



Committee and Date

Cabinet

18 January 2023

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022

**In the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND
10.30 am – 1.27 pm**

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak

Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

Councillors Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Richard Marshall,
Cecilia Motley and Ian Nellins

94 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Rob Gittins, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital.

95 Disclosable Interests

None were declared.

96 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

97 Public Question Time

Public questions were received from:

St Mary's Street Resident's Association Committee – in relation to proposed on street parking scheme changes.

David Kilby, Shropshire Playing Fields Association – in relation to the River Severn Safety Review Report and gating of access to the river.

The full questions and responses provided to them are available from the webpage for the meeting: [CabinetPublicQuestions 14 Dec 22.pdf \(shropshire.gov.uk\)](#)

98 Member Question Time

There were no member questions

99 Scrutiny Items

Councillor Claire Wild, Chair of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee updated Cabinet on discussion held at the meeting on 29 November 2022, at which two Green Papers had been considered:

Digital First Green Paper – the committee had highlighted: the need for safeguards to protect the most vulnerable; the need for better access to and uptake of broadband and improved phone coverage; the importance of committee meetings continuing to be held in public so that the democratic process was not eroded. The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital had attended the meeting and had agreed to take these points on board.

Review of Charging Policy for Second Homes and Empty Properties Green Paper – there had been widespread agreement of those present at the meeting on the contents of the paper.

The Chair reported that the Green Paper system was working well and that in future it was intended that performance data would be provided to the Committee ahead of its presentation to Cabinet.

100 Setting the Council Tax Taxbase for 2023/24

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources presented the report and it was

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agree and recommended to full Council:

1. To approve, 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 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix A, totalling 118,106.08 Band D equivalents.
2. To note the changes to the Council's localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme in 2023/24. 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 8,387.51 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 712.32 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 68.99 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 293.89 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 203.77 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 183.00 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
12. To approve a collection rate for the year 2023/24 of 98.5%.

101 Treasury Strategy 22/23 Mid Year Review

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources presented the report and it was

RESOLVED:

To agree the Treasury Strategy updates as set out in the report.

102 Treasury Management Update Q2 22/23

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources presented the paper and it was

RESOLVED:

To accept the position as set out in the report.

103 Performance Monitoring Report Q2 22/23

The Leader presented the report on behalf of the Portfolio Holder Culture and Digital providing the headlines of performance in Quarter 2. She explained that Key Performance

Indicators were currently in development linked to the outcomes to be achieved within the Shropshire Plan. Cabinet members responded to questions from Group Leaders in relation to the Homelessness Strategy; explained the reasons for the increases in numbers of looked after children and reported on recruitment and retention of social workers and foster carers.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Considered and endorsed, with appropriate comment, the performance to date
2. Considered the emerging issues in this report as set out in paragraph 9.2
3. Reviewed both the appendix and performance portal to identify any performance areas that they would like to consider in greater detail.

104 Financial Strategy Mid-Year Review

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources introduced the report, referring to the need for the Council to take charge of its own destiny and deliver sustainability for the residents of Shropshire. He explained that proposals would be debated and consulted on in the usual way, and reiterated there would be hard decisions to make. He referred to the budgetary pressures caused by increasing demand in adult social care and children's services and high inflation following the covid pandemic and Ukraine War. Focus would be on the priorities set out in the Shropshire Plan and resources would follow those.

Cabinet Members and officers responded to questions from Group Leaders about the method of consultation, conformity with the Gunning Principles and level of detail provided in the paper, particularly in relation to reviews, special needs transport options; garden waste; recruitment; car parking; and target operating model; and explained that the detailed proposals would be included in the budget consultation. The Performance Management Scrutiny Committee would be considering alternative budget proposals at its meeting on 11 January 2023.

Council officers were thanked for their hard work over what had been a difficult year.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- a. Note the factors affecting the estimated funding gap in 2023/24 to 2027/28 and the proposals to close that gap and thereby set a balanced budget for next year (the attachment to appendix 1).
- b. Approve the savings proposals which will contribute towards delivery of a balanced budget in 2023/24 as outlined in Appendix 1 Annex A, enabling the Leader of the Council to consult on the budget plans before presenting a final proposed budget to Council on 2 March 2023.

c. Note and approve the draft capital programme identified at Appendix 1 including funding sources for these schemes.

105 Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning document draft for consultation

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Regulatory Services introduced the report asking for approval to undertake, jointly with Telford and Wrekin Council, a consultation and engagement exercise on the draft Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning document with the public and stakeholders for a 6 week period commencing in January 2023.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve a joint public consultation with Telford and Wrekin Council on the Draft Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document – see Appendix 1.
2. That authority is given to the Executive Director of Place to agree any additional minor-changes to the Draft Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document ahead of this consultation.

106 Draft Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy for Consultation

Councillor Dean Carroll introduced the draft strategy which was designed to seek to tackle fuel poverty, when households must spend a high proportion of their income to keep a home at a reasonable temperature; and also to tackle climate change, through reducing carbon emissions from residential dwellings.

He answered questions from Group Leaders regarding support provided to registered social housing providers to help them bid for grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of their housing stock. He also explained the action plan and key performance indicators would be updated as more information became available and taking a RAG rating approach for the action plan would be considered. He explained that further information regarding sourcing funding for retro-fitting homes in the private sector would be available from the Affordable Warmth Team.

RESOLVED:

To approve that the draft Sustainable Affordable Warmth Strategy, attached at Appendix I, be subject to an eight week public consultation period.

107 Economic Growth Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Growth, Regeneration and Housing was pleased to introduce the final Economic Growth Strategy 2022 – 2027, the product of a genuine co-production with the Shropshire business community. Council would be asked to approve the establishment of the Shropshire Economic Partnership Board at its meeting on 15 December 2022. He thanked the previous Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Councillor Ed Potter, for his work fostering relationships with the business community and

the Leader added her thanks to officers for their hard work in the development of the strategy.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Endorse and approved the final Economic Growth Strategy 2022- 2027(Appendix 1).
2. Recommend to Council the formation of the Shropshire Economic Partnership Board.

108 Proposed designation of a conservation area West Felton

Councillor Richard Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Regulatory Support presented the report and thanked the Natural and Historic Environment Team for their work to date.

RESOLVED:

To agree in principle to the designation of West Felton as a Conservation Area based on the area boundary included in Appendix 1, and to proceed to formal consultation with affected residents, the Parish Council and relevant statutory bodies on this basis.

109 Future Oswestry Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Growth, Regeneration and Housing was very pleased to introduce the report setting out the Future Oswestry Plan and he thanked officers for their hard work, particularly in building and fostering relation between partners.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the Future Oswestry Plan
2. Agreed that the principle of using the Future Oswestry Plan as a material consideration in decision making on relevant planning applications can now be established. The degree of weight that can be attached to the Future Oswestry Plan will depend on the individual circumstances and is a matter for the decision taker in each case.

110 River Safety

The Portfolio Holder for Growth introduced the report which had been developed in partnership by the dedicated water safety team of WSP. Thoughts of the council remained with those impacted by the tragic loss of lives in the River Severn. A considerable number of recommendations across the water safety partnership had been made and a Water Safety Action Group would be established to co-ordinate

implementation of these. The Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council had welcomed and endorsed the report and a brief update explaining progress and actions taken by the Town Council to date was read out on his behalf.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet noted the findings and recommendations of the River Severn Shrewsbury Safety Review report, attached at Appendix 1.
2. That Cabinet asks the existing Team Shrewsbury Group to establish a Water Safety Action Group to coordinate all partners in the review, detailed design and delivery of the proposed actions to be set out in an Action Plan, to improve river safety in Shrewsbury.

111 Library Strategy

Councillor Cecilia Motley introduced the report on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital. She was pleased to report that the council was expanding services available from libraries at a time when some authorities were completely withdrawing funding from their community libraries. She also reported that the strategy had changed between the draft and final version to accommodate views raised by members of the public and staff during the consultation. The Leader and Portfolio Holder responded to questions regarding library levels, and it was confirmed that the needs of traditional library users would be met, and that self-service machines would help free up the time of library staff to provide help where needed.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet approved the “Shropshire Library Strategy 2022-27” and agreed to it being published on the Shropshire Council website.

112 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 press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item

113 Acton Scott Historic Working Farm Options Appraisal

The report was introduced by the Leader on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital

RESOLVED:

To agree the recommendations set out in the report.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: