

## **COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2022**

**In the Clayton Hall - Shrewsbury College, London Road, Shrewsbury. SY2 6PR  
10.00 am - 4.45 pm**

**Responsible Officer:** Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

### **Present**

Councillors Vince Hunt (Chairman) Lezley Picton (Leader), Brian Williams (Vice Chairman), Ed Potter (Deputy Leader), Roy Aldcroft, Jeff Anderson, Caroline Bagnall, Nicholas Bardsley, Joyce Barrow, Bernie Bentick, Thomas Biggins, Ed Bird, Andy Boddington, Peter Broomhall, Julia Buckley, Garry Burchett, Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Steve Charmley, Ted Clarke, Gerald Dakin, Rosemary Dartnall, Steve Davenport, Mary Davies, Julian Dean, Geoff Elner, David Evans, Roger Evans, Paul Gill, Rob Gittins, Nat Green, Simon Harris, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett, Ruth Houghton, Richard Huffer, Tracey Huffer, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Mark Jones, Simon Jones, Duncan Kerr, Heather Kidd, Hilary Luff, Nigel Lumby, Elliott Lynch, Robert Macey, Richard Marshall, David Minnery, Dan Morris, Pamela Moseley, Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Peggy Mullock, Ian Nellins, Kevin Pardy, Tony Parsons, John Price, Chris Schofield, Dan Thomas, Robert Tindall, David Vasmer, Alex Wagner, Claire Wild, Rob Wilson and Paul Wynn

### **76 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Julia Evans, Kate Halliday, Mike Isherwood, Christian Lea, Viv Parry, Edward Towers, Dave Tremellen, Kevin Turley and Les Winwood.

### **77 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Members were reminded that they must declare their disclosable pecuniary interests and other registrable or non-registrable interests in any matter being considered at the meeting as set out in Appendix B of the Members' Code of Conduct and consider if they should leave the room prior to the item being considered.

The Monitoring Officer reminded Members that under the new code of conduct the reason for their interest must be disclosed at the meeting even if it was already included on their Declaration of Interests Form.

Councillor Jeff Anderson declared a prejudicial interest in item 9 as he owned a business in Shrewsbury Town centre

Councillor Nat Green declared a prejudicial interest in item 7 as his wife was involved in financial negotiations regarding stalls in the market.

Councillor Lezley Picton declared a prejudicial interest in items 9 and 19 as she owned property in Shrewsbury Town centre

Councillor Claire Wild declared a prejudicial interest in item 9 and 19 as she owned property in Shrewsbury Town centre.

## 78 Minutes

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2022, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

## 79 Announcements

### **Chairman's Engagements**

The Chairman referred Members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Vice Chairman since the last meeting of the Council on 13 January 2022, which had been circulated by email.

## 80 Public Questions

### Public Questions

The Chairman advised that public questions had been received from Katie Blant, Paul Hollington, Stephen Mulloy, Joanna Blackman, Michael Dinneen and Sharuf Morsa. A copy of the questions and the responses provided are attached to the signed minutes and available from the web page for the meeting.

[Agenda for Council on Thursday, 24th February, 2022, 10.00 am — Shropshire Council](#)

### Petition

A petition, bearing over 1000 signatures had been received from Darren Childs, requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme. The petition requested that the Council:

Support our campaign in returning an ambulance hub back in Ludlow, South Shropshire or the return of local rapid response vehicles who can be on call or based at local areas like Ludlow hospital, GP surgery, fire station, to attend until an ambulance arrives

In presenting his petition Mr Childs gave examples of serious delays in ambulance response times and the effect this has on patients. He urged to Council to support his campaign.

Members comments included: -

- The Council should support a campaign to reopen all the hubs that were closed
- There is a problem with ambulances having to wait at A&E and work must be done within A&E to speed up the triage process in order that ambulances can be freed up quicker.
- WMAS very urban centric and does not take account of the rurality of Shropshire.
- Need to increase resources to enable a more efficient service.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Simon Jones, thanked the petitioner. He stated that the Council was already taking action regarding the ambulance hubs though both the HASC and the HWBB. and in line with the options laid out in the Constitution, proposed that the Council take the action requested in the petition.

This was supported unanimously.

## **81 Capital & Financial Strategy 2022/23 - 2026/27**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gwilym Butler, and seconded by The Leader Councillor Lezley Picton that the report of the Executive Director of Resources, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed

By way of amendment Councillor David Vasmer proposed that that the timescale for conversion of streetlight to LED be reduced from 2 years to one year which would reduce costs and reduce the Council's carbon footprint. This was seconded by Councillor Roger Evans.

On being put to a vote the amendment was defeated

By way of amendment Councillor David Vasmer proposed that that the rise in social housing rents should be reduced from 4.1% to 3%, with the shortfall being met from the Housing Revenue Account. This was seconded by Councillor Heather Kidd.

The Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure Councillor Dean Carroll commented that the rise of 4.1% constituted a rise of 91 pence per week and that the most vulnerable people would be covered by housing benefit. He added that all Residential Social landlords in the county were applying the maximum rise of 4.1%.

Councillor Duncan Kerr asked what percentage of the Council's tenants received housing benefit. Councillor Carroll agreed to circulate the information after the meeting.

On being put to a vote the amendment was defeated

By way amendment Councillor Julia Buckley proposed the following: -

- 1a. Cease activity on NWRR, repay related spend and commitments using capital receipts ringfenced to NWRR leaving a surplus of capital receipts of between £1.3m and £5.6m.
- 1b. Invest in county-wide 20 is plenty
- 1c. Invest in county wide Active Travel Infrastructure
- 2a. Reduce borrowing and debt repayments (by the net of 1a, b, c), creating spare budget in the revenue budget and use this to part fund 2c, d, e.
- 2b. Offer 1 time discount (50% cost) for electronic billing, generating income to part fund 2c, d, e.
- 2c. Retain library staff resource by reversing cut PS17
- 2d. Re-establish 4 x open access youth clubs in areas of most need
- 2e. Increase Mental Health support workers for children and young people

These were seconded by Councillor Tony Parsons

On being put to a vote the amendments were defeated.

By way of amendment Councillor Julian Dean proposed that Council agrees to create a revenue stream to finance borrowing for an Active Travel and Public Transport Infrastructure Investment Fund by changing the charging band for two Shrewsbury Car Parks which would realise an expected income of £253,000 per year, which would be used to establish the new Fund with an initial input of £4.853m. This was seconded by Councillor Duncan Kerr

The Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure Councillor Dean Carroll advised the meeting that whilst he could not support the amendment, he would be happy to include the proposals regarding increasing car park charges as part of a wider review of car parking that he would be carrying out later in the year.

On being put to a vote the amendment was defeated.

By way of amendment Councillor Julian Dean proposed that 10% of the new Highways Investment capital fund be ringfenced to bring existing footways and cycleways to a suitable managed condition, in line with the aspiration for highways, such ringfencing to be shown in the budget by establishing a new budget line for Existing Footways and Cycleways Investment, with a transfer of 10% of the Highways Investment fund to the new budget line. This was seconded by Councillor Duncan Kerr.

On being put to a vote the amendment was defeated.

On being put to a recorded vote, with 42 Members voting in favour, 23 against and no abstentions as follows:

**FOR:**

Councillors Aldcroft, Anderson, Bardsley, Barrow, Biggins, Bird, Broomhall, Burchett, Butler, Carroll, Charmley, Dakin, Davenport, Elner, D Evans, Gill, Gittins, Harris, Hignett, Hunt, Hurst-Knight, M Jones, S Jones, Luff, Lumby, Lynch, Macey, Marshall,

Minnery, Morris, Motley, Mullock, Nellins, Picton, Potter, Price, Schofield, Thomas, Tindall, Wild, Williams and Wynn

**AGAINST:**

Councillors Bagnall, Bentick, Boddington, Buckley, Clarke, Dartnall, Davies, Dean, R Evans, Green, Hartin, Houghton, R Huffer, T Huffer, Kerr, Kidd, Moseley, Mosley, Pardy, Parsons, Vasmer, Wagner and Wilson

It was **RESOLVED** that Members:

- A. Approve a 3.99% Council Tax rise resulting in a basic amount of council tax for a Band D property of £1,561.11 in the billing authority's area, calculated in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (section 42b) and the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Further Financial Provisions and Amendment) Regulations 2008
- B. In accordance with the provisions of Section 40 (2) of the 1992 Act, approve the amount of Council Tax calculated for each category of dwelling in the billing authority's area to be as follows:

<b>Property Band</b>	<b>2022/23 Charge £</b>
A	1,040.74
B	1,214.19
C	1,387.65
D	1,561.11
E	1,908.03
F	2,254.94
G	2,601.85
H	3,122.22

- C. Approve that a total precept of £180,285,304 be levied.
- D. Approve the 2022/23 budget of £597.560m outlined in the Budget Book at Appendix 3, including the savings proposals outlined in section 4.5 of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) at Appendix 1.
- E. Note the changes required to the 2022/23 budget as a result of the Provisional and Final Local Government Settlement and revised business rates and collection fund estimates.
- F. Note the revised funding gap for the years 2023/24 to 2026/27.

- G.** Note the Statement of the Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves as set out in Sections 6.1 – 6.3 of the MTFS at Appendix 1.
- H.** Approve the recommended level of general balances to support the 2022/23 revenue budget of £18.712m, noting that the projected balance is presently significantly below this for 2022/23.
- I.** Note the projected recommended level of general reserves for the following four years at £27.033m in 2023/24, £27.574m in 2024/25, £28.226m in 2025/26 and £30.760m in 2026/27.
- J.** Note the continued use of the Policy for Flexibility around the use of Capital Receipts as detailed in section 8.1 of the MTFS at Appendix 1.
- K.** Agree the adoption of the Capital Strategy 2022/23 – 2026/27 attached as Appendix 2.
- L.** Note the prioritised capital schemes identified at Appendix 2 section 8 including the need to identify and confirm funding sources for these schemes.
- M.** Agree the revised Capital programme as set out in Appendix 2 section 6 and Annex B to the Capital Strategy.
- N.** Agree the Pay and Rewards Policy for all Council staff for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 5.
- O.** Approve the formal council tax resolution as set out in Appendix 4 to determine the levels of Council Tax for Shropshire Council for 2022/23

## **82 Fees and Charges 2022/23**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gwilym Butler, and seconded by The Leader Councillor Lezley Picton that the report of the Executive Director of Resources, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed

In response to Councillor Kidd's query regarding road closure charges Councillor Carroll agreed to contact her outside the meeting to discuss the matter further.

In response to Councillor Wilson's query regarding street trading permits the Leader advised that this fell under Councillor Potters portfolio and that he would respond outside the meeting

Councillor Butler commented that if members had any further questions, they should email him and that he would ask the relevant officer to respond.

### **RESOLVED:**

#### **A. That Members**

Note the breakdown of the total income for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and in particular that the proposed 2022/23 charges for discretionary services represent only £41.768m of the £82.293m of income derived from Fees and Charges.

- B. Approve the charges for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix 3 to be implemented 1 April 2022.
- C. Note that as previously agreed, any changes to fees and charges proposed by Shropshire Community Leisure Trust Ltd. in relation to the outsourced leisure facilities will only be referred to cabinet and council for approval if the proposed increases exceed Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the preceding November.
- D. Subject to restrictions or exemptions identified in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill it is recommended to Council that:
  - i. Social Housing rents for 2022/23 are increased by 4.1% from 4th April 2022.
  - ii. Affordable rents for 2022/23 are increased by 4.1% from 4th April 2022.
  - iii. Shared Ownership rents continue to be set at 2.75% of the outstanding capital value of the home at the time of sale and thereafter increased each April in accordance with the terms specified in the lease agreements.
  - iv. Service charges continue to be set based on actual cost.

### 83 Treasury Strategy 2022/23

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Gwilym Butler, and seconded by The Leader Councillor Lezley Picton that the report of the Executive Director of Resources, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

Councillor Rob Wilson asked whether the charges on the loans to Cornovii inhibited their ability to deliver their objectives. Councillor Butler commented that loans were charged at market rates but that he would raise the issue with the Cornovii board.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Council:-

- a) Approve, with any comments, the Treasury Strategy for 2022/23
- b) Approve, with any comments, the Prudential Indicators, set out in Appendix 1, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.
- c) Approve, with any comments, the Investment Strategy, set out in Appendix 2 in accordance with the DLUHC Guidance on Local Government Investments.
- d) Approve, with any comments, the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement, set out in Appendix 3.

- e) Authorise the Section 151 Officer to exercise the borrowing powers contained in Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and to manage the Council's debt portfolio in accordance with the Treasury Strategy.
- f) Authorise the Section 151 Officer to use other Foreign Banks which meet Link's creditworthiness policy as required.
- g) Authorise the Section 151 Officer to progress and finalise the restatement and amendment of Cornovii Development Ltd loan agreements.

## 84 Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Phase 1

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning, Councillor Gwilym Butler, and seconded by The Leader Councillor Lezley Picton that the report of the Executive Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

By way of amendment Councillor Alan Mosley proposed that under paragraph 3 - recommendations: delete paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 and insert new paragraph 3.5 as follows

3.5 Further to the above, no decision will be taken on the future of the Shirehall or the Council's relocation to the proposed Multi-Agency Hub until a rigorous scrutiny has been undertaken and its recommendations put to a meeting of the Full Council. All members should be able to attend and speak at said scrutiny meeting.

This Scrutiny will be informed by;

1. An up to date and detailed appraisal of the net costs and potential benefits of the full refurbishment of the Shirehall to present a suitable ongoing home for the Council and one which would attract other appropriate leaseholders.
2. Detailed plans, full environmental impact and costings of the proposed areas within the Hub to be occupied by SC and how the space will be utilised as part of a flexible working environment, including a full assessment of how this would be advantageous compared to a refurbished Shirehall.
3. Recent evidence of the attitude of staff regarding the proposed transfer and generally to proposals related to flexible working arrangement proposals.
4. The result of consultation with recognised trade unions.
5. Evidence of consultation with and/or comments submitted by other key stakeholders.
6. The extent to which the work-bases of Council staff will be relocated to other premises within our market towns, where those premises will be and how any moves will operate according to flexible working opportunities."

This was seconded by Councillor Ted Clarke.



Members expressed concern regarding the future of the Shirehall and felt that further work needed doing prior to it being declared surplus to requirements. Concern was also expressed regarding the effect the new developments would have on flooding risks.

On being put to a vote the amendment was defeated.

By way of amendment Councillor Julian Dean proposed that the recommendations at section 3 should be deleted and be replaced with:

That Council

- 3.1 Note the report.
- 3.2. Request completion of work, with appropriate consultation, on the Shropshire Plan, a new Economic Strategy, the Shrewsbury Movement Strategy associated with the Big Town Plan and the new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) prior to reconsideration of Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment proposals, with intention to agree all the above within 2022.
- 3.3. Additionally, to request a report on options for a Shrewsbury Town Centre 'heat network', providing low energy heating using renewable energy, within the same timeframe.
- 3.4. Request a review of Shirehall options that includes independent appraisals for the refit and decarbonisation of the building, balanced against whole life CO2 emissions appraisals for alternative accommodation for the council.
- 3.5. Request that the Place Overview Committee consider the proposals for Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment prior to the report returning to full council, and that any independent appraisals of options and risks associated with flooding, climate change mitigation and heat network provision are reviewed alongside this.
- 3.6. At the appropriate time, to request a revised Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Phase 1 report which takes account of the agreed strategies, plans and scrutiny listed above.

This was seconded by Councillor Duncan Kerr

In response to comments made the Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure pointed out that recommendation 3.6 delegated responsibility to him and the Executive Director for Place to agree and implement the disposal and marketing strategy as the recommended option for the Shirehall site subject to approval by full council. so agreeing the recommendations in the report would not result in the instant sale of the Shirehall.

On being put to a vote the amendment was defeated.

Following a request from Councillor David Vasmer, the Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure agreed to update Members on the issues reported at Shirehall.

## **RESOLVED:**

That Council agrees to:

- 1.1. Approve the preferred option identified in the outline business case for the construction of a Multi-Agency Hub, on the site identified by the Smithfield Riverside master planning process and take forward as a capital project; such approval limited at this stage to progressing the project to detailed design (RIBA Stage 3: Spatial Coordination, or equivalent), requiring funding of £1.715m. A further report will be presented to Council for final approval of the design, gross development cost and funding for the construction of the project.
- 1.2. Approve the submission of a planning application for the demolition of the Riverside Shopping Centre and the former Riverside medical practice to facilitate the construction of the proposed Multi-Agency Hub within the current gross cost estimate for demolition of £3.853m, and to take forward as a capital project to completion of tender documentation and receipt of tenders.
- 1.3. Approve the preferred option identified in the outline business case, and submission of a planning application for the demolition of the former Pride Hill shopping centre, for the delivery of a leisure-led redevelopment of the site, with the adjacent Raven Meadow's surface car park, for a multi-storey travel hub and associated development and take forward as a capital project; such approval limited at this stage to progressing the project to detailed design (RIBA Stage 3: Spatial Coordination, or equivalent), requiring funding of £1.580m. A further report will be presented to Council for final approval of the design, gross development cost and funding for the construction of the project.
- 1.4. Delegate responsibility to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning to progress the capital projects (3.1 – 3.3 above), to include, but not limited to, the following:
  - 1.1.1. progress a procurement and delivery strategy for Smithfield Riverside, incorporating the projects summarised in items 3.1 -3.3 above.
  - 1.1.2. progress life-cycle carbon assessments in relation to the projects summarised in items 3.1 and 3.3 above.
  - 1.1.3. engage with the Environment Agency, via the River Severn Partnership, to seek opportunities provided by the national Defra Adaptive Pathways Pilot for the River Severn, to assess and manage climate related risks, incorporating adaptation into the design and delivery of the Smithfield Riverside development programme.
  - 1.1.4. enter negotiations with the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure the 'Getting Building' funding remains relevant to the Pride Hill project; scope and agree variations as required to the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA).
  - 1.1.5. identify funding of £3.295m to deliver the above development activities, as scheduled in appendix C.

- 1.5. Further to recommendation 3.1, declare the Shirehall building and associated environs within the site boundary marked in red in appendix I, surplus to requirements.
- 1.6. Delegate responsibility to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure, to agree and implement the disposal and marketing strategy as the recommended option for the Shirehall site; agree terms and conditions of sale, all subject to approval at Full Council.

## **85 Shropshire Council Sustainable Warmth Programme**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets and the Green Economy, Councillor Ian Nellins, and seconded by Councillor Simon Jones that the report of the Executive Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

Members welcomed the report and asked that a member briefing session be held to update them on what was available, and that the relevant scrutiny committee monitor the implementation of the scheme.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Council:

1. Note the bids received so far and the various work streams associated with them across Shropshire.
2. Agree permission for Shropshire Council to operate as the accountable body for the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 3 (LAD3) bid awarded 18.11.2021.
3. Agree permission for Shropshire Council to operate as the accountable body for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) awarded 08.02.2022
4. Approve inclusion of the schemes and associated funding totalling £10,414,244 in the capital programme

## **86 Care Leavers Covenant**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education, Councillor Kirstie Hurst-Knight, and seconded by Councillor Nick Bardsley that the report of the Executive Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

Members welcomed the contents of the report.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Council agrees to sign up to a Whole Council 5 Part Strategy and approves the current Covenant Pledge set out in Section 7.3.
2. Members are requested to sign today their commitment to promote the Care Leavers' Covenant with partners and businesses they come into contact with, and to refresh their commitment to the SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS' CHARTER (Appendix 5).
3. That Council delegates to the Chief Executive and the Executive Directors consideration of which of the additional options to enhance the Whole Council Five-Part Strategy they are prepared to endorse to include:
  - The development of more suitable housing options for care leavers.
  - Support to gain suitable housing for care leavers through use of rent guarantor schemes and/or payment of a supplement to housing providers where finance is a barrier.
  - The expansion of support to care leavers who become homeless by extending the automatic priority need category up to the age of 25 (legally it is currently 21).
  - Further to this, no care leaver would be made intentionally homeless from a care placement (ie, children's home, foster care, SB&L, SHIP, SAIL) and all care leavers would be placed into gold banding (or equivalent due to the review of the policy) for HomePoint.
  - Funding for additional work experience and apprenticeship opportunities in the Council ring-fenced for care leavers
  - A 'Whole Council' audit to take place.
  - An annual 'Social Value' face to face event to bring together Council members and representatives from Council departments with local businesses and partner agencies to promote opportunities for Shropshire care leavers and set ambitious targets to enable them to live and work successfully within Shropshire.

**87 Paper v digital agendas**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Digital, Data and Insight, Councillor Rob Gittins, and seconded by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources, Councillor Gwilym Butler that the report of the Interim Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received, and agreed.

Councillor Kidd commented that she found it difficult to quickly search through documents online. She was advised that there was support available for Members to help them with this.

## **RESOLVED:**

That Council

**1.1** agree that paper copies of agendas and reports should not routinely be provided for meetings and IT support will be provided to enable Members to access digital copies of agendas and reports subject to:

- a)** any specific requests by Members for a paper copy of the summons for a meeting to be posted to their home address.
- b)** any specific requests by Chairs of Committees for a paper copy of the agenda but not the full set of reports where a second screen is available when chairing the meeting.
- c)** Copies of reports provided to members will be recorded and costs and carbon savings published annually.

**1.2** agree to amend paragraph 9.2 of Part of the Councils Constitution as follows:

### *“9.2 Contents of the Summons*

*The Summons will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted. When sent electronically it will be accompanied by such reports as are available. When sent by post, such reports as are available will be sent separately by electronic means unless agreed by the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services that they should be provided in paper form.*

**2.** agree that meetings of Council, Cabinet and committees should continue to be live streamed in accordance with the processes that have been in place since the return to face to face meetings in May 2021

## **88 Member and Public Questions Procedure**

It was proposed by the Leader, Councillor Lezley Picton, and seconded by the Councillor Julian Dean that the report of the Interim Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received, and agreed.

By way of amendment Councillor David Vasmer proposed that recommendation be amended to read

That Council approve the Proposed Recommendations with regard to Issues 3,4,5,6 & 7 as set out in Section 4 below and to delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any necessary amendments to the Constitution

This was seconded by Councillor Kevin Pardy.

On being put to the vote the amendment was defeated.

By way of amendment Councillor Rosemary Dartnall proposed

That the proposed recommendation at item 9 be amended to read: It is recognised that vexatious questions may challenge councillors and officers and that the council considers individual residents vexatious. However, within any open and transparent council meeting public questions are a demonstration of fundamental democratic rights. Vexatious and repetitive questions will be ruled out under the criteria of the Council's Procedure Rules. Repeating a question asked and answered at any public council meeting in the previous six months will not be permitted.

#### 5. Risk Assessment and Opportunities

That Appraisal 5.1. be amended to read - There is a risk attached to allowing members of the public into meetings which are live streamed. Officers will be able to mute or remove participants from a meeting where there is cause for concern if abusive, personally abusive or foul language is used or if the participant attempts to interrupt the progress of the meeting.

This was seconded by Councillor Tony Parsons.

Councillor Picton stated that she was happy to accept the amendment to Issue 9 but not the amendment to appraisal 5.1. Councillor Dartnall agreed to withdraw the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of her amendment.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Council approve the Proposed Recommendations with regard to Issues 1 – 9 as set out in Section 4 below subject to the amendment of the recommendation at item 9 to read:

It is recognised that vexatious questions may challenge councillors and officers and that the council considers individual residents vexatious. However, within any open and transparent council meeting public questions are a demonstration of fundamental democratic rights. Vexatious and repetitive questions will be ruled out under the criteria of the Council's Procedure Rules. Repeating a question asked and answered at any public council meeting in the previous six months will not be permitted.

And that delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to make any necessary amendments to the Constitution

#### **89 Members Allowances and Parental Leave for Councillors**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support, Councillor Gwilym Butler, and seconded by Councillor Dan Thomas that the report of the Interim Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received, and agreed.

Members welcomed the contents of the report.

Councillor Buckley commented that if we were to become a truly family friendly council consideration should be given to when and where meetings are held and the facilities which are available.

Councillor Roger Evans asked that the Remuneration Panel be asked to carry out a review of the Allowance Scheme, consulting with Members where appropriate, with a view to bringing a report to the Council meeting in February 2023. Councillor Butler suggested that Group Leaders could discuss how they want this to be taken forward at a meeting of the Constitution Working Group.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the current Members' Allowance Scheme, attached at Appendix 1, be approved.
2. That the Parental Leave Policy for Members, attached at Appendix 2, be approved

## **90 Allocation of Committee Seats and Appointments**

It was proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Vince Hunt, and seconded by the Vice Chairman Councillor Brian Williams that the report of the Interim Assistant Director – Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received, and agreed

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the Council confirms the revised allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the 2021/22 municipal year as a consequence of the change in group membership as follows:
  - a) That the composition and revised allocation of seats on its committees and other bodies as detailed in the report be approved.
  - b) That the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group provides notification of which if its members will continue as a member of the South Planning Committee.
  - c) That Councillor Boddington be appointed to the South Planning Committee.
2. That following changes to committee membership be noted:

### Performance Management Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Nick Hignett appointed as a substitute member of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee

## **91 Motions**

The following motions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 16

- 1. From Councillor Joyce Barrow and supported by Councillors Steve Davenport, David Evans, Robert Macey, Chris Schofield and Lezley Picton**

Whilst consort to the mayor of Oswestry, I came into contact with the Stoma Group, known as “bums on tums” which is a totally voluntary run group, headed by Irene Constable. She told me how simple things, recommended by colostomy UK, could make a huge difference to their members, and are inexpensive changes to toilets.

In terms of the classic 'stand-alone building' type of public toilets, these are all now mostly owned and run by Town & Parish Council's. It's estimated to be in the region of 35 or more of these type of public toilets.

As regards Shropshire Council owned and run buildings or sites which are available to be used by members of the public (such as libraries, museums, leisure etc.), It is estimated to be in the region of 42 with toilet facilities.

I would like Shropshire council to implement the following where possible.

1. A shelf on which to lay out the items needed when changing their appliance. This doesn't need to be huge, if there is already a surface that is within reach, such as a baby changing mat or the like, that would be sufficient.
2. Two Cloths hooks
3. A sanitary bin within the cubicle.
4. Write to all town and parish councils in our area, to ask them to consider doing the same.

None of these are costly but would make the world of distance to an Ostomate who urgently needs to change their appliance.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Chris Schofield

On taking a vote the motion was supported

2. **From Councillor Simon Harris supported by Councillors Tom Biggins, Richard Marshall, Ian Nellins and Chris Schofield**

### **Ban Both Sky Lantern and Balloon Releases from Council Property**

For many years the Marine Conservation Society has run a campaign to make sky lantern and balloon releases illegal by classifying this activity as 'littering'. The Society has not been successful.

The Society has also encouraged Local Authorities to ban these activities from property that the Authorities own – this approach, while not dealing with the problem per se, has had some success. Shropshire's neighbouring Council of Worcestershire has banned both sky lantern and balloon releases, while Hereford has banned sky lantern releases. I understand that Shropshire Council banned sky lantern releases several years ago; although this ban is not reflected on the Society's website.

Both these releases need to be banned for the following reasons:



- Over the past 5 years, on average 3 balloons per 100m have been found during the Great British Beach Clean.
- Balloons marketed as 'biodegradable' can last up to four years ie as litter
- Animals, including livestock, can be injured through ingestion, entanglement and entrapment.
- Marine turtles are particularly vulnerable. The digestive tract of a juvenile green turtle, washed up dead near Blackpool in 2001, was completely blocked by marine litter including a large fragment of blue latex balloon
- Animals get tangled up in balloon ribbons and string, restricting their movement and the ability to eat
- Sky lanterns also pose a fire hazard to crops and to thatched roof properties

I move the following motion:

1. All Sky Lantern and Balloon releases are to be banned from all Shropshire Council property.
2. Shropshire Council will request the Government to classify all such releases as littering, and thus they should be made illegal.
3. Shropshire Council will run a media campaign to discourage all such releases within the County.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Dan Morris

On taking a vote the motion was supported

**3. From Councillor Tom Biggins supported by Councillors Geoff Elner, Ian Nellins, Chris Schofield**

Shropshire Council notes with the utmost concern the DVSA's decision to close the Whitchurch Driving Test centre on 10th April 2022, because the lease is due to end soon, without having undertaken any consultation with those directly affected or the local community.

The loss of the centre removes a vital service from a large part of the Shropshire Council area, including Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Wem, Ellesmere, Hodnet, Prees and all the countryside in between.

In addition pupils come over the border from Bronington, Penley and Hanmer in Wales and from Malpas, Marbury, Wrenbury and Audlem and all the surrounding countryside in South Cheshire.

The nearest test centres will be at Crewe, Wrexham or Shrewsbury.

Pupils will need to travel to a new driving test town to have familiarisation lessons with the road layout before taking a test. This will have the discriminatory effect of increasing the cost for a pupil, due to the extra travel time of going to and returning from a new venue with a driving instructor before the lesson/test can take place.

For example a car journey to Crewe can take  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour/ 1 hour each way, dependent on traffic.

This closure will not only cause a massive inconvenience and extra travelling cost for all individual learner drivers and driving instructors in the future, but it will also remove a local service that provides economic benefit to our area.

This decision is arbitrary, unfounded on economic grounds, and we believe this closure goes against the Government's policy of levelling up. The detrimental effect to the local area of closing the Whitchurch Driving Test Centre is disproportionately severe and will not provide a "customer-centred service" for our area.

Shropshire Council calls on the Secretary of State at the Department for Transport:

1. to reverse the decision by the Driving Standards Agency to close the Driving Test Centre in Whitchurch on 10th April 2022 and
2. to instruct the Driving Standards Agency to maintain a driving test centre in Whitchurch to ensure parity of opportunity for residents across the north of Shropshire and adjoining areas.

By way of amendment Councillor David Vasmer proposed the following: -

Insert after the first paragraph as follows

"Shropshire Council notes the support given by Helen Morgan MP to the campaign to save the Whitchurch Test Centre. She has:

- a. Criticised the DVSA's Chief Executive who said that pupils could take their tests elsewhere. Helen Morgan said that his response "represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the problems faced by rural communities, especially the difficulties we face in getting to Crewe, Wrexham and Shrewsbury."
- b. Met and is working with a local community action group which is campaigning to keep the Test Centre open.
- c. In Parliament asked the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps to keep the Test Centre open
- d. Met with Baroness Vere and the Regional Operations Director of the DVSA to urge them to reverse their closure decision.

Councillor Biggins commend that he was unable to accept the amendment but was willing to add the following paragraph to the motion

Shropshire Council also notes the campaign to save Whitchurch Driving Test Centre led by local driving instructors and their pupils, that is supported by parish and town councils, as well as Shropshire Council Councillors and the MP for North Shropshire.

Councillor Vasmer indicated that he was happy with this

On taking a vote it was **RESOLVED**

Shropshire Council calls on the Secretary of State at the Department for Transport:

- a) to reverse the decision by the Driving Standards Agency to close the Driving Test Centre in Whitchurch on 10th April 2022 and
- b) to instruct the Driving Standards Agency to maintain a driving test centre in Whitchurch to ensure parity of opportunity for residents across the north of Shropshire and adjoining areas.
- c) Shropshire Council also notes the campaign to save Whitchurch Driving Test Centre led by local driving instructors and their pupils that is supported by parish and town councils, as well as Shropshire Councillors and the MP for North Shropshire.

**4. From Councillor Heather Kidd supported by the Liberal Democrat Group**

The role of Scrutiny committees is an integral and important part of the constitution of this Council and vital to the decision making process of a Council. The Council spends time, effort and resources running our Scrutiny Committees. Measuring their value to this Council through constructive challenge and improved policy and decision making is vital to those taking part and also to the people of Shropshire. Good scrutiny should provide measurable outcomes.

This Council therefore resolves to explicitly include the positive changes and improvements that each Scrutiny Committee has achieved throughout the year in the annual report they present to Council. This should include:

- Reporting the impact of Task & Finish Groups – where policy has changed or decisions improved
- The number of recommendations to Cabinet and whether they were adopted or rejected and why.
- Reviews of previous years implementation by Cabinet and any service outcomes at 6 or 12 months.
- A report on any pre-scrutiny work and its impact.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Julia Buckley

On being put to a vote the motion was defeated

**5. From Councillor Lezley Picton supported by Councillors Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Rob Gittins, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Simon Jones, Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins and Ed Potter**

This Administration was very disappointed by the latest Government announcements regarding Shropshire Council's Levelling Up and County Deal bids. This Council put forward first class Levelling Up bids which, if successful, would have made a huge positive difference to communities across Shropshire. Our bid for a county deal, which included asking government to devolve more powers to a local level, was seen as vital at a time when our communities and indeed our whole county is recovering from the pandemic.

As part of the announcement surrounding County Deals, Government insisted that this process was not about, nor would it involve, Local Government reorganisation.

It has now been stated that the success of future bids may require the creation of a 'combined authority' for the area that could, potentially, be made up of both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council, or even by joining with other adjacent authorities.

The communities represented by Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Borough Council are very different, with different priorities and different challenges in delivering services. Active cooperation already exists between both Councils and indeed Herefordshire Council in areas of converging interests and priorities and there is no reason why this will not continue and expand.

**MOTION**

This Council opposes the suggestion of the creation of a single unitary authority covering the whole historic county of Shropshire. Further, that a Mayor or Governor, or any other additional layer of bureaucracy is not required.

That Shropshire Council will continue to work with neighbouring authorities, where appropriate, and without the need for amalgamation, and

That the Council Leader and Chief Executive Officer will continue to impress upon the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities that Shropshire Council is best placed to deliver the needs of its residents and that Council will continue to pursue Levelling Up Bids, County Deals and fairer funding for Shropshire in its own right.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Cecilia Motley.

On being put to a vote the motion was supported.

**6. Received from Councillor Nigel Hartin and is supported by Councillors Heather Kidd, David Vasmer and Rob Wilson**

This Council resolves to help as many residents as possible to organise street parties to celebrate HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, including advertising how to organise one, waiving all fees and covering public liability insurance.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Caroline Bagnall

The Leader Councillor Lezley Picton commented that it would not be possible for the Council to cover public liability insurance and informed the meeting that there was no charge for road closures for community groups and by way of amendment proposed the following: -

This Council resolves to help as many residents as possible to organise street parties to celebrate HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee by publicising specific advice and guidance for events such as Street Parties

Councillor Hartin agreed to accept this amendment and on being put to a vote it was **RESOLVED** that

This Council resolves to help as many residents as possible to organise street parties to celebrate HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee by publicising specific advice and guidance for events such as Street Parties.

Councillor Cecilia Motley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism and Transport advised Members that further information was available from the Events and Licensing Officer and agreed to circulate his contact details to Councillors.

## 92 Questions from Members

The Chairman advised that the following 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.

Received from Councillor Rob Wilson and answered by Councillor Ian Nellins, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets & Green Economy in relation to the traffic filter on Crowmeole Road. By way of supplemental question Councillor Wilson invited the Portfolio Holder to visit the area to see the current situation firsthand which he agreed to do.

Received from Councillor Rob Wilson and answered by Councillor Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure in relation to use of refabricated units for temporary accommodation. There was no supplementary question

Received from Councillors David Evans and Hilary Luff and answered by Councillor Ed Potter, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning in relation to levelling up funding for Craven Arms. There was no supplementary question

Received from Councillor Tom Biggins and answered by Councillor Ed Potter, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and

Planning in relation to a new mini roundabout at the junction of Claypit Street and London Road in Whitchurch. There was no supplementary question

**93 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED:**

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

**94 Alveley Industrial Estate**

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure, Councillor Dean Carroll, and seconded by Councillor Richard Marshall that the exempt report of the Head of Property and Development, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved

**95 Exempt Minutes**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2022, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....