



Committee and Date

Cabinet

19 January 2022

CABINET

**Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2022
In the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND
10.00 - 11.40 am**

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak
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Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Leader)
Councillors Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Rob Gittins, Kirstie Hurst-Knight,
Simon Jones, Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins and Ed Potter

69 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

70 Disclosable 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.

71 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

72 Public Questions

Public questions were received from:

Stephen Mulloy in relation to the Leader of Shropshire Council and CMS Jaw Ltd.

Emma Bullard in relation to the North West Relief Road.

The questions and responses provided to them, and the recording of the meeting are available from the webpage for the meeting: [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 5th January, 2022, 10.00 am – Shropshire Council.](#)

73 **Members Question Time**

Member questions were received from:

Councillor Rob Wilson in relation to damage to pavements.

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Wilson requested an update on the pavement parking consultation and asked what preparations the council was making for publication of the results. Councillor Carroll responded that the results of the governments consultation were still awaited, and action would be taken once this was made public.

Councillor Alex Wagner in relation to the pedestrian crossing just south of Oxon Primary School, linked to the Shropshire Homes development at Leighton Park.

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Wagner asked whether the existing plans are likely to be implemented, without a reasonable amount of amendment. Councillor Carroll advised that he was unable to comment at present.

Councillor Nigel Hartin in relation to the Council Tax policy and long-term empty properties.

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Hartin asked whether council could revisit the policy and questioned if a Task and Finish Group may be the way forward. Councillor Picton advised that the matter could be sent to a Scrutiny Committee in the near future, subject to their work programme.

Councillor David Vasmer in relation to the School Streets Motion.

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Vasmer questioned whether there had been an assessment of the scheme at Coleham Primary School as it was understood this had been successful. Councillor Carroll advised that consultation responses had been received and a formal report would be published in the near future for consideration by members.

Councillor David Vasmer in relation to Acton Scott Historic Working Farm.

The questions and responses provided to them are available from the webpage in addition to the recording of the meeting, both available from here : [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 5th January, 2022, 10.00 am – Shropshire Council.](#)

74 **Scrutiny Items**

There were no scrutiny items for discussion.

75 **Setting the Council Tax Taxbase for 2022/23**

The Portfolio Holder for Resources presented the report which set out the Council Tax taxbase for 2022/23 and outlined the policies used to determine the taxbase; including the Council Tax discount policies, Council Tax Support Scheme and the Collection Rate.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Shropshire Council as its Council Tax taxbase for the year 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix A, totalling 115,485.33 Band D equivalents.
2. To note the changes to the Council's localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme in 2022/23. The scheme is attached at Appendix B.
3. To note the Council Tax Support Scheme amendments detailed in Appendix B have no impact on the taxbase determination.
4. To note the exclusion of 8,780.28 Band D equivalents from the taxbase as a result of localised Council Tax Support.
5. To note 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 note the inclusion of 705.17 Band D equivalents in the Council Tax taxbase as a result of this discount policy.
6. To note 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.
7. To note 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 160.66 band D equivalents from the taxbase.
8. To note continuation of the "six week rule" in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties.

9. To note 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 328.10 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
10. To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to levy a Council Tax premium of 200% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years (but less than ten years) and the resulting inclusion of an additional 175.56 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
11. To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to levy a Council Tax premium of 300% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than ten years and the resulting inclusion of an additional 224.67 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
12. To approve a collection rate for the year 2022/23 of 97.9%.

76 Mid-Year Capital and the Financial Strategy 2022/2023 - 2025/2026

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Resources thanked the Executive Director of Resources and the Finance Team for their hard work in difficult circumstances. He reported that Toyin Bamidele, Interim Assistant Director Strategic Finance would be leaving shortly and expressed appreciation for her work.

He regretted that both the lack of information from government and the North Shropshire by-election had meant that it had not been possible to present proposals at a scrutiny committee prior to the Cabinet meeting, and he committed to ensuring this would happen in future.

Despite significant lobbying efforts for the £50m structural funding gap to be addressed, the government had only made a single year funding round settlement. Although all councils were also currently under pressure, Shropshire Council would need to spend a massive 80 – 85% of its budget on social care in the next year. This was simply not enough and could only be satisfactorily addressed by a sustainable funding solution. In order to fund any new activity, something else would have to come to an end. The capital budget had been rationalised to prioritise initiatives that would lead to revenue creation and that did not require borrowing for delivery.

The Leader allowed comments and questions from group leaders and several members of the council and these covered areas including: use of reserves; proposed savings related to green waste and draining maintenance; the North

West Relief Road's impact on the capital programme; intentions to proceed with a civic hub; the Pride Hill Centre; apparent lack of innovative schemes in the capital programme; the need for priorities and a corporate strategy; climate action; affordable housing; level of lobbying activity and involvement of local MPs in lobbying for fairer funding; use of reserves; implications of asset disposal; council tax increase and services; opportunity for scrutiny of budget proposals; and parish council tax base.

The Leader reiterated the disappointment of the Cabinet with the financial settlement after such a period of extensive lobbying activity. Cabinet had already met with MPs in the new year to consider the way forward. She added her thanks for the work of officers and reiterated that her first loyalty was to the residents of Shropshire.

Opposition members were invited to submit any alternative budget proposals or ideas.

RESOLVED:

- A. To approve the savings proposals which will contribute towards delivery of a balanced budget in 2022/23 as outlined in Appendix 1 Annex A, enabling the Leader of the Council to consult on the budget plans before taking to Council on 24 February 2022.
- B. To note the funding gap for the years 2023/24 to 2026/27.
- C. To note and agree the prioritised capital schemes identified at Appendix 2 section 8 including the need to identify and confirm funding sources for these schemes.

77 Treasury Strategy 2021/22 Mid-Year Review

The Portfolio Holder for Resources presented the report which provided an economic update for the first six months of 2021 and included a review of the investment portfolio and borrowing strategy for 2021/22. It also confirmed compliance with Treasury and Prudential limits.

RESOLVED:

That Members accept the position as set out in the report.

78 Community Asset Transfer Rad Valley Scout & Guide HQ

The Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure presented a report which advised that Copthorne Scout & Guide Management Committee had requested a 99- year lease in the form of a Community Asset Transfer of the Rad Valley

Community Centre, Cophorne, Shrewsbury. The transfer would enable them to access grant funding to repair the roof.

RESOLVED:

That the Organisation is granted a 99-year lease as a Community Asset Transfer with delegated authority to the Head of Property & Development to agree the terms of the transfer and complete the lease to ensure compliance with State Aid/Subsidy Control Rules and the Council’s legislative obligations.

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 Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items

80 The Aspire Centre

The Portfolio Holder for Physical infrastructure presented the report.

RESOLVED:

To accept the two recommendations contained within the report.

81 Shire Services Catering Operations

The Porfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure presented the report.

RESOLVED:

To accept the three recommendations contained within the report.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: