade, creating additional demand for care and support services.
- 3.2 These demographic, demand and inflationary factors have made Adult Social Care one of the Council's most significant financial challenges. Together, Adult and Children's Services account for 71% of the Council's overall budget. Rising complexity of need, workforce and provider cost inflation, and increasing demand for care have placed sustained pressure on resources in recent years, contributing to significant budget challenges during 2025/26 and exposing an underlying structural funding deficit within the service. Local care market pressures, including workforce shortages, provider cost inflation and capacity constraints, also continue to affect the availability, cost and sustainability of commissioned care.
- 3.3 During 2026/27, this structural deficit has been addressed through a combination of budget realignment, strengthened financial controls, demand management and service

redesign. Financial monitoring to date this year is forecasting a favourable position, providing early evidence that these actions are helping to stabilise Adult Social Care finances and create a stronger foundation for the future. Further detail regarding the financial position and improvement trajectory is set out in previous budget reports and in-year financial monitoring reports considered by Cabinet throughout 2025/26 and 2026/27.

- 3.4 While progress has been made, the current operating model often begins formal assessment when residents are already in crisis or experiencing significant instability. This can result in decisions being made at the highest point of need, increasing reliance on long-term commissioned care, higher-cost support packages and reducing opportunities to maximise independence, wellbeing and community-based support.
- 3.5 In response, the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme has been developed through external challenge, internal analysis, financial review activity, budget planning, engagement on the refreshed Adult Social Care Strategy and the development of connected improvement workstreams. The programme aims to support residents to remain independent for longer, improve outcomes, strengthen statutory compliance, manage future demand growth and establish a more sustainable operating model for Adult Social Care.
- 3.6 Local Government Association benchmarking indicates that Adult Social Care expenditure is broadly in line with comparable authorities, providing assurance that the financial challenges facing Shropshire are consistent with wider national trends rather than exceptional local spending.
- 3.7 As a result, 2026/27 represents a year of financial stabilisation and foundation building, with further benefits expected during 2027/28 and more significant long-term improvements anticipated from the Adult Social Care Diagnostic Review and wider transformation programme from 2028/29 onwards. Progress will continue to be monitored through Improvement Board oversight, programme governance arrangements and external challenge.
- 3.8 The programme has now reached a validation and mobilisation stage. Project initiation documents, assumptions, scope, benefits and delivery plans are being reviewed, with priorities and dependencies being tested to ensure they remain realistic and achievable. Financial validation is a critical part of this process and projected savings cannot be treated as deliverable until they have been fully assessed and assured. Cabinet is therefore being asked to endorse the overall programme direction and strategic approach while recognising that individual workstreams may require further development, refinement and approval through the appropriate governance processes before implementation.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 The programme is structured around four strategic themes. These themes provide a clear line of sight between transformation activity, resident outcomes, financial sustainability and delivery assurance:
- **Access, Prevention and Community Support** focuses on earlier help, a clearer front door, stronger information and advice, self-funder support, carer support, community navigation, debt prevention and support to maximise access to eligible benefits. This theme is intended to prevent escalation, improve first contact,

increase advice and support to unpaid carers and strengthen data on demand and impact.

- **Independence and Recovery** focuses on reablement, recovery, the Community Independence Pathway, optimal handed care, technology enabled care and personal budget transformation. The emphasis is on helping people regain or maintain independence, increasing care market capacity and reducing new long-term care packages where this can be achieved safely and lawfully.
- **Complex Care and Accommodation** focuses on Learning Disability, Autism, Mental Health and other complex care pathways, Shared Lives expansion, day services modernisation, housing and supported living options. This area is expected to be informed by the Adult Social Care Diagnostic Review, with particular attention to the 18-65 cohort, transitions, high-cost care, local support and pathway consistency.
- **Commissioning and Financial Sustainability** focuses on market management, provider relationships, cost avoidance, technology review, income optimisation, continuing healthcare, section 117 processes, financial assessment capacity, debt recovery and property-related income. This theme provides the programme link between commissioning practice, market shaping, benefits tracking and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.



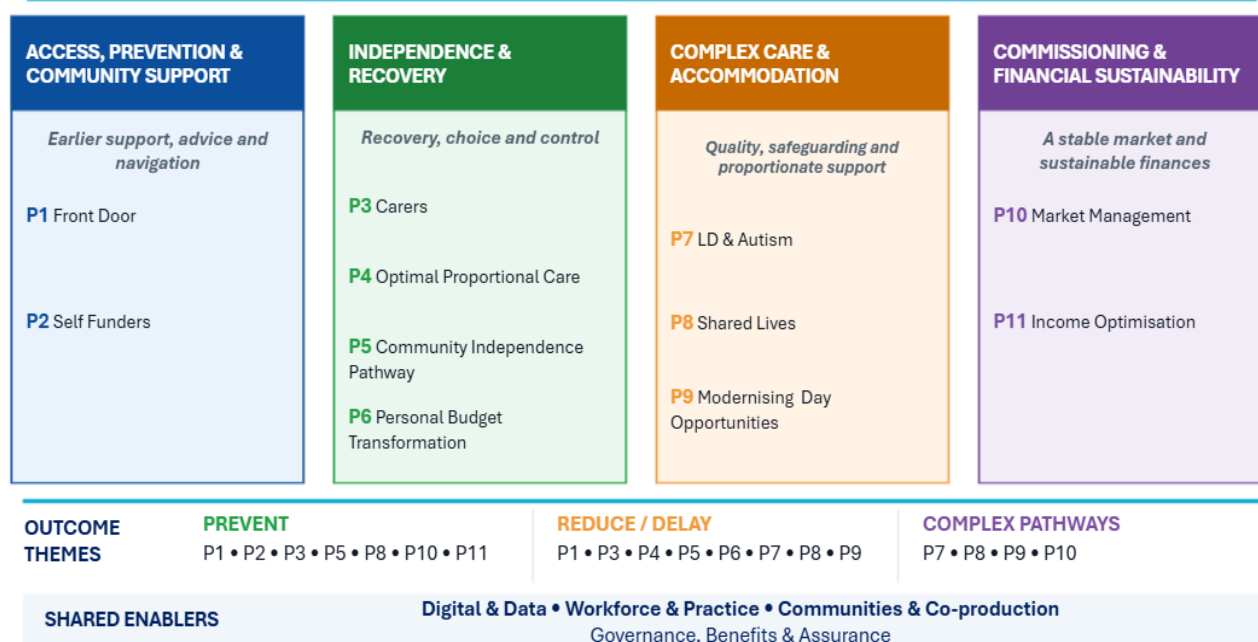
4.2 Prevent activity focuses on early identification, advice, information, equipment, digital support, community networks and low-level interventions to help people maintain wellbeing and reduce avoidable escalation into formal services.

4.3 Reduce and Delay activity includes strengths-based conversations, reablement, therapy, equipment, adaptations, short-term support, proactive reviews, carer support and coordinated risk management to help people regain or maintain independence.

4.4 Complex Pathways will provide clearer routes for people with the highest levels of need, risk or multi-agency involvement, supported by specialist assessment, multi-

disciplinary decision-making, care planning, brokerage, safeguarding, mental capacity considerations and senior oversight.

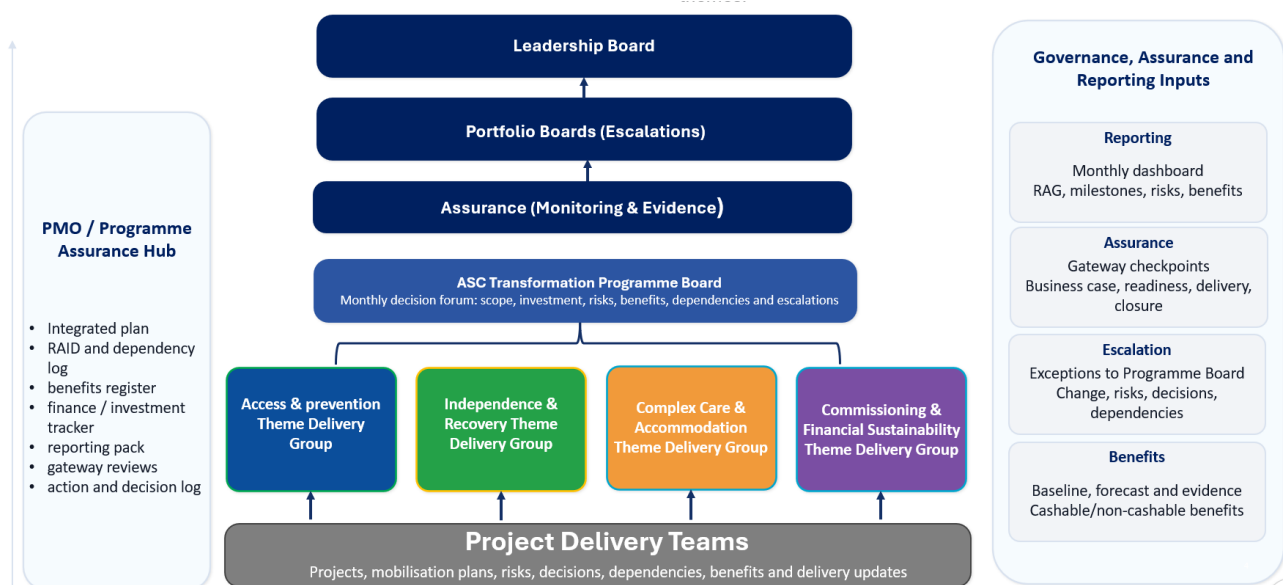
- 4.5 The 11 identified programmes are front door redesign, self-funder support and guidance, carers, optimal handed care, Community Independence Pathway, personal budget transformation, Learning Disability and complex care, Shared Lives, modernising day services, market management and income optimisation.



- 4.6 Some projects are already in delivery, including optimal handed care and the Community Independence Pathway. Others are in discovery, diagnostic or design stages and will require further validation before any recurrent investment, savings or income assumptions are confirmed. This staged approach allows the Council to maintain momentum while protecting financial control and governance.
- 4.7 A diagnostic review of Adult Social Care has been commissioned to provide independent challenge, sector benchmarking and detailed analysis of service delivery, particularly for people with complex needs. Through case audits and system-wide review, the diagnostic will identify opportunities to improve outcomes, strengthen strengths-based practice, optimise commissioning activity and ensure resources are focused where they deliver the greatest impact. The findings will inform the next phase of the Transformation Programme, supporting evidence-based decision making, future investment priorities and long-term financial sustainability. Key findings and final recommendations expected in January 2027.
- 4.8 The Community Independence Pathway is already providing useful evidence. Across the initial learning review and the April to July 2026 update, 418 referrals were recorded and 317 people went through the pathway. At the 3-month review point, out of 137 referrals, 42% had needs fully met without commissioned support, and a further 15% were supported with equipment and technology. Referrals have increased and more people are going through the pathway. Whilst this programme is about improving outcomes and financial sustainability, at its heart it is about people. One person supported through the Community Independence Pathway told us: 'I feel less anxious and more confident to maintain independence.' That reflects exactly what this

programme is trying to achieve; helping people to remain independent, reduce reliance on formal services where appropriate and stay connected to their communities.

- 4.9 Digital transformation is a cross-cutting enabler as part of the wider Council digital programme to support digital-by-choice access for communities, not digital-only access. The programme will support multiple entry routes, including digital access, phone and contact centre routes, assisted digital support, partner and provider referrals, face-to-face support and community navigation. Digital tools should improve information, triage, demand visibility, case status, capacity planning and administrative efficiency, while ensuring that assisted and non-digital routes remain available and professional judgement remains central. Work across these areas will include points of data capture to inform performance data collection, continuous development and improvement, and prioritisation.
- 4.10 The shift towards earlier intervention and prevention will be underpinned by staff training, supervision and development, supporting practitioners and managers to embed strengths-based practice, consistent decision-making and a more preventative approach across Adult Social Care pathways.
- 4.11 Across all projects, co-production opportunities will input into service redesign, ensuring they are person-centred and accessible.
- 4.12 Delivery will also require strong partnership working with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, health partners, housing, care providers and community organisations, recognising their role in prevention, early help, community navigation, carer support and maintaining independence.
- 4.13 The transformation programme will be supported by governance arrangements, with each area having a senior officer responsible for delivery and for informing the transformation boards. The programme will report into an overall Transformation, Improvement and Change Assurance Board comprising members of the Council's Leadership.



- 4.14 To support delivery of the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme, Cabinet is asked to agree the provisional funding of up to £4 million of transformation funding

over the next three financial years, recognising that investment will be required to deliver service redesign, implementation support, programme capacity, technology, and change activity. The funding provision will be incorporated within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and will enable the development and delivery of workstreams designed to improve outcomes, manage future demand, and support the long-term financial sustainability of Adult Social Care. The allocation of funding to individual projects will be subject to appropriate business case development, governance, financial validation and approval processes.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Option 1 is to endorse the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme and progress its workstreams through phased implementation, detailed business cases, financial modelling and appropriate governance routes. This is the recommended option because it provides a coherent programme framework for improving outcomes, strengthening statutory compliance and supporting financial sustainability.
- 5.2 Option 2 is to continue with existing arrangements and progress only limited individual improvements outside a coordinated programme structure. This would reduce immediate change demands but would not address the underlying pressures of rising demand, increasing complexity, workforce capacity and affordability in a systematic way.
- 5.3 Option 3 is to delay decisions until all workstreams are fully scoped. This would provide further detail before implementation but would risk losing momentum on areas already demonstrating benefit and delay action needed to manage demand and cost pressures.
- 5.4 Option 4 is to do nothing and make no further changes to the current Adult Social Care operating model. This is not recommended because it would leave the Council without a coordinated approach to managing rising demand, increasing complexity, workforce pressures and financial sustainability. It would also limit the opportunity to strengthen prevention, earlier intervention, independence and community-based support, increasing the risk that more people enter statutory services at crisis point and require higher-cost long-term care.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

- 6.1 The main risks of this transformation programme relate to capacity to deliver transformation alongside business as usual, recruitment constraints, performance and data limitations, finance capacity for validation and benefits tracking, market quality risks, and the scale and pace required to inform Medium Term Financial Strategy timescales. These risks reinforce the need for strong programme governance, gateway controls and clear escalation routes.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Delivery capacity and pace of change: the scale of transformation, including diagnostic, mobilisation and implementation activity, may exceed available	Maintain clear programme governance, phased delivery plans, PMO oversight and escalation of dependencies, milestones and risks.	Financial sustainability, service delivery, workforce capacity and statutory compliance.

management, operational and project capacity.		
Financial benefits, savings and investment requirements may not be realised in full, within expected timescales, or may change as diagnostic findings, data and evidence are further validated.	Develop detailed business cases, baseline measures and benefits realisation plans, with regular financial monitoring, diagnostic validation and corrective action where assumptions are not being achieved.	Financial sustainability and value for money.
Workforce capacity and capability may limit progress, particularly where specialist roles are required.	Align workforce planning to programme priorities, target investment at critical roles, provide training and supervision, and phase implementation to available capacity.	Workforce resilience, service quality and statutory duties.
Operational disruption or access barriers during changes to pathways, triage arrangements, digital access routes and service models.	Implement changes through programme governance, maintain clear operational guidance and communications, monitor performance, protect assisted digital and non-digital routes, and retain contingency arrangements where needed.	Service continuity, resident experience and reputational risk.
Stakeholder concern, partnership dependency or reputational risk where proposals change established services, access routes, community support arrangements or financial arrangements.	Use early and transparent engagement, clear communications, co-production where appropriate, partner involvement and formal consultation processes where required.	Community confidence, consultation and reputational risk.
Legal and statutory compliance risk if changes are not aligned to Care Act duties, equality responsibilities, procurement requirements and public law obligations.	Build legal, finance and governance input into programme design, complete appropriate impact assessments and use agreed decision-making routes.	Statutory compliance, governance and assurance.
Provider market pressures, including workforce shortages, provider cost inflation, capacity constraints and limited alternatives, may reduce the availability, affordability or sustainability of local support options.	Maintain active market oversight, strengthen commissioning and provider engagement, develop alternative community-based options, monitor capacity and cost pressures in areas of high demand, and escalate market sustainability risks through governance routes.	Market sustainability, service resilience and value for money[RP].

6.2 The programme also creates significant opportunities, including earlier support for residents, improved independence, stronger unpaid carer support, reduced or delayed reliance on formal care, improved market capacity, more transparent financial

processes, better data and performance insight, and a stronger evidence base for future investment and savings decisions.

- 6.3 It will also provide an opportunity to develop this with residents to test models and inform approaches to ensure they meet the needs of people who need to access support at different parts of their care journey.

7. Council Priorities

- 7.1 The proposals support the Council's Corporate Plan priorities by helping people to be healthy, independent and able to thrive at every stage of life. The programme strengthens prevention, early intervention, community support and access to the right help at the right time.
- 7.2 The programme also supports safe and inclusive communities by improving support for people with complex needs, strengthening accommodation and community-based options, and helping more people live independently in the place they call home.
- 7.3 The programme contributes to financial sustainability and value for money by reducing avoidable demand, improving use of commissioned care, strengthening income recovery and targeting specialist capacity where it is most needed. Service transformation is a key facet of the Councils Financial Recovery and Sustainability Strategy.
- 7.4 Overall, the programme supports the Council's future principles by creating a more sustainable, connected and resilient Adult Social Care model.



8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The Adult Social Care Transformation Programme is being developed in the context of the financial emergency declared in 2025. The programme is intended to achieve financial sustainability through demand management, cost avoidance, improved income recovery, and better control of commissioned care. Adult Social Care has a strong track record of delivering savings, including £17.9 million in 2024/25. This report seeks Cabinet endorsement of the wider strategic transformation framework, with detailed investment requirements, savings and cost avoidance estimates to be brought back to Cabinet in March 2027.
- 8.2 It is noted that there is a requirement to earmark up to £4m of transformation funding over the next 3 years in order to support the delivery of this programme. The details of this programme and priorities are still being assessed and will be subject to the outcome of the ASC Diagnostic Review that is due to conclude by January. This allocation will be incorporated within the MTFP to be reported to Cabinet in November.
- 8.3 The completion of the Diagnostic Review will also allow more certainty and profiling of the requirement for investment for the transformation programme. It will also enable some initial projections to be made of future cashable and non cashable savings that can be expected from the programme. Early estimates of cashable savings will be included in the MTFP, subject to the necessary due diligence required to validate them.
- 8.4 As for all parts of the transformation programme, the costs and benefits will be reported within Financial Monitoring Reports to Cabinet and Transformation updates to Cabinet Finance and Improvement Scrutiny and the Improvement Board.

9. Legal and HR Implications

- 9.1 The Council has a range of statutory duties in relation to adult social care, principally under the Care Act 2014, together with associated responsibilities relating to safeguarding, equality, human rights, carers, mental capacity and market shaping. The transformation programme is intended to support the delivery of those duties in a financially sustainable manner by promoting prevention, independence, early intervention and the effective use of resources.
- 9.2 Individual projects arising from the programme will need to be progressed in accordance with the Council's Constitution and decision-making framework. As proposals are developed, consideration will need to be given to the Council's duties under the Care Act 2014, Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, procurement legislation, information governance requirements and the principles of public law. Appropriate consultation, engagement and impact assessments will also be required where proposals may affect service users, carers, providers or communities. Legal Services will provide advice on an ongoing basis.
- 9.3 The decision to endorse the overall transformation plan is not a key decision in itself, and decisions on individual workstreams within the plan will be taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution as plans crystallise.

- 9.4 HR implications include workforce capacity, recruitment, skills, training, supervision and change management requirements. These will need to be assessed through workforce planning and engagement with HR as individual workstreams are developed.
- 9.5 This will include targeted training and development to support the cultural and practice shift towards earlier intervention, prevention and independence-focused support.
- 9.6 The programme will require dedicated programme management, finance, performance, data, commissioning and operational input. Recruitment and capacity constraints are identified as risks, and further external support may be needed where specialist diagnostic, delivery or analytical capacity cannot be met from existing resources. Equality impact assessments will be completed where necessary for separate projects as the programme develops.

10. Electoral Division Implications

- 10.1 The proposals affect Adult Social Care services across Shropshire and are therefore relevant to all electoral divisions.
- 10.2 No single electoral division is expected to be disproportionately affected at this stage, although specific implementation proposals may require local member engagement. Where changes affect particular local services or communities, equality impact assessments will be undertaken.

11. Health, Social and Economic Implications

- 11.1 The proposals are expected to have positive health and social care impacts by strengthening prevention, early intervention, independence, reablement and proportionate support. This should help residents remain well at home for longer and reduce avoidable escalation into crisis or long-term care.
- 11.2 There may be wider economic benefits through improved financial sustainability, better use of care market capacity, effective income recovery and reduced reliance on high-cost commissioned care. The programme should also consider rural access, carers, community assets and equality of access as implementation plans are developed.
- 11.3 The voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and wider partners will be important to delivery, particularly in strengthening local community assets, supporting early help, improving access to advice and reducing avoidable demand on statutory services.
- 11.4 The diagnostic review will provide a stronger evidence base for complex care transformation, with deliverables including a validated baseline, diagnostic findings report, case sampling summary, opportunity pipeline, benefits and savings model, three-year roadmap, final presentation and handover pack. This will help ensure future decisions are grounded in evidence, with clear owners, milestones, dependencies, risks, KPIs and decision points.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 The Adult Social Care Transformation Programme must be implemented in a way that supports equality of access and outcomes for residents with different needs, circumstances and protected characteristics. Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment activity should be completed where required for individual proposals.
- 12.2 Particular attention should be given to older people, disabled people, carers, people with dementia, people with learning disabilities and autism, people living in rural communities and people who may experience barriers to accessing advice, support or digital services. Mitigations should include accessible communications, proportionate assessment, engagement and monitoring of impacts.
- 12.3 The digital and access elements of the programme must be designed on a digital-by-choice basis. This means improving online access and self-service where appropriate, while protecting phone, assisted digital, community and practitioner-led routes for residents and carers who need additional support. Work with VCSA and other partners should also help reach residents and carers who may experience barriers to access, including people in rural communities, people who are digitally excluded and those who may need trusted community-based routes into advice and support.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 The proposals are primarily service redesign rather than capital development, so direct climate impacts are expected to be limited. Opportunities exist to support climate ambitions through reduced travel, appropriate use of digital access and greater use of local community provision.
- 13.2 Preventing or delaying the need for care may reduce resource-intensive activity, including travel by care workers and reliance on residential care placements. No significant adverse climate, biodiversity or environmental implications have been identified at this stage, but environmental impacts should continue to be considered as detailed implementation plans are developed.

Devolution and Strategic Partnerships

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Alex Wagner - Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Economic Growth	
Lead Director:	Kassandra Polyzoides - Interim Service Director for Place Shaping	
Service Area:	Place Shaping	
Report Author	Hayley Deighton, Strategic Partnerships Service Manager	
Officer contact details	Hayley.deighton@shropshire.gov.uk – 01743 252489	
Electoral Divisions Affected	All	
Key Decision	Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	Yes – 17 August 2026	
Report considered by	One Shropshire Board - 3 September 2026 Cabinet – 14 October 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report updates Cabinet on the changing national devolution landscape, including the pause on local government reorganisation, and asks Cabinet to agree that Shropshire Council continues discussions with Government, Telford & Wrekin Council and other partners to explore the options that best support Shropshire. The approach recognises Shropshire's rurality, the importance of the M54 corridor, and the strength of existing partnerships including the Marches Forward Partnership.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to agree to:

- 2.1 continue discussions with Government, Telford & Wrekin Council, and other partners to explore devolution options that support Shropshire's interests, recognise its rurality and build on existing economic and partnership strengths; and
- 2.2 delegate authority to the Chief Executive, and Corporate Director of Growth and Connected Communities, in consultation with the Leader, and relevant Portfolio Holder, to progress discussions with Ministers, Government officials, neighbouring authorities and partners in line with national timescales.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Government is continuing to accelerate English devolution, but the national landscape has changed, including the current pause on local government reorganisation. Shropshire Council therefore needs to keep its position under active review and engage with Government on the options available.
- 3.2 Shropshire remains a distinct unitary authority and a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority. Any future devolution route must reflect Shropshire's geography, economy, rurality, local identity and public service responsibilities.
- 3.3 The county has strong links eastwards through the M54 corridor into Telford and the wider West Midlands, but also has significant cross-border economic and service relationships with Wales. Shropshire is also rural, sparsely populated and made up of a network of market towns, which means that there is no single obvious devolution geography.
- 3.4 A 2025 options appraisal found no single best option for Shropshire. It highlighted the importance of considering a range of relationships and geographies, including the economic role of the M54 corridor, links with Telford and Wrekin, cross-border relationships with Wales, and the wider Marches Forward Partnership.
- 3.5 The recommended approach is therefore to maintain active dialogue with Government, Telford & Wrekin Council and wider partners, without committing at this stage to a single model or formal strategic partnership. This will allow Shropshire to test the options with Ministers and make the case for an approach that supports growth, recognises rurality, protects local identity and builds on the strength of the Marches Forward Partnership.
- 3.6 Subject to Cabinet agreement, officers will progress a phased programme of work, including:
 - **Continued engagement:** continue discussions with Telford & Wrekin Council, the Marches Forward Partnership and other relevant partners, without predetermining the preferred model.
 - **Governance options:** assess mayoral and non-mayoral options, including implications for decision-making, scrutiny and local accountability.
 - **Strategic case:** develop the evidence base on Shropshire's strengths, including its rural economy, market towns, cross-border relationships, the M54 corridor and the Marches Forward Partnership.
 - **Government engagement:** seek discussions with Ministers and Government officials to test all options that could support Shropshire's interests.

- **Public and partner engagement:** undertake consultation when proposals are sufficiently developed and informed by Government feedback.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 The Government's devolution programme requires Shropshire Council to remain actively engaged and to develop a clear local position. The Council needs to move at pace, but without predetermining a single model before further discussions with Ministers, Government officials and partners.
- 4.2 The proposal is to continue exploring the options that best support Shropshire, recognising the importance of the M54 corridor, the Council's relationship with Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire's rural character and the value of the Marches Forward Partnership. This approach keeps options open while allowing the Council to make a positive case to Government about Shropshire's future devolution route.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 The alternative is to take no immediate action or to wait for Government to define a geography for Shropshire. This would reduce the Council's ability to shape the outcome and could leave Shropshire less well placed to access future devolution powers, funding and investment opportunities.
- 5.2 A range of devolution options were considered through the 2025 options appraisal (**see Appendix 1**), but no single model fully reflects Shropshire's geography, economy and public service links. Further discussion with Government and partners is therefore needed before any preferred option is recommended.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

- 6.1 The Council needs to carefully balance the declaration of a financial emergency (favouring short term decision making) with the need to set a long-term vision under a new strategic and sustainable direction and meeting new statutory obligations around devolution and strategic planning.
- 6.2 Whilst there are costs associated with the strategic planning role under English devolution, it is a new statutory requirement for the local authority. It is therefore likely to include government funding to fulfil these new duties, albeit detailed guidance has not yet been provided by government.
- 6.3 Driving strategic partnerships and place shaping activity is critical for the Council in its place-based systems leadership role. It is the only organisation that can fulfil this duty for Shropshire businesses and residents and is vital in helping to convene the right partners to support delivery and in showcasing the growth potential of Shropshire to unlock investment.
- 6.4 Progressing devolution and wider strategic planning will enable the Council to unlock devolved funding allocations and help position the county for investment from central government, government departments and with the private sector. Harnessing the potential of the M54 as a growth corridor and aligning to the existing work across the Marches Forward Partnership will help to amplify Shropshire's economic potential and help to protect Shropshire's frontline service delivery.

6.5 However, Shropshire's strategic planning approach will require careful management and robust governance arrangements. The political ambitions and mandates between Shropshire and other local authorities needs to be fully understood to develop a framework that is mutually beneficial and which helps to facilitate critical decisions on investment, infrastructure and spatial planning. Shropshire's unique rural economic challenges and opportunities must not be overshadowed and there is a need for robust governance arrangements to be put in place from the outset to ensure senior management capacity and political leadership in shaping the proposed framework with government and associated partners.

6.6 In summary, the main risks are delay, loss of influence over the final geography, short-term financial pressure, and the need to ensure Shropshire's priorities are not diluted within any future devolution arrangement. The main opportunities are stronger access to devolved powers and funding, a clearer investment proposition for Shropshire, better strategic planning for housing and infrastructure, and stronger alignment with existing partnerships including the Marches Forward Partnership.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Declaration of a financial emergency risks driving reactive, short-term decision-making that undermines long-term sustainable development and statutory devolution compliance.	Separate immediate emergency financial planning from long-term statutory planning frameworks. Embed statutory devolution milestones into the Council's overarching Corporate Plan to safeguard future service design.	Challenging financial position compromising decision making and governance arrangements.
Progressing new statutory strategic planning duties under English Devolution creates near-term financial pressures before explicit government funding parameters are detailed.	Actively leverage transformation funding allocations. Coordinate government lobbying through regional networks for early delivery of New Burdens funding allocations from central government. Work with neighbouring LAs on shared resource plans	- Governance, performance and financial weaknesses. - Transformation programmes and significant projects.
Failure to strategically position the county alongside key infrastructure corridors through proactive leadership on devolution and strategic partnerships risks losing central funding allocations and private capital to better-aligned neighbouring regions.	Scale up strategic partnership work across the Marches Forward Partnership and around the M54 growth corridor to increase Shropshire's economic profile	- Transformation programmes and significant projects. - Achieving long term financial sustainability.

Conflicting political mandates with Telford and Wrekin Council, combined with Shropshire's immediate focus on its immediate financial emergency risks Shropshire's priorities being overshadowed	Establish robust governance arrangements with Telford and Wrekin Council and with the Marches Forward Partnership to champion Shropshire's needs from the outset and respect individual LA identity and service delivery roles.	• Governance, performance and financial weaknesses. • Breakdown of critical contracts, providers or strategic partnerships.
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7. Council Priorities

7.1 Progressing English devolution under the government's *Rewiring the State* framework serves as the primary route to unlock devolved funding streams and is a key means by which to address financial sustainability which underpins all council priorities within Shropshire's Corporate Plan. This proposal supports the Corporate Plan by helping the Council pursue long-term economic growth and stronger partnership working. It enables Shropshire to make a clear case to Government while protecting local priorities and frontline services.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Shropshire Council continues to manage unprecedented financial demands and a financial emergency was declared by Cabinet on 10 September 2025. The overall financial position of the Council is set out in the monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. Significant management action has been instigated at all levels of the Council reducing spend to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all reports to Members provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers and/or Portfolio Holders review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. All non-essential spend will be stopped and all essential spend challenged. These actions may involve (this is not exhaustive):

- scaling down initiatives,
- changing the scope of activities,
- delaying implementation of agreed plans, or
- extending delivery timescales.

8.2 Devolution is a new statutory requirement being placed on local authorities by government and may, in time, be supported by funding. However, the initial exploratory phases, option appraisals, and joint business case formulation will need to be funded using existing council transformation budgets. Once established, strategic authorities provide opportunity for significant financial gain as they provide a strategic framework for unlocking growth and investment. Under government policy, the creation of a strategic authority provides opportunity to introduce fiscal flexibilities, such as localised business rate retention. Therefore, the primary financial risk for Shropshire Council rests with not meeting the government deadlines, resulting in Shropshire being structurally excluded from major national funding streams.

9. Legal and HR implications

- 9.1 The progression of strategic partnership and planning duties aligns with the requirements outlined in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026. This sets out new statutory requirements for local authorities to form strategic authorities and develop joint Spatial Development Strategies.
- 9.2 Whilst the detailed guidance from government is yet to be provided, legal advice will be provided on an ongoing basis as discussions with partners and government advance, and further detailed guidance is provided to local authorities. Once detailed plans emerge, consideration will be given to what governance arrangements are required and any consequential amendments which will need to be introduced to the Council's Constitution.

10. Electoral Division Implications

- 10.1 English devolution and the Council's approach to strategic partnerships are matters of county wide strategy and therefore directly affect all electoral divisions and requires the strategic engagement of all Members. Whilst this paper recommends delegated authority to move this programme of work forward, all members will be kept fully informed and engaged through corporate briefing sessions and formal reporting channels. This structured oversight will ensure all councillors can actively steer Shropshire's long-term direction as the strategic partnership structures develop in line with emerging government requirements.

11. Health, Social (including "Child Friendly Shropshire") and Economic Implications

- 11.1 The recommendations to progress devolution pathways with Telford & Wrekin Council and scale up cross-border delivery via the Marches Forward Partnership (MFP) are fully in accordance with the Council's Health in All Policies approach. This framework recognises that the wider determinants of health—such as financial security, stable employment, high-quality housing, and physical connectivity—exert the greatest influence on the long-term physical and mental wellbeing of Shropshire's residents. By positioning the Council as a strong strategic partner, these initiatives directly aim to improve population-level health outcomes through targeted economic growth.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 Whilst this paper seeks agreement to proactively progress strategic engagement with Telford and Wrekin Council, any proposals, that come forward from this future strategic planning framework work, will require a completed and detailed Equality, Social Value and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA).
- 12.2 Shropshire possesses a significant, deeply rooted Armed Forces community, encompassing serving personnel, veterans, and military families. In line with the statutory requirements of the Armed Forces Covenant, these strategic partnerships, will work to ensure the military community faces no disadvantage in accessing local services and economic growth. Any joint work with Telford & Wrekin Council will explicitly engage with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and local base commanders during infrastructure planning. This collaborative approach will ensure that future housing allocations, school place planning, and local health provisions consider the unique, highly mobile requirements of military families across the county.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 A devolution framework offers a powerful mechanism to accelerate regional climate resilience and adaptation. The regional scale and strategic basis of strategic authorities enable councils to address macro scale issues, such as climate change, in a more effective way than they are able to individually. For example, the unified governance structure will significantly strengthen the business case for infrastructure priorities and investment in the region. Furthermore, a shared Spatial Development Strategy ensures that environmental protections, biodiversity net gain, and carbon sequestration is planned cohesively across local authority boundaries rather than in isolation.

14. Background Papers

- 14.1 Strategic Partnerships and Spatial Development Strategies - Cabinet 11.03.26 .

15. Appendices

APPENDIX A - Devolution Options Appraisal 2025

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Devolution options appraisal

September 2025

Executive summary

HM Government's devolution agenda

Recent moves to expand devolution have accelerated, with the Government's Devolution White Paper (December 2024) proposing new Strategic Authorities to cover all areas of England.

Shropshire Council is not on the current Devolution Priority Programme, but forthcoming reforms mean it will likely still become part of a Strategic Authority. By engaging early, the Council can help shape the partnerships around it, aligning with areas that share its ambitions and maximising the benefits of new powers and resources.

Without this early involvement, there is a risk that partners are chosen by default, leaving less scope to advance local priorities.

Purpose of this document

This report provides an evidence-based starting point for Shropshire Council to consider how best to position itself within forthcoming devolution arrangements. It sets out an initial review of possible options, focusing on different combinations of neighbouring areas.

The appraisal is not designed to provide a single

“answer.” Instead, it aims to:

- Prompt discussion among Members and officers about the trade-offs, opportunities, and strategic choices involved.
- Support early conversations with potential partner councils by giving Shropshire a clear, evidence-based position.
- Strengthen future engagement with central government by showing that the Council's proposals are well considered, evidence-led, and aligned with the expectations of the Devolution White Paper.

Key findings

The review highlights three central questions:

1. **Who to partner with?** – Should Shropshire work with councils facing similar challenges, which could strengthen joint working but risk reinforcing existing pressures, or seek partners with different strengths, offering greater balance but potentially less alignment?
2. **What scale is right?** – Larger groupings generally perform better across outcomes such

as economic growth, infrastructure, and service delivery, suggesting that going beyond the minimum population threshold may help maximise Shropshire's ambitions.

3. **What *kind* of authority to pursue?** – While Government seeks consistency, existing upper tier authorities vary widely. Some, like Greater Manchester, hold significant powers, funding, and influence. Others, such as the West of England, play a lighter coordinating role. A more flexible model may suit Shropshire better, particularly given the importance of cross-border collaboration through the Marches Forward Partnership.

Early engagement with neighbouring councils will be essential to test appetite for different models.

If Shropshire wishes to pursue a light-touch, flexible approach, it will likely need to build a coalition of likeminded authorities and co-develop a shared strategy for engagement with Government. This means being on the front foot – shaping the agenda rather than responding to it – and ensuring Shropshire is well-positioned to influence outcomes that reflect its local priorities.

Introduction

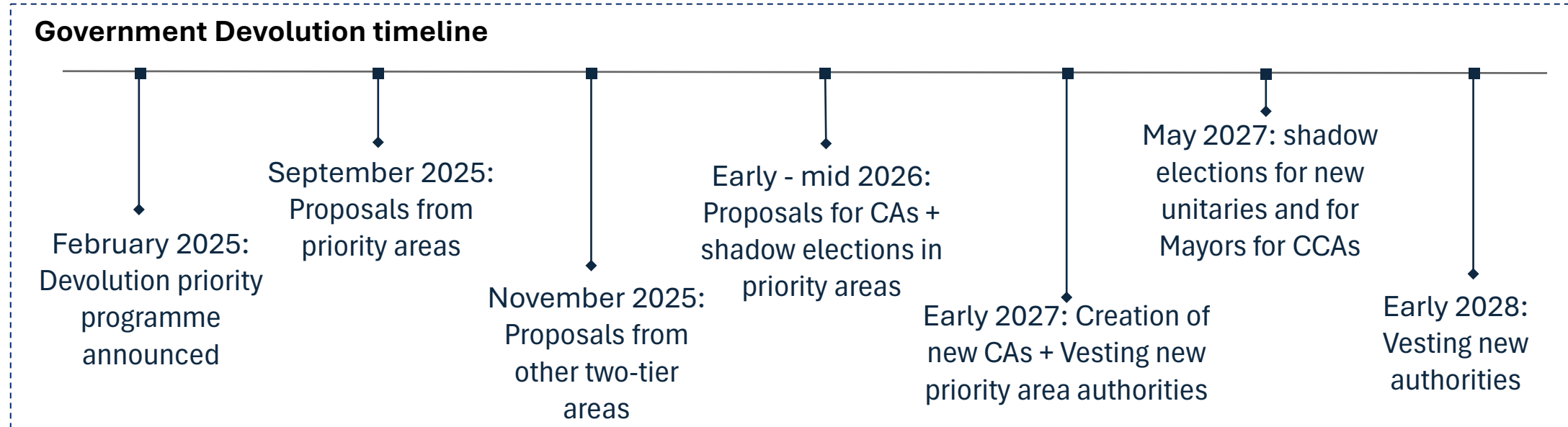
Recent efforts to expand devolution and reform local government across England have gained momentum. The Government's Devolution White Paper (December 2024), signals a significant shift in how powers and funding are distributed, outlining a vision for all areas of England to join new regional Strategic Authorities with greater control over local decisions and budgets.

In response, Shropshire Council has commissioned external advice to assess the implications of the White Paper for the local authority. This paper summarises an options appraisal focused on identifying the most promising opportunities for Shropshire, while also addressing key risks, challenges, and barriers to growth and resilience.

Rather than recommending a single course of action, the paper aims to open dialogue on what devolution could look like for Shropshire. It explores a range of possible approaches aligned with the Council's priorities and long-term ambitions.

Laying this groundwork ensures that future discussions are evidence-based and focused on securing the best outcomes for Shropshire's communities.

Devolution timeline



Recent devolution activity among potential partners

Telford & Wrekin has been operating largely through the Marches partnership architecture rather than promoting a standalone devolution bid. The transfer of LEP functions into local councils has reinforced joint-working with Shropshire and Herefordshire around investment, housing and business support.

Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent have advanced their LGR work in spring/summer 2025. Staffordshire published an interim LGR plan after the May elections, while Stoke has been highlighted as part of the Government's devolution/LGR programme. Public debate has focused on unitarisation options and how best to reach the population thresholds implied in the Devolution White Paper.

Herefordshire Council has stressed member-led reflection on the implications of devolution, while advancing the Marches Forward Partnership as a vehicle for

securing investment. Leaders have emphasised rural priorities and cross-border collaboration, suggesting openness to coalition models that preserve the Marches identity.

Worcestershire has developed LGR proposals, with options ranging from a single county unitary to multiple new unitaries. Leaders have made clear that reorganisation will directly influence the scale and geography of future devolution options.

Gloucestershire councils launched a summer 2025 public engagement exercise on potential reorganisation, including a "Greater Gloucester" option. The process is testing boundaries and scale in line with the White Paper's criteria. This creates scope for early dialogue with Shropshire, particularly on cross-border issues affecting the Forest of Dean.

Warwickshire submitted an interim LGR proposal in March 2025 and is progressing statutory engagement. Its approach is process-led and focused on testing unitary options within the government timetable, signalling caution and an emphasis on robust evidence before committing to wider partnerships.

Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester and Warrington councils have collectively advanced to the next stage of a devolution deal. The Government confirmed in July 2025 that the area may proceed towards a Mayoral Combined Authority, with public consultation under way and mayoral elections expected in 2027. This positions Cheshire & Warrington as one of the fastest-moving neighbouring devolution projects.

Initial option generation and sifting

Our process for generating the long list

We have generated an initial long-list for discussion using a three-stage process:



Stage 1: define 'red-lines'

We began by identifying key policy constraints and non-negotiables from HM Government's White Paper. These red lines set the boundaries for what is considered viable.



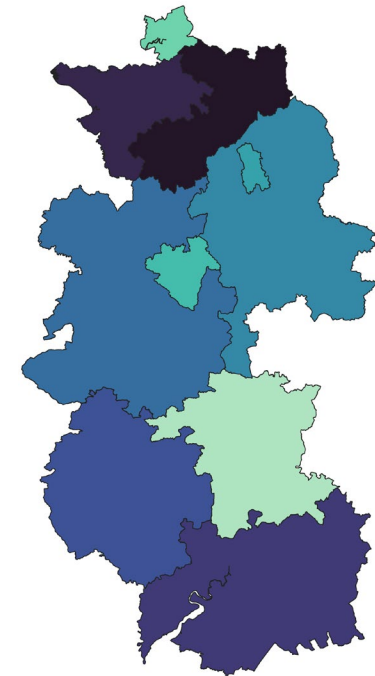
Stage 2: broad generation of options

With those parameters in mind, we cast the net wide – exploring a diverse range of combinations of neighbouring authorities to ensure a comprehensive long list.



Stage 3: sift against red lines

We then applied the red lines to the long list, filtering out options that do not meet the essential criteria, resulting in a refined and policy-compliant shortlist.



**All local authorities
considered**

Defining 'red lines'

HM Government's White Paper sets out a series of principles for establishing new strategic authorities. While many are open to interpretation, three are clear, binary 'red lines' that all proposals must meet. We adopted these red lines as non-negotiable criteria to sift our initial long list of options.

Criteria	Description	Red line?
1 	Scale The combined population of the proposed area must be at least 1.5 million. Precedent from LGR suggests 20% flexibility so we are drawing the red line at 1.2 million.	
2 	Functional economies The area should reflect real-world economic patterns, such as commuting flows and business links.	
3 	Contiguity The area must be geographically continuous, with no gaps between participating councils.	
4 	No 'devolution islands' The proposal must not leave small, isolated authorities outside the arrangement, unable to join a viable alternative.	
5 	Effective delivery The new authority must be capable of delivering key functions like transport planning and development strategies.	
6 	Boundary alignment The proposed area should align, where possible, with existing public sector boundaries (e.g. health, policing).	
7 	Local identity & accountability Residents should be able to identify with the new authority and feel they can hold it to account.	

We did not include any options in the initial long-list which are not geographically contiguous.

Broad generation of options

1/2

We identified 13 devolution options for Shropshire in the following table based on combinations of neighbouring areas. Applying the red lines sifts this to a final long-list of nine options.

Option	Constituent local authorities	Population	Short-list
1 Core Marches	 Shropshire, T&W, Herefordshire	0.7 million	 Population lower than red line threshold
2 Align to local policing boundaries	 Shropshire, T&W, Herefordshire, Worcestershire	1.3 million	 Potential to create 'devolution island' for Gloucestershire
3 Western edge	 Shropshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire	1.8 million	 Potential to create 'devolution island' for Worcestershire
4 South west border group	 Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire	1.8 million	 Meets red line criteria
5 Expanded south west border group	 Shropshire, T&W, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire	1.9 million	 Meets red line criteria
6 Eastern border group	 Shropshire, T&W, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent	1.6 million	 Meets red line criteria

Broad generation of options

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Option	Constituent local authorities	Population	Short-list
7 Eastern group plus WMCA	 Shropshire, T&W, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, WMCA	4.6 million	 Meets red line criteria
8 Marches –Midlands Link	 Shropshire, T&W, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Herefordshire	1.8 million	 Meets red line criteria
9 Eastern group and local policing boundary	 Shropshire, T&W, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Herefordshire, Worcestershire	2.4 million	 Meets red line criteria
10 East and south	 Shropshire, T&W, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire	3.1 million	 Meets red line criteria
11 North	 Shropshire, T&W, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire	1.3 million	 Meets red line criteria
12 North and Telford	 Shropshire, T&W, Warrington and the Cheshires	1.5 million	 Meets red line criteria
13 Rural Doughnut	 Shropshire, Telford, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Worcestershire, Warwickshire	2.8 million	 Meets red line criteria

Appraisal themes

Appraisal themes: White Paper

Key themes provided the high-level framework for assessing each short-listed option. These cover two areas: HM Government's White Paper and Shropshire's local priorities.

The themes arising from the White Paper include:

Theme	Description
1 	Functional economies How well does the option reflect real-world economic geographies, such as commuting and business links?
2 	Effective delivery How capable is the proposed authority of delivering key strategic functions and seeking out commercial opportunities and efficiencies?
3 	Boundary alignment To what extent does the option align with existing public sector boundaries to support coherent service delivery?
4 	Local identity and accountability How well does the option support inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development in key sectors?

Appraisal themes: local priorities

The local priorities considered include:

Theme	Description
1 	Economic growth How well does the option support inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development in key sectors?
2 	Housing How effectively does the option enable the delivery of affordable, energy-efficient housing that meets local needs?
3 	Infrastructure How well does the option improve and future-proof transport, digital, and utility infrastructure, especially in rural areas?
4 	Climate resilience How effectively does the option strengthen resilience to climate change through sustainable infrastructure and land use?
5 	Healthcare access How well does the option support improved health outcomes and equitable access to services and opportunities?

Policy baselining to inform local priorities

To support the devolution options appraisal, a structured policy baselining process was undertaken to identify and evidence Shropshire's strategic priorities – referred to as appraisal themes. This process ensured that the criteria used to assess options were grounded in the county's existing policy landscape and long-term ambitions.

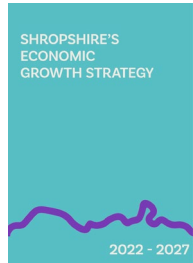
The baselining exercise aimed to extract shared priorities from across Shropshire's strategic documents, providing a clear rationale for the themes selected for appraisal. The approach involved:

- Reviewing key policy documents, including the Economic Growth Strategy, Core Strategy Development Plan, Draft Housing Strategy, Strategic Infrastructure Plan, Integrated Care Strategy, and the Marches Forward Proposition.
- Mapping recurring themes across these documents to identify areas of strategic alignment.
- Synthesising findings into a consolidated matrix, which was used to validate the relevance and consistency of the proposed appraisal themes.

The baselining process led to the identification of six strategic priorities that were consistently reflected across the policy evidence base. These priorities formed the basis of the appraisal criteria, ensuring that all options considered were assessed against themes that are locally grounded, strategically important, and supported by existing policy commitments.

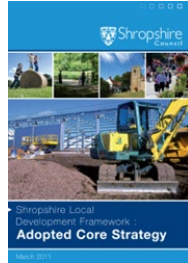
Policy baselining: what we looked at

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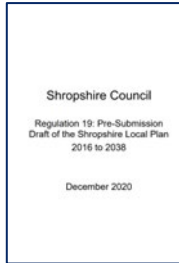
Economic Growth Strategy

- Contains a mission statement and vision for Shropshire
- Adopts a logic model approach to identifying interventions and outcomes
- Establishes a set of KPIs to track progress



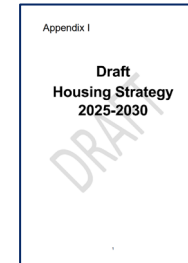
Core Strategy Development Plan

- Contains a spatial vision and strategic objectives for sustainable development, housing, employment, infrastructure, and the environment
- Identified the scale and distribution of growth, including key development areas and priorities



Draft Local Plan (withdrawn)

- Translates the spatial vision into site-specific proposals and development management policies.
- Identifies where and how development will take place, including specific sites for housing and economic growth.



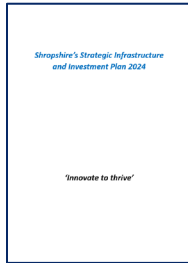
Draft Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030

- Sets out the housing requirement for Shropshire and past key achievements
- Identifies six priority areas for meeting Shropshire's diverse housing requirements sustainably
- Accompanied by action plans with timescales for each priority

Policy baselining: what we looked at

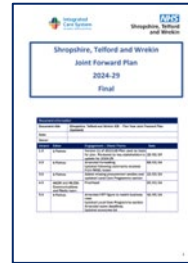
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Strategic Infrastructure / Investment Plan

- Categorises and describes strategic investment and infrastructure requirements.
- Lists specific interventions which are being progressed by the Council and other strategic infrastructure providers.



Integrated Care Strategy / Joint Forward Plan

- Presents an overview of the integrated care system, vision, objectives and purpose
- Outlines the care strategy priorities for population health, inequalities and health and care.
- Sets out outcomes for performance monitoring



Marches Forward proposition

- A shared evidence based is developed to identify ways for the areas to co-work and interventions to accelerate growth
- Sets out three themes of interventions
- Sets out the priority programmes that sit within the interventions

Summary of policies reviewed

Policy	Synopsis
Economic Growth Strategy	This strategy identifies that Shropshire's economy faces persistent challenges, including low productivity, limited infrastructure, skills shortages, and an ageing population. It highlights stark rural inequalities in access to jobs, broadband, and services, and notes that many communities are not fully benefiting from growth. Despite these issues, it finds that Shropshire has untapped strengths in sectors like agri-tech, tourism, and green energy. The strategy emphasises that future growth must be more inclusive, locally grounded, and environmentally sustainable.
Core Strategy Development Plan	The Core Strategy acknowledges the pressure for development across Shropshire's rural and urban areas and the need to carefully manage that growth. It identifies that market towns and key service centres play a critical role in delivering housing, employment, and services. The document also finds that rural isolation, environmental sensitivity, and infrastructure constraints are key challenges. It stresses the importance of shaping development in a way that protects Shropshire's landscape, heritage, and sense of place, while meeting growing demand.
Draft Local Plan (withdrawn)	The withdrawn Draft Local Plan reflects a need to accommodate significant housing and employment growth across the county, particularly in and around Shrewsbury. It highlights the growing affordability gap and the need to provide a mix of housing types. The evidence base pointed to infrastructure deficits, environmental constraints, and a need for clearer delivery mechanisms. Its withdrawal indicates challenges in aligning strategic ambitions with legal, procedural, and local consensus requirements.
Draft Housing Strategy 2025 – 2030	This strategy finds that Shropshire has rising levels of housing need, aggravated by an ageing population, affordability pressures, and energy inefficiency in older homes. It also identifies a mismatch between the types of housing available and the needs of lower-income and vulnerable households. The strategy stresses the importance of housing as a determinant of health and wellbeing and highlights that housing quality in the private rented sector is an area of concern. It reflects a broad consensus that housing outcomes are uneven and require more targeted, place-based responses.
Strategic Infrastructure / Investment Plan	The plan highlights a long-standing underinvestment in infrastructure across Shropshire, especially in transport, digital connectivity, and energy networks. It finds that infrastructure delivery is often fragmented and reactive, limiting the county's ability to support new development or address climate challenges. It also notes the vulnerability of rural communities to climate change and infrastructure failure. The plan identifies specific infrastructure pinch points and sets out priority areas that must be addressed to unlock sustainable, inclusive growth.
Integrated Care Strategy / Joint Forward Plan	This strategy reveals deep-rooted health inequalities across the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin area, with some communities experiencing significantly worse health outcomes and life expectancy. It identifies fragmented service delivery and limited access to prevention and early intervention as major system weaknesses. The strategy also acknowledges workforce shortages and rising demand as key pressures. It presents a strong case for more integrated, locality-based care that addresses the wider determinants of health – such as housing, social connection, and economic opportunity.
Marches Forward proposition	The Marches Forward Proposition identifies that the region underperforms economically compared to national averages and lacks the investment, infrastructure, and autonomy needed to address its unique rural challenges. It highlights issues such as poor transport connectivity, low wages, and demographic pressures. At the same time, it finds that the region has significant assets – including a skilled local workforce, strong community networks, and a low-carbon economy opportunity – that could be harnessed more effectively through greater local decision-making and funding flexibility.

Strategic priorities identified

We identified six strategic priorities through policy baselining by analysing shared aims and recurring themes, grouping them into broad focus areas, and refining them into a coherent set aligned with the Council’s long-term ambitions and desired outcomes:

1		Foster inclusive, sustainable economic growth	Support economic development that benefits all communities, encourages innovation and enterprise, strengthens rural and urban economies, and aligns with environmental goals. This includes growing key sectors like agri-tech, renewable energy, and tourism.
2		Deliver quality homes in the right places	Provide well-designed, energy-efficient, and affordable housing that meets local needs and supports community wellbeing. This involves a plan-led approach that connects housing to infrastructure, services, and sustainable growth.
3		Invest in resilient infrastructure and connectivity	Upgrade and expand transport, digital, and utility infrastructure to improve access, enable growth, and connect people and businesses – especially in rural areas. Emphasises future-proof, green solutions.
4		Harness Shropshire’s strengths in agriculture, food, and tourism	Leverage Shropshire’s assets – such as agriculture, food production, and tourism – to drive local prosperity and innovation. Supports place-based growth by celebrating what makes the region unique.
5		Champion a green, sustainable economy	Lead the transition to net zero by supporting clean energy, reducing emissions, protecting natural resources, and embedding environmental sustainability into all policies and investments.
6		Improve health and reduce inequalities	Work in partnership to create healthier communities, tackle the root causes of poor health, and ensure everyone has fair access to services, housing, and opportunities – especially those facing disadvantage.

Mapping priorities across policy documents

This matrix consolidates key priorities identified across Shropshire’s strategy documents, forming the basis for our appraisal criteria.

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Strategic priorities	Economic strategy	CSDP	LDP	Housing strategy	Infrastructure investment plan	Integrated care strategy	Marches Forward proposition
Foster inclusive, sustainable economic growth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deliver quality homes in the right places	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Invest in resilient infrastructure and connectivity	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Harness Shropshire’s strengths in agriculture, food, and tourism		✓	✓				✓
Champion a green, sustainable economy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tackle health inequalities and promote wellbeing for all			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appraisal criteria

Scoring criteria overview

Under each theme, we have defined a set of scoring criteria. These are specific measures used to assess how well each option performs in relation to the theme.

Each criterion is scored on a consistent scale (1 to 4), allowing for comparative evaluation across options. An example is provided below for the theme ‘functional economies’.

Example scoring criteria – 1 to 4 scale

Theme	Scoring criteria
1  Functional economies	Job weighted share of Shropshire’s total commuter flows (in + out) that go to and from each option (%) • 1: Significantly low job weighted share of total Shropshire commuter flows – at or below 4% (or less) • 2: Between 4% - 6% job weighted share of total Shropshire commuter flows • 3: Between 6% - 8% of all commuter flows to and from Shropshire • 4: Significantly high job weighted share of total Shropshire commuter flows – at or over 8%

Quantitative and qualitative scoring criteria

Our appraisal framework drew on two complementary forms of evidence:

1. Objective indicators

Quantifiable metrics from trusted sources such as ONS datasets, local performance data, and planning figures. They enabled consistent, evidence-based comparison across options.

Examples:

- Number of commuters
- Housing targets and net additions to dwellings

2. Subjective assessments

Informed assessments based on professional judgement, Shropshire Council officer input, and policy alignment. These captured critical factors not easily measured by data.

Examples:

- Identifiability of residents with new strategic authority
- Strength of existing partnerships

Scoring methodology

1/2

We adopted a consistent 1 – 4 scale across all criteria, but with different approaches depending on the type of evidence:

- **Objective scoring**

Based on performance against national or regional benchmarks. Where benchmarks were unavailable or unhelpful, scores were based on relative performance across options.

Score	Performance against benchmark
4	Significantly above benchmark / top quartile nationally
3	Above benchmark
2	Below benchmark
1	Significantly below benchmark / bottom quartile nationally

Benchmarking compared local performance to a broader context and avoid overemphasising small differences.

If:

- benchmark data is unavailable or limited; or
- all options fall within the same benchmark band; or
- a national comparator is not meaningful (e.g., commuting levels)

....then scores were adjusted based on relative performance across the options.

Scoring methodology

2/2

We adopted a consistent 1 – 4 scale across all criteria, but with different approaches depending on the type of evidence:

- **Subjective scoring**

Based on the strength of alignment with themes, informed by professional judgement and supporting evidence.

Score	Alignment with theme
4	Clear, well-evidenced alignment with the theme. Strong rationale or consensus supports the assessment.
3	Good overall alignment with the theme, with some supporting evidence. Some uncertainty or variability in strength.
2	Partial or inconsistent alignment. Evidence is weak, unclear, or not well developed.
1	Little or no alignment with the theme. Lacks supporting evidence or presents notable challenges.

We performed an initial scoring informed by our professional judgement and document and evidence review, before testing and refining these scores with Shropshire Council officers.

The detailed scoring criteria include:

1/2

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Theme	Criteria	Metrics	Type
1 	Functional economies	A Economic geography alignment: captures how closely each option reflects travel-to-work and business linkages with Shropshire	Objective
2 	Effective delivery	A Existing partnerships: captures how closely each options have worked together and the past / potential commercial opportunities they provide	Subjective
		B Potential partnerships: captures combined attitude of each option to seek out opportunities and efficiencies	Subjective
3 	Boundary alignment	A Public service boundary alignment captures how closely each option reflects public service provision linkages with Shropshire	Objective
4 	Local identity and accountability	A Council-resident alignment: captures how closely each option identifies with the new strategic authority	Subjective
		B Socio-economic profile: captures the extent to which the social and economic environment mirrors that of Shropshire.	Objective
5 	Economic growth	A Priority sector presence: captures how strongly each option supports Shropshire's key growth sectors: agri-tech, tourism, and green energy	Objective
		B Growth strategy alignment: captures the extent to which the economic policy mirrors that of Shropshire.	Subjective

The detailed scoring criteria include:

2/2

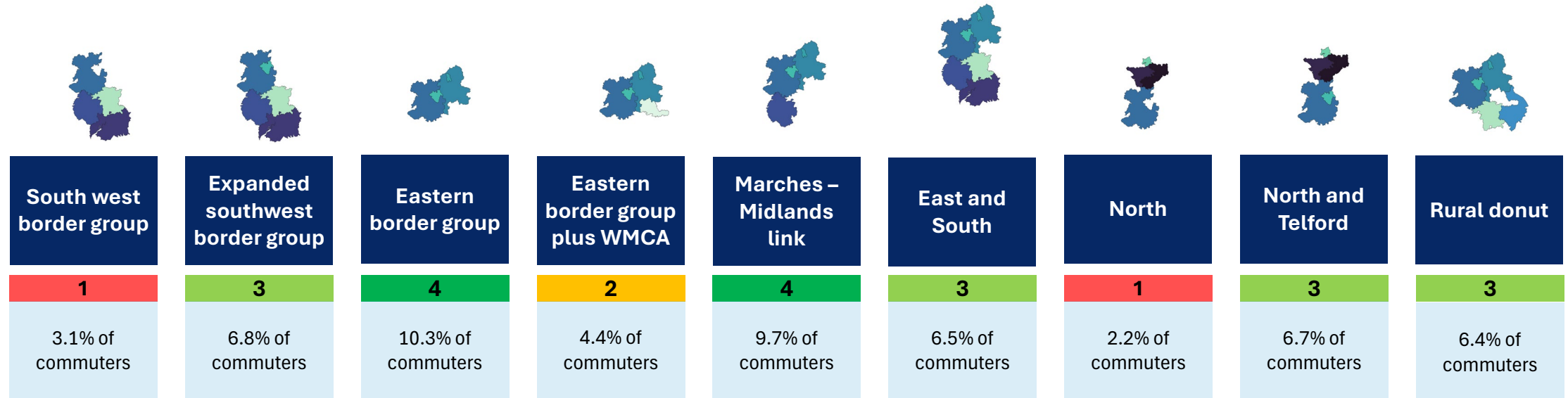
Theme		Criteria	Metrics	Type
6		A Housing pressure: assesses the likelihood that housing need from under-delivering neighbours could fall on Shropshire	Ratio of housing need targets to average net additions (%)	Objective
		B Housing affordability: captures affordability of new housing being delivered	Median house price of new dwellings (£)	Objective
7		A Capacity to deliver: captures the ability to raise, attract or manage infrastructure funding	Local and central government capital infrastructure investment per capita	Objective
		B Rural investment need: captures the degree to which rural infrastructure may be prioritised	Share of population living in rural areas (%)	Objective
		C Transport connectivity: captures the extent to which transport issues and policy mirrors that of Shropshire.	Travel time to employment centre by public transport and walking (minutes)	Objective
8		A Green growth alignment: captures the strength of existing and emerging collaborations that support investment in environmental infrastructure, nature recovery, and land use transformation.	Subjective assessment, informed by research into existing and emerging partnerships on sustainability	Subjective
		B Commitment to climate adaptation: assesses the strength and currency of climate adaptation strategies and local policies	Council Climate Action Scorecard score (%)	Objective
9		A Demographic demand: captures the additional strain or mitigation effect each option has on health and care services, based on population age profile.	Old age dependency ratio (population 65+ / working-age population)	Objective
		B Rural access risk: captures the level of importance likely to be placed on improving healthcare access in rural areas	Share of population more than 30 minutes by public transport from a major hospital (%)	Objective

Unweighted scores

1. Functional economies

How well does the option reflect real-world economic geographies, such as commuting and business links?

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Metric

Share of Shropshire's total commuter flows (in + out) that go to and from each option (%)

Scoring criteria – objective

1	Significantly low share of total Shropshire commuter flows – at or below 4% (or less)
2	Between 4% - 6% share of total Shropshire commuter flows
3	Between 6% - 8% of all commuter flows to and from Shropshire (%)
4	Significantly high share of total Shropshire commuter flows – at or over 8%

2A. Effective delivery: existing partnerships

How well does the option reflect real-world economic geographies, such as commuting and business links?

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South west border group	Expanded southwest border group	Eastern border group	Eastern border group plus WMCA	Marches – Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural donut
2	3	3	2	3	3	1	2	1
Strong partnership only with Herefordshire	Marches ties	Some collaboration in infra projects + disaster mgmt.	Minimal benefits from WMCA partnership	Builds on the Marches area	Builds on the Marches area	Minimal partnerships	Partnerships mostly with Telford	Minimal partnerships with Warwickshire

Metric

Informed by quality of existing partnerships in terms of benefits to Shropshire

Scoring criteria – subjective

1	No existing partnerships
2	Existing partnership(s) with no or little evidence of benefits to Shropshire
3	Existing partnership(s) with indications of some evidence of benefits to Shropshire
4	Existing partnership(s) with good evidence of or strong consensus on benefits to Shropshire

2B. Effective delivery: potential partnerships

How capable is the proposed authority in seeking out commercial opportunities and efficiencies?

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South west border group	Expanded southwest border group	Eastern border group	Eastern border group plus WMCA	Marches – Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural donut
2	2	3	4	4	3	3	3	3
Potentially fewer opportunities owing to local pressures	Potentially fewer opportunities owing to local pressures	County Deal and commercial mindset e.g. EZ	WMCA is an advanced and ambitious CA	Opportunities from the Marches Partnership	Balance of different authorities	Strong commercial mindset in Warrington	Strong commercial mindset in Warrington	Economic diversity may present many opportunities

Rationale

Informed by judgement of LA attitudes towards commercial opportunities

Scoring criteria

Subjective assessment

- 1 No likelihood of potential commercial opportunities
- 2 Potential partnership(s) with no or little evidence of commercial opportunities
- 3 Potential partnership(s) with some evidence of commercial opportunities
- 4 Potential partnership(s) with good evidence of or strong consensus on commercial opportunities

3. Boundary alignment

How well do the options align with existing public sector boundaries to support coherent service delivery?

Page 63

								
South west border group	Expanded southwest border group	Eastern border group	Eastern border group plus WMCA	Marches – Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural donut
2	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
Policing: 2 Resilience: 2 F&R: 1 Health: 1	Policing: 3 Resilience: 3 F&R: 3 Health: 2	Policing: 2 Resilience: 2 F&R: 3 Health: 4	Policing: 2 Resilience: 2 F&R: 3 Health: 3	Policing: 2 Resilience: 2 F&R: 3 Health: 3	Policing: 3 Resilience: 3 F&R: 3 Health: 3	Policing: 1 Resilience: 1 F&R: 1 Health: 1	Policing: 2 Resilience: 2 F&R: 1 Health: 2	Policing: 2 Resilience: 2 F&R: 2 Health: 2

Metric

Alignment of public service boundaries (policing, health, resilience, fire and rescue) shared within the option

Scoring criteria

Objective assessment

- 1 No shared public service boundary
- 2 Option leaves out partner(s) of public service boundary
- 3 Option contains additional areas not included in the public service boundary
- 4 Option is perfectly aligned with public service boundary

4A. Local identity and accountability

How well will Shropshire residents identify with the new strategic authority?

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South west border group	Expanded southwest border group	Eastern border group	Eastern border group plus WMCA	Marches – Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural donut
3	4	3	1	3	2	2	2	1
Common geography around Marches + River S	Common geography around Marches + River S	Not typical grouping but precedents exist	WMCA likely to be viewed as vastly different	Not typical grouping but precedents exist	May be viewed as too large for fair representation	May be challenging given perception of this area as the NW	May be challenging given perception of this area as the NW	May be seen as artificial by residents

Rationale

Informed by expert opinion into resident perception

Scoring criteria

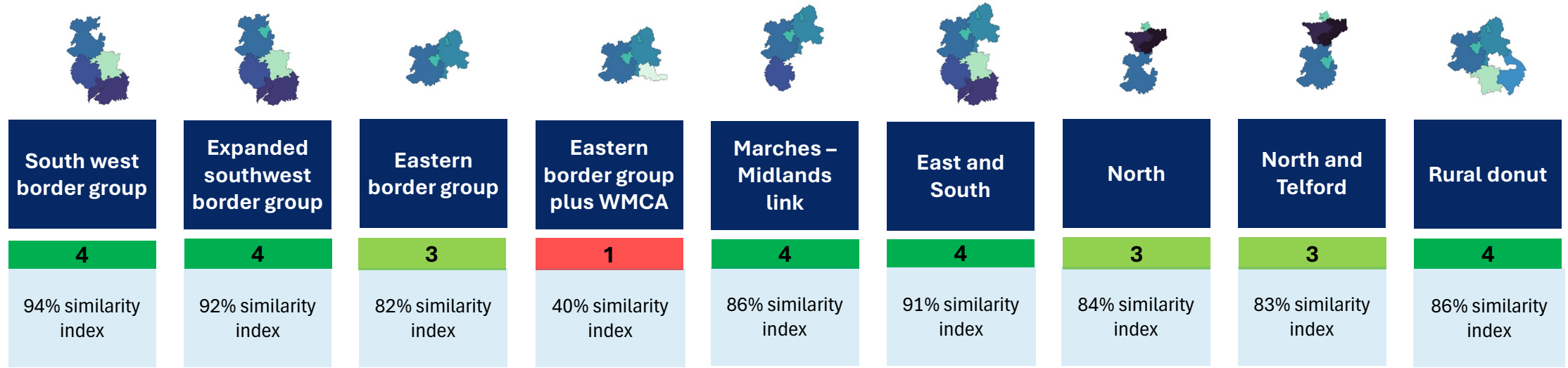
Subjective assessment

- 1** Evidence or consensus of no council-resident alignment
- 2** Little evidence of council-resident alignment
- 3** Indications of some evidence of council-resident alignment
- 4** Good evidence of or strong consensus of council-resident alignment

4B. Local identity and accountability

How does the social and economic environment mirrors that of Shropshire?

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Metric

Similarity index based on ONS output area classifications (%)

Scoring criteria

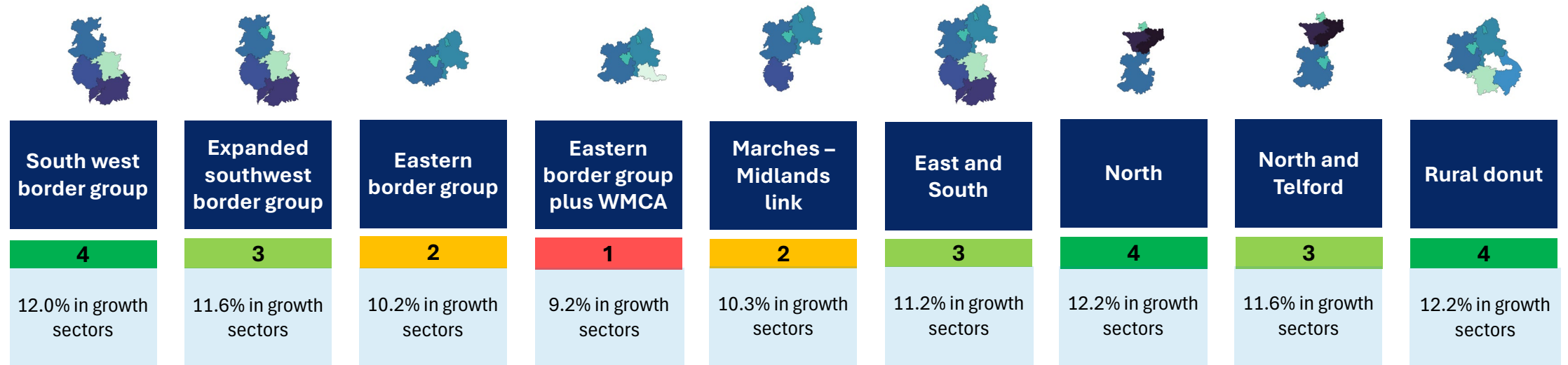
Objective assessment

- 1 Significantly poor similarity index with Shropshire (less than 60%)
- 2 Low similarity index with Shropshire (60%-70%)
- 3 Good similarity index with Shropshire (70%-85%)
- 4 Significantly high similarity index with Shropshire (over 85%)

5A. Economic growth: priority sector presence

How strongly does each option support Shropshire's key growth sectors: agri-tech, tourism, and green energy

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Metric

Share of total jobs in priority sectors (%)

Scoring criteria

Objective assessment

- 1** Significantly poor Shropshire priority sector presence in option partners (less than 10%)
- 2** Low priority sector presence (10%-11%)
- 3** Good priority sector presence (11%-12%)
- 4** Significantly high priority sector presence (over 12%)

5B. Economic growth: growth alignment

The table below provides scoring for each option against the ‘economic growth’ appraisal theme, which captures the extent to which the economic policy mirrors that of Shropshire.

								
South west border group	Expanded southwest border group	Eastern border group	Eastern border group plus WMCA	Marches – Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural donut
4	4	3	1	3	2	2	2	3
Similar rural challenges and growth objectives	Similar rural challenges and growth objectives	Relatively similar challenges with some disparities to either side	Disparities in challenges and growth objectives with WMCA	Relatively similar challenges with some disparities to either side	Area likely to be too large to align growth objectives	Mismatch in most core growth areas	Mismatch in most core growth areas	Relatively similar challenges but disparate economy

Rationale

Informed by a comparative analysis of Shropshire and option partner policies

Scoring criteria

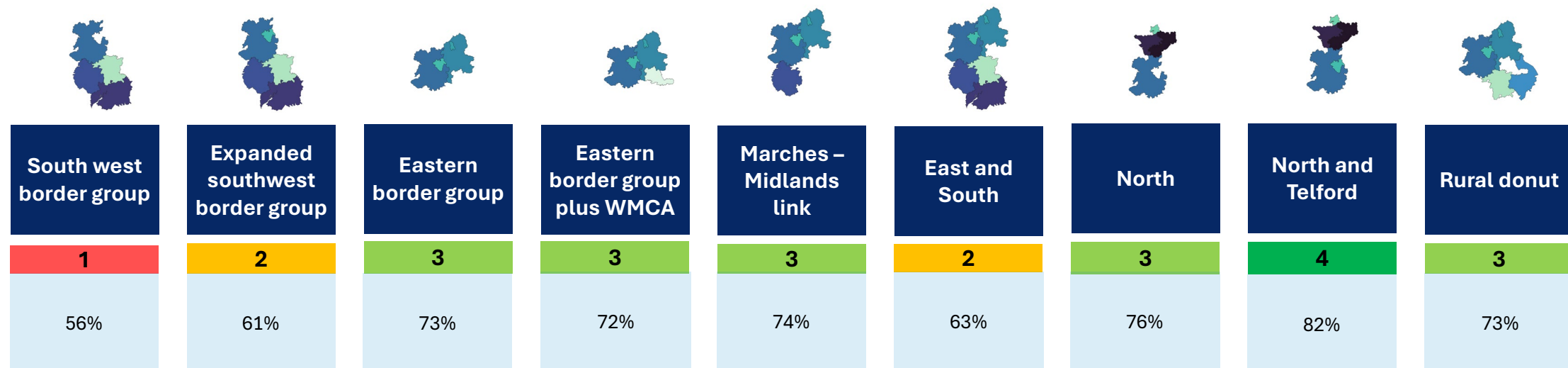
Subjective assessment

- 1** Evidence of or consensus of no growth strategy alignment
- 2** Option has little evidence of growth strategy alignment
- 3** Option has some evidence of growth strategy alignment
- 4** Option has strong evidence or consensus of growth strategy alignment

6. Housing: pressures

What is the likelihood that housing need from under-delivering neighbours could fall on Shropshire?

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Metric

Ratio of average net additional dwellings to housing need targets (%)

Scoring criteria

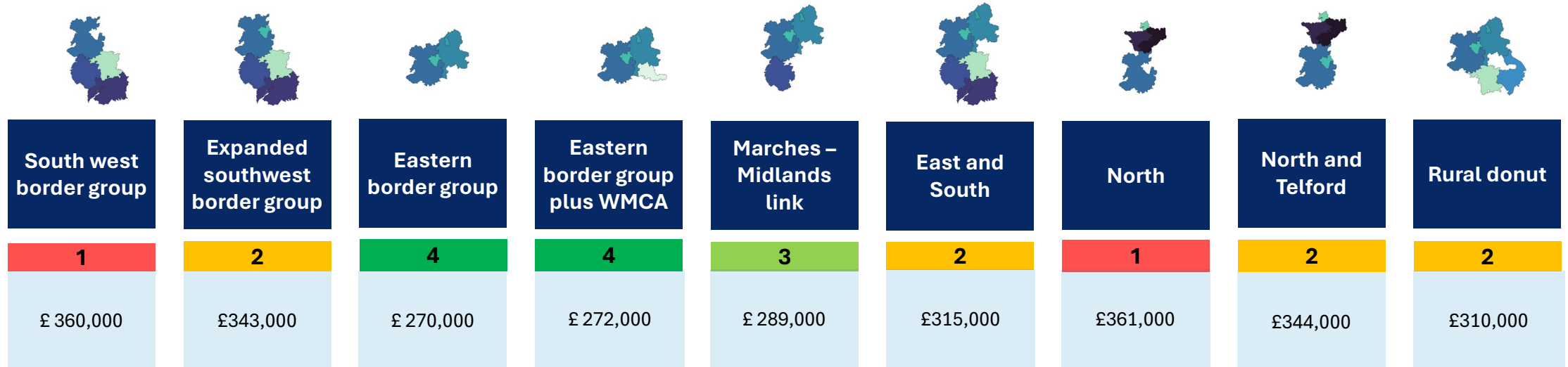
Objective assessment

- 1 Significantly poor similarity index with Shropshire (less than 60%)
- 2 Low similarity index with Shropshire (60%-70%)
- 3 Good similarity index with Shropshire (70%-85%)
- 4 Significantly high similarity index with Shropshire (over 85%)

6B. Housing: affordability

What is the affordability of new housing being delivered?

Page 69



Metric

Median price of new built dwellings

Scoring criteria

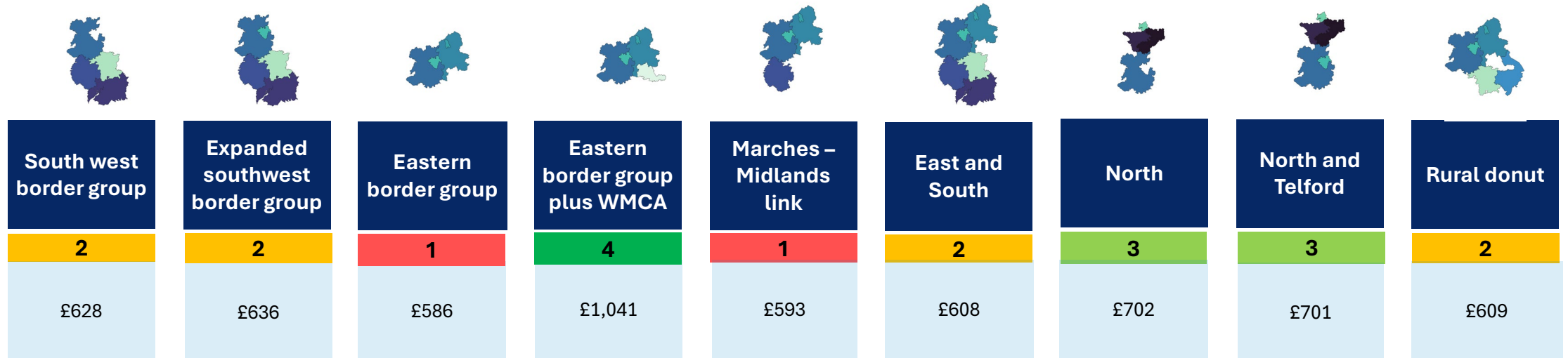
Objective assessment

- 1 Relatively poor affordability of housing in the area (over £350,000)
- 2 Low affordability of housing in the area (£300,000 - £350,000)
- 3 Good affordability of housing in the area (£275,000 - £300,000)
- 4 Relatively high affordability of housing in the area (below £275,000)

7A. Infrastructure: capacity to deliver

What is the ability to raise, attract or manage infrastructure funding?

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Metric

Local and central government capital infrastructure investment per capita

Scoring criteria

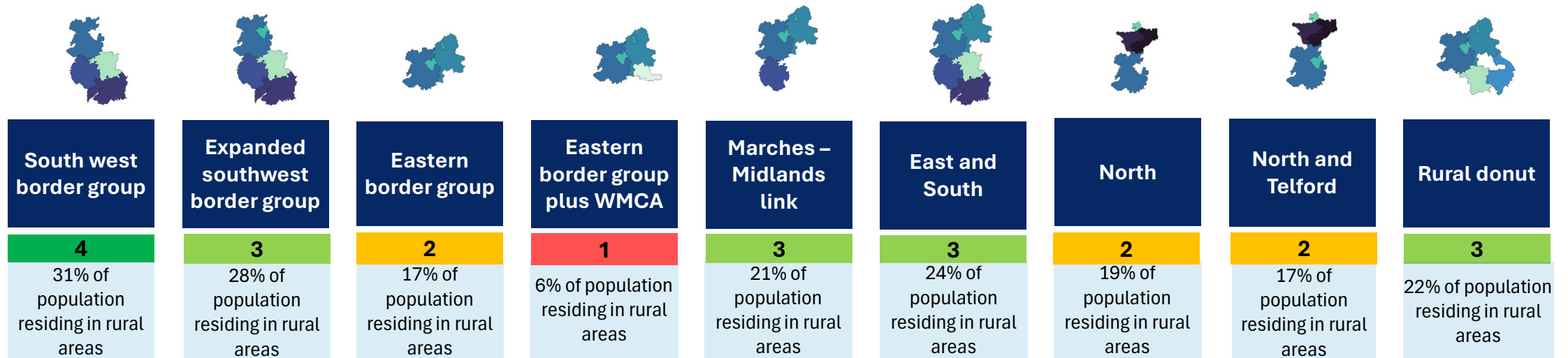
Objective assessment

- 1** Significantly low local and central government capital infrastructure investment per capita (below £600)
- 2** Low local and central government capital infrastructure investment per capita (£600-£700)
- 3** Good local and central government capital infrastructure investment per capita (£700 - £800)
- 4** Significantly high local and central government capital infrastructure investment per capita (over £800)

7B. Infrastructure: rural investment need

How likely is it that rural infrastructure will be prioritised?

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Metric

Share of population living in rural areas (%)

Scoring criteria

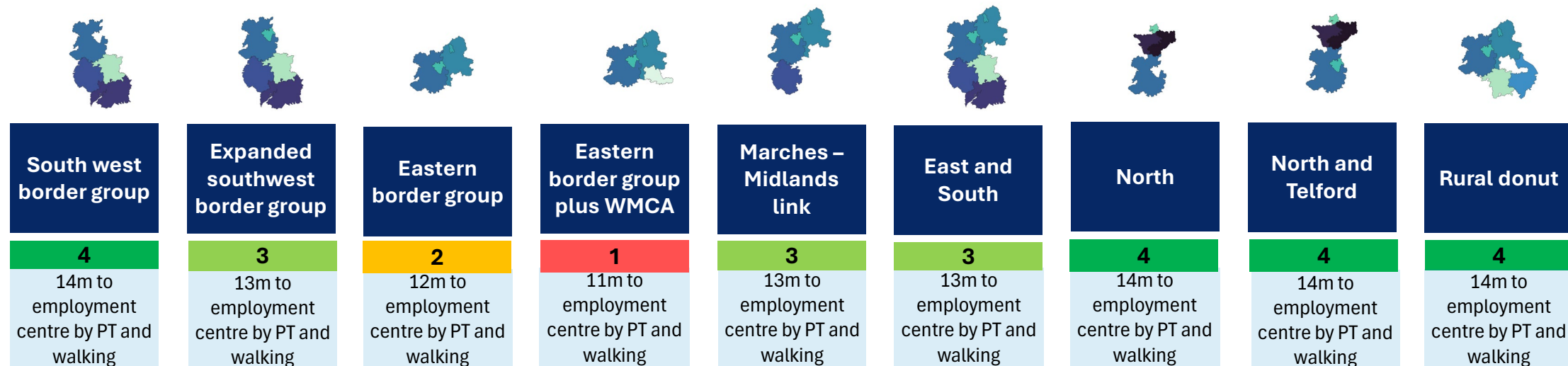
Objective assessment

- 1 Significantly low share of rural population (lower than 10%)
- 2 Low share of rural population (10% - 20%)
- 3 High share of rural population (20% - 30%)
- 4 Significantly high share of rural population (over 30%)

7C. Infrastructure: transport connectivity

What is the extent to which transport issues and policy mirrors that of Shropshire?

Page 72



Metric

Population weighted travel time to nearest employment centre (with 500-4,999 jobs) by public transport (PT) and walking (minutes)

Scoring criteria

Objective assessment

- 1** Significantly shorter time taken to travel to employment centre (under 12m)
- 2** Reasonable amount of time taken to travel to employment centre (12m – 13m)
- 3** Long time taken to travel to employment centre (13m-14m)
- 4** Significantly long time taken to travel to employment centre (over 14m).

8A. Climate resilience: green growth alignment

What is the strength of existing and emerging collaborations that support investment in environmental infrastructure, nature recovery, and land use transformation?

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South west border group	Expanded southwest border group	Eastern border group	Eastern border group plus WMCA	Marches – Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural donut
3	4	3	2	4	3	2	2	2
LAs members of River Severn Partnership	Existing partnerships on environmental infrastructure	Existing partnership on environmental infrastructure	Not well aligned with WMCA	Existing partnerships on environmental infrastructure	Partnerships with some areas but likely too large for alignment	Green Growth a focus area for Cheshire East	Green Growth a focus area for Cheshire East	Limited evidence that this is a focus area

Rationale

Informed by research into existing and emerging partnerships on sustainability

Scoring criteria

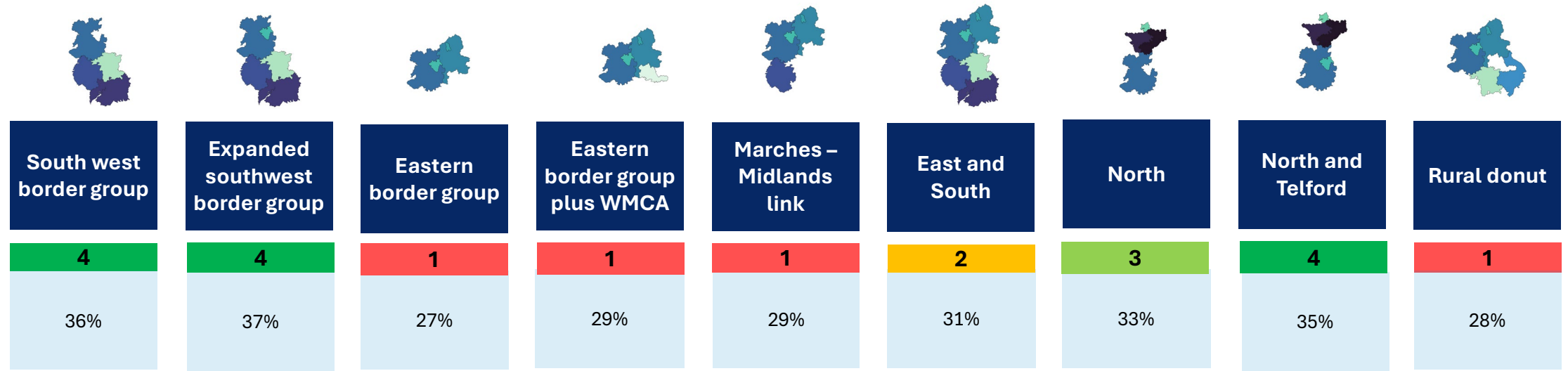
Subjective assessment

- 1** Evidence or consensus of no green growth alignment
- 2** Option has little evidence of green growth alignment
- 3** Option has some evidence of green growth alignment
- 4** Option has strong evidence or consensus of green growth alignment

8B. Climate resilience: climate adaptation

What is the strength and currency of climate adaptation strategies and local policies?

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Metric

Population weighted Council
Climate Action Scorecard score
(%)

Scoring criteria

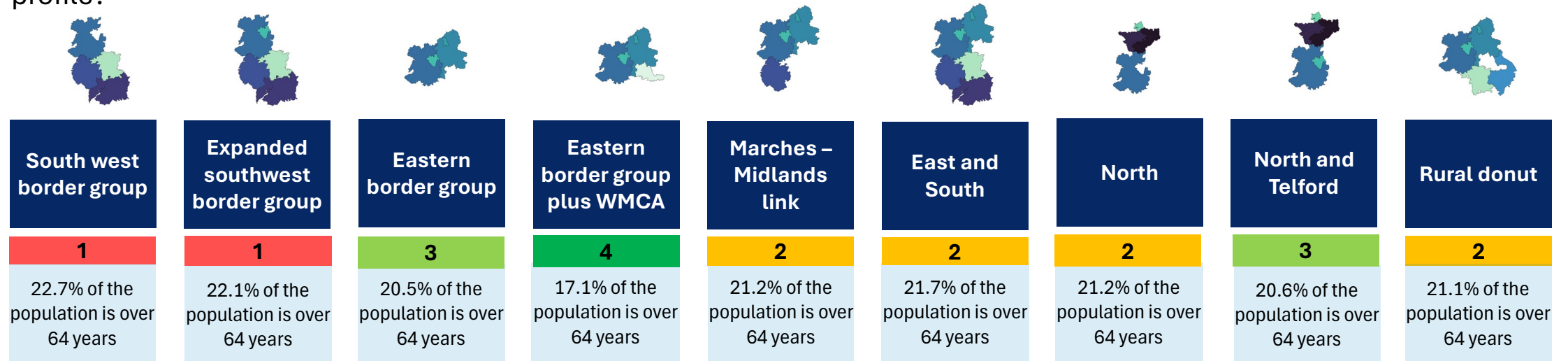
Objective assessment

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Significantly low action taken towards net zero (below 30%) |
| 2 | Low action taken towards net zero (30% - 32%) |
| 3 | Reasonable action taken towards net zero (32% - 34%) |
| 4 | Significant action taken towards net zero (over 34%) |

9A. Health: demographic demand

What is the additional strain or mitigation effect each option has on health and care services, based on population age profile?

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Metric

Old age dependency ratio
(population 65+ / working-age population)

Scoring criteria

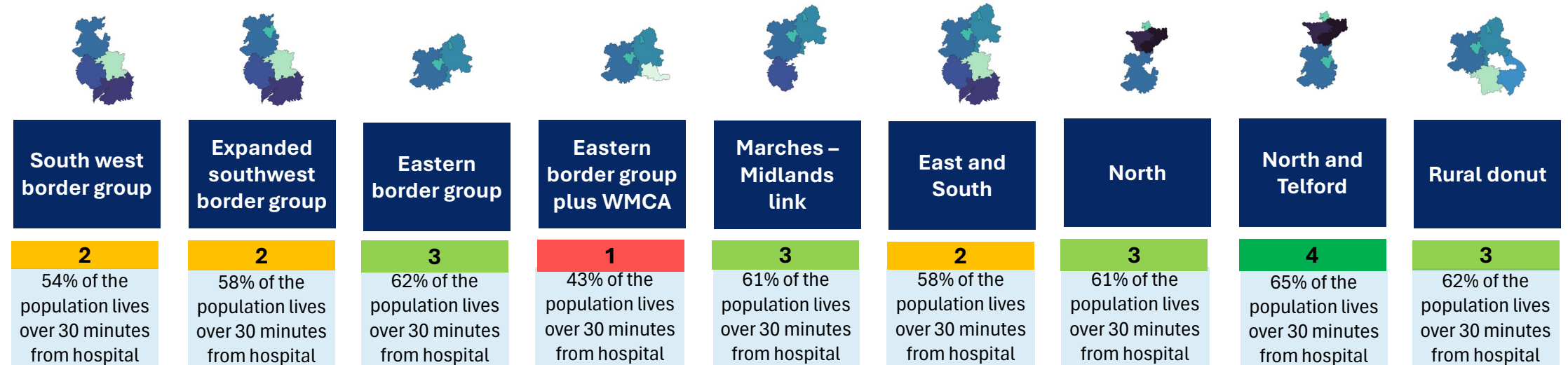
Objective assessment

- 1 Significantly high proportion of older population (over 22%)
- 2 High proportion of older population (21%-22%)
- 3 Low proportion of older population (20%-21%)
- 4 Significantly high proportion of older population (below 20%)

9B. Health: rural access risk

What is the level of importance likely to be placed on improving healthcare access in rural areas?

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Metric

Share of population more than 30 minutes by public transport from a major hospital (%)

Scoring criteria

Objective assessment

- 1** Significantly low proportion of population living 30m from hospital (below 50%)
- 2** Low proportion of population living 30m from hospital (50% - 60%)
- 3** High proportion of population living 30m from hospital (60% - 63%)
- 4** Significantly high proportion of population living 30m from hospital (over 63%)

Summary: scores by individual criteria

1/2

Themes:	Functional Economies	Effective Delivery		Boundary alignment	Local identity and accountability		Economic Growth	
Scoring criteria:		Existing partnerships	Potential partnerships		Council resident alignment	Socio-economic profile	Priority sector presence	Growth strategy alignment
1 South west border group	1	2	2	2	3	4	4	4
2 Expanded south west border group	3	3	2	3	4	4	3	4
3 Eastern border group	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
4 Eastern group plus WMCA	2	2	4	3	1	1	1	1
5 Marches - Midlands link	4	3	4	3	2	4	2	3
6 East and South	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	2
7 North	1	1	3	1	2	3	4	2
8 North and Telford	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2
9 Rural doughnut	3	2	3	2	1	4	4	3

Summary: scores by individual criteria

2/2

Themes:	Housing		Infrastructure			Climate resilience		Health	
Scoring criteria:	Housing pressure	Housing affordability	Capacity to deliver	Rural investment need	Transport connectivity	Green growth alignment	Climate adaptation	Demog. demand	Rural access risk
1 South west border group	1	1	2	4	4	3	4	1	2
2 Expanded south west border group	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	1	2
3 Eastern border group	3	4	1	2	2	3	1	3	3
4 Eastern group plus WMCA	3	4	4	1	1	2	1	4	1
5 Marches - Midlands link	3	3	1	3	3	4	1	2	3
6 East and South	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2
7 North	3	1	3	2	4	2	3	2	3
8 North and Telford	4	2	3	2	4	2	4	3	4
9 Rural doughnut	3	2	2	3	4	2	1	2	3

Approach to weighting and interpretation

Devolution pathways overview

The appraisal provides an evidence-based assessment of how each shortlisted option performs against the key themes. However, the most suitable option depends on the Council's strategic priorities and its appetite for risk.

To reflect different priorities and trade-offs, the appraisal defines three distinct *devolution pathways*.

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Devolution pathways are strategic scenarios that reflect different priorities and value judgments about what matters most for Shropshire. Each pathway applies a different weighting to the appraisal themes, highlighting how alternative options perform when certain outcomes – such as economic growth, service delivery, or local identity – are prioritised over others.

Each pathway assigns different weightings to the themes, meaning that options are ranked differently depending on which outcomes are prioritised. This approach allows the Council to explore how different strategic choices influence the relative attractiveness of each option.

These devolution pathways are defined below, alongside commentary on key risks and opportunities.

Devolution pathway definitions

1/3

Pathway	Description	Opportunities	Risks	Themes prioritised
Shared challenges, shared solutions	Focuses on partnering with authorities that face similar social and economic challenges – such as poor transport connectivity, unequal access to healthcare, and rural service delivery. This pathway emphasises collaboration to address common issues through shared strategies and resources.	• Strong potential for shared learning and joint problem-solving • Greater alignment in service delivery models and rural priorities • Builds resilience through collaboration with like-minded authorities	• May limit economic ambition by focusing on authorities with similar constraints • Risk of slower progress due to shared capacity limitations • Potential difficulty in demonstrating strong economic growth potential to Government	• Local identity and accountability • Green growth • Infrastructure • Health • Climate resilience

Devolution pathway definitions

2/3

Pathway	Description	Opportunities	Risks	Themes prioritised
Growth-oriented & commercially ambitious	Prioritises bold, entrepreneurial partnerships aimed at unlocking economic potential. This pathway seeks alignment with authorities that are commercially minded and supportive of innovation, transformation, and scaling up Shropshire's economic programmes.	• Potential to accelerate economic development and innovation • Access to new investment and HMG funding opportunities • Stronger positioning for regional competitiveness and transformation	• Risk of misalignment in priorities or pace between Shropshire and more commercially driven partners • Potential for unequal influence or benefit-sharing in partnerships	• Effective delivery • Housing • Infrastructure

Devolution pathway definitions

3/3

Pathway	Description	Opportunities	Risks	Themes prioritised
Aligned with Government priorities	Centres on forming arrangements that closely reflect the criteria set out in the Government's Devolution White Paper. This pathway represents the most straightforward and low-friction route to securing devolution approval from central government.	• Clear alignment with national policy objectives and funding streams • Lower risk of delays or negotiation setbacks during the devolution process	• May prioritise ease of approval over local fit or ambition • Risk of reduced flexibility to shape arrangements around Shropshire's unique needs • Risk of limited community buy-in if arrangements feel imposed or externally driven	• Functional economies • Effective delivery • Boundary alignment • Local identity and accountability • Economic growth

Weighted scoring

Weighted score by devolution pathway

Themes:		Shared challenges, shared solutions		Growth-oriented & commercially ambitious		Aligned with Government priorities	
Scoring criteria:		Weighted score	Rank	Weighted score	Rank	Weighted score	Rank
1	South west border group	68	5	48	9	50	7
2	Expanded south west border group	72	2	54	5	65	2
3	Eastern border group	65	7	57	3	65	3
4	Eastern group plus WMCA	49	9	50	7	47	8
5	Marches - Midlands link	69	4	60	2	69	1
6	East and South	65	6	53	6	65	4
7	North	64	8	50	8	44	9
8	North and Telford	73	1	61	1	59	6
9	Rural doughnut	69	3	55	4	60	5

High performing options by devolution pathway

Some options – such as the expanded south west border group and Marches to Midlands – perform strongly across more than one pathway. This is explored in more detail below.

Devolution option	Option partners	Number of pathways	Population
Marches to Midlands	Shropshire, Telford, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Herefordshire	2 (growth-oriented, government-aligned)	1.8 million
Expanded south west border group	Shropshire, Telford, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire	2 (shared challenges, government-aligned)	1.9 million
Eastern border group	Shropshire, Telford, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent	2 (growth-oriented, government-aligned)	1.6 million
North and Telford	Shropshire, Telford, the Cheshires, Warrington	2 (shared challenges, growth-oriented)	1.5 million
Rural doughnut	Shropshire, Telford, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Worcestershire, Warwickshire	1 (shared challenges)	2.8 million

This suggests they offer a degree of flexibility and could be shaped to support different strategic directions.

Interpretation of results

There is no single ‘best’ option

The appraisal confirms that there is no universally optimal devolution option. Instead, the most suitable arrangement for Shropshire depends on the Council’s strategic priorities – whether the focus is on shared service challenges, economic growth, or alignment with Government expectations.

All viable options include Telford

Every high-performing option includes Telford, and in all cases, options that include Telford score better than those without it across all pathways. This highlights the strategic importance of building a strong, collaborative relationship with Telford & Wrekin Council.

Larger options tend to perform better

While the appraisal allowed for some flexibility below the 1.5 million population threshold, the higher-scoring options are generally those with larger populations. This suggests that greater scale – beyond just meeting the minimum threshold – is important for achieving Shropshire’s ambitions. Larger groupings appear to offer stronger performance across multiple themes, including infrastructure, economic growth, and effective delivery.

Annex: Detailed data tables

1: Individual local authority populations

Authority	Population
Birmingham	1,144,919
Cheshire East	398,772
Cheshire West and Chester	357,150
Coventry	345,324
Dudley	323,488
Gloucestershire	645,076
Herefordshire	187,034
Monmouthshire	92,957
Powys	133,169
Sandwell	341,832

Authority	Population
Shropshire	323,606
Solihull	216,240
Staffordshire	876,104
Stoke-on-Trent	258,369
Telford and Wrekin	185,541
Walsall	284,124
Warrington	210,974
Warwickshire	596,772
Wolverhampton	263,727
Worcestershire	603,676

2: Population by broad age ranges

Option	0 - 14	15 - 64	64+	Total
Shropshire only	47,918	193,601	82,088	323,607
South west border group	231,449	878,013	326,320	1,435,782
Expanded south west border group	266,022	996,264	359,038	1,621,324
Eastern border group	224,341	824,557	271,117	1,320,015
Eastern group plus WMCA	804,984	2,708,658	726,023	4,239,665
Marches - Midlands link	252,368	935,091	319,589	1,507,048
East and South	455,790	1,702,570	597,437	2,755,797
North	158,538	603,231	205,133	966,902
North and Telford	193,111	721,482	237,851	1,152,444
Rural doughnut	421,517	1,567,181	531,766	2,520,464
National comparator	9,838,977	36,249,768	10,401,303	56,490,048

3: Population by broad age ranges

Option	0 - 14	15 - 64	64+
Shropshire only	14.81%	59.83%	25.37%
South west border group	16.12%	61.15%	22.73%
Expanded south west border group	16.41%	61.45%	22.14%
Eastern border group	17.00%	62.47%	20.54%
Eastern group plus WMCA	18.99%	63.89%	17.12%
Marches - Midlands link	16.75%	62.05%	21.21%
East and South	16.54%	61.78%	21.68%
North	16.40%	62.39%	21.22%
North and Telford	16.76%	62.60%	20.64%
Rural doughnut	16.72%	62.18%	21.10%
National comparator	17.42%	64.17%	18.41%

4: Population by rural / urban split

Option	Rural population	Population	Rural share
Shropshire only	185,426	323,606	57.3%
South west border group	444,741	1,435,786	31.0%
Expanded south west border group	455,874	1,621,327	28.1%
Eastern border group	217,508	1,320,014	16.5%
Eastern group plus WMCA	244,864	4,239,668	5.8%
Marches - Midlands link	318,506	1,507,048	21.1%
East and South	662,249	2,755,800	24.0%
North	181,353	966,896	18.8%
North and Telford	192,486	1,152,437	16.7%
Rural doughnut	554,421	2,520,462	22.0%
National comparator	9,740,371	49,857,376	19.5%

5: Commuting flows

Option	Inflows from	Outflows to	Total flows	Share of jobs
Shropshire only	-	-		
South west border group	3,335	2,741	6,076	3.1%
Expanded south west border group	12,280	10,377	22,657	6.8%
Eastern border group	11,204	9,959	21,163	10.3%
Eastern group plus WMCA	15,222	12,658	27,880	4.4%
Marches - Midlands link	12,875	11,478	24,353	9.7%
East and South	14,539	12,700	27,239	6.5%
North	1,608	1,495	3,103	2.2%
North and Telford	10,553	9,131	19,684	6.7%
Rural doughnut	12,871	11,194	24,065	6.4%

6: Infrastructure investment

Option	Land improvements	LG excl. transport	LG transport	Other
Shropshire only	£106m	£29m	£52m	£266m
South west border group	£677m	£124m	£204m	£1,677m
Expanded south west border group	£729m	£160m	£223m	£1,863m
Eastern border group	£372m	£114m	£132m	£1,504m
Eastern group plus WMCA	£1,112m	£460m	£563m	£5,608m
Marches - Midlands link	£465m	£133m	£158m	£1,664m
East and South	£1,049m	£238m	£336m	£3,181m
North	£405m	£178m	£114m	£2,133m
North and Telford	£457m	£214m	£133m	£2,319m
Rural doughnut	£882m	£229m	£297m	£3,254m

7: Infrastructure investment per capita

Option	Total	Population	LG £ / capita
Shropshire only	£81m	323,607	£250
South west border group	£328m	1,435,782	£228
Expanded south west border group	£383m	1,621,324	£236
Eastern border group	£246m	1,320,015	£186
Eastern group plus WMCA	£1,023m	4,239,665	£241
Marches - Midlands link	£291m	1,507,048	£193
East and South	£574m	2,755,797	£208
North	£292m	966,902	£302
North and Telford	£347m	1,152,444	£301
Rural doughnut	£526m	2,520,464	£209

8: Travel times to key assets

Option	Time to emp centre by public transport (m)	Time to emp centre by public transport (m)
Shropshire only	20	20.5
South west border group	17	14.1
Expanded south west border group	16	13.9
Eastern border group	12	12.2
Eastern group plus WMCA	12	11.5
Marches - Midlands link	15	13.8
East and South	14	13.2
North	14	14.3
North and Telford	14	14.0
Rural doughnut	14	14.1

9: Climate action scorecards (population weighted)

Option	Score
Shropshire only	33.0%
South west border group	28.2%
Expanded south west border group	46.0%
Eastern border group	Score
Eastern group plus WMCA	33.0%
Marches - Midlands link	28.2%
East and South	46.0%
North	Score
North and Telford	33.0%
Rural doughnut	28.2%

10: Jobs in key growth sectors

Option	Energy (incl. renewables)	Tourism	Agri-tech
Shropshire only	1,430	13,350	3,080
South west border group	5,350	58,855	15,375
Expanded south west border group	5,925	64,380	17,185
Eastern border group	4,095	45,395	11,060
Eastern group plus WMCA	16,305	126,050	36,190
Marches - Midlands link	4,595	52,935	13,050
East and South	9,445	104,250	26,435
North	10,020	41,360	14,925
North and Telford	10,595	46,885	16,735
Rural doughnut	14,030	95,560	35,275

11: Share of jobs in key growth sectors

Option	Energy (incl. renewables)	Tourism	Agri-tech
Shropshire only	1.0%	9.4%	2.2%
South west border group	0.8%	8.9%	2.3%
Expanded south west border group	0.8%	8.5%	2.3%
Eastern border group	0.7%	7.7%	1.9%
Eastern group plus WMCA	0.8%	6.5%	1.9%
Marches - Midlands link	0.7%	7.7%	1.9%
East and South	0.8%	8.3%	2.1%
North	1.8%	7.6%	2.7%
North and Telford	1.7%	7.3%	2.6%
Rural doughnut	1.2%	8.1%	3.0%

12: Approx. population share by social classification

Description	Shropshire only	South west border group	Expanded south west border group	Eastern border group	Eastern group plus WMCA	Marches - Midlands link	East and South	North	North and Telford	Rural doughnut
Spacious Rural Living	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small Town Suburbia	9.7%	8.3%	8.3%	14.1%	6.3%	13.3%	11.2%	13.7%	12.7%	11.2%
Established Mature Families	4.7%	7.8%	7.6%	8.1%	3.5%	7.6%	7.9%	14.4%	13.1%	8.5%
Inner Suburbs and Small Town Living	7.7%	9.1%	8.6%	6.7%	3.4%	6.9%	7.9%	9.0%	8.3%	7.2%
Rural Amenity	29.9%	20.4%	19.0%	11.7%	4.2%	13.3%	16.1%	13.7%	13.0%	13.9%
Ageing Communities	12.5%	12.1%	11.3%	7.2%	3.4%	8.0%	9.7%	9.2%	8.6%	8.2%
Student Living and Professional Footholds	0.2%	0.7%	0.6%	0.3%	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%
Ethnically Diverse Young Families	-	0.4%	0.3%	0.1%	1.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Diverse Educated Urban Singles	-	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Ethnically Diverse Families in Less Connected Locations	-	0.4%	0.5%	1.3%	7.2%	1.2%	0.8%	0.2%	0.4%	0.8%
Established Multi- Ethnic Communities	0.1%	1.1%	1.3%	2.5%	10.2%	2.2%	1.8%	0.4%	0.8%	2.2%
Challenged Multicultural Communities and Students	-	0.5%	0.7%	2.8%	11.8%	2.5%	1.6%	-	0.3%	1.7%
Outer Suburbs	1.1%	3.0%	2.9%	1.7%	4.8%	1.5%	2.3%	2.6%	2.5%	3.6%
Suburban Professionals	2.8%	3.1%	4.3%	6.0%	13.4%	5.4%	4.5%	3.3%	4.9%	7.3%
Challenged Communities	0.7%	6.5%	8.9%	9.9%	13.2%	9.1%	8.2%	3.7%	7.4%	8.6%
Legacy Industrial and Coastal Communities	4.5%	7.5%	7.0%	5.3%	2.8%	5.9%	6.4%	8.9%	8.1%	6.3%
Multicultural Inner Suburbs	0.8%	2.8%	2.6%	1.0%	2.3%	1.0%	1.9%	2.1%	1.9%	2.0%
Established but Challenged	11.4%	8.3%	7.8%	9.2%	4.0%	9.5%	8.7%	7.0%	6.5%	8.0%
Young Families in Industrial Towns	11.2%	5.4%	5.6%	9.8%	5.1%	9.8%	7.6%	8.5%	8.3%	7.7%
Routine Occupations or Retirement	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Legacy and Demographically Mixed Communities	2.6%	2.2%	2.1%	1.8%	1.0%	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%
Similarity index (using cosine similarity)	1.00	0.94	0.92	0.82	0.40	0.86	0.91	0.84	0.83	0.86

13: Housing targets and net additions

Option	Target	Net additions	Ratio
Shropshire only	1,994	1,514	76%
South west border group	9,899	5,591	56%
Expanded south west border group	10,756	6,591	61%
Eastern border group	6,516	4,738	73%
Eastern group plus WMCA	18,717	13,528	72%
Marches - Midlands link	7,879	5,798	74%
East and South	16,415	10,329	63%
North	5,439	4,142	76%
North and Telford	6,296	5,142	82%
Rural doughnut	14,380	10,429	73%

14: Housing affordability

Option	Median house price	Median house price to median gross annual workplace earnings ratio
Shropshire only	£299,983	10
South west border group	£359,716	11
Expanded south west border group	£342,786	11
Eastern border group	£270,135	9
Eastern group plus WMCA	£271,979	8
Marches - Midlands link	£288,663	9
East and South	£314,925	10
North	£361,269	10
North and Telford	£343,951	10
Rural doughnut	£309,747	10

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Cabinet

**14 October 2026
10.00 a.m.**

Public

Shropshire Traffic Management and Parking Consultation

Cabinet Member:	Rob Wilson	
Lead Director:	Andy Wilde – Service Director	
Service Area:	Infrastructure	
Report Author	Simon D'Vali – Executive Manager Strategic Transport	
Officer contact details	Simon.dvali@shropshire.gov.uk	
Electoral Divisions Affected	All	
Key Decision?	Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	Yes – 14 July 2026	
Report considered by	Cabinet & Executive Group BAU - 17 August 2026 Cabinet – 14 October 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out the context for the Parking Management Proposal against the emerging Local Transport Plan.
- 1.2 To address current imbalances in Parking Management across Shropshire.
- 1.3 To set out proposed alternatives to parking.

- 1.4 To update Cabinet on Strategic Transport Workstreams including Residents Permit Parking Zones.
- 1.5 To seek authority to consult on tariff changes in Shropshire, including a revision of some parking bands and operational hours.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to

- 2.1 Approve public consultation on the proposed changes to parking tariffs, parking bands, charging periods and other charging arrangements set out in this report and Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Service Director Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Regeneration, to:
 - a. consider the responses received through the public consultation and any further relevant evidence;
 - b. make any necessary amendments to the proposals arising from the consultation; and
 - c. approve and implement the revised parking charging scheme, including making or varying any necessary traffic regulation orders and determining the implementation date or dates.
- 2.3 Approve the principle that parking charges should be reviewed annually, with any future changes remaining subject to the Council's applicable decision-making and statutory processes.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council considered and approved a Parking Tariff increase at Cabinet in 2024. This was not delivered due to complications with the overall strategy and approach.
- 3.2 Under the existing approval in December 2024, tariff increases for both on-street and off-street were introduced under notice in November 2025.
- 3.3 The Council had previously introduced an inflationary parking tariff increase in 2022.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

4.1 Overview

The Council operates a banded parking structure under which parking places are assigned to tariff bands according to their location, demand and intended use. Higher bands generally apply to centrally located parking places where a greater turnover of vehicles is required. Lower bands generally apply to less central parking or locations intended for longer stays.

The proposals would change hourly tariffs, the banding of certain car parks and charging arrangements on Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays. The principal tariff increases would apply to Bands 1, 2 and 3, while the Band 4 hourly tariff would reduce. A small number of individual car parks would also move between bands.

The higher parking bands predominantly apply in Shrewsbury, where a wider range of public transport and other travel options is available. However, some Band 2 and Band 3 parking is also provided in Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Oswestry and Ellesmere. The effect of the proposals therefore differs between locations and is considered further below.

Bands 1 – 4 is proposed to extend operational hours from 8am – 6pm to 8am – 8pm.

There is a tariff cap of 8 hours on Bands 4 – 6.

The proposals are intended to:

- a. improve the availability and turnover of the most centrally located parking spaces;
- b. encourage longer-stay users to use less central and lower-cost parking;
- c. support greater use of public transport, Park and Ride, walking and cycling where practical alternatives are available;
- d. provide a clearer relationship between the location, demand and tariff applying to each parking place; and
- e. support the Council's wider transport and parking objectives.

The proposals are subject to public consultation. Cabinet is being asked to approve consultation on the proposed changes and will consider the consultation responses before the final arrangements are determined.

4.2 Proposed On-Street Parking Tariffs

The following changes are proposed for on-street parking:

- a. Band 1 would increase from £3.60 to £4.80 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain 30 minutes, increasing from £1.80 to £2.40. Charging would continue to apply every day.
- b. Band 2 would increase from £2.80 to £3.80 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain 30 minutes, increasing from £1.40 to £1.90. Charging would continue to apply every day.
- c. Band 3 would increase from £1.40 to £2.00 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain one hour. Charging would continue to apply every day.
- d. Band 4 would reduce from £1.20 to £1.00 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain one hour. Charging would continue to apply every day.

For Bands 1 to 3, motorists would continue to pay for the full duration of their stay, as no maximum daily charge applies or is proposed.

4.3 Proposed Off-Street Parking Tariffs

The following changes are proposed for off-street parking:

- a. Band 2 would increase from £2.80 to £3.80 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain one hour. There would continue to be no maximum daily charge. The current half-rate tariff on Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays would be removed and the full tariff would apply.
- b. Band 3 would increase from £1.40 to £2.00 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain one hour. There would continue to be no maximum daily charge. The current half-rate tariff on Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays would be retained to support Sunday trading.
- c. Band 4 would reduce from £1.20 to £1.00 per hour. The minimum purchase would remain one hour and the existing eight-hour maximum charge would be retained. Charging would be extended to Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays, when the half-rate tariff would apply.

4.4 Proposed Changes to Individual Car Park Bandings

The following changes to the banding of individual car parks are proposed:

- a. Shirehall Overflow, Shrewsbury, would move from Band 5 to Band 6, reducing the hourly tariff from £0.70 to £0.40.
- b. St Mary's Lane, Much Wenlock, would move from Band 5 to Band 6, reducing the hourly tariff from £0.70 to £0.40.
- c. Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, would move from Band 5 to Band 4, increasing the hourly tariff from £0.70 to £1.00. This would align its tariff with Frankwell Car Park, taking account of its location and intended use.

The complete schedule of existing and proposed tariffs, charging periods and parking-place bandings is provided in Appendix 1.

4.5 Existing and Proposed Standard Hourly Tariffs

The existing and proposed standard hourly tariffs are summarised below:

Band	2018/19	2022/23	November 2025	January 2027 Proposed
Band 1	£2.40	£2.80	£3.60	£4.80
Band 2	£1.80	£2.00	£2.80	£3.80
Band 2 multi-storey car park	£1.80	£2.00	£2.40	£2.50
Band 3	£1.00	£1.20	£1.40	£2.00
Band 4	£0.70	£0.80	£1.20	£1.00

Band 5	£0.50	£0.60	£0.70	£0.70
Band 6	£0.30	£0.40	£0.40	£0.40
Band 7	Free	Free	Free	Free

The table shows the standard hourly tariff for each band. Minimum purchase periods, maximum charges, charging days and hours vary between locations. The detailed arrangements for each parking place are set out in Appendix 1.

4.6 Shrewsbury

The proposed increases in Bands 1, 2 and 3 principally affect centrally located parking in Shrewsbury. These spaces are intended to provide convenient access to the town centre and require sufficient turnover to remain available for shorter visits.

The proposals are intended to encourage longer-stay users to consider lower-cost parking or alternative forms of transport. This should help to make the most central spaces more readily available for shorter visits and support wider objectives to reduce unnecessary vehicle movements and congestion within the town centre.

Shrewsbury is served by rail, local and rural bus services, demand-responsive transport, cycling provision and Park and Ride sites at Harlescott, Meole and Oxon. These alternatives will need to remain convenient and affordable if increased town-centre parking charges are to support changes in travel behaviour.

The proposals include reducing the Band 4 tariff from £1.20 to £1.00 per hour at Frankwell and moving Abbey Foregate from Band 5 to Band 4. Shirehall Overflow would move from Band 5 to Band 6, reducing its hourly tariff from £0.70 to £0.40. These changes are intended to maintain a range of parking options at different prices and distances from the town centre.

4.7 Shrewsbury Residents Permit Parking

A residents' parking scheme is also being developed for Shrewsbury. The relationship between the proposed tariff changes, residents' parking and the potential displacement of parking into surrounding residential areas will need to be considered as the proposals are developed. Work is underway with an anticipated start date of November 2027.

4.8 Shrewsbury Park and Ride

From November 2026 the Oxon and Harlescott Park and Ride will begin evening operations. This follows on from the Night Bus Trial in Winter 2025/26.

Due to reductions in Government public transport funding, it was proposed that the Meole Park and Ride service would be suspended from November 2026. This service will now be extended utilising income from the November 2025 parking tariff changes.

As part of the tariff proposals in this report, consideration will be given to funding a Sunday Park and Ride service from Oxon and Harlescott. The estimated costs of

these new services on a five year contractual basis would represent a financial commitment of £575,000.

Recorded passenger use of the Shrewsbury Park and Ride services between June 2025 and May 2026 is shown below:

Month	Harlescott	Oxon	Meole Brace
June 2025	9,508	12,716	11,063
July 2025	10,741	14,713	13,104
August 2025	11,196	14,376	13,259
September 2025	10,716	13,342	12,401
October 2025	13,784	14,338	10,756
November 2025	13,811	14,434	11,246
December 2025	14,916	15,026	12,189
January 2026	11,725	10,992	9,267
February 2026	12,757	12,312	9,669
March 2026	14,896	14,784	10,898
April 2026	13,733	13,769	10,358
May 2026	13,389	13,650	10,524
Total	151,172	164,452	134,734

This information provides context for considering the capacity and role of Park and Ride as an alternative to town-centre parking.

4.9 Ludlow

The proposals affect Band 2 on-street parking within Ludlow's red zone and Band 3 off-street parking.

The centrally located spaces require sufficient turnover to support access to businesses and services. However, this must be balanced against Ludlow's historic character, steep inclines, demographic profile and the importance of accessible parking to residents and visitors.

Ludlow has a Band 3 town-centre car park and other parking within Bands 5 and 6. of realistic alternatives to central parking will need to be considered as part of the consultation.

Ludlow has a residents' parking scheme, with one permit available per household at a current cost of £100. The interaction between the proposed tariff changes,

residents' parking and the potential displacement of parking will need to be monitored.

Consideration should also be given to the future use of the Park and Ride site and whether changes to waiting restrictions could improve the management and availability of parking within the town. Further consideration should also be given to Festival events and associated transportation to support traffic management in the town.

4.10 Bridgnorth

The proposed Band 3 increase affects centrally located off-street parking in Bridgnorth. These parking places require sufficient turnover, but the town's historic character, steep inclines and dependence on accessible town-centre parking must also be recognised.

Bridgnorth is served by local and rural bus services, a central transport hub and the funicular railway connecting Low Town and High Town. Bus passes are accepted on the funicular railway.

Riverside will remain at Band 4 but the hourly tariff will reduce from £1.20 to £1.00.

Parking capacity can be constrained on Saturdays and during periods of flooding, when on-street spaces and car parks close to the River Severn may be unavailable. The effect of the proposed increase on town-centre access, businesses and consultation.

The Council manages parking at Sainsbury's under an agreement with the store. Any proposed tariff change at that location will need to comply with the terms of the management agreement and take account of the existing customer parking arrangements.

4.11 Oswestry

The Band 3 increase in Oswestry would affect Festival Square Car Park.

Festival Square is centrally located and requires sufficient turnover to support access to the town centre. Other town-centre parking is operated by Oswestry Town Council, and the town is served by local and rural bus services from the bus station.

The effect of the proposal will need to be considered in the context of the overall availability, ownership and pricing of parking within the town.

Oswestry also has a limited residents' parking scheme, which is currently under review.

4.12 Ellesmere

The Band 3 increase in Ellesmere would affect centrally located on-street parking associated with access to the town centre and The Mere.

The proposals are intended to support the management and turnover of these spaces. However, consideration must also be given to the distance between some

parking locations and the town centre and to the role of parking in supporting access to The Mere and local businesses.

Income generated from parking at this location contributes towards the costs associated with The Mere. This should be taken into account when considering the proposed tariff and the consultation responses.

4.13 Much Wenlock

St Mary's Lane would move from Band 5 to Band 6, reducing the hourly tariff from £0.70 to £0.40.

Back Lane will remain at Band 4 but will see a reduction in the hourly tariff from £1.20 to £1.00.

These changes would provide lower-cost parking options within the town and reflect the location and intended use of the car parks.

4.14 Overall Effect of the Proposals

The proposals should be considered as a package rather than as a uniform increase in parking charges.

The proposed increases in Bands 1, 2 and 3 are partly balanced by:

- a. the reduction in the Band 4 hourly tariff from £1.20 to £1.00;
- b. the movement of Shirehall Overflow and St Mary's Lane from Band 5 to Band 6;
- c. the retention of the half-rate Band 3 tariff on Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays; and
- d. the continued availability of lower-cost parking outside the most central locations.

The consultation will provide an opportunity to assess the likely effects on residents, businesses, visitors and town centres and to identify whether any proposals should be amended, phased or supported by additional mitigation such as the introduction of a Sunday Park and Ride service from Oxon and Harlescott.

4.15 Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken to compare Shropshire Council's parking tariff review arrangements with those of neighbouring and comparable local authorities. The review demonstrates that many authorities have either recently implemented parking charge increases or established regular review mechanisms following prolonged periods during which tariffs remained unchanged. In several cases, including Worcester, Cheshire West and Chester, Wiltshire and Devon, significant increases have been introduced to address the cumulative effects of inflation, rising operating costs and the need to maintain and invest in parking infrastructure.

The benchmarking indicates that Shropshire Council's recent parking tariff review is consistent with emerging practice across the sector. Authorities that have delayed reviewing parking charges for extended periods have generally required larger, one-

off increases to restore financial sustainability and align charges with current operational costs. Conversely, there is a growing trend towards introducing regular annual or biennial reviews, enabling smaller and more predictable adjustments that are easier for residents, businesses and visitors to accommodate. The evidence suggests that a structured review process helps ensure parking charges remain proportionate, transparent and reflective of prevailing economic conditions.

The review also highlights that parking charges are increasingly being used to support wider transport, environmental and place-making objectives rather than solely as a source of income. Across comparable authorities, parking policies are being aligned with local transport plans, demand management strategies, congestion reduction measures, town centre regeneration initiatives and investment in sustainable transport infrastructure. Regular reviews of parking tariffs therefore provide an opportunity to balance the need for financial sustainability with the effective management of parking demand, the maintenance of parking assets and the delivery of wider transport objectives. Overall, the benchmarking concludes that Shropshire's approach is in line with comparable authorities and that future regular reviews would help avoid the need for larger catch-up increases while supporting the Council's broader strategic ambitions.

A summary of the benchmarking utilising parking information from Chester, Worcester, Devon, Cumbria, Wiltshire, Somerset is provided in Appendix B.

4.16 Detailed Schedule

A complete schedule of existing and proposed parking-place bandings, tariffs, charging periods and operating arrangements is provided in Appendix A.

4.17 Consultation

Subject to Cabinet approval, the Council will consult on the proposed amendment to the consolidated traffic regulation order in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. This will include consultation with the police, freight and haulage bodies and any other organisations or public bodies considered likely to be affected, together with publication of a notice of proposals and supporting documents for public inspection. The notice will explain the proposed changes to tariffs, parking bands, charging days and hours and other relevant arrangements and will allow at least 21 days for written objections and representations. The Council will also undertake wider public and stakeholder engagement, including with residents, businesses, town and parish councils, elected members, access and equality groups and transport users. All consultation responses, statutory objections, equality impacts and other relevant considerations will be conscientiously considered before any final decision is made. The proposals may then be approved unchanged, modified or not progressed; where a modification would substantially change the proposals, those affected will be given a further opportunity to make representations before the amended order is made and implemented.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Members may choose to scale back the proposals and deliver over a longer timeframe or consider a phased approach.
- 5.2 Members may choose a phased approach to the introduction of the proposals. This will incur further cost to software upgrades and sign production.
- 5.3 Members may choose to not consider any changes to the Tariff structure.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Not meeting income targets	Deliver the recommended proposals	n/a
Criticism from MHCLG and possible reduction in the next round of funding	Deliver the recommended proposals	Inability to set a balanced budget for a given year within the MTFS
Stakeholder criticism of tariff increases and impacts on our town centre, residents, businesses, and visitors	Good comms around DfT priorities about mode shift and less reliance on motorised vehicles, mitigation to the tariff increase with viable, cost-effective transport alternatives	n/a
Economic downturn locally if the transport hierarchy is not fit to ensure access is still available at an economic level and an alternative option available without using the car	Ensure walking/cycling/bus/rail infrastructure is up to Shropshire requirements in the LTP and the Transport Programmes that sit behind it.	n/a
Pressure on essential service providers doctors, dentists, opticians, banks/building society and other services that are in town centre and no longer price accessible leading to town centre closures and out of town services	Ensure walking/cycling/bus/rail infrastructure is up to Shropshire requirements in the LTP and the Transport Programmes that sit behind it.	n/a

Migration of short and long stay parking into residential areas	Ensure Resident Permit Parking programmes are delivered alongside tariff proposals	n/a
Media and damage to council's reputation	Benchmark proposals with our neighbours and examine national trends to ensure nothing sits outside of normal council operations.	n/a
Charges being greater than receiving a PCN, for example if lower contravention ticket paid within 14 days - £25	This is a national issue facing all councils. LAs are lobbying central government on the matter.	n/a

7. Council Priorities

- 7.1 Connected Communities: The DfT has mandated that councils provide the necessary mechanisms to reduce car reliance and provide sustainable and affordable alternatives to the car. This has focused the on-going development of the Local Transport Plan on incentivising that ask along with providing the suitable infrastructure to support any mode shift. By benchmarking parking tariff pricing with our neighbours and the national position, gains can be made in providing modal shift in areas like Shrewsbury where parking is at a premium.
- 7.2 Shropshire's emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP) is intended to provide a single, cohesive framework for the development, management and maintenance of the county's transport network over the coming decade. As the statutory transport strategy for the authority, it brings together a range of supporting policies and delivery plans, including the Parking Strategy, Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), Road Safety and Speed Management Strategy, Active Travel Strategy and Network Management policies. The aim is to ensure that investment decisions, operational activities and future transport interventions work together to support economic growth, improve accessibility, reduce congestion, enhance road safety and contribute to the Council's environmental objectives.
- 7.3 A key component of the LTP is the development of an integrated parking strategy. Parking management is increasingly recognised as a transport planning tool rather than simply a revenue-generating service. The emerging strategy seeks to encourage sustainable travel choices, manage demand in town centres, support modal shift and reduce congestion, particularly within sensitive locations such as Shrewsbury's river loop. Parking policy must align with wider transport objectives, including supporting Park and Ride services, encouraging greater use of public transport and ensuring that any surplus parking income is reinvested into transport and environmental improvements. Effective parking management will be essential if the Council is to successfully deliver wider network management measures and reduce unnecessary vehicle movements within historic town centres.

- 7.4 Public transport forms another fundamental pillar of the emerging LTP. Through the Bus Service Improvement Plan and associated delivery programmes, the Council is seeking to improve service reliability, accessibility and passenger experience whilst maintaining connectivity for communities across the county. Given Shropshire's predominantly rural nature, commercially viable services alone cannot provide the level of connectivity required by residents. Consequently, the Council continues to financially support a significant number of bus services and community transport initiatives to ensure that rural communities retain access to employment, education, healthcare and essential services. Emerging proposals also include improvements to passenger facilities, enhanced Park and Ride frequencies and continued support for community transport providers, helping to create a more inclusive and resilient transport network.
- 7.5 The LTP also places a strong emphasis on road safety and speed management. Alongside targeted engineering measures, the Council is developing a strategic review of speed management across Shropshire to ensure that speed limits and associated interventions reflect the character and function of individual roads and communities. This work will be supported by improved data collection, emerging technology and partnership working with West Mercia Police. The objective is to create a safer network for all users, particularly vulnerable road users, while ensuring that road safety interventions are evidence-led and consistent across the county.
- 7.6 Within Shrewsbury specifically, the Park and Ride network at Meole Brace, Harlescott and Oxon is expected to play an increasingly important role in delivering transport objectives. These sites provide strategic opportunities to intercept traffic before it reaches the town centre and support a transition towards more sustainable travel. Current proposals seek to enhance the Park and Ride offer, improve facilities and increase its attractiveness as an alternative to town centre parking. The emerging transport strategy recognises that successful management of traffic volumes within Shrewsbury will require convenient alternatives for visitors and commuters, with Park and Ride forming a critical part of that solution.
- 7.7 Looking ahead, the Council is also preparing for the introduction of Moving Traffic Offence (MTO) enforcement powers. These powers would enable the use of camera and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to enforce restrictions such as banned turns, pedestrian zone controls, bus gates and other illegal traffic manoeuvres. Such powers have the potential to provide a more effective and proportionate means of managing the highway network, improving compliance, reducing unnecessary traffic and supporting wider town centre movement strategies. The use of technology-led enforcement will complement physical highway measures and help ensure that future transport interventions operate as intended. This approach aligns closely with the Council's wider ambitions around smarter network management and demand management. Pay on exit at council car parks may also be a future consideration and whilst current legislation prevents the use of ANPR enforcement on car parks by councils, cameras can be utilised to support the transactional process. The council will take pay on exit under review.
- 7.8 Together, these elements demonstrate why the Local Transport Plan must be viewed as a single, integrated strategy rather than a collection of individual projects. Parking policy, bus service support, Park and Ride operations, speed management, moving

traffic enforcement and the Shrewsbury Moves programme are all interdependent. Success in reducing congestion, supporting economic growth, improving accessibility and achieving environmental objectives will rely upon coordinated delivery across all of these workstreams, underpinned by a clear long-term transport vision for Shropshire.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The total estimated funding requirements to implement the full package of tariff increases as detailed in the report for changes to tariffs and days and hours of operation is as follows;

Area of Work	Estimated Value
TRO Consultation and Revisions	£10000
New Software (P&D/Pay on Foot/Cashless)	£10000
Installation of Software	£10000
Signage and Installation	£25000

- 8.2 The implementation of these if agreed at Cabinet will be dependent on the outcome of public consultation. The project will be phased to enable delivery, and the programme will be created starting with the largest market town and those with on and off-street parking being in the earlier phases of the delivery.
- 8.3 It needs to be recognised that implementation of schemes of this nature take time and resource of officers. Additional support may be required to support delivery in a timely manner.
- 8.4 Increases in parking charges will bring about change in habits and or parking location.
- 8.5 To try and provide an estimate of any potential increase in revenue the additional annual income that could be generated with evening charges based upon occupancy of the parking assets, and it is as follows;

Versions	New Evenings & Sunday/Bank Holiday/Public Holiday Charges	Proposed Additional Revenue Tariff Changes based on <u>existing*</u> Transactions	Based on proposals - Total estimated additional Income	Comments
October Cabinet V3	£1,600,000	£2,000,000	£3,600,000	Increases in Bands 1,2 and 3 hourly rates and reduction in Band 4 rate. *The large increases in Bands 1 and 2 is likely to see a shift and if park and ride is used and fewer visits this could decrease this

				value by quite a margin (Note increase on Band 3 affecting 4 market towns – One car park leased, and one with a management agreement out of 6 car parks in total
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- 8.6 To try and estimate the proposed tariff increases and the potential increase in annual revenue that could be generated with an increase in tariffs on the current charging days and hours based on current transactions and parking locations this could generate circa £1,800,000.
- 8.7 Please note that estimation of income is dependent on many other factors and significant changes in habits, places of interest or availability of services may impact on number and location of parking stays.
- 8.8 Consideration of subsidised Park and Ride services on Sundays to offset Tariff increases. Two bus contracts on a five-year award is a financial commitment of £575,000.
- 8.9 There are Infrastructure service requirements to support this change, examples include: the Requirement for a Parking Services Manager (£70K/year), Parking Asset maintenance (£500,000/year), Meole Brace Park and Ride Bus Contract support (£500,000/Year) and Legal support (£200,000/Year).

9. Legal and HR implications

- 9.1 As set out above, the Council has powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to provide and regulate on-street and off-street parking and to levy charges. The proposed changes will require amendment of the Council's consolidated traffic regulation order and compliance with the relevant statutory consultation and notice procedures. Consultation responses, equality impacts and all other relevant considerations must be taken into account before any final decision is made and implemented.
- 9.2 There is no requirement to consult the Trade Union as there are no operational changes to officer terms and conditions as a result of this report.

10. Electoral Division Implications

The proposals impact on any Shropshire Ward that features a Band 1 – 4 car park. The Strategic Transport Service has already provided briefings for Members and will continue to work with Members on this matter.

11. Health, Social (including “Child Friendly Shropshire”) and Economic Implications

The parking strategy for Shropshire is under review. However, it is in line with the objectives in the Local Transport Plan in which the DfT set out High level priorities. One of which is: 'Create healthier communities – making healthy travel choices will be easy and convenient, supported by a transport network that delivers cleaner, quieter and more liveable places.' Programmes will underpin this priority. This Tariff structure will encourage gentle mode shift, and the Transport programmes will support that shift with the inclusion of further walking and cycling infrastructure along with support for bus infrastructure. Working with Public Health on supporting the Cardio-Vascular and non-movement agenda in Shropshire will be part of the Local Transport Plan development.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 Disability and Age (Mobility Needs):

- People with impaired mobility or chronic health conditions often rely on private vehicles because alternative public transport is physically inaccessible or poorly connected. The programmes that sit under the Shropshire Local Transport Plan must recognise this issue. An early stakeholder session with local access groups and the LTP has further highlighted the need to address this with improved accessible infrastructure.
- While Blue Badge holders typically retain exemptions or dedicated free bays on-street, disabled residents without a Blue Badge or those relying on visitor/carer permits face compounding costs therefore as above, infrastructure needs to align with this issue. A review of disabled parking provision for Shropshire should be considered following any network changes as a direct result of the contents of this report.
- Consideration will be given to how any surplus can be utilised to support public transport services, so those not eligible for a Blue Badge have additional options.

12.2 Socio-Economic Disadvantage:

- Fixed or rising parking fees take a larger percentage of disposable income from lower-income households, part-time workers, and younger or older people outside full-time employment. Consideration to concessionary fares or other mitigation can be considered to combat this inequality.
- Increased on-street or municipal parking costs can restrict low-income individuals from accessing essential high street amenities, healthcare appointments etc.
- Consideration has been given in the proposals in this report to protect lower cost parking options and to extending the operation of Park and Ride services into the evenings, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

12.3 Digital Exclusion (Payment Methods):

Transitioning exclusively to app-based parking payments (such as RingGo) or cashless meters disadvantages older demographics, low-income individuals without modern smartphones or data plans, and those with restricted digital literacy. Coin payment will be retained at existing locations.

- 12.4 If granted approval to consult and following the consultation, an Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) Stage 1 screening is required to understand the impact on all Protected Characteristics as a result of any proposals in this report.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

The Tariff changes will provide support for those residents who want to use their car less and use other modes of transport, especially for short journeys. Mode shift is an important part of the emerging Local Plan, along with the draft Local Transport Plan and the Shrewsbury Movement and Public Space Strategy.

14. Background Papers

Parking Tariff Consultation Cabinet report and Appendix – 4 December 2024

[Report
Appendix 1 - ESHIA draft - 061124.pdf](#)

15. Appendices

Appendix A
Parking Tariff Bands, locations and times with existing and proposed Tariffs.

Appendix B
Benchmarking with neighbouring authorities.

Town	Name	Current Band	Current Charging Hours	Current Chargeable Days	Current Charge per hour Mon - Sat	Current Charge per hour Sun/BH/PH	Current Charging Cap	Min Vend	Proposed Band	Proposed Charging Hours	Proposed Chargeable Days	Proposed Charge per hour Mon to Sat	Proposed Charge per hour Sun/BH/PH	Proposed Charging Cap	Proposed Min Vend	Changes YES or NO
Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury On Street	BAND 1	8am - 6pm	everyday	£3.60	£3.60	NO	30 mins	BAND 1	8am - 8pm	everyday	£4.80	£4.80	NO	30 mins	YES
Ludlow	Ludlow On Street (Red)	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	everyday	£2.80	£2.80	NO	1 hr	BAND 2	8am - 8pm	everyday	£3.80	£3.80	NO	30 mins	YES
Shrewsbury	Bridge Street	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	everyday	£2.80	£1.40	NO	1 hr	BAND 2	8am - 8pm	everyday	£3.80	£3.80	NO	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	St Austins Street	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	everyday	£2.80	£1.40	NO	1 hr	BAND 2	8am - 8pm	everyday	£3.80	£3.80	NO	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	Quarry Fitness Centre	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	everyday	£2.80	£1.40	NO	1 hr	BAND 2	8am - 8pm	everyday	£3.80	£3.80	NO	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	The Gap	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	everyday	£2.80	£1.40	NO	1 hr	BAND 2	8am - 8pm	everyday	£3.80	£3.80	NO	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	Ravens Meadow **	BAND 2	24 hours	everyday	£2.40	£2.40 FIXED FEE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 2	24 hours	everyday	£2.50	£2.50 FIXED FEE	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	St Julians Friars	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.40	£0.70	NO	1 hr	BAND 3	8am - 8pm	everyday	£2.00	£1.00	NO	1 hr	YES
Ludlow	Castle Street	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.40	£0.70	NO	1 hr	BAND 3	8am - 8pm	everyday	£2.00	£1.00	NO	1 hr	YES
Bridgnorth	Sainsburys	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.40	£0.70	NO	1 hr	BAND 3	8am - 8pm	everyday	£2.00	£1.00	NO	1 hr	YES
Bridgnorth	Listley Street N & S	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.40	£0.70	NO	1 hr	BAND 3	8am - 8pm	everyday	£2.00	£1.00	NO	1 hr	YES
Oswestry	Festival Square	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.40	£0.70	NO	1 hr	BAND 3	8am - 8pm	everyday	£2.00	£1.00	NO	1 hr	YES

Ellesmere	Mereside On Street	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.40	£1.40	NO	1 hr	BAND 3	8am - 8pm	everyday	£2.00	£2.00	NO	1 hr	YES
Ludlow	Ludlow On Street (Blue)	BAND 4	8am - 6pm	everyday	£1.20	£1.20	NO	1 hr	BAND 4	8am - 8pm	everyday	£1.00	£1.00	NO	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	Frankwell Car Parks*	BAND 4	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£1.20	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 4	8am - 8pm	everyday	£1.00	£0.50	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES
Bridgnorth	Riverside	BAND 4	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£1.20	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 4	8am - 8pm	everyday	£1.00	£0.50	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES
Much Wenlock	Back Lane	BAND 4	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£1.20	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 4	8am - 8pm	everyday	£1.00	£0.50	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	Abbey Foregate	BAND 5	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£0.70	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 4	8am - 8pm	everyday	£1.00	£0.50	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES
Shrewsbury	Shirehall Overflow	BAND 5	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£0.70	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 6	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£0.40	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES
Much Wenlock	St Marys Lane	BAND 5	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£0.70	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	BAND 6	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	£0.40	FREE	8 HOUR	1 hr	YES

Permits

Tariff type	Band	Current Hours of charging	Proposed Hours of charging	Current Chargeable days	Proposed Chargeable days	Current Cap?	Proposed Cap	Current Hourly Rate*	Proposed Hourly Rate*	Season Ticket 12 mth	Season Ticket 6 mth	Season Ticket 3 mth	Season Ticket 1 mth	Resident Permit 12 mth	Current Weekly Ticket	Flat Rate 8*200
ON STREET	BAND 1	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	everyday	everyday	No	No	£3.60	£4.80	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	N/A
ON STREET	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	everyday	everyday	No	No	£2.80	£3.80	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	N/A
OFF STREET	BAND 2	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	everyday	everyday	No	No	£2.80	£3.80	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	N/A
MSCP	BAND 2	24hrs	24hrs	everyday	everyday	Yes	Yes	£2.40	£2.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	N/A
ON STREET	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	everyday	everyday	No	No	£1.40	£2.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	N/A
OFF STREET	BAND 3	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	everyday	everyday	No	No	£1.40	£2.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	£640.00	£0	£3,200.00
ON STREET	BAND 4	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	everyday	everyday	No	No	£1.20	£1.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0	N/A
OFF STREET	BAND 4	8am - 6pm	8am - 8pm	Mon - Sat	everyday	Yes	Yes	£1.20	£1.00	£800.00	£500.00	£300.00	£117	£640.00	£40	£1,600.00
OFF STREET	BAND 5	8am - 6pm	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	Mon - Sat	Yes	Yes	£0.70	£0.70	£560.00	£350.00	£210.00	£82	£448.00	£24	£1,120.00
OFF STREET	BAND 6	8am - 6pm	8am - 6pm	Mon - Sat	Mon - Sat	Yes	Yes	£0.40	£0.40	£320.00	£200.00	£120.00	£47	£256.00	£13	£640.00
OFF STREET	BAND 7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Notes

Band 3 - Resident Permit Holders only at St Julian's Friar's Car Park as lack of RPZ and demand for permits this side of town, based on the Band 4 rates

No Resident, Season or Weekly on Bands 1 to 3 except St Julian's which is based on B4 for reasons above

Where states charging hours, this is Mon to Sat and excludes bank and public holidays except for Bands 3 and 4 see below and on street which is charged at full rate everyday

Note* Band 3 off street proposed to be half the Mon to Sat rate on Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays.

Note* Band 4 off street proposed to be half the Mon to Sat rate on Sundays and Bank and Public Holidays. Weekly ticket reflected still to be based on 6 days use out of 7 days at 8 hours

Parking Tariff Benchmarking: Frequency and Scale of Increases

Comparison table for Shropshire and neighbouring / comparable UK local authorities

Authority	Recent tariff increases identified	Frequency of review / increase	Typical fee or % increase	Relevant rationale / contextual points
Shropshire Council	Parking charges remained unchanged for several years before major review / increases identified for 2024/25 and further proposed rates noted in Shropshire parking review material.	Historically around 3-5 years between substantive reviews; recommendation is to move to a more regular review mechanism.	Examples: Shrewsbury on-street Band 1 from £2.80 to £3.60 per hour (+28.6%); Band 2 from £2.00 to £2.80 per hour (+40%). Later proposed schedule shows Band 1 £3.60, Band 2 £2.80, Band 3 £1.40, Band 4 £1.20 and lower bands £0.70 / £0.40.	Rationale includes asset maintenance, parking infrastructure investment, Park & Ride support, demand management, Local Transport Plan objectives, congestion reduction and air quality benefits.
Worcester City Council	First significant increase approved in 2023/24 following no tariff changes since 2009. Further annual review undertaken for 2026/27 including a proposed 5% uplift across Council-owned car parks and introduction of charges at Diglis Playing Fields and Waterworks Road car parks (subject to consultation).	Historically no increase for approximately 14 years before 2023. Since then, parking tariffs have been reviewed through the annual budget and fees and charges process.	2023/24 examples: Red Zone 2-hour stay increased from £2.40 to £3.00 (+25%); Amber Zone 2-hour stay increased from £1.80 to £2.00 (+11%). 2026/27 proposal: 5% increase in off-street parking charges	Rationale includes addressing inflationary pressures, maintaining parking assets, supporting core council services, ensuring financial sustainability, and aligning tariffs more closely with comparable authorities after a 14-year tariff freeze. The Council noted parking income is a significant funding source for waste, recycling, street cleansing and housing services.
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Tariff changes implemented for Council run car parks from January 2024 following many years without inflation-linked increases. A second phase increase was implemented from 30 January 2025 affecting car parks in Ellesmere Port, Frodsham and Northwich.	Phased annual review approach. The Council implemented Phase 1 in 2024 and Phase 2 in 2025 after a prolonged period of 10years during which charges had not kept pace with inflation.	2024 examples: Northwich 2-hour tariff increased from £0.20 to £0.50 (+150%); longer-stay tariffs increased from £3 to £3.30 2025 examples: Most tariffs across Ellesmere Port, Frodsham and Northwich increased by £0.20.	The Council cited significant investment in parking facilities, new payment machines and payment options, the need to address inflation after charges had not increased for many years (in some cases over 10 years), and support for the borough's 15-year Parking Strategy. The Council also highlighted the need to ensure parking remains financially sustainable while supporting local economic activity.
Westmorland & Furness Council (Cumbria)	Comprehensive Parking Services Review commenced in September 2024 forming the evidence base for the Council's Parking Strategy 2025.	Strategic review-led approach following local government reorganisation following local government reorganisation in 2023.	The published strategy and review documents do not currently specify tariff increases.	Reviews include improving consistency across former councils, reviewing parking fees and charges, improving permit arrangements, supporting town centres, supporting sustainable transport objectives and aligning parking operations with wider transport policy.
Wiltshire Council	Comprehensive parking charges review was approved alongside the Parking Plan 2026-2030 in January 2026. Following consultation, revised parking charges were implemented in September 2026.	Biennial review cycle. Parking charges remained unchanged from 2022 until the 2026 review. The Council's Parking Plan 2026–2030 introduced regular two-yearly tariff reviews, with increases implemented in 2026 and a further review planned for 2028	Parking charges increased by an average of 20% from September 2026. The Council noted that inflation had increased by approximately 28% since the previous tariff increase in 2022. Consultation documents also referenced a further 5% increase planned for 2028.	The review was driven by inflationary pressures, the need for a financially sustainable and self-financing parking service, support for transport infrastructure and rural bus services, and alignment with the Local Transport Plan

Authority	Recent tariff increases identified	Frequency of review / increase	Typical fee or % increase	Relevant rationale / contextual points
Devon County Council	On-street parking charges were reviewed and increased in 2025, following the previous review in September 2022.	The Council reviews on-street parking tariffs periodically rather than annually, typically every 2-3 years,	Location-specific tariff changes rather than a standard county-wide increase. Recent examples include increases of up to 50%, with Ilfracombe tariffs increasing from £2.00 to £3.00 for a 2-hour stay (+50%) and some Exeter tariffs increasing by up to 49%.	Tariffs are reviewed to manage parking demand, reduce congestion by encouraging drivers to use car parks over on-street parking bays
Somerset Council	Undertook a county-wide parking harmonisation review in 2025, followed by the Somerset Parking Review and Charging Principles Framework in 2026.	Strategic county-wide review approach following local government reorganisation, with major parking reviews undertaken in 2025 and 2026	No single authority-wide percentage uplift identified. Somerset uses a five-tier pricing framework with tariffs varying by location, demand and car park role	The review focuses on fairness and consistency across Somerset, supporting local economies, managing parking demand, encouraging sustainable travel, improving customer clarity, supporting transport strategies and ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

Why Local Authorities should regularly review parking charges

Maintaining Financial Sustainability

Parking infrastructure requires ongoing investment in resurfacing, lighting, signage, payment systems, enforcement technology and general maintenance. If charges are not reviewed regularly, revenue fails to keep pace with rising costs.

Avoiding Large Future Increases

Small annual or biennial increases are generally easier for residents, businesses and visitors to understand and absorb than large step changes after many years of tariff freezes.

Supporting Effective Traffic Management

Parking charges are not simply a revenue mechanism. They are a recognised traffic management tool that can:

- Encourage turnover of prime parking spaces.
- Manage demand in busy centres.
- Reduce congestion.
- Support sustainable travel choices.
- Funding Wider Transport Improvements

Surplus parking income can be reinvested into transport initiatives including parking improvements, public realm, Park & Ride services and wider transport infrastructure.

Supporting Town Centre Vitality

Appropriately structured tariffs can improve parking availability and turnover, making it easier for shoppers and visitors to access town centres.

Risks of Not Reviewing Parking Charges

Authorities that delay reviews typically face a number of challenges:

- Page 127
- Growing Maintenance Backlogs
 - Without sufficient revenue, councils may struggle to maintain car parks, equipment, lighting, surfacing and signage to the desired standard.
 - Reduced Ability to Invest
 - Investment in new payment technology, EV infrastructure, security improvements and Park & Ride enhancements becomes increasingly difficult.
 - Tariffs Fall Behind the Market
 - When neighboring authorities undertake regular reviews whilst one authority does not, tariff structures become increasingly misaligned and can undermine demand management objectives.
 - Requirement for Large Catch-Up Increases
 - Long periods without review often lead to politically difficult increases of 20-40% or more when action finally becomes unavoidable.
 - Pressure on General Council Budgets
 - Where parking income no longer covers operating and maintenance costs, increasing pressure can be placed on wider council finances.

Conclusion

Benchmarking indicates that regular annual or biennial tariff reviews are increasingly common. Authorities that have frozen tariffs for several years often need larger catch-up increases, commonly exceeding standard inflationary uplifts. Shropshire’s movement towards updated tariffs is therefore consistent with regional and comparable authority practice, provided future reviews are made regular, transparent and linked to asset condition, demand management and wider transport objectives.

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Committee

Cabinet

Date and Time

14 October 2026
10.30 am
Public

Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan - Area Designation

Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Walker	
Lead Director:	Kassandra Polyzoides – Interim Service Director for Place Shaping	
Service Area:	Place Shaping	
Report Author	Rosie Corner – Policy & Neighbourhood Planning Officer	
Officer contact details	01743 256 422 Rosie.Corner@shropshire.gov.uk	
Electoral Divisions Affected	N/A	
Key Decision?	Not Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	Yes – 10 September 2026	
Report considered by	Cabinet – 14 October 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the application by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council for the Parish area of Albrighton and Donington to be considered as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.2 It is Shropshire Council's role to decide if the proposed Neighbourhood Area, in this case, the area covered by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council, is an appropriate area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (referred to in this report as the 'Neighbourhood Plan'). The recommendation focuses solely on the extent of the area to be used in the preparation of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. This recommendation does not deal with the proposed content of the Neighbourhood Plan, which are issues to be considered by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council in

cooperation with Shropshire Council in due course. The application and the proposed area map are attached as Appendix A. It is considered the identification of the Albrighton and Donington Parish area as a Neighbourhood Area responds positively to the Shropshire Plan's objectives, in particular meeting the ambition improve the health of Shropshire's economy and environment.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 agree the designation of the proposed Neighbourhood Area identified on the map in Appendix A, covering the Parish of Albrighton and Donington as an appropriate basis for the development of a Neighbourhood Development Plan and notifies Albrighton and Donington Pariah Council accordingly.

3. Background

- 3.1 Shropshire Council fully supports the principle of areas seeking to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans to supplement and complement the wider policies of the Development Plan. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the principle of Neighbourhood Plans and their status as part of the Development Plan. The NPPF states "Neighbourhood plans allow local communities to plan positively for their areas by identifying and addressing community priorities that can be met or supported through the planning system." It is also made clear that Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.
- 3.2 The development of a Neighbourhood Plan must be facilitated by the Town or Parish Council and will, in most cases, proceed with support and assistance from volunteers across the community. It is recommended that Albrighton and Donington Parish Council begin early consultation with their communities, including on how to finance the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan, including any supporting evidence which will be required.
- 3.3 In due course and as part of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process, Shropshire Council will consider whether the Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan conforms to the adopted strategic policies of the wider Development Plan as part of ongoing cooperation between the Councils and as part of formal consultation responses. Ultimately, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to an independent assessment and will need to meet a number of mandatory 'basic conditions' set out in legislation. If the independent assessment agrees the plan is suitable, a neighbourhood planning referendum would then be required.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 Shropshire Council officers have had early discussions with representatives from Albrighton and Donington Parish Council, specifically to discuss the extent of the proposal and to further understand the rationale for the area proposed.
- 4.2 Having had these early discussions, it is considered the proposed area, which accords with the parish boundary, is appropriate for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan can therefore offer

the opportunity to deliver some additional value through the preparation of locally relevant planning policies to support the delivery of appropriate development, whilst continuing to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

- 4.3 Albrighton and Donington Parish Council must seek to ensure the future sustainable development of the settlement by providing detailed planning policies for their area. Whilst the exact scope and remit of the Neighbourhood Plan is to be discussed, at this stage it is clear there is an understanding from the Parish Council as to the general role of the Neighbourhood Plan and the type of policies it is likely to introduce. Further discussions will help to clarify this. In addition, it should be recognised that in line with national regulations on Community Infrastructure levy (CIL), areas with adopted ('made') Neighbourhood Plans in place, receive 25% CIL Neighbourhood Funds (uncapped) from CIL liable development in its area after the Plan's adoption, compared with 15% (capped) in non-Neighbourhood Plan areas.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 At this stage Cabinet may refuse to designate this Neighbourhood Plan area, in which case Albrighton and Donington Parish Council would not be able to progress their Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2 In the case that Cabinet wished to change the proposed neighbourhood area, Albrighton and Donington Parish Council, if in agreement, would have to resubmit their request for designation and Shropshire Council would be required to run a Regulation 6 consultation for 6 weeks, inviting representations on the proposed neighbourhood area.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

- 6.1 The power to designate a Neighbourhood Area is exercisable under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the Act"). Under Regulation 5(1) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 an Area Application must include a map that identifies the area to which the application relates and a statement to explain why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area and that the body is in fact a "relevant body" for the purposes of Section 61 G(2) of the Act. Albrighton and Donington Parish Council is a relevant body for the purposes of the Act.
- 6.2 The relevant material (the application from Albrighton and Donington Parish Council for the designation of the proposed Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan area and the map of the proposed Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan area, included as Appendix A to this report) was submitted by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council and received by Shropshire Council on 11 August 2026. As stated under Regulation 5A (1b) and 5A (3) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, it is not required that the area application be publicised or undergo public consultation where the area for designation relates to the full parish area i.e. regulations 6 and 6A do not apply.

- 6.3 In determining the application Shropshire Council must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the parish area as a Neighbourhood Area and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas. In the event the designation is approved, the name of the neighbourhood area, identifying map and name of relevant body who applied for designation will be published on the Council's website in accordance with Regulation 7 (1) to bring the designation to the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the neighbourhood area. If the designation is refused under Section 61G (9) of the Act, reasons must be given and the decision publicised in accordance with Regulation 7 (2) of the Regulations. It is considered there is significant risk to the Council of not agreeing to the Albrighton and Donington Parish Area as a Neighbourhood Area without sound rationale.
- 6.4 The designation of an appropriate area for a Neighbourhood Plan is to confirm the geographic area the Plan will cover. This does not set policies to be contained in the Neighbourhood Plan, or the thematic scope of that Plan. Indeed, and importantly, the designation of a Neighbourhood Area does not commit the Parish or Town Council to producing or completing a Neighbourhood Plan. It is, however, a first important step in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan as required by regulations.
- 6.5 When approved, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the statutory development plan for the area. The statutory framework covering the production of neighbourhood plans is therefore quite prescriptive and there is little risk for either Shropshire Council or Albrighton and Donington Council in following this carefully. However, it is important that a high degree of trust and cooperation between the Councils is maintained in order to reduce any risk of inconsistency and conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and those other parts of the Development Plan prepared by Shropshire Council.
- 6.6 Shropshire's statutory Development Plan will be an important and ongoing consideration in the context of any Neighbourhood Plan prepared for the Albrighton and Donington Parish Council area. At present the Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plans (2006-2026) represent the Countywide adopted Development Plan. In response to the Inspectors' soundness concerns, the Draft Local Plan Review (2016-2036) was withdrawn from examination, a decision approved by Full Council on 17th July 2025. Shropshire Council have now been required to set out a timeframe for a further Local Plan review, with work commencing in September 2026 on a 30-month timetable, with adoption scheduled in March 2029. The timeframe of the future Local Plan is likely to be 2026 to 2046.
- 6.7 A Neighbourhood Plan will, after passing through the relevant stages of consultation, submission, examination and the referendum, go on to become part of the statutory Development Plan for the area. By definition, the Neighbourhood Plan should be a product of the community and as such will contain policies that, whilst in general conformity with other elements of the Development Plan, should have their own distinct character. The degree of scrutiny to be applied to a Neighbourhood Plan through its examination process is dependent upon the scope of the plan, and it will continue to be particularly important for appropriate evidence to be produced to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. Statute provides that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of relevant Development Plan policies

unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The weight given to the Plan thus remains to be balanced with other considerations when taken in the round by decision makers.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Risk of non compliance with Regulations 5, 6 and 7 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.	Complying with the regulations by: 1) including with the Area Application a map that identifies the area to which the application relates and a statement to explain why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area and that the body is in fact a “relevant body” for the purposes of Section 61 G(2) of the Act, and; 2) not carrying out a public consultation as this is not required as the area for designation relates to the full parish area; and having regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the parish area as a Neighbourhood Area and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.	None
Risk of inconsistency and conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and those other parts of the Development Plan prepared by Shropshire Council.	Maintain a high degree of trust and cooperation between the Councils.	None

7. Council Priorities

7.1 The continued creation of new Neighbourhood Plans for Shropshire contributes to the following priorities from Shropshire Council's Corporate Plan 2026-2030:

- communities are connected by well-maintained roads, accessible transport and infrastructure;
- people live in safe, inclusive places with homes that meet their needs;
- everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and thrive at every stage of life;
- an environment that harnesses our natural assets and supports wellbeing; and

- a thriving economy that benefits everyone.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Shropshire Council continues to manage unprecedented financial demands and a financial emergency was declared by Cabinet on 10 September 2025. The overall financial position of the Council is set out in the monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. Significant management action has been instigated at all levels of the Council reducing spend to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all reports to Members provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers and/or Portfolio Holders review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. All non-essential spend will be stopped and all essential spend challenged. These actions may involve (this is not exhaustive):

- scaling down initiatives,
- changing the scope of activities
- delaying implementation of agreed plans, or
- extending delivery timescales

8.2 Schedule 10, paras 3(1) and 7(3) of the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 read in their entirety provide that the following costs would fall to Shropshire Council: delivering a supporting role particularly in the latter stages of the Plan's development, appointing an Examiner for the Plan, conducting an Examination and holding a Referendum. Current provisions allow an application for these additional costs to be met, and a reimbursement of costs will therefore be sought from Central Government. It is considered likely the robustness of the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be tested over time by independent Planning Inspectors on planning appeals made under Section 78 of the Act. Members are advised that the liability for future appeal costs rests with Shropshire Council as Local Planning Authority and as such the usability of such plans and their impact on local decision making will need to be carefully monitored.

9. Legal and HR implications

9.1 The designation of a Neighbourhood Area is governed by section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Albrighton and Donington Parish Council is a qualifying body for the purposes of making an area application. As the proposed Neighbourhood Area corresponds to the full parish boundary, there is no requirement for the Council to undertake a public consultation on the area designation proposal.

9.2 In determining the application, the Council must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole parish area as a Neighbourhood Area and maintaining existing neighbourhood area boundaries. If approved, the designation must be publicised in accordance with the Regulations.

9.3 This decision relates solely to the designation of the Neighbourhood Area and does not approve or endorse the content of any future Neighbourhood Development Plan. Any subsequent Neighbourhood Plan would be required to satisfy the statutory basic conditions, undergo independent examination and, if successful, proceed to a local referendum before it can be made and form part of the statutory development plan.

10. Electoral Division Implications

10.1 Adopting a neighbourhood plan requires a local referendum. The voting area for this referendum uses the designated neighbourhood boundary, and polls are run by Shropshire Council's Democratic Services team using standard local government voting registers.

10.2 If a separate community governance review alters a parish or ward boundary, an existing neighbourhood plan area might need to be formally re-designated by the local planning authority to realign with the new administrative footprint.

11. Health, Social (including “Child Friendly Shropshire”) and Economic Implications

11.1 The designation of the Albrighton and Donington neighbourhood area allows the important first step in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Albrighton and Donington. Whilst at this stage the contents of the Plan are not known and will be subject to the objectives led by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council in consultation with their communities, there is the potential for the policies and any site allocations therein to have health, social and economic implications. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) whose purpose is to identify and mitigate any negative implications.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 At this stage the content of a Neighbourhood Plan for Albrighton and Donington is not known however there is very limited scope for these policies to have equality and diversity implications.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1 At this stage the content of a Neighbourhood Plan for Albrighton and Donington is not known however there is an opportunity to explore additional development management policies for the local area which could respond to the ongoing need to reduce energy and fuel consumption, generate renewable energy, offset and mitigate carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Any new development management policies would need to demonstrate they are deliverable and ensure development remains viable.

13.2 The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment whose purpose is to identify and mitigate any negative implications for biodiversity and the environment.

14. Background Papers

14.1 None.

15. Appendices

APPENDIX A - Application from Albrighton and Donington Parish Council for the designation of the proposed Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan area including a map of proposed Neighbourhood Plan area



Application to designate a Neighbourhood Area
Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulation 2012 Part 2 (5) (1)

Clerk details

Name: Jo Cox

Address: Library Building, Station Road, Albrighton, WV7 3QH

Email: admin@AlbrightonDonington-pc.gov.uk

Tel no.: 01902 375455

Relevant body:

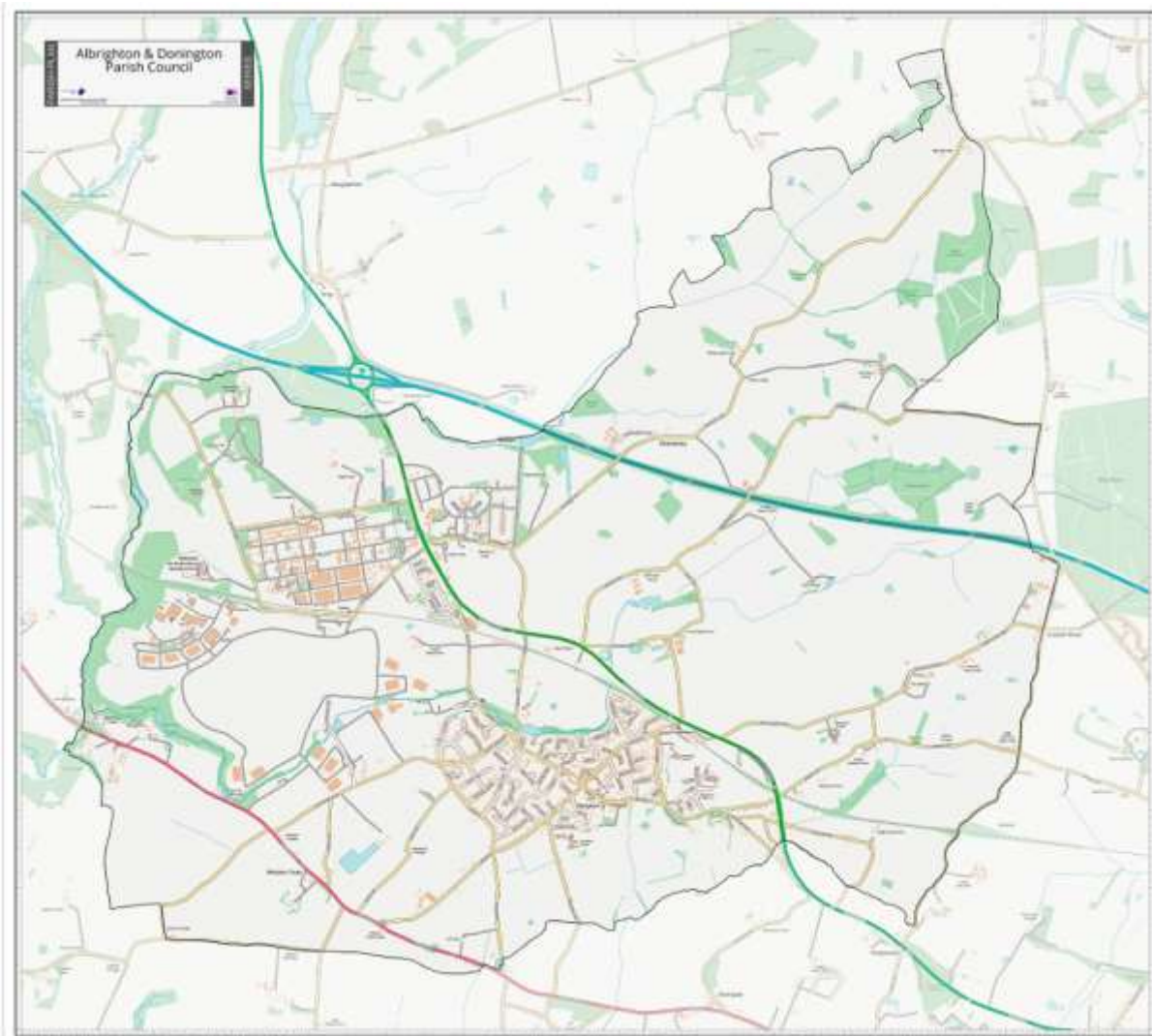
We confirm that we are the relevant body to undertake a neighbourhood plan in our area in accordance with section 61G of the 1990 Act and section 5C of the 2012 Regulations. Albrighton and Donington Parish Council resolved to develop a plan for the neighborhood area at a Parish council meeting on June 18th 2026.

Name of Council

Albrighton and Donington Parish Council

Extent of the area:

Whole Parish boundary area – please see map below.



Justification statement:

The Parish's boundary changed on 1/4/25 when the previous Parishes of Albrighton and Donington (with Boscobel) were combined. The new Parish boundary contains the conurbation of Albrighton, considered a Key Centre within Shropshire Council's planning hierarchy, which serves some small adjacent rural hamlets and isolated groups of dwellings and businesses. RAF Cosford is also contained within the Parish providing employment opportunity and custom for retailers and business in the Parish.

This proposed Neighbourhood Area differs slightly from that covered by the Albrighton Neighbourhood Plan Light (2013), as it reflects the current administrative boundary of the Parish Council and no longer includes the area within Boningale Parish.

Request for information:

We would be grateful if you could advise us of any procedural requirements, documentation, or next steps that the Planning Team within Shropshire Council expects at this stage, including arrangements for the designation of the Neighbourhood Area. The Parish Council would also welcome advice on the availability of existing GIS mapping, evidence studies and other information held by Shropshire Council that may assist in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Parish Council looks forward to working collaboratively with Shropshire Council to ensure that the Neighbourhood Development Plan is prepared in parallel with, and has regard to, the emerging Shropshire Local Plan.

Name: Joanne Cox

Position: Clerk/RFO to Albrighton and Donington Parish Council

Signature: *Joanne Cox*

Date: 11.08.2026

Via email to: planning.policy@shropshire.gov.uk

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Committee

Cabinet

Date and Time

14 October 2026
10.30 am

Public

DWP Skills Bootcamps

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Wagner – Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Economic Growth	
Lead Director:	Kassandra Polyzoides – Interim Service Director for Place Shaping	
Service Area:	Place Shaping	
Report Author	Amy Farley – Strategic Skills Lead – Workforce and Growth	
Officer contact details	01743 252306 – amy.farley@shropshire.gov.uk	
Electoral Divisions Affected	All	
Key Decision?	Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	Yes	
Report considered by	Cabinet – 14 October 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for Shropshire Council to submit a delivery plan to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for Skills Bootcamps funding, and to act as the accountable body for delivery in Shropshire.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve entering into the Grant Funding Agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver the programme.

- 2.2 Approve Shropshire Council acting as the accountable body for the funding within the Shropshire Council delivery area.
- 2.3 Support the commissioning of training providers to deliver Skills Bootcamps based on employer demand and local need, noting that this approach was approved by CCDG on 7 September 2026.
- 2.4 Note the proposed governance and delivery arrangements, whereby the programme will be managed by the Economy, Funding and Skills Service in alignment with the Get Marches Working Plan, The Shropshire Skills and Employment Strategy and the Councils Corporate Plan priorities.
- 2.5 Acknowledge that approval to submit the Delivery Plan to DWP has been obtained in accordance with BTCRP governance arrangements.

3. Background

- 3.1 Skills Bootcamps are flexible training programmes of up to 16 weeks in duration, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), designed to help adults develop skills in areas of identified labour market demand. Provision includes a guaranteed interview with an employer and is focused on supporting positive employment and progression outcomes.
- 3.2 The programme provides funding to local areas to commission and manage delivery arrangements that respond to local economic priorities, employer demand and workforce shortages. Local Authorities are responsible for ensuring delivery meets national programme requirements and achieves agreed performance outcomes.
- 3.3 The current funding round covers the period April 2027 to March 2028, with a further period available for the achievement and reporting of learner outcomes. Funding is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions through a Grant Funding Agreement with the accountable body.
- 3.4 Shropshire Council has submitted a Delivery Plan to the Department for Work and Pensions setting out the proposed approach to Skills Bootcamp delivery within the county. A funding decision is anticipated in December 2026
- 3.5 The programme represents an opportunity to secure approximately £1.5 million of external investment to support residents to access training linked to employment opportunities whilst helping employers address skills shortages and recruitment challenges.
- 3.6 Evidence from local labour market intelligence, employer engagement activity, the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), the Get Marches Working Plan and the Shropshire Skills and Employment Strategy identifies ongoing workforce challenges across a number of sectors, including construction, health and social care, digital, engineering and advanced manufacturing. Skills Bootcamps provide a flexible mechanism to respond to these workforce needs through targeted skills provision linked to employment outcomes.

- 3.7 Subject to approval of the funding application, Shropshire Council will act as the accountable body (for Shropshire only) for the programme. This will include responsibility for receiving and administering grant funding, commissioning providers, monitoring performance, ensuring compliance with grant conditions, maintaining appropriate assurance arrangements and submitting financial and performance returns to the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 3.8 Cabinet approval is sought at this stage to enable the Council to enter into the Grant Funding Agreement and implement delivery arrangements within the timescales set by the Department for Work and Pensions should the application be successful.
- 3.9 The proposed delivery model has been developed in consultation with relevant internal services and delivery partners. Legal, Procurement, Finance and Risk Management colleagues have been engaged in the development of the proposal and will continue to support implementation should funding be approved.
- 3.10 Approval to submit the Delivery Plan was obtained through the BTCRP. The proposed commissioning approach has also been considered through the Council's CCDG, ensuring alignment with the Council's established governance processes.
- 3.11 The proposal supports delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and aligns with the objectives of the Get Marches Working Plan and the Shropshire Skills and Employment Strategy by supporting economic growth, reducing barriers to employment and ensuring residents have access to skills development opportunities that meet current and future employer needs.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 Shropshire Council have submitted a delivery plan to DWP setting out how Skills Bootcamps will be delivered across the county.
- 4.2 The programme will bring £1.5 million of external funding into Shropshire, including £400,000 ringfenced for construction skills. Up to 20% (approx. £300,000) will be allocated to management and administration, leaving approximately £800,000 to support delivery across other priority sectors, based on local need and employer demand.
- 4.3 The programme will run from 1st April 2027– 31st March 2028, with a view for this to be extended year on year.
- 4.4 Delivery will be led through the Economy, Funding and Skills Service and commissioned to external providers. Provision will be driven by employer demand, focusing on local vacancies and skills gaps, and informed by local skills research, the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), the Get Marches Working Plan, and Corporate Plan priorities.
- 4.5 The Council will procure providers in line with the council's procurement policy to deliver targeted courses linked to real job opportunities, ensuring provision can flex in response to changing labour market need.

- 4.6 To address the challenges of a rural county and limited public transport, delivery will adopt a hub and spoke model, combining central training locations with local outreach delivery. This will be supported by flexible and blended learning approaches, ensuring residents across Shropshire can access provision regardless of location.
- 4.7 All Skills Bootcamps will meet national requirements, including strong employer involvement, a guaranteed interview for relevant learners, and positive outcomes for the majority of participants.
- 4.8 The programme is expected to support residents into employment or progression, helping to reduce economic inactivity and address key workforce shortages.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Do not proceed with the project. This would result in the loss of an opportunity for external funding in Shropshire to support much-needed activity that would support residents and employers and leave Shropshire as the only local authority area in the wider region not delivering Skills Bootcamps.
- 5.2 Under current circumstances, no alternative funding or resources is available to enable the Council's to support local workforce shortages and help residents into employment in such a way.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

- 6.1 The proposal creates an opportunity to bring external investment into Shropshire, support residents into better jobs and help employers fill vacancies more quickly. The main risks relate to commissioning the right provision, achieving DWP targets and maintaining compliance with grant conditions.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Courses do not match employer demand	Use skills research, employer engagement, LSIP evidence and the Get Marches Working Plan to shape course commissioning.	Strategic Risk: Increasing demand for services and economic uncertainty
Underperformance against DWP targets	Set clear performance requirements in provider agreements and monitor learner starts, completions and outcomes through contract management.	Strategic Risk: Governance, performance and financial weaknesses
Funding clawback if grant conditions are not met	Maintain robust assurance, financial controls, data reporting and audit trails in line with DWP requirements.	Strategic Risk: Governance, assurance and value for money

Low learner take-up	Commission provision linked to real job opportunities and promote through provider, employer and partner networks. Use early market engagement with potential providers and apply clear evaluation criteria during procurement.	Strategic Risk: Increasing demand for services and economic uncertainty
Insufficient provider capacity in some sectors	Use market engagement and open commissioning to identify providers with the right quality, reach and sector expertise.	Strategic Risk: Breakdown of critical contracts, providers or strategic partnerships

7. Council Priorities

- 7.1 This proposal supports the Council's Corporate Plan by contributing to a thriving local economy, improving access to opportunity and helping residents gain the skills needed for sustainable employment.
- 7.2 It supports prevention and early intervention by helping people move closer to work, progress in work and improve earnings over time.
- 7.3 It also supports the Council's wider role in enabling economic growth by aligning public investment with business need and labour market demand
- 7.4 The proposal is directly aligned to the Get Marches Working Plan, which sets out the need for a joined-up approach to employment, skills and employer engagement across the area.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The programme is fully funded through external DWP grant and there is no direct call on the Council's core budget to deliver the programme.
- 8.2 The grant can be used to meet eligible delivery and management costs, with up to 20% available for management and administration costs in line with the grant conditions and this will sufficiently cover the M&A needed for the programme delivery without requiring additional council resources. This also included redundancies, Legal, Procurement and finance as well as direct management costs.
- 8.3 As accountable body, the Council will be responsible for financial oversight, grant claims, provider commissioning, contract management and assurance.
- 8.4 There is a risk of clawback if the terms of the grant agreement are not met. This will be managed through robust financial controls, clear provider agreements and regular monitoring of delivery and spend.
- 8.5 The risk of underperformance will be passed on to the provider through a robust Grant Funding Agreement.

Funding is performance-based, with payments linked to delivery milestones, including learner starts, completions and job outcomes. This requires strong contract management and employer engagement to ensure outcomes are achieved. These will be covered in the GFA between Shropshire and the provider.

8.6 Payments model:

- 40% start training
- 30% completion training + interview
- 30% job outcome

20% of the £1.5 million is paid upfront to cover Management and administrative. 40% of delivery costs are paid upfront.

8.7 Employer co-funding will apply where existing employees are trained, in line with national programme requirements

9. Legal and HR implications

9.1 The Council will need to ensure any commissioning of providers is undertaken in line with procurement legislation, the Council's internal rules and the requirements set out in the grant offer letter. As the commissioning body, the Council will be responsible and accountable to Government and partner authorities for the spend under the programme and for managing the relationship with providers of any commissioned services.

9.2 Provider contracts or funding agreements will need to include clear requirements on delivery standards, performance, data sharing, compliance and audit.

9.3 There are no direct HR implications arising from the recommendation as delivery will be commissioned externally and managed through the Economy, Skills and Funding Service, which has capacity due to the closure of the UKSPF programme.

10. Electoral Division Implications

10.1 The proposal has county-wide implications and may benefit residents across all electoral divisions.

10.2 Delivery will need to consider both urban and rural access so that local provision reflects need across Shropshire.

10.3 As the proposal affects the whole of Shropshire, no specific local member consultation is proposed beyond the normal Cabinet process

11. Health, Social (including “Child Friendly Shropshire”) and Economic Implications

11.1 Employment is an important wider determinant of health. By helping residents gain skills and move into work or progress in work, the programme has the potential to improve income, confidence, wellbeing and longer-term financial resilience.

- 11.2 The proposal supports inclusive access to training and employment opportunities, including for people who may face barriers to work or progression.
- 11.3 There is a positive economic impact through helping employers (including Shropshire Council) fill vacancies, improving productivity and strengthening the local workforce.
- 11.4 Although Skills Bootcamps are aimed at adults aged 19+, there may be indirect benefits for Child Friendly Shropshire ambitions through improved family stability and reduced financial pressure in households.
- 11.5 Commissioning arrangements can also encourage providers to consider accessibility and tailored support for priority groups, including care leavers where relevant.
- 11.6 Improving access to locally available and flexible skills provision will help reduce inequalities linked to rural isolation and transport barriers.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 Skills Bootcamps are open to eligible adults aged 19+ and are intended to widen access to in-demand training for people who are unemployed, employed, self-employed, returning to work or facing barriers to progression.
- 12.2 National guidance expects delivery to encourage participation from underrepresented groups and those with protected characteristics.
- 12.3 Equality considerations will need to be reflected in commissioning, including accessibility, rurality, support needs and fair access to provision.
- 12.4 The proposal is expected to have an overall positive equalities impact. An ESHIA should be completed as part of the final report process if required.
- 12.5 Particular consideration will be given to rural access and transport barriers to ensure equal access to provision across all communities.
- 12.6 The programme can also support the Armed Forces Covenant by improving access to training and employment opportunities for veterans and the wider armed forces community.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 The proposal is expected to have a neutral to minor positive environmental impact.
- 13.2 There may be indirect environmental benefits where local delivery reduces travel and where Skills Bootcamps support sectors linked to green skills, clean energy or low carbon growth.
- 13.3 No significant adverse impacts on biodiversity or the environment have been identified at this stage.

14. Background Papers

- 14.1 Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 2026–2030
- 14.2 DWP Skills Bootcamps Wave 7 Guidance and Policy Specification
- 14.3 DWP Skills Bootcamps Grant Offer Letter Template
- 14.4 Get Marches Working Plan
- 14.5 Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

15. Appendices

- APPENDIX A - DWP Skills Bootcamps Wave 7 Guidance and Policy Specification
- APPENDIX B - DWP Skills Bootcamps DRAFT Grant Offer Letter Template

SKILLS BOOTCAMPS GRANTS DELIVERY

W7 (Financial Year 2026-27) Guidance

December 2025

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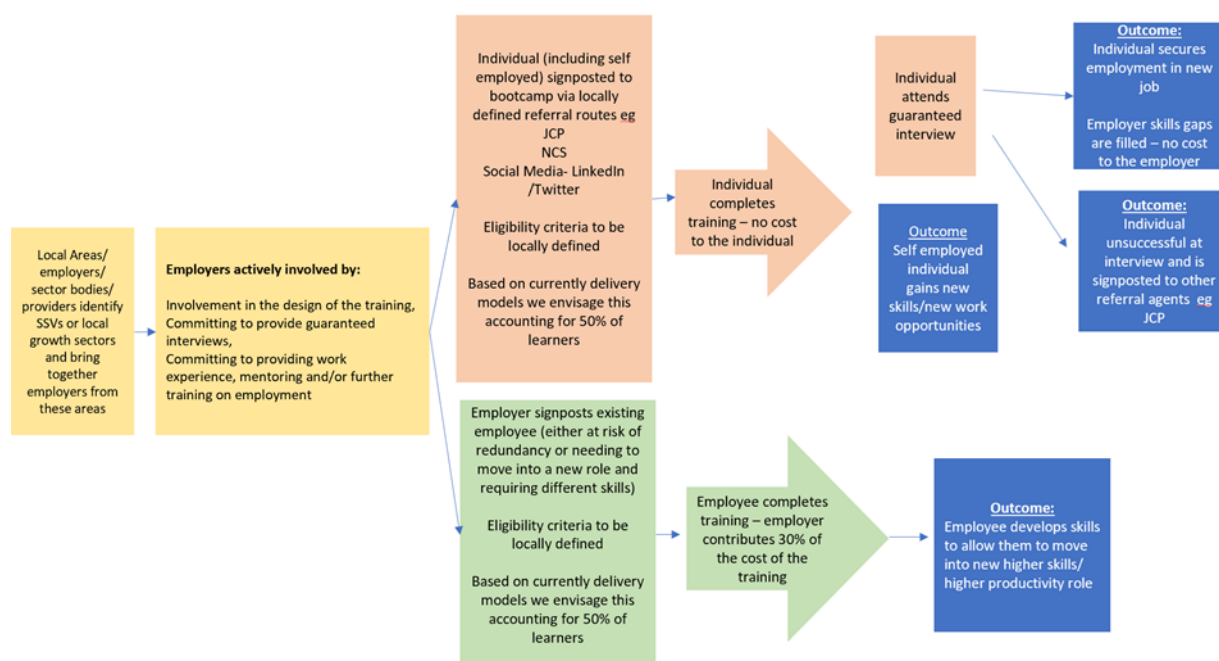
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Background to Skills Bootcamps

- a. Skills Bootcamps aim to secure benefits for adults by giving them access to in-demand skills training and a guaranteed interview for a more sustainable, higher-skilled job and higher wages over time. The benefits for employers include helping them fill specific skills shortage vacancies, enabling them to become more productive, more quickly.
- b. The overall aims of the Skills Bootcamps are:
 - to deliver *flexible training programmes lasting up to 16 weeks, based on employer / sector 'in-demand' skills needs which may be either regulated (i.e. qualification based) or non-regulated (e.g. based on alignment with industry standards) enabling adults to do training around work and other commitments, looking to gain work, additional responsibilities, or access new opportunities and will offer a guaranteed job interview (in the case of a new job) to individual participants on completion of the course.
 - to address the needs of adults (19+) who are full-time and part-time employed, unemployed, returning to work after a break or self-employed, and provide individuals with wider access to opportunities to retrain, update or formalise their skills or acquire specialist skills.
 - to address the needs of employers and the wider economy, to deliver targeted interventions to meet short-medium term demand to fill vacancies and drive productivity. They will help fill medium-higher level vacancies and bring individuals closer to better jobs, by linking them with line of sight to a job/ different role, additional responsibilities or new opportunities/contracts
 - to help fill vacancies and bring individuals closer to better jobs (including those currently in employment), by linking them with line of sight to a job / different role, additional responsibilities or new opportunities / contracts
- c. We initially tested Skills Bootcamps in a range of Digital Skills such as digital marketing, software development and cyber security from Autumn 2020 and have expanded across England to include a wider range of more technical and specialist courses such as construction, retrofit, electro technical, photonics, marine design, electrical installation and more.

The Skills Bootcamp Delivery Model

Skills Bootcamps are intensive, Level 2-5 or equivalent flexible training courses up to 16 weeks, with a guaranteed job interview (in the case of a new job), which equip adults with technical skills that enable them to access in-demand jobs, apprenticeships, new opportunities and an increased level of income over time (including for the self-employed).



All Skills Bootcamps must meet the requirements posed in the mainstream **Skills Bootcamp Delivery Model** to be considered for funding.

Skill Areas

There must be evidence of demand for the skills developed through the Skills Bootcamp, including evidence of vacancies in the local labour market. Providers must cite the evidence they are relying on regarding local labour market needs and demonstrate due regard to the skills analysis and priorities of Local Partners, Skills Advisory Panels, Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA), Local Authorities (LA), etc and show how they align with Local Skills Improvement Plan(s).

Until now, priority sectors for Skills Bootcamps have been Construction and the Built Environment, Engineering and Manufacturing, Digital, Creative and Design, Business and Administration, Education and Early Years and Transport and Logistics. However, Skills England have identified 8 Industrial Strategy priorities (Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy, Digital Technologies, Life Sciences, Creative Industries, Financial Services,

Professional Services, and Defence) plus Construction and Health and Social Care) so it is right that Skills Bootcamps funding should pivot towards these.

Where there is demand for a skill area that meets the general criteria, but is not in a sector listed here, it can be procured using up to 50%¹ of your grant.

Skills Bootcamps - overarching principles

Skills Bootcamps are free, flexible courses of up to 16 weeks, giving people the chance to build sector-specific skills with an offer of a job interview at the end, giving learners direct line of sight into a job. Training must be designed and delivered in partnership with employers to ensure it delivers the skills needed.

Learner Eligibility

To be funded, the learners must:

- Be aged 19 or older, on or before 31 August within the ESFA funding year (01 August – 31 July).
- Have the right to work in the UK- this can be checked [on gov.uk/view-right-to-work](https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work) and
- Meet residency requirements- providers should refer to the [residency eligibility](#) section of the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) funding rules for the relevant year before accepting an individual onto a Skills Bootcamp. The 2023/24 AEB rules apply to Skills Bootcamps delivery before 01 August 2024, and from 01 August 2024 onwards the ASF rules for the relevant ESFA funding year apply.
- Live in England, subject to the further detail provided below.

Delivery (including completions and outcomes) outside of England

You must not actively recruit learners who live or work outside of England.

We will fund an individual who lives in Scotland or Wales if specialist skills training is only available in England and the individual intends to work in England following completion of the Skills Bootcamp. We do not expect these numbers to be significant.

¹ This % is 100% in deeper devolution areas

For learning delivered at an employee's workplace, we will fund individuals whose main employment or normal place of work is in England.

Providers located close to the borders can deliver Skills Bootcamps to learners who are not resident in England if the learner intends to work in England following completion of the Skills Bootcamp. Delivery must take place in England. We do not expect these numbers to be significant.

We will only fund a completion and/or outcome if it relates to an organisation registered as a UK company under the Companies Act 2006 and/or the workplace is located in England.

Target Groups

All Skills Bootcamps should be open to all eligible adults within the communities they serve, including those employed, not in work or self-employed, serving prisoners due to be released within 6 months of completion of a Skills Bootcamp, and those on Temporary Release².

Skills Bootcamps aim to support participants into improved employment outcomes. Providers should consider how their Skills Bootcamp will support participants effectively into a positive employment outcome.

Prior Attainment and experience

No prior attainment is required unless specifically prescribed by an employer and/or specifically related to the job and sector within which the vacancies offered are situated. Providers should screen potential learners and select those who will benefit from enrolling onto a Skills Bootcamp, including by checking that the potential Learner does not already have a significant proportion of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that the Skills Bootcamp is designed to help them acquire.

Providers should signpost to other opportunities where a Skills Bootcamp is not appropriate for a potential learner including a referral to [website of the National Careers Service](#).

However, Providers may define their own selection processes and/or assessments as part of their approach to recruitment of appropriate learners.

² MSAs are restricted in their use of funding in a prison setting so should seek internal legal advice if intending to deliver

Funding conditions

You must not transfer funding between the following budgets:

- Skills Bootcamps
- ESFA funded AEB
- AEB funding received from devolved budgets to combined authorities
- 19 to 24 traineeship programmes
- Free courses for jobs
- Apprenticeships
- Advanced learner loans bursary fund
- Advanced learner loan facility
- Multiply

Providers should not claim funding for any learner's learning aim or programme that duplicates provision they have received from any other source.

We have adjusted learner eligibility so participants enrolled on DWP's Restart programme can access Skills Bootcamps, recognising differences in provision. However, if providers are delivering both a DWP Restart programme and a DWP Skills Bootcamp, they must:

- Ensure that they are delivering two separate sets of activities to receive funding from both programmes for an individual learner and
- Must inform their DWP contract manager they are engaged in the delivery of both programmes.

An adult may only start one Skills Bootcamp per funding year (1 April to 31 March) and must not be on more than one Skills Bootcamp at any one time. However, where an individual starts a Skills Bootcamp and then realises that it is not suitable for them for whatever reason, they may start, and be funded for, another Skills Bootcamp as long as the first milestone payment on the original Skills Bootcamp has not been reached (limited to two starts per funding year).

Providers have an obligation to ask prospective learners whether they have already undertaken a Skills Bootcamp in that funding year and if they are currently undertaking a Skills Bootcamp.

Learners may transfer between Skills Bootcamps within a year but only under the following conditions:

- The learner must have left their first Skills Bootcamp before the first payment milestone cut-off.
- The learner may only start two Skills Bootcamps maximum within a year.

Where an employer is training an existing employee, they must contribute to the cost of the course. In the case of large employers, DWP will cover 70% of the cost of the Skills Bootcamp with the remaining 30% of the agreed learner rate to be funded by the employer. Existing employees are defined as someone directly employed by the employer, not a temporary worker, self-employed and contractor, director or officeholder. However, where a director or office holder is also an employee the employer will be expected to contribute. Further information on [employment status](#) is available.

In the case of small and medium employers DWP will cover 90% of the cost of the Skills Bootcamp, so the employer contribution is reduced to 10%. A small or medium sized employer is defined as having fewer than 250 employees.

Providers are free to agree further funding contributions from employers should they want to enhance the content of the Skills Bootcamp.

Providers are responsible for ensuring they collect, and maintain evidence of, payment of the employer's contribution. You may be required to provide evidence as part of payment evidence assurance checks.

Courses are fully funded by Government for independent learners (individuals not being co-funded by their employer), and for the self-employed.

Individuals must not be charged for any element of the Skills Bootcamp.

As part of their delivery, the Provider will comply with Part 2 (The Management of Safeguarding) of Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>) in order to ensure the provision is delivered with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of high needs learners aged up to 25 receiving education or training at their institution or under the auspices of the provider in the environment outside the direct control of the Provider in an environment outside the direct control of the provider in order to ensure the provision is delivered with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of high needs learners aged up to 25 receiving education or training at their institution or under the auspices of the provider in the environment outside the direct control of the Provider in an environment outside the direct control of the provider.

The Provider will monitor and act on, any other harm to learners to the extent that the provider could reasonably be expected to do so and/or where the harm could affect the quality of the learning experience.

Payment Milestones

There are three payment milestones associated with a learner on a Skills Bootcamp. Payments will be made on the following basis:

Table 1: Payment Milestone details: This is a summary; for detailed advice on what must be provided to obtain a milestone payment, please see the evidence section.

Commencement	Contract Delivery	Outcome
	Course completion and interview offered	On job offer (or equivalent)
40%	30%	30%
Paid on the learner completing 14 qualifying days of training and on completion of the initial assessment (initial assessment as set out in the service requirements). The 14 qualifying days of the training course must include a minimum of 10 guided learning hours. Providers must achieve Starts by 31st March 2027 in line with delivery plans and in time to achieve Completions by this deadline also. The Provider should report on the next monthly	Course completion and interview offered: Finishing the training and completion of a final assessment for all learners (final assessment as set out in the service requirements), and; - For the independent learner: an offer of an interview with an employer for a live vacancy that will utilise the skills obtained on the Skills Bootcamp, which meets the criteria set out under the service requirements - For the co-funded learner: an offer of an interview for a new enhanced role/responsibility within the current organisation, which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements - For the self-employed learner: written confirmation of how the new training has been/will be applied to get new opportunities (work or contracts),	- For the independent learner: An offer for a job which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements - For the co-funded learner: The offer or commencement of a new enhanced role/responsibility within the current organisation, which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements - For the self-employed learner: Learner has secured new opportunities (work/new contracts), which meet the criteria set out in the service requirements If an independent learner plans to be self-employed, they can achieve a self-employed learner outcome; and a self-employed learner who plans to

reporting cycle any new learner Starts via the ILR, Contract Monitoring Plan and Learner Datasheet.	which meet the criteria set out in the service requirements If an independent learner plans to be self-employed, they can achieve a self-employed learner completion; and a self-employed learner who plans to become employed can achieve an independent learner completion. The Provider should report on the next monthly reporting cycle any new learner Completions via the ILR, Contract Monitoring Plan and Learner Datasheet.	become employed can achieve an independent learner outcome. Providers should note that the learner must have finished the training element and final assessment of the Skills Bootcamp, in line with the declared GLH in your bid, for the provider to be able to claim a Positive Outcome payment. Providers must achieve Positive Outcomes within the six months after the training is finished (and not 6 months after the completion of Milestone 2). Providers should track learners within this 6-month period until the learner achieves a positive outcome. The Provider should report on the next monthly reporting cycle any new learner Positive Outcomes via the ILR, Contract Monitoring Plan and Learner Datasheet.
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Pathways to Accelerated Apprenticeships

Commencement	Contract Delivery	Outcome
	Course completion and interview offered	On job offer (or equivalent)
40%	30%	30%
Paid on the learner completing 14 qualifying days of training and on completion of the initial assessment (initial assessment as set out in the service requirements). The 14 qualifying days of the training course	Course completion and interview offered: Finishing the training and completion of a final assessment for all learners (final assessment as set out in the service requirements), and; For the independent learner: an offer of an interview with an employer for an apprenticeship or other live	- For the independent learner: An offer for an accelerated apprenticeship or for a job (which is not an apprenticeship), which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements. - For the co-funded learner: the offer or commencement of a new role/responsibility within the current organisation,

must include a minimum of 10 guided learning hours.	job vacancy, which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements; - For the co-funded learner: an offer of an interview for a new role/responsibility within the current organisation, which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements - For the self-employed learner: written confirmation of how the new training has been/will be applied to get new opportunities (work or contracts), which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements If an independent learner plans to be self-employed, they can achieve a self-employed learner completion; and a self-employed learner who plans to become employed can achieve an independent learner completion. Providers must achieve Completions by 31st March 2024 and in line with delivery plans. The Provider should report on the next monthly reporting cycle any new learner Completions via the ILR, Contract Monitoring Plan and Learner Datasheet.	which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements For the self employed learner: Learner has secured new opportunities (work or new contracts) which meets the criteria set out in the service requirements. If an independent learner plans to be self-employed, they can achieve a self-employed learner outcome; and a self-employed learner who plans to become employed can achieve an independent learner outcome. The offer of an apprenticeship that has not been accelerated cannot be used to claim for the Outcome payment in this model. Providers should note that the learner must have finished the training element and final assessment of the Skills Bootcamp, in line with the declared GLH in their bid, for the provider to be able to claim an outcome payment. Providers must achieve Positive Outcomes within the six months after the training is finished (and not 6 months after the completion of Milestone 2). Providers should track learners within this 6-month period until the learner achieves a positive outcome. The Provider should report on the next monthly reporting cycle any new learner Positive Outcomes via the ILR, Contract Monitoring Plan and Learner Datasheet.
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We recognise that there may be instances where a learner has changed their status part way through their Skills Bootcamp, e.g., from self-employed to actively looking for, and obtaining, a job and therefore their expected completion/outcome has changed. Where that is the case, you should discuss this with your Grant Manager to confirm what evidence requirements are expected to enable a claim to be made.

HGV Payment milestones

Within the national contracts 4 payment milestones were agreed within some (Novice courses) HGV Skills Bootcamps due to delays in testing availability and providers outgoings for these early on in the course. You may agree similar with your provider if appropriate.

	Pathway A – Novice to CAT C	Pathway B – Novice to CAT C, then CAT C+E	Pathway C – Novice to CAT C, then CAT C+E, plus Additional Elements
Payment Milestone 1 20%	Eligibility and suitability checks: including attained provisional licence	Eligibility and suitability checks: including attained provisional licence	Eligibility and suitability checks: including attained provisional licence
Payment Milestone 2 30%	Passed Theory test, completed the practical training and taken a practical test	Passed Theory test, completed the practical training and taken a practical test	Passed Theory test, completed the practical training and taken a practical test
Payment Milestone 3 20%	Passed Practical Test and passed CPC mod 4 and evidence of job interview	Passed Practical Test and passed CPC mod 4 and evidence of job interview	Passed Practical Test and passed CPC mod 4 and evidence of job interview
Payment Milestone 4 30%	Evidence of a CAT C job offer / commencement of new role / self-employed outcome	Evidence of CAT C or CAT C+E job offer / commencement of new role / self-employed outcome	Evidence of a CAT C or CAT C+E job offer / commencement of new role / self-employed outcome

	Pathway D – existing CAT C upgrade to CAT C+E	Pathway E – Existing HGV upgrade to ADR Packages / Tankers	Pathway F - Existing HGV upgrade to ADR Tankers plus PDP	Pathway G – Back to Wheels Refresher into previous existing category	Pathway H - Back to Wheels Refresher with Upgrade to CAT C+E
Payment Milestone 1 40%	Completion of relevant training	Completion of relevant training	Completion of relevant training	Completion of relevant training	Completion of relevant training
Payment Milestone 2 30%	Successfully passed Practical Test and evidence of a Job Interview	Successfully passed Test including Practical and evidence of a Job Interview	Successfully passed Test including Practical and evidence of a Job Interview	Evidence of up-to-date Driver CPC and a Job interview	Successfully passed test including practical and evidence of a job interview
Payment Milestone 3 30%	Evidence of a CAT C+E Job offer or commencement of a new role / self-employed outcome	Evidence of an ADR Job offer or commencement of an ADR role / self-employed outcome	Evidence of a PDP Job offer or commencement of a PDP role / self-employed outcome	Evidence of a CAT C or CAT C+E job offer/commencement of new CAT C or CAT C+E role/self-employed outcome	Evidence of a CAT C+E job offer/commencement of new role/self-employed outcome

Paid employment for a minimum of twelve continuous weeks:

Meaning that there is confirmation of the offer of a job with a duration of 12 weeks, including where learners are employed on a zero hours' contract and / or contracted by an agency, that utilises the skills acquired by attending the Skills Bootcamp. Where this is for an initial temporary assignment lasting less than 12 weeks, the job offer includes a description of the role, the start date, the length of assignment, and confirmation that further assignments will follow. This does not mean where learners are contracted, registered or signed up to some form of organisation/agency with no line of sight to a job offer.

Course Length

The Provider must offer Skills Bootcamps at a minimum of 60 Guided Learning Hours (20 glh for Skills Bootcamps related to driving) over a maximum of 16 weeks.

Guided Learning Hours

Guided Learning is the activity of a Learner being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training (including placement, onsite or practical education or training) under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, with the simultaneous presence of the Learner and that person in the same physical or virtual space. This could include, but is not limited to, simultaneous presence: in a classroom, in a virtual classroom or breakout room, on site, placement, or other physical learning environment.

GLH can include learners being taught content in the same physical or virtual space (such as a classroom style delivery), as well as undertaking project work, workshops and assessments which are under the regular guidance, supervision and support of a tutor i.e. the tutor is 'circulating', checking in on groups/learners, offering advice, guidance and feedback, asking prompt questions to stimulate ideas, getting learners on the right path etc. This can also include work-based activities and coaching and mentoring among others.

GLH does not cover examples where learners are sent off to do a project independently, in groups or alone where the tutor is not regularly supporting or interacting in the ways described above i.e. it does not include time spent on unsupervised preparation or study, whether at home or otherwise. It also does not include optional, drop-in sessions that learners can book in addition to the planned guided learning hours set out for the Skills Bootcamp. It does not include watching recordings from live, or prerecorded sessions.

Delivery of Skills Bootcamp

The provider must ensure that the Skills Bootcamp can be reasonably delivered to a learner concurrently employed in either a full-time or part-time role or around other commitments.

Skills Bootcamps should be designed to encourage the participation of underrepresented groups which may include, but not exclusively, ethnic minority background, disability, women, veterans, prison leavers, serving

prisoners due to be released within 6 months of completion of the Skills Bootcamp, prisoners on temporary release or learners with childcare or similar responsibilities; those with protected characteristics (as defined in the [Equality Act 2010](#)) and those who might face barriers to employment.

Skills Bootcamps: Content

Skills Bootcamp training must either be accredited, aligned to occupational standards managed by the Institute for Apprenticeship & Technical Education (IfATE) or utilise a recognised standard for representing attainment (e.g., Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) or Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA)). Where Providers are using RARPA, SFIA or similar methodology we would expect evidence of significant employer engagement in designing the curriculum.

Each Skills Bootcamp must meet the minimum number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) as stated in the provider bid and a maximum duration of 16 weeks.

Provision may be delivered remotely online, face-to-face or through a blended approach.

Wraparound Career and Personal Development Support

Funding for wraparound career and personal development support for Skills Bootcamps is included in your Skills Bootcamps allocation.

The provider must deliver personalised wraparound career and personal development support for all phases of the Skills Bootcamps delivery. Ensuring this support is tailored to different needs and contexts including personalisation considering experience and employment status (employed, unemployed, self-employed, returners to work, prisoners within 6 months of release etc).

Such support can include, but is not limited to:

- Wider employment skills and behaviours including, but not limited to, appropriate workplace communication, stress management, time management, decision making and problem solving (such skills and behaviours, “Behavioural Skills Support”) to assist the learner to gain relevant employment.
- Sector-specific behavioural skills support for employment. This should also include, but is not limited to ensuring that all learners have a

positive attitude and aspire to securing a job, and setting out clear codes of conduct and expectations around independent learning.

- Appropriate pastoral support, coaching and mentoring (which may include but is not limited to, tailored career coaching from industry professionals with extensive experience in the Skills Bootcamp sector).
- Appropriate academic, skills and training support. This should include the incorporation of activities which replicate what learners can expect to be doing in the workplace, such as group projects, solving problems for real-world challenges set by employers, or industry placements and / or mentorships to gain experience 'on the job'.
- Personalised support, taking into consideration the learner's employment history and existing skills. Learners should complete personal development plans at the beginning, and record progress in reflective journals as the course progresses.
- IT, internet access and administrative support by providing provider contact details during office hours.
- Assistance with the drafting of industry standard, sector-specific CVs and preparation for interviews personalised to the individual learner need (which may include, not limited to, mock interviews from industry professionals with experience in the sector and offering feedback).
- Maintaining a relationship between learner and employer throughout the programme. Focus on engagement with employers who have genuine and evidenced vacancies, matching learners to job vacancies and securing interviews for learners with employers early into the programme.
- In the event that the learner is either unsuccessful at interview or does not attend an interview, carry out a follow up review with the learner to discuss why they did not pass or attend the interview.
- Based on the review, signposting appropriate next steps for the learner. This can include but is not limited to further career and personal development support, additional learning if the learner requires more support to pass an interview related to the relevant skills need or helping the learner to secure further interviews with appropriate employers.
- Scheduling monthly check-ins to track the learner's employment status for the number of months after completion of the relevant Skills Bootcamp specified in the Contract Order Form or until the Learner has achieved a job outcome (whichever occurs earlier).

We expect all Independent Learners (not co-funded by their employer, and not self-employed) to progress on to a guaranteed job interview upon the completion of the Skills Bootcamp. This should be a genuine vacancy related to the skills gained through the Skills Bootcamp which must be intended to be

continuous employment for at least 12 weeks.

Paid employment for a minimum of twelve continuous weeks is defined as:

- Confirmation of the offer of a job with a duration of 12 weeks, including where learners are employed on a zero hours' contract and / or contracted by an agency, that utilises the skills acquired by attending the Skills Bootcamp. Where this is for an initial temporary assignment lasting less than 12 weeks, the job offer includes a description of the role, the start date, the length of assignment, and confirmation that further assignments will follow. This does not mean where learners are contracted, registered or signed up to some form of organisation/agency with no line of sight to a job offer.

Providers should ensure interviews are offered to all independent learners; without the offer of an interview the Skills Bootcamp is not complete and Milestone 2 cannot be claimed.

The Provider may deliver Skills Bootcamps remotely, online or face to face or through a blended approach.

Provider Eligibility

This programme is open to all training providers registered on the UK Register of Learning Providers – providers not currently registered can apply [here](#). It is also open to any employer/s or employer bodies.

Employer Engagement & Involvement

MCA/LEPs/LAs should ensure training providers engage employers at the design, delivery, and post-Skills Bootcamp stage of their provision and to gain commitment to interview candidates from the Skills Bootcamps for relevant vacancies, or to establish what the impact will be if they are training their own employees. Training Providers may be required to provide evidence of work with employers. This could include the provision of behavioural skills support, coaching and mentoring, design and / or the delivery of content as well as evidence of interviews taking place and where participants have been recruited by the employer.

We have a target of 60% of employers involved in Skills Bootcamp being SMEs.

Grant Monitoring and Reporting

We are expecting to use the ILR to report learner details from 1 April 2025, for learners who start their Skills Bootcamp from 1 April 2025 onwards.

The grant management plan will continue to be used for the purposes of recording learner progress against starts, completions and outcomes, employer engagement, recording and monitoring delivery risks and tracking spend and drawdown against grant awards. An updated plan will be shared with Grant recipients at the earliest opportunity.

Grant recipients will be required to comply with the following conditions:

- a. When commissioning has concluded and grant recipients have a more clear picture of the delivery they expect over FY2025-26 they must update DWP with names of contracted providers, Skills Bootcamps titles and expected learner numbers. This can be through completing a GMP, even if nothing has yet started.
- b. Your Grant Manager will schedule performance review meetings at a mutually convenient date, commencing from May 2025 and likely each month thereafter.

In advance of the scheduled monthly review meeting, you will be requested to submit an updated grant management plan reflecting the latest position across all elements covered in the plan and to include up-to-date learner data for the period covering at least up to the end of the previous month.

- c. Provide ad hoc reports in response to wider requests from the Department for information to support upward reporting and further development of the Skills Bootcamp programme from time to time.

Roles & Responsibilities

MCA/LEPs/LAs should provide on request details of key personnel responsible for the delivery obligations contained within the GOL.

Data submission

The Provider must supply the Department with data in accordance with the following:

- in line with agreed audit arrangements
- in adherence with the UK GDPR and DPA 2018
- to support payments to be made
- to enable reconciliation to take place
- to support the grant management process; and
- any written request from the Department

Data Spreadsheets

Data Spreadsheets are not required for delivery beginning on or after 1 April 2025 (wave 6). The data DWP requires for these learners will be collected only through the ILR.

However, MCA/LEPs/LAs should continue to prepare up-to-date completed data submission template(s) at the following pre-determined intervals for wave 5 delivery (FY24-25) and any remaining wave 4 delivery (FY23-24) (unless agreed separately with your Grant Manager).

Data Reporting Sequence	Submission Date – by 22 nd of the month
1. Progress up to end of March 25	Reported no later than 22 April 25
2. Progress up to end of June 25	Reported no later than 22 July 25
3. Progress up to end of September 25.	reported no later than 22 October 25
4. Progress up to end December 25	reported no later than 22 January 26
5. Progress up to end March 26	reported no later than 22 April 26.
<i>The data submissions capture learner completion/outcome data. Data should be submitted in a timely manner, the cut off point for all outcomes data collection and claims is 6 months from the completion of the Skills Bootcamp training. .</i>	

DWP have issued a copy of the data template for completion. Guidance is included within the data return template.

The expectation is that a separate data return template is used per provider per Skills Bootcamp.

Therefore;

- a) if a Skills Bootcamp has multiple providers, a separate data return is expected for each provider for that Skills Bootcamp.
- b) if a single provider delivers multiple Skills Bootcamp under your grant, then a separate return is required for each Skills Bootcamp in their portfolio.
- c) multiple cohorts of the same Skills Bootcamp delivered by a single provider must be captured on the same data return.

Providers/sub-contractors must issue appropriate privacy notices to learners and employers to enable data collection, sharing and reporting.

Payments to Grant Recipients

In addition to providing a signed copy of the Grant Funding Agreement, you are requested to follow the instructions on Bank Account Details (in Annex B) of the GOL and provide details of your bank account which must be at a bank authorised to conduct banking business in England. This will allow us to set you up on the Department's DWP ERP payment system to receive Funding.

Payment claims must be submitted in accordance with Clause 10.1 of the general Terms and Conditions and may only be sent to the Department once the Grant Funding Agreement has been signed and any pre-disbursement conditions have been met.

Payments will be disbursed into the bank account with the number provided through the process laid down in Annex B and the Department shall not be responsible for any errors caused by any mistakes in the information provided by the Grant recipients.

Please note that any delays in returning the documents could result in a delay to the payment of Funding.

Claiming 'up-front' payment in advance of expenditure

Under the grant terms you are able to claim:

- a percentage of your planned delivery costs - 40% (or equivalent to the % spent in FY23-24 if less than 40%) in FY2025-26)
- 100% of your planned management costs*

To claim this payment:

Complete Annex E, confirming the costs as outlined in your proposal.

Complete Annex D, ensuring this is signed by authorised representative.

Send both accurately completed documents to your Grant Manager along with a copy of your Annex Gii for your FY24-25 grant if applicable.

Any retained funds from FY24-25 will be deducted from the value due – this is purely administrative to avoid clawback.

You can submit your claim after your Grant Offer letter has been issued, signed and returned and after your Annex Gii for FY24-25 has been agreed. Payment will be made as soon as possible, but not before 1 April 2025.

If you have not claimed payments from DWP previously you will need to complete a vendor registration form using the link below at the earliest opportunity

[Provide information about your banking and payments to DWP - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

End of Year Accounting

At the end of the financial year, you will be required to submit an annex G(ii) form verifying your spend over the financial year, which is to be agreed and signed by your accounting/151 officer. This will include all spend within the financial year regardless of which Wave the learner is from.

Your Grant Manager will work with you towards financial year end to undertake reconciliation activity of spend over the financial year. This will include obtaining verification of your actual management costs over the financial year. Any variations to the value paid as part of the 'payment in advance of expenditure' for 100% of your planned management costs will be reconciled if applicable and not already done so earlier in the grant management process.

Grant Assurance

DWP will ask each grant recipient to complete a template to record your own assurance process, including the procedures and processes for collecting evidence for each payment milestone and the activity to prove and defray invoices or claims, cover communication of expectations to providers, management processes, evidence checking, audit requirements, record retention, and checks and action if an anomaly is identified.

At the end of the grant period we will ask you to supply evidence that shows you have applied these checks and balances when managing your grant over the period.

Learner and Employer Evidence Checks

The DWP may conduct random sampling checks of learner and employer evidence throughout the duration of the grant period aligned to reporting periods. We reserve the right to vary the volume and cadence of checks over the lifetime of the grant

However, if any issues arise from any part of the process relating to data returns, payment claims or previous evidence checks, the DWP reserves the right to conduct evidence checks in advance of releasing payment. This includes commissioning additional checks in terms of volume and periodicity on an ad-hoc basis as required.

Publicity and Branding

Please refer to the guidance to align marketing activity with the requirements set out in the guidance.

Course Marketing actions: reach an informed, proactive and diverse audience

Skills Bootcamps providers are required to publish course marketing information to the National Careers Service Course Directory. Your Skills Bootcamps will then be discoverable on [National Careers Service Find a](#)

[Course page](#). You will use a self-service system, *Publish to the Course Directory*, to keep your course information up to date. You will be able to publish new courses, make changes and remove courses in real time.

Please contact the Tribal helpdesk: support@coursedirectory.org.uk who will support you to gain access to the *Publish to the Course Directory* system, including setting up a DWP Sign In (DSI) account which is required to access *Publish to the Course Directory*. Please note that as you are a DWP grant holder we will securely provide Tribal with your contact details, as part of our data sharing agreement with them. Tribal may contact you directly.

The benefits of publishing your Skills Bootcamps in this way are:

- All citizens, regardless of where they live, their interests or ability, can find and make an **informed choice** about the training that is right for them. We expect that people who enquire to you via this route will already have a good understanding of what a Skills Bootcamp is.
- We know from user-research that easily accessible information on available training, the type of opportunities it leads to, when/where it is, and what it costs is key for helping citizens find a course that can fit into their busy lives and **ultimately apply**. National Careers Service Find a Course is a user-friendly, dedicated page to search for government assured training provision, that is undergoing improvement work.
- You and your providers will continue to benefit from the highly successful Skills for Life communications campaign, which signposts people interested in Skills Bootcamps to the [National Careers Service Find a Course page](#). Skills Bootcamps are consistently one of the top performing skills offers included in the campaign. We expect that you will reach a **large, and diverse audience**.
- You can re-use the data. The information in Publish to the Course Directory is published monthly as open-source data files. The files are used by MCAs, local authorities and software providers to populate their own skills and training site search functions, widening the reach of the information. Contact support@coursedirectory.org.uk to request the data files.
- Providers must adhere with DWP's communications guidance and Skills Bootcamps should be advertised, marketed, and delivered in accordance with the specified naming convention and branding. Your nominated grant manager will provide you with a pack that outlines the mandatory requirements along with some optional guidance to support you.
- Providers must promote Skills Bootcamps in such a way as to recruit an eligible, diverse group of learners.
- Opportunities should be promoted to eligible learners through a variety of channels based on those which are more likely to encourage applications from a wide range of adults, including those with protected characteristics:

- a) By making clear in communications the eligibility criteria for the Skills Bootcamp and that the training is free to learners.
- b) By making clear in communications the requirements and expectations of the Skills Bootcamps including the objective of moving to a new/better job

Complaints and Whistleblowing Guidance

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the services provided.

The primary responsibility for receiving feedback and investigating complaints in respect of the services will rest with the provider and where applicable, their subcontractors.

Providers and where applicable, their subcontractors, should have procedures in place to gather and act upon feedback and complaints.

This should be well-advertised and an accessible mechanism (for example, a published webform, an email address or a phone number) to raise a formal complaint through for all applicants, learners, staff and others (e.g., engaged employers) linked to Skills Bootcamps delivery. This should be signposted as part of the onboarding process, alongside an escalation process to the grant recipient.

The published procedures should outline the process, including any appeals process and timeframe for response. The provider (or their subcontractor) will be responsible for resolving complaints in accordance with their own procedures. Once the provider (or their subcontractor) has concluded its investigations, including any appeals process, it should inform the complainant in writing (letter or email) of the final outcome.

The provider (or their subcontractor) should ensure it has in place and complies with an effective whistleblowing procedure, whereby staff may raise in confidence concerns about possible malpractice without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, or disadvantage.

Providers (or their subcontractors) should ensure they retain a record of complaints received. At a minimum this includes:

- Date received
- Complainant name
- Summary of complaint
- The provider (or their subcontractor) response to complaint at each stage of their published complaint procedure, including any appeal process.

Contacting us

Local areas should speak to the grant management team in the first instance.

Glossary

Glossary	Descriptor
14 qualifying days	For funding purposes, 14 qualifying days means that the learner attended day 1 of their Skills Bootcamp and undertook the required study and remained on the programme on day 14 (calendar days) and having completed any minimum GLH as detailed in the relevant payment milestones.
Accelerated Apprenticeship	An accelerated apprenticeship means the apprenticeship's planned duration is shorter by at least 3 months than the typical duration of the standard, based on recognition of prior learning. Minimum requirements of an apprenticeship must still be met (12-month minimum duration and 20% off-the-job training).
Best Practice	The findings from a synthesis of evidence given in interviews, the opinions of providers themselves and analysis of QA&I data. The following categories are most frequently and consistently identified as the most important for achieving high levels of completions and outcomes in Skills Bootcamps: Building and sustaining an employer network: Build strong relationships with local employers, using this network to embed themselves in the industry, working in partnership to achieve completions and outcomes. Knowing your sector: Understand what the sector and its employers want and what skills they need and incorporate this into the design and delivery of the Skills Bootcamp. Recruitment expertise: Secure genuine interviews, vacancies or assurances of future opportunities for learners early, pre-programme if possible. Securing the right learners for the right course: Use stringent screening, application and IAG processed to ensure learners have the right qualities and behaviours to complete the course and secure an outcome. Expectations, aspiration and commitment: Set high expectations of learner behaviour (e.g. attitude, aspiration, attendance, punctuality, confidence, resilience) and highlight the potential endpoint and/or progression route to build aspiration and commitment. High quality, engaging, real-world teaching: High quality teaching that engages learners through to completion, reflects the realities of working in the sector and builds credibility with employers by delivering the skills they need.
Co-funded Learner	Employed individuals where the employer is co-funding the learning.

Completion	Learners finish their training and final assessment, and; A) for Independent Learners – an offer of an interview for a vacancy which meet the criteria set out in the Service Requirements; B) for Self-Employed Learners - written confirmation from the Self-Employed Learners of how the Skills Bootcamp training has been or will be applied to enable them to secure new work of contract, which meet the criteria set out in the Service Requirements; and C) for Co-Funded Learners – an offer of an interview for a new role or responsibility or an offer of a new role or responsibility which in either case meets the criteria set out in the Service Requirements. D) Including any definition as defined within the payment terms/profile.
Drop Out	Where a M1 payment is claimed for a learner, but the learner does not finish the training.
Employment status	The main types of employment are: 1. Worker. 2. Employee. 3. Self-employed. 4. Contractor. 5. Director. 6. Office holder. More information on employment status is available.
Finish	The point at which the Skills Bootcamp course content ends (100% of GLH and final assessment finished).

Guided Learning (GL)	Guided Learning is the activity of a learner being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training (including placement, onsite or practical education or training) under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, with the simultaneous presence of the learner and that person in the same physical or virtual space. This could include, but is not limited to, simultaneous presence: in a classroom, in a virtual classroom or breakout room, on site, placement, or other physical learning environment. GLH can include learners being taught content in the same physical or virtual space (such as a classroom style delivery), as well as undertaking project work, workshops and assessments which are under the regular guidance, supervision and support of a tutor i.e. the tutor is ‘circulating’, checking in on groups/learners, offering advice, guidance and feedback, asking prompt questions to stimulate ideas, getting learners on the right path etc. This can also include work-based activities and coaching and mentoring among others. GLH does not cover examples where learners are sent off to do a project independently, in groups or alone where the tutor is not regularly supporting or interacting in the ways described above i.e. it does not include time spent on unsupervised preparation or study, whether at home or otherwise. It also does not include optional, drop-in sessions that learners can book in addition to the planned guided learning hours set out for the Skills Bootcamp. It does not include watching recordings from live, or prerecorded sessions.
Guided Learning Hour (GLH)	An hour spent by a learner participating in Guided Learning.
Independent Learner	Individuals not being co-funded by their employer.
Interview	A job interview is an interview consisting of a conversation between a job applicant and a representative of an employer which is conducted to assess whether the applicant should be hired. This does not include: • Learners being signed up to recruitment agencies, as evidence of an offer of an interview. • General interviews with recruitment agencies without a live vacancy, as evidence of an offer of an interview. • Interviews arranged where: (a) Learners are invited to employer meet and greet sessions e.g. an employer insight day (b) Learners are invited to meet employers as part of an initial screening process

Paid employment for a minimum of twelve continuous weeks	Confirmation of the offer of a job with a duration of 12 weeks, including where learners are employed on a zero hours' contract and / or contracted by an agency, that utilises the skills acquired by attending the Skills Bootcamp. Where this is for an initial temporary assignment lasting less than 12 weeks, the job offer includes a description of the role, the start date, the length of assignment, and confirmation that further assignments will follow. This does not mean where learners are contracted, registered or signed up to some form of organisation/agency with no line of sight to a job offer.
RRPA	Recognising and Rewarding Progress and Achievement.
SFIA	Skills Framework for the Information Age.
Self-employed	A person is self-employed if they run their business for themselves and take responsibility for its success or failure. Self-employed workers are not paid through PAYE, and they do not have the rights and responsibilities of an employee. A learner who will be fully-funded by the DWP and is not being trained on behalf of their existing employer.
Small or Medium Enterprise (SME)	A small or medium sized employer is defined as having fewer than 250 employees.
Starts	Learners claimed at milestone 1 (M1).
Subcontractor	Person other than the provider, who is a party to a sub-contract and the servants or agents of that person.
Provider	Person, firm or company with whom the authority enters into this contract as identified in the contract order form.



XXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX,
XXXXXXXXXXXX,
XXXXXX,
XXXX,
XXXXX

Dec 2025

Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 (Wave 7) – CONTRACT NUMBER

Dear XXXX,

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, acting through the Department for Work and Pensions, I would like to offer ACCOUNTABLE BODY (the “Grant Recipient” or “You”) a grant (“Funding”) for the amount set out and on the terms and conditions contained in and referred to in this Grant Offer Letter.

The Power under which the Funding is to be paid: **Section 14 of the Education Act 2002**, and will accordingly be paid only in respect of Eligible Expenditure for the purpose of the Funded Activities. Any unused Funding will need to be returned to the Department in accordance with the more detailed provisions set out in Annex H.

This Funding is to arrange for the delivery of and management of Skills Bootcamps in your geographical and neighbouring areas in agreement with relevant local authorities. The Skills Bootcamps shall be aligned to employer needs and directly linked to employment opportunities (with outcomes to be delivered a maximum of 6 months following this agreement end date) as described in the Policy Specification at Annex F.

This agreement dates from 1st April 2026 to 30th September 2027. ***The funding referred to is for the 2026-27 financial year only; the period 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2027 is to achieve outcomes for the learners who completed their Skills Bootcamp in FY2026-27 and funding for these cases will be available in FY2027-28.***

The Department may extend the funding period of this agreement for 12 months, by giving written notice to the Grant Recipient no later than 31 March 2027 and a further 12 months, by giving written notice to the Grant Recipient no later than 31 March 2028.

Each extension will be subject to:

- Funding and other approvals for subsequent years.
- Assessment of Need
- Satisfactory delivery performance
- The understanding that outcomes can be delivered a maximum of 6 months from agreement end dates.

Skills Bootcamps rely on local knowledge of skills shortages and employer needs, and the ability to attract and train local learners and to help them achieve better job outcomes. The key delivery outcomes are detailed in the Key Performance Indicators included in Annex F.

I am pleased to inform you that the Department is willing to offer You Funding of up to:

- £xxxxxxxx.00 (XXX Million XXX Hundred and XXX Thousand Pounds) of which a maximum of 15%, £XXXXXX.00 (XXX Hundred and XXXX Thousand Pounds) may be used to cover management costs to deliver the programme, for the period from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027¹, (see Project Specific Condition 10) which will be paid in accordance with the Grant Payment Schedule at Annex H.
- The grant also includes £xxxxxx as part of the Construction Skills package for FY2026-27. This is the minimum amount to be spent on Skills Bootcamps in skills related to construction that are in demand locally.
- The funding stated above is not intended to cover any spillover costs for Skills Bootcamps that started in FY2025-26, those costs will be covered separately when claimed; Annex C(ii) should be used for this purpose.

The period 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2027 is to achieve outcomes for the learners who completed their Skills Bootcamp in FY2026-27 and management costs for this period will be available in FY2027-28.

This correspondence constitutes a Grant Offer Letter, which, on acceptance of the offer contained in it, will form an integral part of the Grant Funding

1

Agreement. The offer is subject to the provisions, limitations, and conditions set out below, and to the DfE general [Grant Terms and Conditions²](#), as from time to time published on the Department's GOV.UK website and accessible via the link provided here or any subsequent version from time to time published on that website, which shall automatically be deemed to be substituted for any earlier version on and from the date on which the later version is stated to apply to any new agreements entered into. You should read all Annexes and general terms and conditions carefully before accepting the offer of Funding. **Failure to observe these terms and conditions may result in the Funding being withdrawn.**

Project specific conditions

The grant is awarded under the additional following general conditions specific for this project:

The Grant Terms and Conditions are hereby amended and supplemented as follows:

(1) Clause 4.2 and 4.6 shall be read and construed subject to the following additional provisions:

(a) Without prejudice to the generality of any of its obligations in Clause 20 and subject always to its specific duties under Clause 20.1, 18.1 and 21.3, the Grant Recipient shall have the freedom to decide, acting reasonably, how best to ensure that the funded Activities are delivered in accordance with the relevant aims and objectives of this Grant Funding Agreement as set out in Annex F, provided that, where applicable, it complies in full with its duties as a contracting authority under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Procurement Act 2023 once in effect, and internal governance rules and duly selects and awards contracts to providers in accordance with those Regulations and such rules subject to the provisions of Section 7 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the applicable Section of the Procurement Act 2023 (light touch regime).

(b) Where the Grant Recipient reasonably considers that it would be more appropriate for providers to be funded by way of grant and is satisfied that this would not constitute a breach of the aforementioned Regulations and it is consistent with its own rules it may do so provided that those providers are selected on the basis of a competitive process for grant funding approximating as closely as possible to a competition for the award of a public contract subject to the provisions of Section 7 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the applicable Section of the Procurement Act 2023 (light touch regime).

(c) If the Grant Recipient reasonably considers that it would not be appropriate for providers to be selected using a competitive process (whether in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Procurement Act 2023 once in effect or under a single tender action), the Grant Recipient may, using its sectoral knowledge and existing relationships, award funding by way of grant on the basis of objective criteria without any prior competitive process on condition that:

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions>

(i) it uses reasonable endeavours (for example by relevant benchmarking) to ensure that none of the Funding paid to such subcontractors (including grantees) in respect of any services or supplies delivered by them represents more than the market rate for equivalent services, (after duly informing itself and taking relevant professional advice and after taking into consideration any regional differences, the scale of service provided and any resulting efficiencies of scale) and

(ii) it keeps records adequately recording in each case the basis on which the appropriate level of payments has been determined.

(2) The provisions of Clause 22.5 apply only to the extent of any Funding awarded to and retained by the Grant Recipient in respect of Eligible Expenditure incurred directly by itself, including in particular expenditure directly related to the administration of the Funding and the management of contracts and grants awarded to third parties, but do not apply as a matter of course to funding of providers (whether by way of public contracts or grant funding agreements). It is the duty of the Grant Recipient to satisfy itself whether the relevant legislation applies and on what grounds, if any, it does not and, if it does, to determine if any relevant exceptions or exemptions apply, without prejudice to any of its other duties in Clause 20.”

(3) You are required to make it a specific legal requirement of any contract or arrangement which you enter into with any providers of Skills Bootcamps using Funding provided to You pursuant to this Grant Funding Agreement that it must follow the Policy Specification in Annex F.

(4) Grant terms should comply with government Grants Functional Standard

(5) Local areas are permitted to use up to 50% of the delivery cost element of the grant award to deliver Skills Bootcamps in any sector or skill area needed locally outside the Skills England identified priorities - the 8 Industrial Strategy priorities (Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy, Digital Technologies, Life Sciences, Creative Industries, Financial Services, Professional Services, and Defence) plus Construction and Health and Social Care.

(6) Notwithstanding Clause 4.6 the Grant Recipient is specifically required to enter into contracts or funding agreements or otherwise make payments to providers of Skills Bootcamps within the limits of its own powers and subject to ensuring that the providers are made fully aware of and required to comply at all times with the same terms and conditions *mutatis mutandis* (so far as relevant) imposed on the Grant Recipient by this Grant Funding Agreement.

Immediately upon entering into a relevant agreement or other arrangement with any relevant providers (including sub-contractors) of Skills Bootcamps in accordance with the objectives of this Grant Funding Agreement, the Grant Recipient must update the ILR system with the Skills Bootcamps Contract Details using the appropriate upload document. The Grant Recipient must also ensure the NCS Find a Course website is updated regularly to include all their contracted Skills Bootcamps open to learner applications.

(7) The Grant Recipient must use its best endeavours to ensure that the providers with which it has entered into any relevant agreement or other arrangement to provide Skills Bootcamps in accordance with the objectives of this Grant Funding Agreement achieves the following outcomes:

- XXX learner starts between 1st April 2026 and 31st March 2027 (based on an average learner cost of £3170 across FY2025-26)

- At least 80% of those who start training will complete, by 31 March 2027 which includes 100% of relevant learners³ being offered a guaranteed interview with an employer with appropriate vacancies.
- At least 75% of learners who complete their course will have a positive outcome (a new job must be continuous employment for at least 12 weeks or an apprenticeship, increased responsibilities or a new role with existing employer or increased opportunities for the self-employed) within 6 months of completing their Skills Bootcamp.

(8) The Grant Recipient must

- a on or before 1 May 2026 produce a delivery plan showing a delivery trajectory for learner starts.
- b When agreements are made with providers to deliver Skills Bootcamps, the details of agreements must be recorded in the Skills Bootcamps Contract collection, via Submit Learner Data (SLD) <https://guidance.submit-learner-data.service.gov.uk/24-25/ilr/fieldcollectionrequirements/skillsbootcamps>.
- c Ensure that the provider returns the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) in line with the ILR Skills Bootcamps funding stream specification.
- d ad hoc Reports in response to wider requests from the Department for information to support upward reporting and further development of the Skills Bootcamp programme from time to time.

(9) To ensure delivery and budgetary confidence, at least 20% of learner starts must occur by 31st July 2026 (to be reviewed by 15 August 2026); and 50% of learner starts must have occurred by 30 September 2026 (to be reviewed by 15 November based on data reporting through the ILR). If budget forecasting raises concerns in the programme, we reserve the right to reduce the amount of the Funding for the remainder of the Funding Period by an amount corresponding as closely as reasonably possible, to the amount of the Funding remaining, including the associated management costs, but for the avoidance of doubt, not below a level which affects Funding that has been committed to providers in respect of learners who already have start dates or have started or completed their training.

(10) The Grant Recipient is permitted to use a maximum of 15% of the Funding to cover the actual costs necessarily incurred in managing and administering the disbursement of the Funding to third parties as required to further the objectives of this Grant Funding Agreement, including (without limitation) the establishment of, entry into, and management of arrangements with the providers of Skills Bootcamps. These costs shall be as agreed and detailed in Annex E and must be signed off as part of your Section 151 Officer review at the end of the financial year; we reserve the right to reconcile the payments made to ensure that management fees account for no more than those agreed in Annex H.

(11) Notwithstanding the Government policy referred to below prohibiting the Grant Recipient from spending or claiming any part of the Funding for the purpose of advertising, marketing or any of the other costs specified and the provisions of Clause 29 and without prejudice to Clause 11.4 the Grant Recipient may use Funding to attract learners through media, website-based, and other appropriate marketing and communications and shall submit claims for such costs as part the management costs referred to in Special Condition (9) above).

³ A relevant learner is a learner who is not sponsored by their existing employer and is not self-employed.

(12) Notwithstanding clause 11.4 prohibiting you from applying Funding to services that you have a statutory duty to provide, and without prejudice to other terms in 11.4, you may apply Funding to Skills Bootcamps as defined in Annex F.

(13) The Grant Recipient will insert a clause in all supplier contracts/agreements stating: All parties must agree to share Skills Bootcamps performance data with and between DWP and all Skills Bootcamps Grant Recipients. This will enable all funders to review previous performance of suppliers/training providers within the programme when considering new and additional delivery contracts.

(14). Where the Grant Recipient withdraws from the programme, they will continue to collect and report data on completions and outcomes from delivery for six months following the end of the final Skills Bootcamp. The DWP will provide reasonable management costs to support this activity.

Complying with Government policies

The grant funding is provided on the strict understanding that none of this funding is to be used for advertising, marketing, communications and consultancy, or for any costs associated with the maintenance, technical development or updating of existing websites or for the development/creation of new websites.

In addition to providing a signed copy of this Grant Funding Agreement, you are then requested to follow the instructions on Bank Account Details (in Annex B) and provide details of Your bank account which must be at a bank authorised to conduct banking business in England. This will allow Us to set You up on the Department's DWP ERP payment system to receive Funding.

Payment claims must be submitted in accordance with Clause 10.1 of the general Terms and Conditions and may only be sent to the Department once the Grant Funding Agreement has been signed and any pre-disbursement conditions have been met.

Payments will be disbursed into the bank account with the number provided through the process laid down in Annex B and the Department shall not be responsible for any errors caused by any mistakes in the information provided by **ACCOUNTABLE BODY**.

Please note that any delays in returning the documents could result in a delay to the payment of Funding.

FE colleges are at the heart of their local communities and are a key part of

the skills system in delivering priority skills programmes, including Skills Bootcamps. We encourage you to engage with FE colleges regarding Skills Bootcamps and will support you in appointing the best providers to deliver successfully in your area.

The Grant Manager for this Project at the DWP, Skills Bootcamps Team is Niki Comer. We look forward to working with you to bring about the rapid signature of the Grant Agreement.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER

If you wish to accept this offer of a grant, please sign both copies of the enclosed Grant Funding agreement Annex A.

You must accept this grant offer and the conditions made in it in writing no later than 10 days from the date of this letter.

If you cannot return the acceptance by the specified date, please contact me before that date to explain the reasons. Otherwise, we will assume that the offer has been refused, and it will be withdrawn without further correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

Niki Comer

For and on behalf of Department for Work and Pensions
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3BT
Web: www.gov.uk/DWP

This Grant Funding Agreement is made between:

(1) The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, and

(2) **ACCOUNTABLE BODY**.

This Agreement comprises the Grant Offer Letter, project specific conditions, where relevant, any annexes to this letter and general [Grant Terms and Conditions](#)⁴.

This letter must be read in conjunction with general conditions of grant and these relevant annexes:

Annex A - Acceptance of Grant Offer and effective date

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions>

- Annex B - Bank account details
- Annex C(i) - Claiming Grant in Arrears – current year delivery
- Annex C(ii) – Claiming Grant in Arrears – FY2025-26 delivery
- Annex D - Claiming Grant in Advance
- Annex E - Details of Grant Allocations
- Annex F - List of Objectives for which the grant is being paid
- ~~Annex G (i) – Annual Certification of Expenditure (external auditor or accountant's report arrangements)~~ **NOT USED**
- Annex G (ii) – Statement of Grant Usage (Statement prepared by Local Authority)
- Annex H - Grant Payment schedule
- Annex I - Sample Exit Plan
- Annex J - Sample Progress Report Template
- Annex K - Generic Standard GDPR Clauses:
 - Schedule 1 - Processing, Personal Data and Data Subjects
 - Schedule 2 - Schedule for Joint Controller Agreements

Annex A - Acceptance of Grant Offer and effective date – Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 – **CONTRACT NUMBER.**

This Grant Funding Agreement is effective from the date of signing.

Signed by person authorised to sign on behalf of the Secretary of State	
Date	
Signature	
Name (please print)	XXXX
Position in DfE	XXXX

As representative of **ACCOUNTABLE BODY**, I have read both the Grant Offer Letter and associated annexes, and the DWP Grant Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions [Grant Terms and Conditions](#). I agree to comply with the notified conditions of the grant on which the offer is made.

Signed by a person authorised to sign on behalf of ACCOUNTABLE BODY	
Date	
Signature	
Name (please print)	
Position in organisation	

Principal contacts	Department	ACCOUNTABLE BODY
Contact name	Niki Comer	Project manager
Position	Grant Manager	
Telephone no.		
Email address	Nicola-jane.comer@education.gov.uk	

User Note: Grant Recipient to sign and date one copy of this *letter of offer* and retain it for their records. Grant Recipient to Sign and date another copy of this letter and return to the grant manager. The Grant Manager or whoever has the relevant authority should sign and date Annex B. A copy of the signed Grant Offer letter should be returned to the Grant Recipient.

Annex B – Bank account details - Skills Bootcamp FY2026-27 –

CONTRACT NUMBER

Information required by the Department to make payment of grant for the activities stated in the offer letter.

Use the link below to add or amend Supplier or Provider's bank details or other information to the DfE ERP system.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/DfE-suppliers-bank-details-forms>

PLEASE NOTE: THIS PAGE WILL BE UPDATED IN TIME FOR THE OFFICIAL TRANSFER FROM DfE TO DWP – A VARIATION TO THIS GOL WILL BE ISSUED.

Annex C(i) - Grant claim form for **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** Claiming Grant in Arrears - Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**

This claim form should be completed by an authorised senior officer of **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** and returned to your nominated Grant Manager as soon as possible in the month following that for which the grant is being claimed and should be supported by invoices or receipts. The Authority will sample check expenditure over the duration of the funding period, in which evidence of receipts and/or invoices will be required to be provided.

Amount of claim in respect of Delivery which started in FY2026-27 only:

Insert the details which are expected to show that expenditure has taken place	£
Sum Claimed for this period	£
TOTAL GRANT CLAIMED IN FY2026-27	£

I certify that:

- the above claim is made in accordance with the Grant Offer Letter and Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement for the Skills Bootcamps Wave 7 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**
- the claim is in respect of eligible expenditure already committed or incurred;
- the information I have provided in this form is complete and correct, and
- no claim has been made for funding in respect of these items from any other body.

Signed by a senior officer authorised to sign on behalf of ACCOUNTABLE BODY	
Date	
Signature	
Name (please print)	
Position in organisation	

Annex C(ii) - Grant claim form for **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** Claiming Grant in Arrears - Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**

This claim form should be completed by an authorised senior officer of **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** and returned to your nominated Grant Manager as soon as possible in the month following that for which the grant is being claimed and should be supported by invoices or receipts. The Authority will sample check expenditure over the duration of the funding period, in which evidence of receipts and/or invoices will be required to be provided.

Amount of claim in respect of Delivery which started in FY2025-26 only:

Insert the details which are expected to show that expenditure has taken place	£
Sum Claimed for this period	£
TOTAL CLAIMED IN FY2026-27 relating directly to delivery that started in FY2025-26	£

I certify that:

- the above claim is made in accordance with the Grant Offer Letter and Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement for the Skills Bootcamps Wave 6 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**
- the claim is in respect of eligible expenditure already committed or incurred;
- the information I have provided in this form is complete and correct, and
- no claim has been made for funding in respect of these items from any other body.

Signed by a senior officer authorised to sign on behalf of ACCOUNTABLE BODY	
Date	
Signature	
Name (please print)	
Position in organisation	

Annex D - Grant claim form for Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 **CONTRACT NUMBER**, permitted to claim Grant in Advance of Expenditure

This claim form should be completed by an authorised senior officer of **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** and returned to your nominated Grant Manager **along with a completed Annex E.**

	Claim in FY 2026-27
a. Management Costs as detailed in Annex E	£
b. XX % of the total delivery funding element of the Grant.	£
c. Total Claim from FY2026-27 grant.	£
d. Claim to be paid by DWP	£

I certify that:

- * the above claim is made in accordance with the Grant Offer Letter and Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement for the Skills Bootcamp Wave 6.
 - * the grant received and spent will be used wholly for the purposes for which it is given.
 - * the information I have provided in this form is complete and correct, and
 - * the amount of grant claimed on this form represents expenditure incurred or to be incurred for the purposes for which grant is given.

Signed by a senior officer authorised to sign on behalf of ACCOUNTABLE BODY	
Date	
Signature	
Name (please print)	
Position in organisation	

Annex E - Details of Grant Resource Budget Allocation-Skills Bootcamp FY2026-27 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**

Table 1 - Overview of Estimated Budget

Item	£ for Financial Year 2026/27
Overview of Income and revenue	
A. Income	
A1: Grant from the Department	
A2: Financial contributions Grantee own resources	
A3: Other Financial Contributions from third parties – Match Funding, Contributions in Kind	
A4: +Other income to be specified	
TOTAL Income A	
Overview of Expenditure	
B. Eligible Salary costs	
B1: Staff and Volunteer Costs Salaries, Wages and any associated direct costs	
B2: Travel and subsistence	
B3: Office equipment and materials	
B4: Other direct costs eg training	
B5: +Other costs – to be specified	
Subtotal B	
C. Administration non-staff costs	
C1: Payments to Service Providers: Sub-contracting and other external services (For each supplier please identify these costs)	
C2: Indirect costs - Overheads	
C3: Advertising, marketing, communications (where approved by the Department)	
C4: Consultancy (where approved by DWP)	
C5: Audit fees Annual Certification of Expenditure	
C6: Irrecoverable VAT costs	
C7: +Other service costs – to be specified	
Subtotal C	
TOTAL Grant Costs B+C	£

Annex F – The principal objective of the Funding is the establishment of Skills Bootcamps.

The Funding, which is from the National Skills Fund, must be used to achieve the overall policy objectives of the Skills Bootcamps programme.

Skills Bootcamps are intensive, Level 2-5 or equivalent flexible training courses up to 16 weeks, with a guaranteed job interview (in the case of a new job), which equip adults with technical skills that enable them to access in demand jobs, apprenticeships, new opportunities and an increased level of income over time (including for the self-employed).

The Grant Recipient should aim to design a programme of procurement, and if necessary, grant funding intended to maximise learner numbers in the skills sectors that make them more employable locally.

Specifically, the Funding should have as its objective to meet the minimum targets set out in Column 2 of the table overleaf in respect of each of the objectives set out in Column 1.

In designing the terms and conditions and service specification for any procured services or, as the case may be, laying down conditions, including setting out the relevant objectives, for any grant funding, the Grant Recipient should ensure that providers are, so far as possible, required to comply with the content of the Policy Specification below and the minimum targets set out in Column 2 of the table overleaf in respect of each of the objectives set out in Column 1.



SKILLS_BOOTCAMPS
_Wv7_GUIDANCE_AN

List of Objectives and Associated Targets for which the grant is being paid - Skills Bootcamp FY2026-27–

CONTRACT NUMBER

	Column 1	Column 2
Learner Starts	The number of expected learner starts before 31 March 2027, based on an average learner cost in FY25-26 of £3170.	XXXX
Learner Completions	The Grant Recipient will work with suppliers to ensure at least 80% of learners complete their course.	XXXX
Guaranteed Interview for each Relevant Learner* on the Skills Bootcamp *a Relevant Learner is one who is not training with the support of their existing employer or are self-employed.	Interview must be for a job (which can be an Apprenticeship) The interview must be for a job that matches the skills acquired by the Learner through the successful completion of the Skills Bootcamp.	100%
Learner Outcomes / Career Progression The Grant Recipient will work with suppliers to ensure a positive outcome for at least 75% of individuals within 6 months of completing their Skills Bootcamp	Unemployed Learners/independent Learners: Should get a new job (which can be an Apprenticeship) within 6 months of completion of their Skills Bootcamp, that utilises the skills acquired in the Skills Bootcamp Employed Learners being supported by their employers: Should get a new or different role within 6 months of completion of their Skills Bootcamp, that utilises the skills acquired in the Skills Bootcamp. Self-employed Learners: Should secure new opportunities/contracts within 6 months of completion of their Skills Bootcamp, that utilises the skills acquired in the Skills Bootcamp	75%
New Skills	Learners who successfully complete a Skills Bootcamp will have acquired new skills within the scope of the Skills Bootcamp programme.	100%

Referral to alternative Opportunities	Learners who are unsuccessful at post completion interview should be referred to other job and training opportunities.	100%
Learner Drop-Out Rates	Robust recruitment and Learner support processes must be in place to minimise Learner drop- outs.	<= 20%
Employer Engagement	Every Skills Bootcamp should be able to evidence Employer Engagement at the Design Stage, during the Delivery Stage and Post Skills Bootcamp Stage, supporting the Learner into the improved outcome.	100%
Employer Co-Funding	Where they are training their own existing employees*, all employers must co-fund the training with a cash contribution. <i>*Employee defined as directly employed by the employer, not a worker, sub-contractor, or freelancer</i> <i>** SME defined as an employer with less than 250 employees.</i>	=/>30% of Skills Bootcamp Cost =/>10% of Skills Bootcamp cost if the employer is an SME**

Annex G (i) - Annual Certification of Expenditure (external
auditor or accountant's report arrangements) NOT USED

Annex G (ii) – Statement of Grant Usage – Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**

* The letter is to be reproduced on headed paper of the local authority or maintained school

* This section is an alternative to Annex G (i) and is to be used where the grant recipient is a Local Authority or maintained school.

Notes for completion:

1. The Grant Recipient shall prepare a Certification of Grant Usage for the Grant Period Insert start and end dates.
2. This comprises three parts:
 - a) Certificate of Grant Usage.
 - b) Statement of Expenditure; and
 - c) Report confirming Delivery.
3. The Grant Recipient shall submit the forms to the Department **no later than 28, twenty eight days** from the end of the Grant Period.

a) Certificate of Grant Usage

Name of organisation	Insert Name of Grant Recipient
Approved Project title	Insert Project name

- The total Grant amount of £INSERT FIGURE was exclusively used for the purposes set out in the agreement between the Grant Recipient and the Department, dated INSERT DATE OF OUR LETTER.
- A Grant Management Plan, including narrative on current position, shall be submitted as a report on the activities funded by the Grant Funding will be submitted to the Department, confirming that the grant outputs have been delivered to a satisfactory standard and the expected benefits that have accrued or will accrue. The report will be provided within 28 days after the completion of the funding of Skills Bootcamps FY2025-26 **INSERT CONTRACT NUMBER.**
- A final financial statement detailing the use of the Grant Funding will be provided in section b – Statement of Expenditure. This is a summary

statement of all receipts and expenditures connected with the above Project. The organisation's financial systems that recorded the income and expenditure of this Grant have provided sufficient internal control for the purposes of this certification.

Signature

Name Date

Position

Organisation address

Postcode

Initialed by Organisation's Chief Financial Officer/
Auditor

b) Statement of Expenditure

Name of Organisation	Insert Name of Grant Recipient	
Name of Approved Project	Insert Project name	
Expenditure Type		(£)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		
Paid for as follows		(£)

Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27 Grants

Contribution from DWP	
Matching funding from own partners' resources	
Other funding	
TOTAL	
Under spend on Grant (if applicable)	
Any unspent funds at 31 March 2027 must be repaid to DWP upon request, even if they are committed.	
Payments falling into FY2027-28 must be paid from your FY2027-28 grant.	

c) Report confirming Delivery

The outputs will be taken from the ILR.

Annex H – Proposed Grant payment schedule - Skills Bootcamp FY2026-27 – **CONTRACT NUMBER**

The Department will pay this Grant to **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** in accordance with the following payment schedule, subject to **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** meeting the requirements of this Grant Funding Agreement.

Grant Project Name	Skills Bootcamps FY2026-27	
Grant Reference Number	CONTRACT NUMBER	
Proposed Payment Stages	Activity Details / Outputs	Proposed Payment Amount
To Be Claimed within Quarter 1		
DWP (The Department) will pay the Grant Recipient following receipt of the completed claim form at Annex D	Management Costs detailed in Annex E	£
	XX% of Delivery Costs detailed in Annex E	£
Remaining Delivery Costs (subject to agreement conditions including performance conditions set out on item 7 in Project Specific Conditions)		
To be paid on receipt of a completed claim form (Annex C)	Delivery actuals paid in arrears after initial grant funding has been utilised., and subject to agreement conditions.	£

1. The Grant Recipient is responsible for the audit trail to prove course starts, completions and outcomes, and grant management by the Department will involve random checks on individual starts, completions and outcomes in claims.
2. Job outcomes will be considered achieved only if they happen within 6 months of the completion of the Skills Bootcamp and the latest this can happen is a maximum of 6 months from this agreement end date. The Grant Recipient will be responsible to report on the Job Outcomes over this period.
3. Grant claims will be reconciled as soon as possible when definite participant numbers and course costs are known. At this point the Department will action any required clawback of funds.
4. Final claims need to be submitted no later than 8 weeks after the final outcome period has passed.

Annex I – Sample exit plan - Skills Bootcamp FY2026-27 – CONTRACT NUMBER

The exit plan is for illustration purposes only. You may wish to draft your own plan to suit your own particular requirements and can use the headings below as a basis for structuring your own plan.

Introduction

1. Although the Department does not seek to exercise detailed control of the activities of **ACCOUNTABLE BODY**, it must ensure that public money is protected and value for money achieved. To meet this requirement, this Annex describes the duties and responsibilities of **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** and the Department, leading up to and covering the expiry or termination of this grant for whatever reason and the transfer of the grant funded activities.
2. This Annex defines the exit plan and how it shall be revised to ensure that it remains workable at any time. The Department and **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** acknowledge the importance of keeping the exit plan up to date during the term of the Grant and of reflecting the impact of all relevant changes to the grant funded activities or outputs required. You shall not make any additional charge for any work undertaken in making changes to the exit plan. Where there are principles to be adopted in implementing this plan, the parties to this Grant Funding Agreement shall endeavour to agree the relevant details within such principles.
3. The Department shall be entitled to disclose the contents of the exit plan to any future bidder for the Grant (or its equivalent).

Objectives

4. The objective of the exit plan is to ensure:
 - an orderly and smooth transition of the grant funded activities from **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** to a successor body or the Department at the expiry or termination of this Grant;
 - the continuation of grant funded activities;
 - that there is no undue favour to **ACCOUNTABLE BODY** in any future competition for the Grant (in whole or in part); and
 - that the responsibilities of both parties to the Grant Funding Agreement are clearly defined in the event of expiry or termination.

General

5. Where the Department intends to continue the operation of the grant funded activities in broadly the same way after expiry or termination, either

by performing them itself or by means of a successor, you shall endeavour to ensure the smooth and orderly transition of the grant funded activities and shall co-operate with the Department or the successor, as the case may be, in order to achieve such transition.

6. When such endeavours and co-operation are outside the scope of the Grant, you shall provide quotations for reasonable charges associated with providing such assistance and the Department shall pay such reasonable charges.
7. You shall comply with any reasonable request of the Department for information relating to the performance of the grant funded activities, including the use of other parties. You will be allowed a reasonable period of time in which to respond to the Department.

Exit Planning

8. You shall, in conjunction with the Department, maintain, and as necessary update, the Exit Plan throughout the period of the Grant so that it can be implemented immediately, if required. From time-to-time either the Department or you can instigate a review of the Exit Plan.
9. You shall co-operate with all reasonable requests made by either the Department or a successor body relating to exit transition arrangements for the grant funded activities.

Assistance

10. You shall be responsible for delivering the grant funded activities and achieving the objectives at Annex F until the date of expiry or termination or transfer of the Grant (as appropriate).
11. You shall use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that a transition of responsibility for the delivery of the grant funded activities to the successor body or the Department, as the case may be, minimises any detrimental effect on the delivery of the activities and the Department shall use all reasonable endeavours to co-operate in such transfer.

Assets Register

12. You shall maintain throughout the exit period of this Grant an asset register in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement.
13. You shall not change the status of any asset without the prior written consent of the Department where such a change would either be viewed as a major change or would require repayment in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement.

Transfer of the Department's Data

In addition to complying with the provisions of the main agreement, you shall, upon reasonable written request by the Department or in

14. any event, within one month of notice of termination, deliver the Department's data, including the following:
 - a) an inventory of the Department's data and any other data available for transfer;
 - b) a data structure definition (where relevant) covering all available Departmental data; and
 - c) a proposed method for testing the integrity and completeness of the Department's data transferred.

Documentation and Access

15. You shall provide the Department on request with information and documentation reasonably necessary to assist with the transfer of the grant funded activities to the Department or to a successor body, including any documentation required to support any bidding process for the provision of the activities. This includes full details of:
 - a) the work programme, objectives/targets, and other services delivered by you under this funding agreement.
 - b) any software, including third party software and any hardware used in connection with the delivery of the activities.
 - c) software and supply agreements used to deliver any services associated with delivery of the activities, including the agreements relating to any third-party software identified by name of supplier, term of Grant, and charges payable under the Grant; and
 - d) any employees used by you to help deliver the grant funded activities who are essential to this delivery; this information shall be provided under conditions of confidentiality reasonably acceptable to you.
16. The Department may make the documentation available to suppliers who wish to bid for the provision of the activities. You shall respond expediently and in full to any reasonable questions by the Department or the suppliers and shall co-operate with any reasonable due diligence activities carried out by suppliers.

Transfer Support Activities

17. You shall co-operate with all reasonable requests made by either the Department or a successor relating to the grant funded activities transition arrangements. The Department and you shall discuss the implementation plan for the transition of the activities to either the Department or a Successor body.

Annex J – Sample Progress and Final reporting form – **NOT USED**

The Grant Management Plan fulfils this purpose and will be retained as part of the grant documentation.

Annex K – Generic Standard GDPR Clauses

Schedule 1 - Processing, Personal Data and Data Subjects

Notwithstanding Clause 51.1 of the [Grants Terms and Conditions](#), the Parties acknowledge that they are also Joint Controllers for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation in respect of:

- Learner and Provider participation data
- Provider performance data

In respect of Personal Data under Joint Control, Clause 51.1 - 51.14 will not apply and the Parties agree to put in place a Joint Controller Agreement as outlined in Schedule 2 instead.

This Schedule shall be completed by the Controller, who may take account of the view of the Processors, however the final decision as to the content of this Schedule shall be with the Controller at its absolute discretion.

1. The contact details of the Data Protection Officer are: **INSERT NAME, INSERT EMAIL**
2. The contact details of the Department's Data Protection Officer are:
Department for Education, 7&8 Wellington Place, Wellington Street,
Leeds, LS1 4AW
Email: dataprotection.office@education.gov.uk.
3. Where a Party acts as a Data Processor it shall comply with any further written instructions with respect to processing by the Data Controller.
4. Any such further instructions shall be incorporated into this Schedule.

Description	Details
Identity of the Controller and Processor	The Parties acknowledge that for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation, the Customer is the Controller and the Grant Recipient is the Processor in accordance with Clause 50.1 in respect of: • UK Register of Learning Pool (UKPRN) portal data • Learner reference number • Unique learner number • Funding and delivery data • Fraud and investigation data Notwithstanding Clause 50.1 the Parties acknowledge that they are also Joint Controllers for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation in respect of: • Participation data

	Performance data In respect of Personal Data under Joint Control, Clause 50.1-50.14 will not apply, and the Parties agree to put in place a Joint Controller Agreement as outlined in Schedule 2 instead.
Subject matter of the processing	The processing is needed in order to ensure that the Parties can effectively deliver the Grant for the provision of digital education and skills training to members of the public, aligned to employer needs.
Duration of the processing	The duration of processing shall be in accordance with agreed retention periods for the data, and taking into account the expiry or termination or transfer of the Grant.
Nature and purposes of the processing	The purpose of processing shall be: - Monitoring the delivery of digital education and skills training subject to Grant funding. - Monitoring the performance of providers of digital education and skills training subject to Grant funding - Monitoring the performance of digital education and skills training learners - Auditing Grant awards - Addressing any complaints in relation to Grant funding The nature of processing will be collecting, recording, storing, sharing, analysing, structuring, anonymising, and the erasure/destruction of data.
Type of Personal Data	Learner (student) data - UKPRN - Learner reference number - Unique learner number - Date of birth - Ethnicity - Gender - LLDD and health problem - Prior attainment - Postcode prior to enrolment - Learner employment status

	• ESM Type - benefit status indicator
Categories of Data Subject	• Learner (student) data • Digital education and skills providers Employer data • Full name of business lead • Business lead contact email address • Business lead contact telephone number • Name of business
Plan for return and destruction of the data once the processing is complete UNLESS requirement under union or member state law to preserve that type of data	Data shared under this agreement will be retained in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018, and for a maximum of 7 years.

Schedule 2 Joint Controller Agreement

Where the Parties are Joint Controllers of data jointly determining the purposes and means of processing, Clause 50.1 - 50.14 of the Grant Terms and Conditions will not apply and the Parties agree the following shall be applicable:

1. Each Parties Data Protection Officer listed in Annex K shall act as the single point of contact within their organisation who can be contacted in respect of queries or complaints in relation to this Agreement or any data protection issues.
2. Each party shall comply with all the obligations imposed on a Data Controller under the Data Protection Laws in the performance of its obligations under this Agreement.
3. The Parties will ensure that they are transparent about their joint purposes for processing personal data.
4. The Parties shall provide all reasonable assistance to each other in the preparation of any Data Protection Impact Assessment prior to commencing any processing. Such assistance may include:
 - a) a systematic description of the envisaged processing operations and the purpose of the processing.
 - b) an assessment of the necessity and proportionality of the processing.
 - c) an assessment of the risks to the rights and freedoms of Data Subjects; and
 - d) the measures envisaged to address the risks, including safeguards, security measures, and mechanisms to ensure the protection of Personal Data.
5. The Parties shall, in relation to any Personal Data processed as Joint Data Controllers:
 - a) process that Personal Data only in accordance with this Annex K Schedule 1, unless a Party is required to do otherwise by Law. If it is so required, the Party shall promptly notify the Joint Data Controller before processing the Personal Data unless prohibited by Law.
 - b) ensure that it has in place Protective Measures, which are appropriate to protect against a Data Loss Event, having taken account of the:
 - (i) nature of the data to be protected.
 - (ii) harm that might result from a Data Loss Event.
 - (iii) state of technological development; and
 - (iv) cost of implementing any measures.
 - c) ensure that:
 - (i) Personnel process data in accordance with this Agreement (and in particular Annex K Schedule 1);
 - (ii) take all reasonable steps to ensure the reliability and integrity of any Processor Personnel who have access to the Personal Data and ensure that they:

- A. are aware of and comply with data protection responsibilities under Annex K Schedule 1;
 - B. are subject to appropriate confidentiality undertakings.
 - C. are informed of the confidential nature of the Personal Data and do not publish, disclose or divulge any of the Personal Data to any third Party unless directed in writing to do so by the Joint Data Controllers or as otherwise permitted by this Agreement; and
 - D. have undergone adequate training in the use, care, protection and handling of Personal Data; and
- d) Each Party shall:
- (i) be responsible for the creation and publication of their own privacy notices.
 - (ii) ensure that such privacy notices are clear and provide sufficient information to Data Subjects in order for them to understand how their Personal Data is being processed as well as how Data Subjects can make exercise their Data subject rights.
 - (iii) Where Sub-Processors or third parties will be collecting the data from Data Subjects the Joint Data Controller engaging the Sub-Processor or third party shall ensure they provide appropriate privacy notices.
- e) The Parties agree not to transfer Personal Data outside of the EU unless each Joint Data Controller has provided prior written consent, and the following conditions are fulfilled by the Joint Data Controller transferring the data:
- (i) appropriate safeguards in relation to the transfer are provided (whether in accordance with GDPR Article 46 or LED Article 37)
 - (ii) data Subjects have enforceable rights and effective legal remedies.
 - (iii) An adequate level of protection is provided to any Personal Data that is transferred
6. Subject to clause 7, A party shall notify a Joint Data Controller immediately if, in relation to data processed as Joint Data Controllers it receives a:
- a) a Data Subject Request (or purported Data Subject Request).
 - b) a request to rectify, block or erase any Personal Data.
 - c) any other request, complaint or communication relating to either Party's obligations under the Data Protection Legislation.
 - d) any communication from the Information Commissioner or any other regulatory authority in connection with Personal Data processed under this Agreement.

- e) a request from any third Party for disclosure of Personal Data where compliance with such request is required or purported to be required by Law.
 - f) becomes aware of a Data Loss Event.
- 7. It shall be the responsibility of the party receiving a request listed in Clause 6 to respond to the request. The obligation in clause 6 to notify shall include the provision of further information to the Controller in phases, as details become available.
- 8. Taking into account the nature of Joint Data processing, the Parties shall provide each other full assistance in relation to either Party's obligations under Data Protection Legislation and any complaint, communication or request made under clause 6, including by promptly providing:
 - a) full details and copies of the complaint, communication or request.
 - b) Reasonable assistance to enable each Party to comply with a Data Subject Request within the relevant timescales set out in the Data Protection Legislation.
 - c) a reasonable request, for any Personal Data it holds in relation to a Data Subject.
 - d) assistance as requested following any Data Loss Event.
 - e) assistance as requested with respect to any request from the Information Commissioner's Office, or any consultation with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- 9. Each Joint Data Controller shall maintain complete and accurate records and information to demonstrate its compliance with this Schedule.
- 10. A Party shall, before allowing a Sub-processor to process any Personal Data subject to this Schedule:
 - a) notify a Joint Data Processor in writing of the intended Sub-processor.
 - b) enter into a written agreement with the Sub-processor which give effect to the terms set out in this Schedule.
- 11. The Joint Data Controller using a Sub-processor shall remain fully liable for all acts or omissions of any of its Sub-processor
- 12. The Parties agree to take account of any guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office and amend this agreement to ensure that it complies with any guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office.