



Shropshire Council  
Legal and Democratic Services  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
SY2 6ND

Date: 10 January 2025

**Committee:**

**Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: Monday, 20 January 2025**

**Time: 2.00 pm**

**Venue: Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND**

You are requested to attend the above meeting. The Agenda is attached

There will be some access to the meeting room for members of the press and public, but this will be limited. If you wish to attend the meeting please email [democracy@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@shropshire.gov.uk) to check that a seat will be available for you.

Please click [here](#) to view the livestream of the meeting on the date and time stated on the agenda

The recording of the event will also be made available shortly after the meeting on the Shropshire Council Youtube Channel [Here](#)

Tim Collard  
Assistant Director - Legal and Governance

**Members of Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Claire Wild (Chair)

Joyce Barrow (Vice-Chair)

Thomas Biggins

Rosemary Dartnall

Roger Evans

David Minnery

Peggy Mullock

Andrew Sherrington

Dan Thomas

Robert Tindall

Your Committee Officer is:

**Ashley Kendrick Democratic Services Officer**

Tel: 01743 250893

Email: [ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk)

# AGENDA

## 1 Apologies

## 2 Disclosable Interests

Members are 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. Further advice can be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

## 3 Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 4)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2024.

## 4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions from members of the public. Deadline for notification is 12 noon on Tuesday 14 January 2025.

## 5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions of which members of the Council have given notice. Deadline for notification is 12 noon on Tuesday 14 January 2025.

## 6 Financial Monitoring Period 8

To scrutinise financial monitoring at Period 8 and identify issues that may require further investigation by an overview and scrutiny committee.

### REPORT TO FOLLOW

## 7 Draft Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2029/30

To receive the draft financial strategy as its being developed and provide any feedback accordingly.

### REPORT TO FOLLOW

**8 Work Programme (Pages 5 - 6)**

To consider proposals for the Committee's work programme 2024 – 2025, attached

**9 Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 11 February 2025.

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## **Committee and Date**

Transformation and  
Improvement Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee

20 January 2025

## **TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2024  
In the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, SY2 6ND  
10.00 am – 11.10 am**

**Responsible Officer** Amanda Holyoak, Committee Officer  
Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

### **Present**

Councillor Claire Wild (Chair)  
Councillors Joyce Barrow (Vice-Chair), Thomas Biggins, Rosemary Dartnall, Roger Evans,  
Rob Gittins, David Minnery, Peggy Mullock and Dan Thomas

### **In Attendance**

Andy Begley – Chief Executive, Claire Braddock – Overview and Scrutiny Officer,  
Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and  
Communities, Tom Dodds – Scrutiny Manager, Amanda Holyoak – Committee Officer,  
Ben Jay – Assistant Director Finance and Technology (Via MS Teams) Lezley Picton –  
Leader (Via MS Teams), James Walton – Executive Director of Resources

### **38 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Tony Parsons.

The Executive Director for People and Executive Director for Health had also sent apologies.

### **39 Disclosable Interests**

None were declared.

### **40 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **41 Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

### **42 Member Question Time**

There were no member questions.

### **43 Collaborative Budget**

The Committee received and noted the report of the cross-party Collaborative Budget Task and Finish Group. The Portfolio Holder for Resources reported that the meetings of the group had been very well attended. No questions on the report were raised and the Portfolio Holder observed that this demonstrated the success of the approach.

#### 44 **Draft Financial Strategy 2024/25 - 2028/29**

The Executive Director of Resources presented the report and apologised for its late circulation. The reason for this had been to enable it to reflect the most up to date position, including the information provided within the Policy Statement released on 28 November.

In response to a member question, the Executive Director explained that while the National Insurance contribution increase had no direct local authority impact, it would affect the supply chain and the council's costs for third party spend across the board. Discussions and negotiations would determine how these costs would be absorbed.

A member said he understood the difficulties caused by a change in government and the wait for financial settlement information but was disappointed with the level of detail within the report especially regarding possible mitigations. He felt that reference should have been made to financial savings agreed by the Council in February 2024 and that the Quarter 2 report should have been included on the agenda for the meeting.

The Chair referred to discussions held at the Collaborative Budget Task and Finish Group where it was agreed that some lines of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy required improved dialogue. The Portfolio Holder emphasised the distinct roles of councillors in setting policy and the day-to-day detailed work of officers. In response to a comment on availability of information he confirmed that he was not party to any more information than other members in the meeting and trusted the figures provided by officers.

The Executive Director reported that the Collaborative Budget Task and Finish Group would shortly be considering a set of proposals to go out to public consultation. An updated gap position could not be identified until the settlement was received during week commencing 16 December. He also reiterated that no information was being held back and there was no hidden policy agenda. If any savings required a policy change then that would have to be considered in the usual way by Cabinet or Council.

The Assistant Director Finance and Technology drew attention to the link on page 10 of the report to the February Council MTF report. He understood that figures might not seem to link back in the way that might be expected, but the situation was moving extremely quickly and all information was available and could be tracked to ensure transparency. The Executive Director confirmed that the Core Spending power information in the paper was purely for the current year 2024 – 2025.

With regard to the Quarter 2 update, it had not been included as an item at this meeting as the committee wished to see quarterly reporting information ahead of Cabinet. On this occasion the timing of meetings meant that this had not been possible. The report could have been added to the meeting agenda if requested and was available on the website. If

there were any questions on it the Executive Director confirmed that he was happy to take them.

Committee members made reference to the comments on financial sustainability and risks within the External Auditor’s Annual Report 2023 – 2024 considered by the Audit Committee on 28 November 2024. The Executive Director pointed out that this was a publicly available report and that governance issues were within the remit of the Audit Committee. He explained that unless there was a material change in the direction of travel of a key project there was not sufficient information available to quantify or build in identified risks into next year.

Answering further questions, officers explained that although it was usual for the settlement information to arrive very close to Christmas, for at least the last five years it had been possible to expect a principle of no fundamental changes. This would not be the case this year and usual assumptions could not be made, for example, the Council had only just learnt that the Rural Services Delivery Grant had come to an end. It was not possible in these circumstances to give a sense of what the funding gap would be ahead of the settlement.

Responding to a question about public transport funding, the Assistant Director Finance and Technology Management explained that there was some information available to the council on what would be covered. However, he drew attention to the imminent publication of the Devolution White Paper and potential implications for responsibilities around public transport and consequent funding impacts.

The Chair proposed that the report be noted and this was seconded. On taking a vote, this was agreed by the Committee. Councillors Roger Evans and Rosemary Dartnall asked that the minutes record that they had abstained.

**45 Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Manager referred to the forthcoming pre-election period and the financial strategy item planned for the next meeting. The Executive Director confirmed that the Quarter 3 report would not be produced until February but that period 7 or possibly period 8 information should be available for consideration in January.

The Committee agreed that the scheduled meeting date of 13 January 2025 would be too soon, and it was agreed to change this to 20 January 2025 so that the latest available information could be provided.

**46 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 20 January 2025 at 2.00 pm.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....

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## Transformation & Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee High-level work programme – July 2024

Date	Item	Responsible Officer	Briefing	Briefing and decision by Members to go to committee	Straight to committee
<b>15 July 2024</b>	<del>Council's New Target Operating Model (TOM)</del>	<del>Andy Begley</del>			x
	<del>Financial Strategy 2025/25 to 2029/30</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
	<del>Local Government Productivity Plan</del>	<del>James Walton</del>			x
<b>9 September 2024</b>	<del>Q1 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report</del>	<del>James Walton/Sam Williams</del>			x
	<del>Q1 Financial Monitoring Report</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
	<del>Financial Monitoring - P4 2024/25 (July)</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
	<del>2023/24 Annual Corporate Customer Feedback Report (Complaints, Comments and Compliments)</del>	<del>Billy Webster/Nigel Newman</del>			x
<b>18 November 2024</b>	<del>Q2 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report</del>	<del>James Walton/Sam Williams</del>			x
	<del>Q2 Financial Monitoring Report</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
	<del>Financial Monitoring - P7 2024/25 (October) - if available</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
<b>13 January 2025</b>	<del>P8 Financial Monitoring</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
	<del>2025/26 to 2029/30 Medium Term Financial Strategy (incl. Budget 2025/26)</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
<b>11 February 2025</b>	<del>Q3 2024/25 Corporate Performance Report</del>	<del>James Walton/Sam Williams</del>			x
	<del>Q3 Financial Monitoring Report</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x
	<del>Financial Monitoring - P10 2024/25 (January) - if available</del>	<del>James Walton/Ben Jay</del>			x

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