



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
INSERT NEXT MEETING DATE

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2024

In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND
10.00 - 11.36 am

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

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

Present

Councillors Vince Hunt and Lezley Picton (Leader), Brian Williams (Vice Chairman), Ian Nellins (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, Steve Charmley, Ted Clarke, Rachel Connolly, Gerald Dakin, Rosemary Dartnall, Steve Davenport, Mary Davies, Julian Dean, Geoff Elner, David Evans, Julia Evans, Roger Evans, Paul Gill, Rob Gittins, Nat Green, Kate Halliday, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett, Ruth Houghton, Richard Huffer, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Mike Isherwood, Mark Jones, Simon Jones, Duncan Kerr, Heather Kidd, Christian Lea, Hilary Luff, Nigel Lumby, Robert Macey, David Minnery, Dan Morris, Pamela Moseley, Alan Mosley, Peggy Mullock, Kevin Pardy, Tony Parsons, Ed Potter, Chris Schofield, Andrew Sherrington, Dan Thomas, Robert Tindall, Kevin Turley, David Vasmer, Alex Wagner, Claire Wild, Mark Williams, Rob Wilson and Paul Wynn

1 Election of Chairman

The Vice Chairman confirmed that the Chief Executive had received the resignation of the Chairman Councillor Vince Hunt

It was proposed by the Vice Chairman, Councillor Brian Williams and seconded by the Leader Councillor Lezley Picton that Councillor Vince Hunt be elected as Chairman of Shropshire Council

It was proposed by Councillor Roger Evans and seconded by Councillor Andrew Sherrington that Councillor Nigel Hartin be elected as Chairman of Shropshire Council

Following a vote it was **RESOLVED**

That Councillor Vince Hunt be elected Chairman of Shropshire Council to hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council on 22 May 2025.

Councillor Hunt then took the Chair and subscribed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before being invested with the Chairman's badge of office.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Dean Carroll, Simon Harris, Tracey Huffer, Cecilia Motley, Viv Parry, John Price, Colin Taylor and Ed Towers.

3 **Appointment of Vice Chairman**

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had received the formal resignation of the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Brian Williams.

It was proposed by the Chairman Councillor Vince Hunt and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Ian Nellins that Councillor Brian Williams be appointed as Vice Chairman of Shropshire Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Roger Evans and seconded by Councillor Andrew Sherrington that Councillor Nigel Hartin be appointed as Vice Chairman of Shropshire Council.

Following a vote it was **RESOLVED**: -

That Councillor Brian Williams should be appointed as Vice-Chairman of Shropshire Council to hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council on 22 May 2025.

4 **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.

There were no declarations made

5 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2024, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

6 **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 21 March 2024, which had been emailed prior to the meeting.

7 **Public Questions**

The Chairman advised that public questions had been received from Adam Fejfer, Teri Trickett, Victoria moore and Spencer Edwards. 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, 9th May, 2024, 10.00 am — Shropshire Council](#)

Petition

The Chairman advised that a petition, bearing over 1000 signatures had been received from Tracey Cansdale, requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme. The petition stated

"We the undersigned demand a formal consultation on the decision to close the Schools Library Service plus a commitment to rapidly explore and report on options to rehouse the existing library and maintain the service in some form, within a month and before any actions are taken to close it".

Ms Cansdale was given 5 minutes to outline her case during which she stressed the importance of the School Library Service to schools and stated that many schools would not be able to afford the number of books currently supplied by the service. She added that she felt the consultation currently being undertaken was flawed as there were barriers to the public being involved and school governors were not included as a connected category in the stakeholder survey. In closing she stated that the petition showed that there was a clear public will for the Council to be subsidising this service in the medium term until enough time is given for more marketing, sponsorship and income generation, and that the resounding message of the 4300 signatures of the petition is that Council taxpayers are aghast at the thought of it being lost.

During the debate Members highlighted the value of the service for schools, especially in rural areas, and the impact on children's learning and development. A Member expressed concern that the correct procedures have not been followed prior to schools being advised that the service was being discontinued.

In summing up the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education stated that a consultation had been commenced with all schools that use the service and a report would be brought to Cabinet in September. She urged everyone to take part in the consultation. She commented that as the consultation had not ended there was currently insufficient information to base any action on and proposed that no further action be taken.

On being put to a recorded vote with 36 Members voting for, 30 against and no abstentions as follows:

FOR:

Councillors Aldcroft, Anderson, Bardsley, Barrow, Biggins, Bird, Broomhall, Burchett, Butler, Charmley, Dakin, Davenport, Elnor, D Evans, Gill, Gittins, Hignett, Hunt, Hurst- Knight, M Jones, S Jones, Lea Luff, Lumby, Macey, Morris, Mullock, Nellins, Picton, Potter, Schofield, Thomas, Tindall, Wild, B Williams and Wynn

AGAINST:

Councillors Bagnall, Bentick, Boddington, Buckley, Clarke, Connolly, Dartnall, Davies, Dean, J Evans, R Evans, Green, Halliday, Hartin, Houghton, R Huffer, Isherwood, Kerr, Kidd, Minnery, Moseley, Mosley, Pardy, Parsons, Sherrington, Turley, Vasmer, Wagner, M Williams and Wilson

It was **RESOLVED:**

That no further action be taken

8 Constitution of Committees and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

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

RESOLVED:

That the Council confirms the constitution of committees and the allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the 2024/25 municipal year and the allocation of seats between the political groups, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

9 Scheme of Delegation

The Chairman, Councillor Vince Hunt moved that the Responsibility for Functions, set out in Part 3 of the Constitution and the Scheme of Delegations, set out in Part 8 of the Constitution be approved. This was seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Brian Williams.

RESOLVED:

That the Responsibility for Functions, as set out in Part 3 of the Constitution and the Scheme of Delegations, as set out in Part 8 of the Constitution be approved

10 Motions

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Duncan Kerr and supported by the Green Group

A peer review of Shropshire Council last year reported that the Council's financial position was perilous. It has got a great deal worse since then. With dramatically increasing demands for statutory services and very restricted funds good stewardship demands that Shropshire Council work as closely as possible with local parish councils who are not facing the pressure on statutory services.

Like so many of the issues now facing Shropshire Council this work could have, and should have, been done in the better times when capacity was higher. As with planting a tree, if the best time was years ago the second-best time is now.

Shropshire Council has shown it can work well with individual town and parish council on an ad-hoc basis in response to funding streams from Government. But this piecemeal approach is insufficient to meet the challenges our communities now face. Now is the time to show that this Council has a genuine commitment to work in full partnership with local councils to maximise efficiencies. It can do this by jointly developing with them a charter.

A model for this already exists in other Unitary areas such as Northumberland [Northumberland-T-PCC-Charter-FINAL-10-Jan-23.pdf](#). We could rightfully expect that SALC would help in the development of this.

This motion moves that Shropshire Council commit to developing a similar charter by December 2024.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Julian Dean

On taking a vote the motion was not supported.

The following motion submitted by Councillor Julian Dean and supported by the Green Group

Improving local and national performance on climate action

We recognise that local delivery of net zero is essential to the UK's commitments to net zero by 2050 and to 68% emissions reductions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

We note that the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has found that supporting a local approach for delivering net zero by 2050 would be at half the cost of a national approach and would deliver three times the financial returns to our communities. A fair transition to a local net zero economy has the potential to boost prosperity and well-being in every corner of the UK.

We further note that, when it comes to adaptation, the LGA states that "Nationally we are not sufficiently prepared for the impacts of climate change, and central government must prioritise its work with local government to close this gap." We further note that "For many climate impacts it is the most vulnerable in society that will be most impacted and have the least ability to adapt" (CCC: The Just Transition and Climate Change Adaptation).

We note that analysis of Climate Emergency UK Scorecards on Climate Action highlight that success is aligned with:

- A dedicated portfolio holder
- Having a published climate strategy with SMART targets, including area-wide targets, plus effective reporting.
- Innovative financing for climate action
- Effective area partnerships that include key anchor institutions and influencers
- At present the Shropshire Plan Performance Report contains no KPIs related to corporate or area wide carbon emissions, to modal shift towards active

travel and public transport or to the decarbonisation of heating in Shropshire homes, as examples of potential areas for SMART targets.

At present there is no effective publicly visible partnership with public or private sector institutions working together on a green transition for Shropshire.

This Council therefore resolves to ask Cabinet to examine best practice across these areas and to bring forward proposals to develop / improve the council's measuring and reporting against both council and area wide mitigation and adaptation targets; to include KPIs for the Shropshire Plan; and for innovative financing of projects - in particular looking at municipal bonds that can raise both finance and awareness amongst residents; and for establishing an effective and public facing partnership with anchor institutions and others, ensuring decision makers are brought together.

Council notes the Mission Zero Coalition statement that "The quickest, cheapest and fairest route to net-zero is through local authorities. As analysis has shown, local-led action could save the UK £140bn in reaching net-zero compared to a top-down approach, while delivering almost double the energy savings and social benefits"

We note the results of a recent LGA survey suggesting that 67% of councils are not confident in hitting their net zero targets.

This Council therefore resolves to ask all political parties to commit the next Government to deliver a new partnership deal between councils and government that will enable councils and local communities to accelerate local decarbonisation and adaptation. This new partnership should include:

- Government departments and councils working together within a Local Net Zero Delivery Unit, overseen by a Delivery Board, with the authority to transform the funding and regulatory landscape.
- A Local Net Zero Data and Reporting Framework to ensure better accountability and scrutiny. (These proposals were developed by UK100 - to which Shropshire Council belongs)
- A local climate 'test' applied to all government decisions – from housing to skills - that guarantees support, rather than conflict, with local climate action (as proposed by the LGA)

Council further resolves to ask all political parties to commit to giving Local Authorities statutory duties, powers and funding to enable a Net Zero transition in line with the UK's legal commitments

Council asks our group leaders to write to their respective national parties calling on them to make these commitments.

Council asks our council leadership and our elected members to use every forum available to press the case for these changes in the relationship between national and local government to help accelerate meaningful action on decarbonisation and adaptation.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Julia Evans

Following a vote the motion was unanimously supported

11 Questions from Members

The Chairman advised that the following question 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 Rosemary Dartnall in relation to Member question procedure at Council. By way of supplementary question Councillor Dartnall asked whether any new procedure agreed would be in place for the next council meeting in July. She was advised that any change would need a change to the constitution which would require a report to be brought to the next Council meeting.

12 Future Meeting Dates

RESOLVED:

That meetings of the Council in 2024 – 2025 would be held on the following Thursdays, commencing at 10.00 am.

- 18 July 2024
- 26 September 2024
- 12 December 2024
- 27 February 2025
- 27 March 2025
- 22 May 2025

Signed (Chairman)

Date: