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Committee and Date

Council
27th February 2020

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2019

In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

10.00 am - 2.05 pm

Responsible Officer: Julie Fildes

Email: julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257723

Present

Councillors Ann Hartley and Peter Nutting (Leader)
Councillors Vince Hunt (Speaker), Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Peter Adams, Roy Aldcroft, Nicholas Bardsley, Joyce Barrow, Thomas Biggins, Ed Bird, Andy Boddington, Gwendoline Burgess, Gwilym Butler, Karen Calder, Dean Carroll, Lee Chapman, Ted Clarke, Gerald Dakin, Steve Davenport, Julian Dean, Pauline Dee, David Evans, Roger Evans, Hannah Fraser, Rob Gittins, Nat Green, Simon Harris, Nick Hignett, Ruth Houghton, Richard Huffer, Tracey Huffer, Roger Hughes, Ioan Jones, Simon Jones, Mark Jones, Heather Kidd, Christian Lea, Elliott Lynch, Robert Macey, Jane MacKenzie, Chris Mellings, Paul Milner, David Minnery, Dan Morris, Pamela Moseley, Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Peggy Mullock, Kevin Pardy, William Parr, Vivienne Parry, Malcolm Pate, Alexander Phillips, Lezley Picton, Ed Potter, Keith Roberts, Madge Shinton, Robert Tindall, Kevin Turley, David Turner, Claire Wild, Brian Williams, Michael Wood and Paul Wynn

62 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kate Halliday, Nigel Hartin, Tony Parsons, John Price, Dave Tremellen, David Vasmer and Tina Woodward.

63 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

Councillors C Wild and L Picton asked that it be noted that they had prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 21- Shopping Centres Holding Structures Review, which had been previously recorded in the register of Members Interests and would not take any part in discussion or voting and leave the room during consideration of this item.

Councillor Ioan Jones declared that his home was located in the area pertaining to Agenda item 23 - Shrewsbury Schools Place Planning. Referring to the same Councillor K Pardy asked it to be noted that schools listed in the report were located within this Ward.

Councillor S Harris declared he was the Chair of the Star Housing Association.

64 **Minutes**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2019, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

65 **Announcements**

Chairman's Engagements

The Chairman referred Members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Speaker since the last meeting of the Council on 19th September 2019, which had been circulated at the meeting.

66 **Public Questions (Pages 58 - 63)**

Public Questions

The Speaker advised that three public questions had been received from Mr S Mulloy, Mr M Femour and Mr M Andrews who were present at the meeting and received answers to their questions from the respective Portfolio Holders. [A copy of the questions and the responses given by the Portfolio Holders are attached to the signed minutes.]

Petitions

The Speaker advised that a petition bearing more than 1,000 signatures requesting that the Council agree a target date of 2030 to achieve 'net carbon zero' emissions from its activities and to design an action plan accordingly, had been received from Mr Frank Oldaker on behalf of Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth requesting a debate. Ms Oldaker was given 5 minutes to open the debate and outline his case.

Mr Oldaker welcomed the actions already undertaken by the Council to reduce carbon emissions but observed that increases in extreme weather events were increasing at a faster rate than anticipated which indicated that the situation was more serious than had been predicted. He noted that although the Council had set a target date to reduce carbon emissions it had not set one for the County. He urged Members to be bold and support urgent action.

A debate ensued, and the following Members spoke in support of the key points made by the petitioners: Councillors A Boddington, H Fraser, A Mosley and R Evans. Members observed the importance of setting challenging targets underpinned by quantitative baseline measurements and specific budget provision. Members suggested that suppliers with effective carbon reducing policies should be given preferential treatment. Members who spoke supported a County wide target.

In formally responding to the petition the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change, Councillor D Carroll welcomed the debate and advised that work was ongoing to obtain baseline data that would enable the setting of a realistic date for net carbon zero target for the County. He continued that the Climate Strategy Framework addressed the issues raised in the petition and for this reason

his decision was that no further action to be taken for reasons set out in his response.

67 **Climate Change Strategy Framework**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change, Councillor D Carroll and seconded by the Deputy Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Councillor R Gittins, that the report of the Director of Place on Climate Change Strategy Framework, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

Councillor D Carroll stated that the Climate Change Strategy Framework was ambitious and a comprehensive road map setting out the Authority's approach as a community leader. The framework would lead to the development of other plans and strategies which had to be consistent and work together to lead communities.

The Chairman noted that three amendments had been proposed and these would be dealt with in order.

The first amendment was proposed by Councillor J Dean and seconded by Councillor M Shineton. The amendment proposed 5 further recommendations [copy attached to the signed minutes].

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

The second amendment was proposed by Councillor A Boddington and seconded by Councillor R Houghton. The amendment proposed that (i) the Council agrees that the Shropshire Climate Action Partnership is established by May 2020, and (ii) that the Council agrees a target and outline plan for a zero carbon Shropshire is brought to Council by July 2020.

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

The third amendment was proposed by Councillor H Fraser and seconded by Councillor R Evans. The amendment proposed that 'Council included in its Annual Climate Impact Budget Shropshire County's Carbon Budget to identify annual performance and trends across the entire County with an aspiration that the Council can, through its role as influencer and place-maker, assist the County to become net carbon neutral by 2030.

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

Members debated the content of the report and its recommendations. They noted that there was no specific budget for climate change but budgets across all directorates were contributing to achieving the targets. Climate change had become an important factor in the development of Council strategies and policies.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Climate Change Strategy Framework document be approved; and

- ii) That the preparation of an annual Climate Impact Budget which will identify the climate impacts of Council services and major projects and will report on annual performance trends in parallel with the Council's financial budget be approved.

68 **Setting the Council Tax Taxbase for 2020/21**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support, Councillor D Minnery and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance on Setting the Council Tax Taxbase 2020/21, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

On being put to a recorded vote the proposition was carried by 59 Members voting in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention, as follows:

FOR (59)

Cllrs Adams, Aldcroft, Bardsley, Barrow, Biggins, Bird, Boddington, Burgess, Butler, Calder, Carroll, Chapman, Charmley, Clarke, Dakin, Dee, D Evans, R Evans, Gittings, Green, Harris, Hartley, Hignett, Houghton, R Huffer, T Huffer, Hughes, Hunt, I Jones, M T Jones, S Jones, Kidd, Lea, Lynch, Mackenzie, Mellings, Milner, Minnery, Morris, Moseley, Motley, Mullock, Nutting, Pardy, Parr, Parry, Pate, Phillips, Picton, Potter, Roberts, Shineton, Tindall, Turley, Turner, Williams, Winwood, Wood, and Wynn.

AGAINST (0)

ABSTENTION (1)

Cllr Dean

RESOLVED:

- i) In accordance with the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 the revised discretionary power to levy a Council Tax premium in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years i.e. increasing the premium to 200% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years and the resulting inclusion of an additional 382.22 Band D equivalents in the taxbase be approved;
- ii) The publication of a notice regarding the new discretionary Council Tax discount policy awarded in respect of vacant properties within 21 days of the determination be approved;
- iii) That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Shropshire Council as it's Council Tax taxbase for the year 2020/21, as detailed in Appendix A, totalling 113,557.43 Band D equivalents be approved.

- iv) That the changes to the Council's localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme in 2020/21 be noted. The scheme is attached at Appendix B.
- v) That it be noted that the Council Tax Support Scheme amendments detailed in Section 6 have no impact on the taxbase determination.
- vi) That the exclusion of 8,801.98 Band D equivalents from the taxbase as a result of localised Council Tax Support be noted.
- vii) That continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy of 0% in respect of second homes (other than those that retain a 50% discount through regulation as a result of job related protection) and the inclusion of 705.45 Band D equivalents in the Council Tax taxbase as a result of this discount policy be noted.
- viii) That continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to not award a discount in respect of vacant dwellings undergoing major repair, i.e. former Class A exempt properties be noted.
- ix) That continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties, of 100% for one month i.e. effectively reinstating the exemption and the resulting exclusion of 266.55 band D equivalents from the taxbase be noted.
- x) That continuation of the "six week rule" in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties be noted.
- xi) That continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to levy a Council Tax premium of 100% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years (but less than five years) and the resulting inclusion of an additional 288.55 Band D equivalents in the taxbase be noted.
- xii) That a collection rate for the year 2020/21 of 98.3% be approved.

69 County Wide Street Lighting LED Lantern Replacement Project. (Carbon Reduction Programme)

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport, Councillor S Davenport and seconded by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change, Councillor D Carroll, that the report of the Director of Place on County Wide Street Lighting LED Lantern Replacement Project. (Carbon Reduction Programme), a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

Councillor Davenport advised that the proposal would reduce the Council's carbon footprint and save £1m in electricity consumption, maintenance costs and through hidden savings. Members commented that they welcomed the report but expressed disappointment that it had not been undertaken at an earlier opportunity.

RESOLVED:

- i) That a funding application to Salix be approved requesting £3,034,979 of Capital for the conversion of 16,253 life expired lanterns to energy efficient LED lighting with the funding to be repaid from revenue savings;
- ii) That the draw-down and phased repayment of a £3.03 million interest free loan from Salix be approved for qualifying carbon reduction benefits to reduce the interest charges associated with the capital borrowing requirement;
- iii) That the addition of £3,789,032 to the Capital Programme Budget funded by Shropshire Council as the remaining budget requirement to deliver the project be approved;
- iv) That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Finance and Governance to enter into an agreement with Salix for the works, once all negotiations have concluded; and
- v) That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place to agree, implement and conclude the most efficient procurement route to facilitate the physical works being undertaken over the works period.

70 Local Government Act 1972, Section 101 Proposed definitive Map Modification Order to Upgrade Footpath 18, 18Y & 18Z to Bridleway Status and the Addition of Three Bridleways in the Parish of Wroxeter and Uppington. Acceptance of the Delegation to Telford and Wrekin Council to Investigate and make the Order on Our Behalf

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Waste and Communication, Councillor L Picton and seconded by Councillor C Wild, that the report of the Director of Place on Local Government Act 1972, Section 101 Proposed definitive Map Modification Order to Upgrade Footpath 18, 18Y & 18Z to Bridleway Status and the Addition of Three Bridleways in the Parish of Wroxeter and Uppington. Acceptance of the Delegation to Telford and Wrekin Council to Investigate and make the Order on Our Behalf, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

that delegated authority be granted to Telford and Wrekin Council to publish the legal order for the connecting routes in Shropshire at the same time as those that are in Telford and Wrekin.

71 Proposed Removal of Licensing Act Hearing Procedure from the Council's Constitution

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Communities Place Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor G Butler and seconded by Councillor K Roberts, that the report of the Director of Public Health on Proposed Removal of Licensing Act

Hearing Procedure from the Council's Constitution, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the procedure for the holding of hearings in respect of licensing matters as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution under Annex A (D58 to D60) of the Licensing Act Sub-Committee Procedure Rules be removed from the Council's Constitution with immediate effect.

72 Portfolio Holder Report for Housing and Strategic Planning

It was proposed by Councillor R Macey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning, that the annual report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes be received.

Councillor Macey presented and amplified his report and responded to the questions, queries and concerns raised by Members, including Councillors R Houghton, H Kidd, K Parry, G Butler, J Dean and R Evans.

In response to Councillor Wild's suggestion that a Task and Finish Group should be established by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee to look at CIL funding allocation, Councillor Macey endorsed Councillor Butler's comments that the Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] Task and Finish Group had recently concluded its work and reported its findings to Cabinet, and little benefit would be gained from re-establishing it at the present time.

RESOLVED:

That that content of the Annual Report for Housing and Strategic Planning be noted and approved.

73 Report of the Portfolio Holder Finance and Corporate Support

It was proposed by Councillor Minnery that the annual report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes be received.

Councillor Minnery presented and amplified his report and responded to the questions, queries and concerns raised by Members, including Councillors Bird, Nutting, Parry, Moseley, Mellings, R Evans and Pate.

Councillor Nutting responded to queries on potential development of land at Junction 3 of the M50 at Shifnal which was not identified for development in the Local Plan. He commented that further information was expected from neighbouring urban Councils on their housing need

Councillor Minnery agreed with Councillor Mellings assertion that the Financial Strategy for 2020/2021 was challenging but Officers were actively working to identify savings.

RESOLVED:

That that content of the Annual Report for Finance and Corporate Support be noted and approved.

74 Annual Report 2018/19 - Place Overview Committee

It was proposed by Councillor J Barrow that the annual report of the Place Overview Committee, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes be received and agreed.

Councillor Joyce Barrow presented the report and outlined the work undertaken by the Committee. She thanked all Members and Officers involved in the work of the Committee for their hard work and commitment.

RESOLVED:

That that Annual Report of the Place Overview Committee be noted and approved.

75 Annual Report 2018/2019 - Performance Management Scrutiny Committee

It was proposed by Councillor C Wild, that the annual report of the Place Overview Committee, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes be received and agreed.

Councillor Claire Wild presented the report and outlined the work undertaken by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That that Annual Report of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee be noted and approved.

76 Appointments to Committees

It was proposed by the Speaker, Councillor Vince Hunt, and seconded by the Chairman, Councillor Ann Hartley, that the changes to the Northern Planning Committee membership be considered and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor R Evans replaces Councillor H Fraser as a substitute Member of the Northern Planning Committee.

77 Motions

1 The following motion has been received from Councillor Dan Morris and supported by the Conservative Group:

This Council supports the principle of a 20 mph speed limit outside all schools in the county and asks officers to bring a report to Council within 6 months to consider how this could be implemented.

Councillor A Boddington proposed an amendment to the motion that 'yellow zig zag lines outside most schools in Shropshire are currently advisory. No penalties can be enforced. The council requests a countywide traffic regulation order is issued to implement a mandatory prohibition of traffic stopping outside our schools when students are present.' The Leader, Councillor P Nutting, responded that Officers would look into this matter but it could not form part of the motion being considered. Councillor Boddington agreed to withdraw his amendment to the motion.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be supported.

2. The following motion has been received from Councillor Karen Calder and is supported by the Conservative Group

This Council recognises the invaluable contribution made to our community and country by members of the Armed services, the life and professional skills they gain through military service and our debt to them in perpetuity.

This Council also recognises that their service whilst equipping them with many practical skills does not always equip them with administrative and literary skills needed to satisfy some of today's initial employment application questionnaires and procedures.

This Council therefore commits to offering all former service personnel a guaranteed interview for any vacancy applied for where they meet the essential criteria and will encourage our arm's length partner organisations and the wider Shropshire business community to also offer interviews.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be supported.

3 The following motion has been received from Councillor Andy Boddington and supported by Councillors Julian Dean, Heather Kidd, Nigel Hartin and Chris Mellings

In July, the Committee on Climate Change recommended that the UK plants 30,000 hectares of trees a year. The committee warned that if carbon reduction measures are not delivered rapidly, we will need to plant 50,000 hectares a year. In November, the UN Environment Programme called for a faster reduction in greenhouse gases. There is a consensus that planting trees can help us achieve the UK's goal of net zero by 2050 at the latest.

Woodlands have many benefits. They create a carbon reservoir that helps slow climate change. They boost wildlife and help promote public health. Woodlands are a major economic resource, providing material for construction and power. Woodlands support jobs.

Well managed broadleaf woodlands promote biodiversity. They boost tourism. They are a public good.

No one doubts that doubling woodland cover will be a major challenge. Introducing a public money for public goods system to support farmers and landowners requires national legislation. Local authorities have limited resources and expertise is thinly spread. But there is potential for groups of local authorities to work together, supported by wildlife charities and experts, to develop regional policies for increasing woodland cover. Councils either side of Offa's Dyke through the Marches would be ideal partners.

This council requests its leader and the portfolio holder for climate change to work with other local authorities to develop plans to double woodland cover in the Marches by 2050.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be not supported.

4 The following motion has been received from Councillor Chris Mellings and supported by Councillors Ruth Houghton, Nigel Hartin, David Vasmer, Andy Boddington, Heather Kidd and Roger Evans.

"Fireworks are used by people throughout the year to mark different events. While they bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant problems and fear for other people and animals. They can be a source of fear and distress for many animals (including pets, farm livestock and wildlife). Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries – sometimes very serious ones – as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise. Many residents have raised concern about the impact of fireworks on animals in particular.

In response to the concerns, Council therefore resolves:

To encourage all public firework displays within Shropshire being appropriately advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people

To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people (including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks)

To encourage events to consider the use of silent displays with music for the youngest children and to protect animals

To compile and display on its website and via social media, a list of public firework displays with appropriate information to enable residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people

To make representations to the Government via the relevant Portfolio Holder urging it to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays

To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock “quieter” fireworks for public display”

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be supported.

5 The following motion has been received from Councillor Roger Evans and supported by the Liberal Democrat Group:

Lib Dem motion on 20mph 17 December 2019

Many councils have or are in the process of implementing wide area 20mph speed limits on residential and urban roads without traffic calming.

Many bodies with a remit for public health support a reduction in speed limits to 20mph on residential streets. Wide area 20mph limits rarely need traffic calming measures. They are an affordable way to improve health equality by creating child, disability, elderly and dementia friendly streetscapes that help reduce inactivity, obesity and isolation.

Implementing wide area 20mph limits must be a core part of Shropshire Council’s public health strategy.

This council requests the Director of Public Health and Director of Place bring a report to council by May 2020 setting out the parameters and timetable for introducing area wide 20mph limits across Shropshire’s towns and major villages.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be not supported.

78 Questions from Members

The Speaker advised that five questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 15. A copy of the report containing the detailed questions and their formal response is attached to the signed minutes.

- i) Received from Councillor H Fraser and answered by Councillor Ed Potter, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services in relation to school funds and the Apprenticeship Levy.

- ii) Received from Councillor H Fraser and answered by Councillor G Butler, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services in relation to the planning process.

By way of a supplementary question Councillor Fraser asked for further information regarding the enquiry regarding a formal planning enforcement. Councillor Butler agreed to meet with Councillor Fraser outside the meeting to discuss the matter.

- iii) Received from Councillor D Turner and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in relation to highway issues in the Much Wenlock area.

By way of supplementary question Councillor Turner requested a written response to his questions.

- iv) Received from Councillor A Boddington and answered by Councillor D Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Adult Services and Climate Change, in relation to power use in Shirehall from fossil fuels.
- v) Received from Councillor A Boddington and answered by Councillor D Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Adult Services and Climate Change, in relation to investment policies for Shropshire County Pension Fund.
- vi) Received from Councillor R Evans and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport, in relation to the Council's Highways contracts with Kier and WSP.

79 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 Procedure Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items.

80 Exempt Minutes of 19th September 2019

RESOLVED:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2019, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

81 Shrewsbury Shopping Centres - Pride Hill Repurposing

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration Councillor S Charmley and seconded by the Leader Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Director of the Director of Place on Shrewsbury Shopping Centres – Pride Hill Repurposing, a copy of which is attached

to the exempt signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the five exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

82 Shopping Centres Holding Structures Review

Councillors C Wild and L Picton left the chamber for this item.

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration, Councillor S Charmley and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance on Shopping Centres Holding Structure Review, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the three exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt minutes.

83 Strategic Property Acquisition - Oswestry Central

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration, Councillor S Charmley and seconded by Councillor P Milner, that the report of the Director of Place on Strategic Property Acquisition – Oswestry Central, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the five exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

84 Shrewsbury Schools Place Planning

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor E Potter and seconded by the Deputy Portfolio Holder for Education, Councillor N Bardsley, that the report of the Director of Children's Services on Shrewsbury Schools Place Planning, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the eight exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

85 Ludlow Assembly Rooms Budget

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration, Councillor S Charmley and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Director of Place on Ludlow Assembly Rooms' Budget a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes and the recommendations therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the eight exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

Minute Item 66

COUNCIL 19TH DECEMBER 2019

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Question from Mark Fermor

On 18 November Council officers held a discussion workshop inviting public participation at which the Council stated that

‘7.7% annual reductions will be required to reach Zero 2030’

Last week the UN meeting in Madrid faced the reality that 2030 is too late to ensure we avoid runaway climate catastrophe. The Secretary General made this plea:

‘Leaders at all levels are requested to step-up to the challenge and demonstrate that business as usual is no longer acceptable’.

The pace of change in our lives now needed exceeds the comprehension of most of us and it is only once a target date is set that we can start to face the choices needed. Failure to set a target date in May has led to Shropshire continuing to go the wrong direction. Please can the Council now undertake to set a target date before we lose more time. This is an emergency and we need to start acting like it. It is abundantly clear that 2030 is already too late.

Please can the Council commit to making a plan to do everything within the Councils power to make Shropshire carbon neutral by 2030.

It is only when a target date is set that you will face the reality of choices that need to be made and provide some leadership to the people of Shropshire. The people of Shropshire are looking to you for an adequate response to the emergency we all face. We know that we need to act now, but without a plan from you it is not clear what changes we should make.

Response from Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Climate Change:

The Strategy Framework recommended for approval today gives a clear commitment to reduce Shropshire Council’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net carbon zero by 2030. Taking early action on what we can directly control is considered to be a more effective approach than expending significant effort in planning and target setting.

The Strategy Framework recommended for approval today gives a clear commitment that Shropshire Council will use its experience to work with others and provide community leadership to help reduce Shropshire’s overall carbon footprint. However, much more work and evidence is needed before a target date can be identified for net zero GHG emissions for the county as a whole.

With regard to establishing a target for Shropshire sooner than 2030; *achieving net carbon zero for Shropshire Council by 2030 will be challenging but is considered achievable. More work is needed in this context to identify our indirect (Scope 3) emissions. However, as the report already notes, it is crucial that we don't stop acting just because we are planning, and the Council will continue to take action to reduce its carbon emissions and to support similar action by others. Shropshire Council will use its experience to work with others and provide community leadership to help reduce Shropshire's overall carbon footprint. Much more work and evidence is needed before a target date can be identified for net zero GHG emissions for the county as a whole.*

Question from Steven Mulloy

The House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts - LEP Progress Review, published 5th July 2019, criticised LEP's saying:

"LEPs have also continued to underspend their local growth funding allocations every year since 2015–16, calling into question their capacity to deliver the complex projects they said were critical to economic growth in their areas."

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmpubacc/1754/175402.htm>

The Marches LEP considered this review at their meeting on 23rd July 2019.

At the 7th November 2019 emergency meeting of the Marches LEP, this Council sought agreement for the merger of the OLR and NWR schemes, part of which is being funded by the LEP.

This Council told the LEP "If the proposal was approved by LEP Board it would be presented to the full council meeting on 19th December 2019".

The minutes of the LEP Board record that:

<1576237894718blob.jpg>

Inspection of the agenda for the full council meeting of the 19th December 2019 shows that the merger of the two schemes is not on the agenda, although it is on the agenda for Cabinet on the 16th December to be heard behind closed doors. Whilst the Cabinet may be the executive decision-making body, due process requires this council to debate and agree on any merger of the two schemes, and as noted above, it is a condition of LEP funding that they do.

Question

Given the above, may I ask:

1. Why the proposed merger of the Oxon Link Road and North West Road has not been put on the agenda for consideration by Full Council?

2. Without this on the agenda, how can Shropshire satisfy the condition set by the LEP?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport:

1. *The resolved detailed design and Full Business Case incorporating the merged schemes, will be considered for approval by Full Council prior to submission to DfT in Autumn 2021 in line with the Outline Business Case already approved by Full Council 16th May 2019.*
2. *The LEP Management Board has been updated on, and accepted, the revised OLR / NWRR merged programme, incorporating the Autumn 2021 FBC gateway date 7th Nov 2019.*

Question from Malcolm Andrew, Chair, On behalf of Trefonen Rural Protection Group Management Committee

Planning Policy Local Plan Review & Climate Change Policy.

Q1. Can the Council confirm that the Local Plan Review is being properly resourced with adequate officers and support to ensure that all aspects of evidence base detail are accurate?

With the change in role of Mr Adrian Cooper from Planning Policy & Strategy Manager to be the Climate Change Task Force Leader in September 2019 the small Planning Policy Officer team has both lost its Manager and been reduced in number at a vital stage of the Review with the Draft Final Plan.

It must be incumbent upon the Council to properly resource this vital task that will determine the scale and location of development across the whole county until 2036.

Q2. Can the Council confirm that the Draft 'Final Plan' will be scrutinized before final consultation and submission for Examination to ensure it factually accurate and "sound"?

We have identified and advised Officers of anomalies and inaccuracies in both the original and 'Updated' Hierarchy of Settlements scoring which have influenced outcomes and relaxations of policy wording and thereby settlement status and allocations. In our view these issues with the Evidence Base might lead to the current Draft Plan being considered 'unsound' by the Inspector. We have raised those concerns with Cabinet and Officers, and the Place Overview Committee. However, the responses are that there will be another chance to comment at Final Plan stage and, most worryingly, that scrutiny will be left to the independent Planning Inspectorate Examination. That appears to abdicate the Council's responsibility for scrutiny of the Local Plan Review. We do not want to be in a position of "last resort" of having to outline flaws to the independent Inspector with the risks of an "unsound" Plan (as identified in your Local Development Scheme June 2019) potentially allowing "free for all" development, when we believe the points can be addressed now before 'Final Plan' stage whilst it is still in the control of your Council.

Q3. Can the Council confirm that the Draft 'Final Plan' has been reviewed against the Council's recently adopted Climate Emergency Policy?

Has the full impact on Climate Change of development in proposed locations been re-assessed? In particular rural locations where, public transport is very limited, resulting in increased vehicular use to reach employment and key services – doctors, dentists, hospitals etc.

Q4. Housing Supply - With the progress of the Ironbridge Power Station redevelopment will the 1000 homes proposed now be included into the Housing Supply figures against the “High Growth” Target 28,750 homes? The potential from this strategic site has, until now, been excluded from future housing supply calculations as it was unclear whether it would be delivered within the plan period to 2036. Whilst there is still considerable site clearance and remediation to be undertaken it is clear that this site redevelopment is moving forward to delivery within that time frame. This supply would relieve “number pressure” on less sustainable locations across the county.

Q5 Housing Needs in support of Economic Growth – will the highly ambitious economic growth aims be reviewed in view of the imminent Brexit with associated impacts on investment and immigration; and the current hold on HS2 which will, at the very least, delay commencement until the end of the Local Plan Review period 2036?

The “High Growth” Target 28,750 homes at 15% over and above the Full and Objective Housing Needs Assessment (FOAHN) was set to support the highly ambitious Economic Growth Strategy. This increases the risk of future “under supply” against annual targets due to market demands outside the control of the Council at any time until 2036 – with the risk of an “out of date” Plan potentially allowing “free for all” development anywhere in the county as in 2014/15.

Response from Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning

- 1. Plans for the resourcing of the team were in place prior to any agreement for the Climate Change role being filled by the Planning Policy and Strategy Manager. The Local Plan Review is a key priority for this Council. The role of Planning Policy and Strategy Manager has been filled by one of our experienced Principal Planning Policy Officers on an interim basis and arrangements have been put in place for additional temporary resources and expertise to support the work that is required to be completed.*
- 2. Shropshire Council’s Cabinet will consider the contents of the draft Final Plan, where officers will seek approval to progress to the statutory six-week consultation on the ‘soundness’ of the Plan in the spring 2020. Following this consultation, the Council has an opportunity to consider responses and to propose a schedule of minor modifications to the Local Plan. The Local Plan, along with any minor modifications will then be subject to consideration by Full Council in summer 2020, where officers will seek approval for the Local Plan to be submitted to the Government for Examination. Therefore, both Cabinet and Full Council have an opportunity to scrutinize the contents of the Local Plan ahead of its submission to Government.*

3. *The emerging Climate Change Strategy is being prepared to support the Council's overall response to the declared Climate Emergency. This Strategy will be considered as part of the emerging Local Plan, both in terms of the overall distribution of development and design standards of new build development. It should however be noted that the Local Plan's preparation up to this point has already been heavily influenced by the need to ensure a sustainable pattern of development, focussing the majority of new proposals into 'higher level' towns, whilst ensuring necessary rural development is focussed into the most sustainable locations by taking account of the ability for communities to access basic services and facilities locally.*
4. *The Local Plan Review has not made a discount allowance for non-delivery on the substantial amount of currently committed sites in Shropshire's main towns over the plan period. The likely future housing supply from the former Ironbridge Power Station site is therefore important as a counter to any future non-delivery on these sites in order to give the council's housing land supply further resilience. The recent progress with the former Ironbridge Power Station site is encouraging, however it should be noted this site continues to be subject to Planning approval.*
5. *The Economic Growth Strategy 2017-21 is an agreed strategy of Shropshire Council and its partners. It is subject to monitoring and review including through Place Overview Committee. The purpose of our Strategy is to make the step change needed in Shropshire's economic productivity and to grow the local economy. This has not changed. Brexit and HS2 are both significant, there is no doubt about this, but the Council has been doing a number of things to understand local impacts related to both of these and decisions that are made by Central Government about them. Indeed, both are referenced in the existing document published in September 2017. There has been a Brexit member task and finish group which has reported through Place Overview Committee and there is a significant amount of work being undertaken at officer level. The housing requirement in the Economic Growth Strategy is set at 1,375 new homes per annum, in line with average annual housing requirement established in Shropshire's adopted Core Strategy, however Shropshire has exceeded this requirement for the last 3 years consecutively since 2016/17.*

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