



<u>Committee and Date</u> COUNCIL
24 th June 2010
10.00 am

<u>Item</u>
3
Public

MINUTES

OF

MEETING OF SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

HELD ON 29th April 2010
AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Mr P Adams
Mrs B J Baker
Mr T Barker
Mrs J B Barrow
Mr K R Barrow
Mr J T Bebb
Mr M Bennett
Mr W Benyon
Mrs K Burgoyne
Mr V Bushell JP
Mr G Butler
Mrs K D Calder
Mrs A Caesar-Homden
Mr S Charmley
Mrs A M Chebsey
Mr J E Clarke
Mr G L Dakin
Mr S Davenport
Mr A B Davies
Mr T Davies
Mrs P A Dee
Mr A Durnell
Mr D W Evans

Mr R A Evans
Mr E J Overall
Mr J A Gibson
Mr J B Gillow OBE
Mr N J Hartin
Mrs E A Hartley
Mrs T Huffer
Mr R Hughes
Mr V J Hunt
Mr J Hurst-Knight
Dr J E Jones
Mrs J Jones
Mr S P A Jones
Mr J M W Kenny
Mr C J Lea
Mr D G Lloyd MBE
Mr C J Mellings
Mr D J Minnery
Mr A N Mosley
Mrs C M A Motley
Mrs M R Mullock
Mrs E M Nicholls
Mr P A Nutting

Mr M J Owen JP
Mr W M Parr
Mrs E A Parsons
Mr M G Pate
Mr P F Phillips
Mr M T Price
Mr D L Roberts
Mrs D M Shingleton
Mr M Taylor-Smith
Mrs R T D Taylor-Smith
Mr G F Tonkinson
Mr A E Walpole
Mr S J West
Mr M Whiteman OBE
Mr B B Williams RD
Mr J M Williams
Dr M Winchester
Mr L Winwood
Mr M L Wood
Mrs T Woodward
Mr P A D Wynn

1. ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Chairman, Mr M G Pate, took the chair for this item and called for nominations for the election of Speaker and Vice Chairman of Shropshire Council.

It was proposed by Mr K R Barrow and seconded by Mrs E A Hartley that Mr D G Lloyd be elected Speaker and Vice Chairman of Shropshire Council.

RESOLVED:

That Mr D G Lloyd be elected Speaker and Vice Chairman of the Council and hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on 12th May 2011.

The Speaker then subscribed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invested with the Badge of Office. He thanked the Council for re-electing him and commented on the honour of holding the office, thanking all members for their support and assistance during his first year in that role for the new Shropshire Council.

The Chief Executive then informed Council that he had just received the formal resignation of Mr M G Pate, Chairman and Deputy Speaker with immediate effect, to enable him to be present in the Chamber and vote, in the event of his nomination for the offices of Chairman and Deputy Speaker.

The Speaker then took the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chief Executive reported apologies for absence had been received from Mr T Biggins, Mrs H Kidd, Mr K Roberts, Mr J Tandy, Mr R Tindall and Mrs C Wild.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY SPEAKER

It was proposed by Mr K R Barrow and seconded by Mr P F Phillips that Mr M G Pate be elected Chairman and Deputy Speaker of the Council to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on 12th May 2011.

RESOLVED:

That Mr M G Pate be elected Chairman and Deputy Speaker of the Council and hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on 12th May 2011.

The Chairman and Deputy Speaker then subscribed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invested with the Chairman's Badge of Office.

After thanking the Council for the honour it had again bestowed on him, he paid tribute to the support given to him by the Speaker and Vice-Chairman, Mr D G Lloyd over the past year.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

- (a) Mr T Barker declared a personal interest in item 14 (Leader and Portfolio Holders – Statements) as a member of the Board of Severnside Housing Association.
- (b) Mrs A M Chebsey declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 11 (Membership of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Telford & Wrekin Council) as an employee of the Trust. She left the room during the consideration of, and voting on this item.
- (c) Mr N J Hartin declared a personal interest in item 14 (Leader and Portfolio Holders – Statements) as a member of the Board of the South Shropshire Housing Association.
- (d) Mr A N Mosley declared a personal interest in item 14 (Leader and Portfolio Holders – Statements) as a member of the Board of Severnside Housing Association.
- (e) Mr M J Owen declared a personal interest in item 14 (Leader and Portfolio Holders – Statements) as a member of the Board of Severnside Housing Association.
- (f) Mr P A Nutting declared a personal interest in item 11 (Membership of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Telford & Wrekin Council) as his wife worked for the NHS Trust.
- (g) Mrs D M Shingleton declared a personal interest in item 14 (Leader and Portfolio Holders – Statements) as a member of the Board of the Shropshire Rural Housing Association.
- (h) Mrs T Woodward declared a personal interest in item 14 (Leader and Portfolio Holders – Statements) as her husband worked in the construction industry.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th February 2010 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

6.1 Chairman's Engagements

The Chairman referred members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Speaker and Vice Chairman, since the last meeting of Council in February which had been circulated at the meeting.

6.2 **Shropshire County Show**

The Chairman advised Council that the BBC's Countryfile programme would be featuring an item from the Shropshire County Show, which was being held at the West Mid Showground in Shrewsbury, over the weekend of 26th and 27th June 2010. He indicated that one of the programme's presenters would be featured having a lesson on how to drive a farm tractor.

7. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Speaker advised that 2 questions had been received from Mr N McCormack and Mr A Tacchi in accordance with Procedure Rule 14.

Question 1

In advising members that Mr McCormack was unable to be present at the meeting, the Speaker submitted the following question on his behalf:

I am informed you are proposing to increase income from Leisure Centre charge "equalisation" over £1/3m.

- (a) Scrutiny is to review leisure centres and their fees in the forthcoming year. Why are you pre-empting that work?
- (b) Cabinet has commissioned work on physical outcomes of leisure centres, with partners eg PCT. Do your budget proposals over-ride any outcomes of that work?
- (c) The PCT writes that the Council has not directly consulted them on its budget proposals. Why have you not?
- (d) The one Council Business case for Unitary promised to level to the best. I think – like most residents – that this would mean lowering charges to those of the lower (subject to variation in facilities plus inflation), How will you explain this broken promise to the Ministers?

Mr S Charmley, the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure replied as follows:

1. There is no plan to review fees across leisure centres in the forthcoming year. We are looking at the use of indoor leisure facilities, in terms of sports halls, swimming pools and fitness suites across the county as part of a wider Indoor Facilities Strategy. This work will contribute to decisions on future investment priorities for improvements.
2. The budget for Leisure Services has already been confirmed by Full Council at an earlier meeting and stands for the 2010/11 year.

The Physical Activity Outcomes Review is a separate piece of work tasked with increasing physical activity in four specific areas - rugby, cricket, walking and

swimming. The outcome of this piece of work will be known by July 2010 when the results will be reported back to Cabinet. This may influence decisions about future funding.

3. Shropshire Council does not currently formally consult with Shropshire PCT on its budget proposals. However, a constant dialogue between the two organisations takes place over the joint commissioning and delivery of local services. This avoids any risk of unintentional “cost-shunting” between the Council and the local Health Service. It has recently been agreed with the PCT to hold regular high level discussion (at Leader and Chief Executive level) about our relevant strategies for the future and our investment/spending priorities to ensure greater alignment between the two organisations.
4. Shropshire Council is undertaking a systematic review of its leisure facilities through the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy. This will highlight what level of investment is required on a strategic basis, for sports halls, swimming pools and fitness suites as at present the quality and standard vary across the county. To charge similar prices when the quality and range of facilities vary would be inappropriate.

Once these facilities are all at a similar standard, consideration of the harmonisation of leisure fees and charges can take place.

By way of a supplementary question, Mr P F Phillips expressed concern about the review being carried out across the leisure centres as it appeared to him to be concentrating mainly on fees and financial issues. He asked that his comments be noted.

In his reply, Mr Charmley re-affirmed his initial comments regarding the review of indoor leisure facilities, but indicated that he would send a written response to Mr Phillips on the matter.

Question 2

The Speaker then invited Mr Tacchi to submit his question as follows:

Why haven't the residents of Severn Cliff who occupy flats within an old building had their old windows replaced as promised by the Bridgnorth District Council sometime ago, I understand that an amount of money was ring fenced for this refurbishment. The residents, some of who are well into their eighties, are suffering from cold, damp and mildew walls, ice forming on the inside of the windows which have been painted shut and will not open and constant condensation to a point where it runs down the walls and onto the carpets.

In this day and age elderly residents should not have to suffer this kind of discomfort and inconvenience, particularly when we are trying to conserve energy and maintain a high level of thermal insulation. This old building is in desperate need of repair and refurbishment and I feel that the poor state of the single glazed, rotten sash windows require replacing with double glazed units as a priority. It would be extremely unfair to subject these residents to further misery next winter.

I would also like to point out that if there was a fire in the building there is no means of escape through the windows as in many cases they do not open.

I have voiced my concerns to Councillor Lea on behalf of the residents and he arranged a site visit but all that was offered was to paint over the rotten frames, please could you treat this as a priority and offer these elderly residents a little more comfort in the twilight of their years and give them something to look forward to this winter.

Mr M T Price, Portfolio Holder for Housing replied as follows:

Thank you for your question. As you know we arranged for an inspection of the flats to be carried out and that took place on 27th April 2010 with particular reference to the issues raised regarding damp and being unable to open windows in the flats. My response set out below and tabled at this meeting was prepared prior to that inspection. However I can now advise that the report on that visit has shown that the access to 4 properties and a number of windows were found to be sticking. That will be remedied. Also evidence was found of surface condensation on the windows. Whilst the properties meet the Decent Homes Standards, my view is that this standard is just a minimum and we should be achieving higher than these targets. I will therefore continue to monitor progress and will personally visit the Severn Cliff flats at Bridgnorth. However I am confident that the issues will be resolved over the next few weeks.

“We have arranged for an inspection of the flats to be carried out and that took place on 27th April 2010 with particular reference to the issues raised regarding damp and being unable to open windows in the flats. I am awaiting the report on that visit.

The current programme of planned maintenance is guided by the stock condition survey carried out last year following the move to One Council for Shropshire. 50% of the stock was surveyed and this survey identified those properties which need work to bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard. This is a standard defined by the Government in June 2006. Those properties surveyed at Severn Cliff were classed as meeting the Decent Homes Standard so are not included in the heating and window improvement programme.

However, a number of the Severn Cliff properties have been identified for work under the Landlord Service Affordable Warmth Action Plan, and additional insulation for the properties will be provided, which should make the identified properties easier and cheaper to heat.

In addition Fire Risk Assessments have been reviewed this year for flatted properties and we are in the process of implementing a programme of works including management processes and education to ensure the fire safety of residents in all flats is improved.”

In thanking Mr Price for his reply, Mr Tacchi indicated by way of a supplementary question that he had a number of photographs showing the poor condition of the windows at Severn Cliff and sought permission to forward these on to Mr Price.

In response, Mr M T Price commented that he would be happy to receive the photographs from Mr Tacchi and would ensure they were passed to the relevant officers.

8. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

The Speaker advised that the following question had been received from Mr N J Hartin in accordance with Procedural Rule 15:

Is there any reason to prohibit the Council extending its Council Tax payment options to allow payments over a 12 month period as well as the existing 10 months?

This could surely be implemented from the start of the next financial year at minimal or no additional cost. This would, in a time of economic uncertainty, provide hard pressed families with more flexibility to enable them to spread the cost of payments over a more sensible term which would assist in setting family budgets since most other Direct Debit payment options are offered on a monthly basis.

The Leader, Mr K R Barrow, replied as follows:

The legislation provides for Council Tax to be paid over 10 months and that is the Council's standard approach. However, the Council does have discretion in cases of hardship to offer payment over 12 months. Residents are urged to raise any issues with the Council Tax department who will make the necessary adjustments to instalment plans.

Mr N J Hartin thanked the Portfolio Holder for the initial response, but suggested that perhaps he had missed the point of his question. In referring to a copy of the 1992 Regulations, he commented that existing legislation did allow a billing authority to agree different payment options with individual taxpayers. He indicated that wide ranging options, such as weekly and fortnightly payments were already in place in other local authority areas. He also commented that an extension of options over a 12 month period would enable persons to pay over a longer term, and asked the Leader to re-consider the matter again.

In reply, Mr K R Barrow indicated that he had not missed the question's point and stated that any change to the payment approach would impact upon the Council's interest rate and income stream, and have consequences for the budget provision for other Council services. In agreeing to look at the matter again, he re-affirmed his belief that the Council's existing standard approach was still the best way forward.

9. REPORT OF THE POLITICAL STRUCTURES MONITORING GROUP

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr K R Barrow and seconded by Mr M L Wood that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed Minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

The Speaker then announced that, immediately prior to the meeting, the Labour Group had given notice of an amendment to the recommendations.

At the Speaker's invitation Mr J E Clarke proposed by way of amendment the following which was duly seconded by Dr J E Jones:

That the recommendations in the report be amended to enable the regular Backbenchers meetings to be retained, in order to discuss common issues relating to Members' services, Members' development and other such matters, including referring issues back to Cabinet and Scrutiny.

Speaking to the amendment, Mr J E Clarke advised that, as Chairman of the Backbenchers Group, he was particularly disappointed at the proposals to change the format of the meetings and stressed the importance and benefits of allowing all non-executive members, not just from the opposition groups, to meet and discuss items of common interest in addition to those matters being considered by Council.

Mrs P A Dee, the Leader of the Independent Group, also expressed concern at the proposals. She remarked that, with the recent establishment of the new Council, and as a new member, the meetings had allowed her to meet with colleagues and talk through issues.

Supporting the comments by Mrs P A Dee, Mrs E A Parsons referred to the large number of non-executive members and emphasised the opportunity afforded to members by previous backbench meetings, to discuss issues with colleagues across the whole spectrum of political groups on the Council.

Mr A N Mosley also spoke in support of the amendment, pointing out that a large percentage of the Council's business was carried out on non-party lines, in the interests of service delivery and for the benefit of all residents of Shropshire. Referring to the difficult economic times ahead and the likely choices facing the Council, he suggested that it would be particularly useful to retain the Backbenchers meetings in their current format.

Several other members from the Opposition Groups, including Mr R A Evans and Mr P F Phillips spoke in support of the amendment. They referred to the value of the existing meetings and voiced concern that the abolition of the current format would reduce the role and voice of all non-executive members, with Cabinet becoming a more powerful, and therefore less accountable body.

Exercising her right to speak as seconder of the amendment, Dr J E Jones suggested that the focus of the meetings had changed in recent times. Consequently she felt that the format should be revisited, with consideration being given to increasing its member development role and providing assistance to members to carry out their wider community role.

Replying the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, pointed out that members would now be able to question him, the Portfolio Holders and Scrutiny Chairmen at meetings of full Council.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost with 15 members voting in favour, 50 against and with 3 members abstaining.

At the Speaker's invitation Mr N J Hartin then proposed by way of a second amendment the following which was duly seconded by Mr J M W Kenny:

That the recommendations be amended by the addition of 2.5 below:

That the recommendations above come into effect at the close of business at this Annual Council meeting.

Speaking to the second amendment, Mr N J Hartin suggested that the new procedures relating to the questioning of the Portfolio Holders and Scrutiny Chairmen had not been taken on board by all members of Council, and that the change should not therefore take effect until the end of this meeting's business. He indicated that the matter ought to be fully debated by Council and not implemented until such time that a formal decision had been made on the matter.

Speaking in support of the amendment, Mr R A Evans commented that the matter had not been debated by members and that until such time as a decision had been made, no action should have been taken thereon.

In turn, Mr A N Mosley expressed his support for the introduction of the new procedures as soon as possible, indicating that members of the Labour Group were fully aware of the proposals. He also expressed the hope that the new procedures would raise the status of the Council meetings and make for much more interesting debates.

In supporting the comments of Mr N J Hartin and Mr R A Evans, Mr J M W Kenny stated that the new procedures would lead to a dilution of members roles and urged all members to support the second amendment.

Responding, the Leader stated that, if approved, the new procedures would make Council more open and transparent, with members being held more accountable for their actions.

On being put to the vote, the second amendment was declared lost.

The Speaker then opened the debate on the recommendations, being the substantive motion.

Mrs E A Parsons stated that in her opinion, many of the proposals in the report were to be welcomed. Referring specifically to paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 of the report, she indicated that it would be useful to receive details of the Council's structure and departments in order to know who to contact for assistance with their divisional work. This would enhance existing relationships between members and officers, and help them deal with the ever increasing expectations of residents.

With regard to the draft protocol for members and officers in dealing with the media, she expressed support for much of its content. However she also expressed disappointment that the Council did not intend in the main, to make a public

response to letters appearing in local newspapers on Council services and decisions. She suggested that responses should be made wherever possible, particularly in relation to answering criticism about the Council and giving information about issues.

Mr J M Williams also referred to the draft media protocol and commented that publicity should be objective, especially as it related to consultations with the public.

Replying the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, indicated that it was entirely acceptable for individual members to respond to letters about themselves in the press and that the public would expect them to do so. He also expressed particular support for the setting up of the joint Task and Finish Group to review frontline member support, indicating that this was a step in the right direction in enhancing support arrangements.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried, with 52 members voting in favour and 2 against.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the protocol, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, for the Council to call to account senior representatives of the Executive and Scrutiny functions of the Council, be approved.
- (b) That the protocol, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, for members and officers in dealing with the media on Council business, be approved.
- (c) That, a joint Task and Finish Group be established, to review the support to frontline members in carrying out their community leadership role.
- (d) That the revised arrangements for briefings for political groups, prior to meetings of the Council, be approved.

10. CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

It was proposed by the Leader Mr K R Barrow and seconded by Mr M Bennett that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the constitution of committees and the allocations of seats to each of the political groups be confirmed, as set out in the report by the Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Democratic Services, for the 2010/2011 municipal year, namely:

Health Overview and Crime Reduction Scrutiny Committee (10)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs K D Calder Mr G L Dakin Mr V J Hunt Mrs J Jones Mr D J Minnery Mr G F Tonkinson Mr M Whiteman Mrs T Woodward	Mrs E A Parsons	Mrs T Huffer	
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr T H Biggins Ms K Burgoyne Mr J B Gillow Mr M J Owen +4	Mr V T Bushell	Mrs A M Chebsey	
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee (10)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr T Barker Mr V J Hunt Mr D G Lloyd Ms M Mullock Mr B B Williams Dr M Winchester VACANCY	Mr J Tandy	Mr N J Hartin	Mrs D M Shingleton
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr J Hurst-Knight Mrs R T D Taylor-Smith Mr R S Tindall Mr G A Tonkinson +3	Mr A N Mosley	Mr P F Phillips	Mrs P A Dee
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1

Community Services Scrutiny Committee (10)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P Adams Mr J A Gibson Mr J B Gillow Mr R Hughes Mr M J Owen Mr R S Tindall Mr L Winwood	Mr J E Clarke	Mrs B J Baker Mrs H M Kidd	
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Ms M Mullock Mr A E Walpole Mrs T Woodward Mr P A D Wynn +3	Mr J M Williams	Mrs A M Chebsey Mr N J Hartin	
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

Development Services Scrutiny Committee (10)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr T Bebb Mr S Davenport Mr D W Evans Mr E J Everall Mr C J Lea Mr W M Parr VACANCY	Mr A N Mosley	Mr T Davies	Mrs P A Dee
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J B Barrow Mr W Benyon Ms K Burgoyne Mrs K D Calder +3	Mr J E Clarke	Mrs A M Chebsey	Mrs D M Shingleton
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1

Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee (10)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J B Barrow Ms K Burgoyne Mr T Durnell Mr C J Lea Mr K R Roberts Mr A E Walpole Mrs C M Wild	Dr J E Jones	Mr R A Evans Mrs H M Kidd	
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J Jones Mr M J Owen Mr W M Parr Mr P A D Wynn +3	Mrs E A Parsons	Mr N J Hartin Mr P F Phillips	
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

Pensions Committee (4)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr T H Biggins Mr A B Davies Mr M G Pate		Mrs A M Chebsey	
TOTAL 3	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J B Barrow Mr S J West Mr M Wood		Mrs E M Nicholls	
TOTAL 3	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Audit Committee (5)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P Adams Mr M Whiteman Mr B B Williams Mr M L Wood		Mr C J Mellings	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr A Davies Mr J B Gillow Mr K R Roberts Mr R S Tindall		Mr R A Evans	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Human Resources Committee (7)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J B Barrow Mr K R Barrow Ms C M Motley Mr M J Owen Dr M Winchester	Mr A N Mosley	Mrs B J Baker	
TOTAL 5	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Economic Development Committee (9)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr K R Barrow Mr E J Overall Ms C M Motley Mr M G Pate Mr D W L Roberts Mr M A Taylor-Smith Dr M Winchester	Mr A N Mosley	Mr P F Phillips	
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Strategic Licensing Committee (Provisional Membership) (11)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P Adams Mr W Benyon Mr A B Davies Mr T Durnell Mr S P A Jones Mr K R Roberts Mrs R T D Taylor-Smith Mr R S Tindall	Mr J Tandy	Mrs T Huffer	Mrs D M Shingleton
TOTAL 8*	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1

(* includes 6 ex-officio seats for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Licensing Area Committees – Membership of the Strategic Licensing Committee can only be confirmed after the appointment of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Area Committees)

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J B Barrow Mr J T Bebb Mr G Butler Mr R Hughes Mr M J Owen Mrs T Woodward + 2	VACANCY	Mrs E M Nicholls	VACANCY
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1

Central Licensing Committee (5)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P Adams Mr M J Owen Mr K R Roberts	Mr V Bushell	Mr R A Evans	
TOTAL 3	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr J T Bebb Mr T Durnell Mrs J Jones	Mrs E A Parsons	Mrs B J Baker	
TOTAL 3	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

North Licensing Committee (5)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr W Benyon Mr A B Davies Mr R Hughes Mr S P A Jones		Mr C J Mellings	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr G L Dakin Mrs E A Hartley Mr D G Lloyd Ms M Mullock		Mr T Davies	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

South Licensing Committee (5)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr G H L Butler Mrs R T D Taylor-Smith Mr R Tindall Mrs T Woodward		Mrs E M Nicholls	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr D W Evans Mr J Hurst-Knight Mr W Parr Mr G F Tonkinson		Mr N J Hartin	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Strategic Planning Committee (Provisional Membership) (11)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P V Andrews Mr T Bebb Mrs K D Calder Mr T Durnell Mr D A Evans Mr E J Everall Mr A E Walpole Mr S J West	Mr J M Williams	Mrs A Chebsey Mrs T Huffer	
TOTAL 8*	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

(* includes 6 ex-officio seats for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Area Planning Committees – Membership of the Strategic Planning Committee can only be confirmed after the appointment of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Area Planning Committees)

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P Adams Mr T Barker Mrs J B Barrow Mr J A Gibson Mr V J Hunt Mr M T Price Mr M Wood +1	Vacancy	Mr T Davies Mr N J Hartin	
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

Central Planning Committee (11)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr T Barker Mr T Bebb Mr T Durnell Mr E J Everall Mr M T Price Mrs C M Wild	Mr V Bushell Mr J E Clarke Mrs E A Parsons	Mr R A Evans Mr J M W Kenny	
TOTAL 6	TOTAL 3	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P M Adams Mrs K Burgoyne Mrs J Jones Mr M J Owen Mr D Roberts Dr M Winchester	Mr J Tandy Mr A N Mosley Mr J M Williams	Mrs B J Baker Mrs A M Chebsey	
TOTAL 6	TOTAL 3	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

South Planning Committee (11)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P V Andrews Mr D W Evans Mr J Hurst-Knight Mr W M Parr Mrs R T D Taylor-Smith Mr R Tindall Mr S J West Mr M Whiteman		Mrs E M Nicholls Mr P F Phillips	Mrs M Shingleton
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 1

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr G Butler Mr J A Gibson Mr C J Lea Mrs C Motley Mr M G Pate Mr M Taylor-Smith Mr G Tonkinson +1		Mr N J Hartin Mrs T Huffer	VACANCY
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 1

North Planning Committee (11)

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mrs J B Barrow Mr M Bennett Mrs K D Calder Mr G L Dakin Mr S Davenport Mr V J Hunt Mr D J Minnery Ms M Mullock Mr A E Walpole Mr P R D Wynn		Mrs P A Dee (Acting as Liberal Democrat Representative)	
TOTAL 10	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Substitutes

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr W Benyon Mr T H Biggins Mrs Caesar-Homden Mr S Charmley Mr J B Gillow Mrs E A Hartley Mr D G Lloyd Mr S Jones Mr B B Williams +1		Mr C J Mellings	
TOTAL 10	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Fire Authority

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr P Adams Mrs J B Barrow Mr A B Davies Mr D J Minnery Mr M T Price Mr K R Roberts Mr S J West Dr M Winchester	Dr J E Jones	Mr N J Hartin Mr C J Mellings	
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0

West Mercia Police Authority

Conservative Group	Labour Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Independent
Mr M L Wood		Mr J M W Kenny	
TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0

11. MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WITH TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

It was proposed by Mr G L Dakin, Chairman of the Health Overview and Crime Reduction Scrutiny Committee, and seconded by Mrs K D Calder that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

In referring to the forthcoming debate on proposals for changes to the NHS services and the likely significant impact upon local communities, Mr G L Dakin stated that it would be beneficial to amend the Council's membership on the Joint Committee to include 3 co-opted members with expert detailed NHS knowledge, with full voting rights, in place of 3 of the existing 6 Shropshire councillors. In order to do this, it was proposed to increase the number of co-optees on the Health Overview and Crime Reduction Scrutiny Committee by 2 to 6. Mr Dakin emphasised that the co-optees' substantial working knowledge and experience of the NHS would add significant value to the work of the elected members.

Acknowledging the value of the co-optees' contributions to the debate, Mrs Woodward expressed concern regarding the proposal to allocate voting rights to them. She stated that as the democratically elected representatives for Shropshire, only councillors should be given the right to vote. She indicated that the Council's membership on the Joint Committee should remain as 6, with 3 co-optees with expert knowledge, being invited to work alongside them.

In response, Mrs D M Shingleton and Mr N J Hartin spoke in support of the recommendations in the report and, commented on the benefits of ensuring a GP was one of the co-optees, with membership being drawn from across all the political groups on the Council.

Mr K R Barrow also spoke in support of the proposals, pointing out that Telford & Wrekin Council had already adopted the suggested model and that any final decisions would be taken by the Council's Health Overview and Crime Reduction Scrutiny Committee.

Mrs K D Calder also drew members' attention to the fact that the increase in co-optees would be "time and subject" limited, relating only to the changes to NHS services that were being developed and would be formally consulted on.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, 2 individuals with specific and detailed knowledge of the NHS be co-opted to the Health Overview and Crime Reduction Scrutiny Committee.
- (b) That, the representation for Shropshire Council on the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be amended to 3 co-opted members and 3 councillors.
- (c) That, the Scheme set out in the Appendix to the report by the Director of Community Services, for the granting of voting rights to the co-opted members of the Joint Committee be approved, on the understanding that their voting rights would only apply to matters relating to changes to Health Services in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.
- (d) That the Constitution be amended to reflect agreement of the recommendations in (a), (b) and (c) above.

12. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

It was proposed by Mr K R Barrow and seconded by Mrs E A Hartley that the Scheme of Delegation, as set out in Part 8 of the Constitution, be agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the Scheme of Delegation, as set out in Part 8 of the Constitution, be agreed.

13. DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

It was proposed by the Speaker and seconded by the Chairman that the programme of dates for meetings of the Shropshire Council be held on the following Thursdays, commencing at 10am:

24 June 2010;
22 July 2010;
30 September 2010;
14 October 2010;
9 December 2010,
24 February 2011; and
12 May 2011.

14. LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER STATEMENTS

The Speaker reported that in accordance with the new way of working, the Leader and Portfolio Holders for Strategic Planning & Transport and Housing would present their Statements for their individual responsibilities. Following each presentation, questions would be received from members that had been submitted before the deadline.

Statement from the Leader

The Speaker then invited the Leader, Mr K R Barrow to present his Statement, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, on an overview of the progress made by the Council in the first 12 months, together with comments on the planned response to the challenges that lay ahead. In doing so, Mr K R Barrow confirmed that Mrs E A Hartley had been appointed to the position of Deputy Leader, and in thanking the former Deputy Leader Mrs C M A Motley for her contribution to the position over the last year, advised that she would be assuming responsibility for the "Transformation "Agenda" which was a major challenge faced by the Council in the immediate future.

The Speaker then invited Mr N J Hartin to ask the Leader the following question:

Can I commend Councillor Barrow on his statement which contains much with which we can all agree, particularly I would suggest his commitment to greater transparency in the way this Council conducts its business and as pointed out in paragraph 12 of his statement, his commitment to involve local people in the future in a more open and honest way than occurs at present! However, can I ask Councillor Barrow if he will give a firm commitment that, in future, before significant decisions are taken, potentially affecting large sections of our local communities, he will, as a matter of course consult local people on a much wider basis than at present in order to avoid some of the difficulties experienced recently eg: Meals on Wheels in the run up to the budget this year?

Mr K R Barrow then replied:

I firmly believe in consultation and have attended many meetings as a result. With regard to the Meals on Wheels service which you have specifically mentioned, I can say that the intention is not to cut the service. Rather the review is to carry out appropriate consultation in order to deliver a better service with the funds that the Council has available to it.

By way of a supplementary question Mr N J Hartin stated that he hoped the Leader had taken on board his question and looked forward to greater transparency and openness with the public in future. In conclusion he indicated that he would be monitoring the position.

Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Transport

The Speaker invited the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Transport, Mr M Taylor-Smith, to present his Statement, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, on the areas covered across his whole portfolio, namely: Transportation; Development Management; Planning Strategy and Policy; Environment, Traffic Management and Regulation, Environmental Maintenance, Highway and Winter Maintenance; Flood and Water Management, Passenger Transport; Car Parking and Major Projects.

The Speaker advised that three questions had been received from Mr T Davies and invited him to put them as follows:

- (a) “There has been another accident on the A5 between the Gledrid crossroads and the Welsh Border, occurring on 22nd March and involving two lorries and a car. The driver of the car and one lorry driver were killed and the A5 was closed for several days.

The Highways Agency seem reluctant to dual this section of the A5/A483 from Shrewsbury to the Welsh Border, which has seen many deaths and numerous accidents.

Safety improvements are definitely required on this stretch of the road.

What budget would Shropshire Council allocate to part fund such “improvements”? Bearing in mind £15 million is to be funded from local resources, with £85million from the Department of Transport to fund the Northern Relief Road.”

Mr M Taylor-Smith then replied:

Responsibility for improvements on the A5 rests with the Highways Authority, however I can confirm that despite the recent tragic fatalities the safety of the road between Shrewsbury and the Welsh Border has improved, with greater difficulties being experienced over the border. Based on previous proposals and given the current criteria, it is not possible at this stage to make a case for dualling the A5. With the ongoing Police investigation into the crash, I don't wish to pre-empt their findings, however I can confirm that the Highways Agency will continue to undertake further studies at any specific locations where collision rates have not reduced or show an increase in the future, subject to funds being available.

By way of a supplementary question Mr T Davies stated that safety measures were needed on this stretch of the A5 and asked that consideration be given to turning the road into 3 lanes, 2 in a northerly direction and 1 in a southerly direction. He asked the Portfolio Holder and

Leader to meet with the local Member of Parliament and the Highways Agency in order to secure improvements to the road as a matter of urgency.

In reply, the Portfolio Holder stated that representations had been made on the issue and that the report on the Police investigation into the crash was awaited.

- (b) “Can the Portfolio Holder confirm (Ref: Pg 8, key issues bullet 4), how the refocusing on the review of existing limits, which may involve significant extra expenditure on traffic calming measures to further reduce speeds, will not affect the delivery of new village speed limits across Shropshire?”

Mr M Taylor-Smith then replied:

I can confirm that we are already dealing with this issue. At the start of the Village Speed Limit Project we had identified 113 villages in Shropshire that needed consideration which eventually rose to 114. Of the 54 villages that have received new speed limits, 4 villages have already been identified as needing additional measures given the mean speeds through these have not reduced to an acceptable level since the implementation of the new limits. This work is estimated to cost in the region of £60,000. We will be reviewing the remaining 50 villages and identifying remedial measures if necessary. However as the budget for the Village Speed Limits and the review is £300,000, some schemes will have to be curtailed. Given these pressures on the budget, it also likely that not all of the remaining 47 villages who were programmed to receive new speed limits will do so.

In response Mr T Davies commented that some of the villages still wished to go ahead with new speed limits and requested the Portfolio Holder to remain alert to the position.

- (c) “Can the Portfolio Holder give a comparison of costs incurred on parking enforcement in the first six months following the changeover to the reduced service last year as compared to the costs during the preceding six months?”

Mr M Taylor-Smith then replied:

I have the costs and can confirm that with the decrease in the number of enforcement officers throughout the county from 23 to 14, there has been a reduction in the total enforcement cost of providing the service. It should be noted however that with this decrease in numbers and the introduction of a more tolerant regime, there has been an expected drop in the income generated following the changeover to the new service. I can also confirm that this forms part of a parking review which is currently being carried out, and a report will be submitted to Cabinet in due course.

Portfolio Holder for Housing

The Speaker invited the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Mr M T Price, to present his Statement, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, on the areas covered across his Portfolio, namely: Housing Enabling and Implementation; Shrewsbury

Growth Point; Housing Landlord Services; and Housing Community. In doing so, Mr M T Price agreed to email a copy of his prepared speech to all members of Council for information.

No questions had been received for Mr M T Price.

15. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Mr T Barker, referred to the Statements of the work of each of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees for the period up until April 2010, copies of which are attached to the signed minutes, and emphasised that all members would be consulted during the current review of Scrutiny, prior to the matter being considered by Council in June. He urged members to contribute their views on how the Council's scrutiny process might be improved, and in stressing its important role in the decision-making process, commented that Scrutiny offered the means for all members to improve matters for their residents.

The Speaker confirmed that no questions had been received from members for the Scrutiny Chairmen.

RESOLVED:

That the Statements from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted.

16. MOTIONS

The following motion was received from Mr K R Barrow:

Fairtrade Status

"Shropshire Council wholly supports the principles of fair trading throughout the world and will seek to promote this cause both within the Council and by encouraging local businesses, commercial outlets and other public agencies to support this initiative."

Speaking to the motion, Mr K R Barrow stated that he believed that prior to April 2009, all the councils in Shropshire had pledged their support for a similar motion, but that the new Council must renew and demonstrate its support in order that Shropshire could retain its Fairtrade county status.

The motion was seconded by the Portfolio Holder, Mrs E A Hartley who reserved her right to speak later in the debate.

Several members, including Mr N J Hartin, Mr J Hurst-Knight, Mr J M W Kenny, Mr L Winwood and Mrs T Woodward welcomed the opportunity to speak in support of the motion and, in doing so drew attention to such matters as the need for the Council to actively fulfil its duties under the resolution in an appropriate manner and for careful monitoring to take place.

In exercising her right to speak, Mrs E A Hartley confirmed that she would be monitoring the actions being taken by the Council to support Fairtrade in Shropshire and her intention to report back to members at regular intervals on the matter.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

17. REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MERCIA POLICE AUTHORITY

It was proposed by the Speaker and seconded by the Chairman that the report of the West Mercia Police Authority, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes be received and noted.

Referring to the wide area often covered by just a police and community support officer in the rural areas, Mr T Barker asked if the Police Authority would consider using small motorcycles to improve their motability. Replying, Mr J M W Kenny indicated that he would ensure that this suggestion would receive consideration by the Authority.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

18. REPORT OF THE SHROPSHIRE AND WREKIN COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

It was proposed by Mr S J West and seconded by the Speaker that the reports of the meetings of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 11 February and 29 April 2010, copies of which are attached to the signed minutes be received and noted.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be noted.

SPEAKER

DATE

The meeting closed at 12 noon.