



**Committee and Date**

Council

21 March 2024

**COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024**

**In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND**

**10.00 am - 3.00 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), Ian Nellins (Deputy Leader), Roy Aldcroft, Jeff Anderson, Caroline Bagnall, Nicholas Bardsley, Joyce Barrow, Bernie Bentick, Thomas Biggins, Ed Bird, Andy Boddington, Julia Buckley, Garry Burchett, Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, 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, Simon Harris, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett, Ruth Houghton, Richard Huffer, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Mark Jones, Simon Jones, Duncan Kerr, Heather Kidd, Christian Lea, Hilary Luff, Nigel Lumby, Robert Macey, David Minnery, Dan Morris, Pamela Moseley, Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Peggy Mullock, Kevin Pardy, Vivienne Parry, Tony Parsons, John Price, Ed Potter, Chris Schofield, Andrew Sherrington, Colin Taylor, Dan Thomas, Robert Tindall, Edward Towers, David Vasmer, Alex Wagner, Claire Wild, Mark Williams and Rob Wilson

**79 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Broomhall, Tracey Huffer, Mike Isherwood, Kevin Turley and Paul Wynn.

**80 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.

Councillor Jeff Anderson declared an interest in agenda item 11(b) – Motion on Consultation on car parking increases as he owned a business in the town centre. He left the room for the duration of this item

Councillor Ruth Houghton declared an interest in agenda item 11(a) Motion on Social Care Costs as she was a trustee of a charity that provided care and had a contract with Shropshire Council. She left the room for the duration of this item.

**81 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

## 82 **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 15 December 2023, which had been emailed prior to the meeting.

## 83 **Public Questions**

The Chairman advised that public questions had been received from Timothy Ashton, Mike Streetly, Jamie Russell, Emma Bullard, Paul Cawthorne and Karen Pearce. 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, 29th February, 2024, 10.00 am — Shropshire Council](#)

## 84 **Financial Strategy 2024/25 - 2028/29 - Final (including Capital Strategy and Council Tax Resolution)**

It was proposed by Councillor Lezley Picton, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy, Improvement and Communications, and seconded by Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities 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 a request from Councillor Roger Evans, the Chairman confirmed that he would split the recommendations in two for the purposes of voting, taking recommendations i to iv (council tax resolution) first and the remaining recommendations second.

By way of amendment Councillor Julia Buckley made the following proposal

“That in lieu of the proposed redundancies, Council enter into consultations with the trade unions and employees, to introduce 12 days unpaid leave for all staff. This would amount to an additional day's holiday per month, and a saving of 4.6% on salaries, totalling £10.6m based on the most recent annual pay bill.

Based on the median salary, this would protect 292.68 Full Time Equivalent jobs (including on costs at an average of 27%)

All those staff below scp 39 (band 13) would still receive a net increase on their salary following a pay rise of £1800 which has been budgeted for by the Council.”

This was seconded by Councillor Alan Mosley

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities stated that whilst he could not currently commit to this proposal, he would investigate the matter further.

On being put to a recorded vote with 29 Members voting for, 38 against and 2 abstentions as follows:

**FOR:**

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

**AGAINST:**

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

**ABSTAIN:**

Councillors Minnery and Towers

The amendment proposed by Councillor Buckley fell.

By way of amendment Councillor Julian Dean proposed the following

“Delete all from

‘In respect of the revenue budget’ to ‘xv agree the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 2 section 6 and Annex B to capital Strategy’.

Delete all from and including ‘In relation to the delivery partner’

Insert at the end:

1. Require the cabinet to return to full council in time to set a balanced budget with new proposals which rebalance the Capital Strategy specifically to support more investment in infrastructure that will support care for adults and children which mitigate the need for residential care.
- 1a. Specifically the £2m identified in savings from children services to be retained by the dept and used to fund the repayments on a revised capital programme designed to enable the development of in-house residential alternatives to expensive privately operated care homes.

2. To require the cabinet to bring forward an asset disposal strategy that requires the council to approach parish and town councils and community groups for assets earmarked for disposal, with a view to making arrangements for such assets to stay in public or community hands, whether for management or ownership.
3. To require the cabinet to set up cross party working groups to consider the implications and enactment of agreed budget measures within each portfolio area, with terms of reference that allow them to bring forward alternatives throughout the year.
4. To require the cabinet to produce portfolio specific equalities and community impact assessments to be considered by the working parties as part of the process at 3.”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Duncan Kerr

The Leader stated that she would be happy to consider cross party working as suggested but could not accept the specifics of the amendment proposed.

Following a vote with 28 votes for, 39 votes against and 1 abstention Councillor Dean's amendment fell.

Following further discussion the Chairman reminded the Members that he would take recommendations i to iv first and on being put to a recorded vote with 69 Members voting for, none against and no abstentions as follows:

**FOR:**

Councillors Aldcroft, Anderson, Bagnall, Bardsley, Barrow, Bentick, Biggins, Bird, Boddington, Buckley, Burchett, Butler, Carroll, Charmley, Clarke, Connolly, Dakin, Dartnall, Davenport, Davies, Dean, Elnor, D Evans, J Evans, R Evans, Gill, Gittins, Green, Halliday, Harris, Hartin, Hignett, Houghton, R Huffer, Hunt, Hurst-Knight, M Jones, S Jones, Kerr, Kidd, Lea, Luff, Lumby, Macey, Minnery, Morris, Moseley, Mosley, Motley, Mullock, Nellins, Pardy, Parry, Parsons, Picton, Potter, Price, Schofield, Sherrington, Taylor, Thomas, Tindall, Towers, Vasmer, Wagner, Wild, B Williams, M Williams and Wilson.

It was **RESOLVED:**

That Council

- i. approve a 4.99% Council tax rise (a 2.99% increase to Council Tax and a 2% increase to Adult Social Care Precept) resulting in a basic amount of council tax for a Band D property of £1,720.80 in the billing authority's area, calculated in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (section 42b).

- ii. 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:

Property Band	2024/25 Charge £
A	1,147.20
B	1,338.40
C	1,529.60
D	1,720.80
E	2,103.20
F	2,485.60
G	2,868.00
H	3,441.60

- iii. approve a total precept of £205,104,165.
- iv. approve the formal council tax resolution as set out in Appendix 4 to determine the levels of Council Tax for Shropshire Council for 2024/25.

Cllr Buckley asked for an explanation as to why the reference to "Bridgnorth Town Centre Parking and Public Realm Works" which had been included in previous Capital Strategy had been removed from the Priority Capital Schemes Schedule (Appendix C to the Report). In response the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support gave his assurance that the scheme was in the Council's Aspirational Schemes Schedule and remained under consideration for inclusion in the Capital Programme subject to a clear specification and business case.

Recommendations v to xvii were then taken and on being put to a recorded vote with 37 Members voting for, 32 against and no abstentions as follows:

**FOR:**

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

**AGAINST:**

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

It was **RESOLVED:**

That Council

- v. approve the 2024/25 gross budget of £709.472m outlined in the Budget Book at Appendix 3.
- vi. note the key changes to the MTFS as outlined in Appendix 1 since the December update of the MTFS and the advice relating to those changes, in particular:
  - the public consultation and related findings
  - the Alternative Budget process and findings
  - the Financial Settlement and implications for the Council
  - the Collection Fund outturn and the impact on next year
  - the latest budget forecast for the current year and the resulting likely impact on reserves in this year and next (also included in the MTFS assumptions)
  - Inclusion of the Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESIHA)
- vii. note the alignment of this report with other reports on this agenda, including the Fees and Charges proposals, and the proposed Treasury Strategy.
- viii. note the revised funding gap for the years 2025/26 to 2028/29.
- ix. 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.
- x. approve the recommended level of general fund balances to support the 2024/25 revenue budget of £49.682m, noting that the projected balance is presently significantly below this for 2024/25.
- xi. note the projected recommended level of general reserves for the following four years at £47.463m in 2025/26, £45.539m in 2026/27, £45.874m in 2027/28 and £46.934m in 2028/29.
- xii. 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.
- xiii. agree the adoption of the Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2028/29 attached as Appendix 2.
- xiv. note the prioritised capital schemes identified at Appendix 2 section 8 including the need to identify and confirm funding sources for these schemes.
- xv. agree the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 2 section 6 and Annex B to the Capital Strategy.
- xvi. agree the Pay and Rewards Policy for all Council staff for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 5.

- xvii. approve a delegation to the CFO in consultation with the Portfolio Holder - Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities to enable specific work to be commissioned from PwC in line with the conditions set out in paragraph 4.8.

## 85 Fees and Charges 2024/25

It was proposed by Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities and seconded by Councillor Claire Wild 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 Andrew Sherrington suggested that a charge out rate for Social Care ICT equipment expertise could be levied. It was suggested that he contact the Portfolio Holder for Social Care/Executive Director directly regarding this so they can provide a response directly.

Councillor Heather Kidd commented that some fees were capped which meant that it was not possible to get full cost recovery and asked could the Council lobby Central Government for the removal of such caps

### **RESOLVED:**

That Council

- i. Note the breakdown of the total income for 2023/24 and 2024/25 and in particular that the proposed 2024/25 charges for discretionary services represent £52.822m of the £98.525m of income derived from Fees and Charges.
- ii. To approve the charges for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 3 to be implemented from 1 April 2024.
- iii. To 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.
- iv. To note that the proposals to increase car parking fees and charges (arising from the traffic management policies and strategies of the Council) further to the recent decision of Cabinet has been called in for further scrutiny by Councillors. This report does not supersede the call-in process; rather, the outcome of the call in process will determine the eventual charges to be levied in 2024/25.

- v. To note that proposals in adult social care services for applying charges for telecare services and appointeeships are new proposals and will require further discussion and consultation. Proposed charges will be set on a 'cost recovery' basis, in line with best practice in other councils.
- vi. To revise housing rents as follows (subject to restrictions or exemptions identified in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill)
  - a) Social Housing rents for 2024/25 are increased by 7.7% from 3rd April 2024.
  - b) Affordable rents for 2024/25 are increased by 7.7% from 3rd April 2024.
  - c) 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.
  - d) All accommodation charges for 2024/25 are increased by 7.7% from 3rd April 2024.
  - e) Service charges continue to be set on the basis of actual cost
- vii. To review the total estimated income from different fees and charges items, to identify which items generate the most income, and to consider whether the benchmarking already undertaken for those sources of income is placing the council in the upper quartile for charges, based on comparison with similar local authorities

## 86 Treasury Strategy 2024/25

It was proposed by Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities and seconded by Councillor Claire Wild 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.

It was unanimously RESOLVED

That Full Council

- i. Approve the Treasury Strategy for 2024/25, set out in appendix 1 (parts 1-3).
- ii. Approve the Investment Strategy, set out in Appendix 1 (part 4) in accordance with the DLUHC Guidance on Local Government Investments.
- iii. Approve the Prudential Indicators, set out in Appendix 1 (part 5), in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003.
- iv. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement, set out in Appendix 1 (part 6).
- v. 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.



- vi. Authorise the Section 151 Officer to use other Foreign Banks which meet Link's creditworthiness policy as required.
- vii. Authorise the Section 151 Officer to progress and finalise the restatement and amendment of Cornovii Development Ltd loan agreements

## 87 Shrewsbury North West Relief Road – Funding Delegation

It was proposed by the Councillor Dan Morris, Portfolio Holder for Highways and seconded by Councillor Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Assets 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 Andrew Sherrington proposed that funding only be agreed to bring the project to Full Business case and no other expenditure is incurred until it is agreed at a future meeting of Council.

This was seconded by Councillor Julian Dean

On being put to a recorded vote with 37 Members voting for, 32 against and no abstentions as follows:

### **FOR:**

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

### **AGAINST:**

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

Councillor Sherrington's amendment fell.

On being put to a recorded vote with 37 Members voting for, 32 against and no abstentions as follows:

### **FOR:**

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

### **AGAINST:**

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

It was **RESOLVED**:

That Council

- a) Approves the delegation of programme development responsibility for the NWRR together with authority to spend up to an additional £16.981m (as set out in more detail within the table at paragraph 5.9 below) so as to enable the completion of the Full Business Case submission, to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport, noting that £6.667m of this will be funded by the DfT Large Local Majors Grant. The breakdown of this delegation, including contingency, is £16.499m advance works costs, £181,500 to deliver the FBC, and £300,000 to cover exceedance of current delegation.
- b) Confirms, for the avoidance of doubt, that the previous total combined delegation of £27.9m was comprised of £15m (NWRR) and £12.9m (OLR).

## 88 **Appointment to Committees**

It was proposed by the Chairman Councillor Vince Hunt and seconded by the Vice Chairman Councillor Brian Williams that the following amendments to committee membership be agreed.

### Northern Planning Committee

Councillor Ed Potter to be appointed as a substitute member of the Northern Planning Committee

### Southern Planning Committee

Councillor Roy Aldcroft to be appointed as a substitute member of the Southern Planning Committee

Councillor David Vasmer to replace Councillor Mark Williams as a substitute member of the Southern Planning Committee

### Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Alan Moseley to replace Councillor Ted Clarke as a substitute member of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Heather Kidd to replace Councillor Bernie Bentick as a substitute member of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Jeff Anderson to be appointed a substitute member of the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**RESOLVED:**

That the following changes in committee membership be agreed

Northern Planning Committee

Councillor Ed Potter to be appointed as a substitute member of the Northern Planning Committee

Southern Planning Committee

Councillor Roy Aldcroft to be appointed as a substitute member of the Southern Planning Committee

Councillor David Vasmer to replace Councillor Mark Williams as a substitute member of the Southern Planning Committee

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Alan Moseley to replace Councillor Ted Clarke as a substitute member of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Heather Kidd to replace Councillor Bernie Bentick as a substitute member of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Jeff Anderson to be appointed a substitute member of the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

89 **Motions**

**The following motion was received from Councillor Tony Parsons and supported by the Labour Group**

The original motion on Social Care as set out on the agenda was altered by Councillor Tony Parsons and presented to the council as follows:

**Social Care Costs**

**This Council notes:**

In October 2023, Skills for Care estimated that there were 1000 vacancies in the adult social care workforce in Shropshire (a vacancy rate of 8%)<sup>[1]</sup>. However, in a survey of its care provider members the average staff turnover rate over the last 12 months reported by respondents was 19%, and nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents stated that they are employing less staff than this time last year, with nearly a third (31%) of domiciliary care providers stating that they now employ less staff than a year ago.

For much of the past 12 months our local hospitals in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have continued to face the challenge of trying to discharge people back into the community made all the more difficult by the lack of available care. As was the case a year ago, this is not due to a lack of care providers, but their inability to recruit and retain staff as a result of the low wages they can afford to pay their staff due in part to the low fee rates payable by local authorities.

This is compounded by significant operational cost pressures over the last 12 months. Inflation as measured by CPI rose by 3.9% in the 12 months to November 2023, but for the period April-September 2023 was significantly higher, ranging from 6.7%-8.7%.

The National Living Wage (NLW) is due to increase by 9.8%, from £10.42 to £11.44 per hour, from 1 April 2024 and whilst this is a positive move for care workers will directly impact on care providers' staff costs.. Put simply, if local authority fee rates do not at least cover the increase in NLW this will represent a real terms cut in fee rates. In addition to staff costs, care providers have continued to face significant financial challenges over the last 12 months relating to staff recruitment, energy/utility costs, PPE and other operating costs including insurance, IT and staff travel.

**This Council believes:**

Both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council had been awarded additional funding by central Government, through the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), under the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund for investment in adult social care in 2023/24. Shropshire Council had been allocated an additional £2,119,773 which was used to improve fee rates together with additional investment from the Council. We await to see what funding is provided by central government in 2024/25.

Most local care providers have grave concerns regarding their financial viability and the sustainability of their business in continuing with local authority-funded care going forward without a significant increase in local authority fee rates from April 2024. Whilst Council awaits funding from the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund for investment in adult social care for financial year 2024/25, when that funding is provided it needs to be specifically targeted to address this issue.

Only 19% of respondents to the survey of care provider members conducted by Partners in Care in October 2023 feel that current local authority fee rates cover their actual weekly operating costs. More than half (54%) of all providers who responded confirmed that they have reduced the amount of local authority funded

placements/packages they accept in the past 12 months, with 56% of all respondents also expecting to further reduce the amount of council funded care they provide in the next 12 months if fee rates remain the same in 2024/25.

**This Council commits:**

To use funding received from central government for investment in adult social care in 2024/25 to increase fee rates paid to adult social care providers, particularly as we continue to prepare for the implementation of charging reform.”

By way of amendment Councillor Cecilia Motley proposed

That paragraphs 2 - 6 be deleted and replaced with the following: -

**This Council believes:**

Both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council had been awarded additional funding by central Government, through the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) under the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund for investment in adult social care in 2023/24. Shropshire Council had been allocated an additional £2,119,773 which was used to improve fee rates together with a large investment of more than £6m provided by Shropshire Council, and increased contributions as demand and prices continued to rise.

A proportion of care providers have concerns over their financial viability but our ASC teams are not seeing large exits from the market to support this. Furthermore, despite increasing financial pressures Shropshire Council already pays the highest rates for domiciliary care across the region and the second highest care home rates. This needs to be taken into account.

Additionally, Shropshire Council should not be expected to bear the full brunt of National Living Wage and care costs in the county when it only commissions 30% of care, with the NHS also commissioning 30% and private funders the remaining 40%. Most care homes negotiate a rate with the Council depending on need so it is hard for the Council generalise costs.

**This Council commits:**

To use funding received from central government and aligned to grant conditions for investment in adult social care provision in 2024/25 which best meets the needs of our residents in the most cost efficient way.

Councillor Parsons indicated that he was happy to accept the amendment.

By way of further amendment Councillor Roger Evans proposed that the following be added to the end of the motion

“including paying more to care staff through improved hourly rates.”

Councillor Parsons and Councillor Motley both indicated that they were happy to accept this amendment

Following a vote it was unanimously **RESOLVED**

**This Council commits:**

To use funding received from central government and aligned to grant conditions for investment in adult social care provision in 2024/25 which best meets the needs of our residents in the most cost-efficient way, including paying more to care staff through improved hourly rates.

**The following motion was received from Councillor Alan Mosley and supported by the Labour Group**

**Consultation on Car Parking Increases**

This council notes:

The decision by Shropshire Council cabinet this January to raise £2m income through increasing car parking charges seeks to introduce increases of 33% at St. Julian Friars, 50% at Frankwell, 67% at Abbey Foregate and zero at Raven Meadows. This appears to penalise those who park outside of loop, whilst rewarding those who drive into the centre.

The cabinet proposals also seek to increase charges in the evening until 8pm and introduce them on Sundays and Bank Holidays

The scale of the increases has also sparked a considerable number of objections and concerns raised by the public, residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

Recent surveys and submissions by Shrewsbury BID provide evidence that there is considerable concern about the adverse impact on businesses of all types.

There has been a lack of any meaningful engagement with businesses or the wider public on the rationale and potential impact of the changes.

The proposals as they currently stand could undermine the Shropshire Plan:-

“We'll develop Shropshire as a vibrant destination that attracts people to live in, work in, learn in and visit. We'll deliver excellent connectivity and infrastructure, and increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities. We will communicate clearly and transparently about what Shropshire Council delivers, signposting to the right places for services and support, and listen to what communities say about their place and what they need.”

**This council believes:**

1. The proposed hikes, ranging from 29% to 67%, could have a profound and serious impact on our Town's economy and attraction without any other mitigating improvements to town centre access, for example public transport, park and ride, highways infrastructure, active travel. Hence, the new charges

pose a significant risk to the Shrewsbury town centre economy and its on-going post- Covid recovery

2. The swingeing increases for Abbey Foregate and Frankwell will have a particularly serious impact on those commuting to work, especially those on low income, where they have no affordable or convenient alternatives.
3. The changes are contrary to proposals within the movement strategy aimed at encouraging parking outside of the river loop.
4. Changes to Sunday and early evening charges could have a particularly seriously impact on the those employed in the night-time, hospitality and cultural economy and on visitors and residents in the town.
5. Many could be deterred from using designated car parks and will seek on-street parking around the town centre, much to the detriment of local residents.

**This Council:**

1. Recognises the need for a new Parking Strategy to be developed and for a review of the role, structure and staff in the Parking Services operation. This needs to be completed and with full public consultation, before such significant proposals are introduced.
2. So the parking increases need to be paused until such consultation has gathered feedback from those affected and demonstrated mitigation.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Julia Buckley

Following a vote the motion was not supported.

**90 Questions from Members**

The Chairman advised that two questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 15, and that he had also allowed an urgent question from Councillor Julia Evans. A copy of the report containing the detailed questions and their formal response is attached to the signed minutes.

Received from Councillor Viv Parry in respect of road signage to help deter heavy lorries from using Ludford Bridge. By way of supplementary question Councillor Parry asked whether specific signs could be moved. The Portfolio Holder requested that she email him and he would provide a response outside the meeting.

Received from Councillor David Vasmer regarding procedures for call in meetings. By way of supplementary question Councillor Vasmer asked for assurance that Group Leaders would be consulted prior to anything being brought to Council. The Leader reminded him that the Group Leaders were part of the Scrutiny Chairs Group who would be considering any changes before they are brought to Council.

Received from Councillor Julia Evans regarding the ICB declaration of a critical emergency. By way of supplementary question Councillor Evans asked how the

recent county wide critical care emergency in the health care system impacted on the council both financially and in capacity terms, and how the burden of care shift to the council from the NHS was affecting the council year on year. The Portfolio Holder agreed to provide an answer outside of the meeting.

91 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

92 **Exempt Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....