



Cabinet

Item

Public

## Report of the Committee-

|   |                                 |      |              |
|---|---------------------------------|------|--------------|
| <b>Responsible Overview and Scrutiny Officer:</b> | Sophie Foster                   |      |              |
| email:  | sophie.foster@shropshire.gov.uk | Tel: | 01743 255248 |
| <b>Overview and Scrutiny Chair:</b>               | Cllr Rosie Radford              |      |              |
| <b>Task and Finish Group Chair:</b>               | Cllr Dawn Husemann              |      |              |

### 1. Synopsis

**L1:** To report the findings and recommendations of the Health in All Policies (HiAP) & Planning Task and Finish Group following their investigation into how health and wellbeing can be more effectively embedded within planning policy and practice in Shropshire.

### 2. Executive Summary

**L2:** This is the report of the Health in All Policies & Planning Task and Finish Group which the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to be presented directly to Cabinet. The report sets out the key findings, conclusions and recommendations arising from a detailed review of the relationship between planning policy, place shaping and population health outcomes in Shropshire.

**L3:** The Task and Finish Group was commissioned to consider how planning policy and practice can act as an upstream public health intervention, supporting prevention, independence and reduced demand on Adult Social Care and Children's Services. Particular attention was given to Shropshire's rural context, dispersed settlements, housing affordability, social sustainability, and the needs of vulnerable groups including disabled adults, families with complex needs, carers and care leavers.

**L4:** The Group undertook a comprehensive programme of work including a desktop review of policy and national best practice, benchmarking with comparator councils, evidence sessions with council officers, portfolio holders, developers, housing providers and partners,

lived experience input from residents and carers, and a site visit to Telford and Wrekin Council to examine whole-council approaches to healthy place shaping.

**L5:** Evidence considered by the Group highlighted that while there is strong organisational commitment to Health in All Policies, current arrangements rely heavily on early engagement and individual practice rather than consistently enforceable policy. National planning reform and uncertainty around policy tools further limits the ability to embed health requirements without clear Local Plan support.

**L6:** The Group concluded that planning is a critical determinant of health and wellbeing and that clearer articulation of health, prevention, rural social sustainability and deliverability within the emerging Local Plan is essential to achieving consistent application of Health in All Policies in practice.

**L7:** The Task and Finish Group has made a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening early cross-service engagement, embedding HiAP as a core planning principle, improving policy support for accessible and adaptable housing, reflecting rural social sustainability, supporting rural exception sites, improving deliverability and transparency, strengthening viability expertise, and developing proportionate approaches to monitoring the health impacts of planning.

### **3. Recommendations**

Cabinet Members are asked to:

**L8:** Consider and comment on the report and recommendations of the Health in All Policies & Planning Task and Finish Group attached at Appendix I.

**L9:** Endorse those recommendations of the Task and Finish Group which relate to Shropshire Council, as set out in Section 8 of the appended report.

**L10:** Provide a formal response to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, including an action plan setting out what will be done, by when, for recommendations that are accepted, and reasons for any recommendations that are not accepted.

## **Report**

### **4. Financial Implications**

**L11:** There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, should Cabinet agree to implement any of the recommendations, appropriate financial and viability advice should be sought to understand resource implications and ensure deliverability.

### **5. Climate Change Appraisal**

**L12:** The work of the Task and Finish Group has identified opportunities where improved planning policy and practice could contribute positively to climate change mitigation and environmental outcomes. These include supporting compact and socially sustainable communities, reducing the need for travel through appropriate location of development,

improving energy efficiency and adaptability of homes, and embedding green and open spaces as integral components of healthy place making.

## 6. Background

L13: Members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee had highlighted the impact of housing, planning and place-based decisions on health, independence and demand for health and social care services. In response, the Committee commissioned the Health in All Policies & Planning Task and Finish Group to examine how health can be more effectively embedded within planning policy and practice in Shropshire.

L14: The Task and Finish Group structured its work around reviewing policy and evidence, hearing from officers, partners, developers and portfolio holders, gathering lived experience evidence, and benchmarking with other councils. The Group's findings, conclusions and recommendations are set out in full in the report attached at Appendix I.

## 7. Report Recommendations

As set out in Section 8 of Appendix I

### List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Report of the Health in All Policies & Planning Task and Finish Group (Appendix I).

**Local Member:** All

### Appendices

Appendix I: Report of the Task and Finish Group