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Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest to create a better borough

Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Full Council

Thursday 16 July 2026

6.00 pm

Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Democratic Services:	**Paige Starkey**	**01952 380110**
Media Enquiries:	**Corporate Communications**	**01952 382406**

Committee Members: Councillors E Aston, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, B Carter, L D Carter, C Chikandamina, G H Cook, E Davies, P Davis, F Doran, N A Dugmore, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, S Handley, Z Hannington, C Healy, T L B Janke, A S Jhawar, J Jones, J Kaur, G C W Latham-Reynolds, L Lewis, G Luter, A D McClements, R Mehta, K Middleton, H Morgan, T J Nelson, R A Overton, N Page, L Parker, I Preece, S J Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, H Rhodes, R Sahota, P J Scott, S Syrda, G Thomas, P Thomas, J Thompson, K L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, K Tonks, R Tyrrell, J Urey, O Vickers, P Watling and D R W White

	Agenda	**Page**
1.0	**Prayers and Reflections**	
2.0	**Apologies for Absence**	
3.0	**Declarations of Interest**	

4.0	**Minutes of the Previous Meetings**	**5 - 14**

To confirm the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council and the Annual Council Meeting held on 21 May 2026.

5.0	**Presentation of Special Recognition Award**	

To make a presentation of a Special Recognition Award to Dr Graham Wynn OBE.

6.0	**Leader's Report & Announcements**	

The Leader of the Council may give an oral report on matters of significance to the Borough, comment upon the Cabinet decisions or make any announcements.

7.0	**Mayor’s Announcements**	**15 - 16**

To note the Mayoral Engagements undertaken since the previous Council meeting.

8.0	**Public Questions**	

To receive any questions from the public which have been submitted under Council Procedure Rules 7.11 and 7.12. The session will last no more than 15 minutes with a maximum of 2 minutes allowed for each question and answer. Questions can be asked of the Leader and Cabinet Members.

9.0	**Councillor Questions On Notice**	

To answer questions received under Council Procedure Rule 6.2.

NB In accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6.2.9 there will be a maximum of 30 minutes allowed for questions and answers. Any question not answered within the 30 minute time limit will receive a written reply within 5 working days.

10.0	**Cabinet Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting of the Council**	**17 - 22**

To receive the report on the Cabinet decisions made since publication of the last Council meeting agenda. Cabinet Members may speak on these decisions and Members may ask questions about key decisions of the relevant Cabinet Member for the purposes of clarification only. Members are asked to note the additional delegations to officers granted at those meetings.

11.0	**CSE Annual Report**	**23 - 48**

To receive the annual CSE Report.

12.0 Recommendations from Cabinet

Cabinet - 11 June 2026

12a 2025/26 Financial Outturn Report **49 - 90**

To receive the 2025/26 Financial Outturn Report.

13.0 Motions on Notice

13a Councillor Carolyn Healy will propose the following Motion:-

"This Council rejects the calls from the MP for the Wrekin to allow access to the Telford and Wrekin household recycling centres by residents from outside the borough. The household recycling centres are funded through the council tax payments of Telford and Wrekin residents who also benefit from weekly food waste collections and kerbside green waste collections at no extra charge, services not offered in neighbouring authorities. We send a strong message to the MP for the Wrekin that this Council will not subsidise the lack of services in neighbouring authorities and will always put Telford and Wrekin residents first."

The Motion will be seconded by Councillor Lee Carter.

13b Councillor Rachael Tyrrell will propose the following Motion:-

"This Council notes with concern the continuing problems experienced by residents, local businesses, community organisations and public services as a result of unreliable Royal Mail deliveries, including delayed letters, missed time-sensitive correspondence and inconsistent delivery patterns across the borough.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Write to Ofcom to express this Council's concern about Royal Mail delivery performance and the impact of delays on residents, businesses and public services in the borough.

2. Ask Ofcom to ensure that Royal Mail is held fully accountable for meeting its universal service obligations and quality-of-service targets.

3. Request that Ofcom considers the particular impact of delivery delays on vulnerable residents, people who are digitally excluded, rural and hard-to-reach communities, and those dependent on postal correspondence for health, legal, financial and welfare matters.

4. Call on Ofcom to require Royal Mail to publish a clear, credible and locally meaningful improvement plan, including how service reliability will be monitored and reported.

5. Ask Royal Mail to provide the Council with information on local delivery performance, staffing levels, delivery office arrangements and the steps being taken to improve reliability across the borough."

The Motion will be seconded by Councillor Nigel Dugmore.

13c Councillor Andrew Eade will propose the following Motion:-

"This Council undertakes to write to the successor of Keir Starmer's short lived premiership to seek reassurance, on behalf of our communities in Telford & Wrekin, that taxation will not be increased any further from the current record levels but will be reduced by making savings elsewhere."

The Motion will be seconded by Councillor Paul Thomas.

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SPECIAL COUNCIL

Minutes of a special meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday 21 May 2026 at 5.40 pm in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors E Aston, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Chikandamina, G H Cook, P Davis, F Doran, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, S Handley, Z Hannington, C Healy, T L B Janke, A S Jhawar, J Kaur, L Lewis, G Luter, A D McClements, R Mehta, K Middleton, H Morgan, T J Nelson, R A Overton, N Page, I Preece, S J Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, H Rhodes, R Sahota, P J Scott, S Syrda, G Thomas, P Thomas, J Thompson, K L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, K Tonks, R Tyrrell, J Urey, O Vickers, P Watling and D R W White

In Attendance: A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance) and D Sidaway (Chief Executive)

Apologies: Councillors E Davies, N A Dugmore, J Jones, G C W Latham-Reynolds and L Parker

68 Honorary Freedom of the Borough

This special meeting of the Council had been convened for the purpose of seeking Council's approval to admit Garrison Sergeant Major Andrew 'Vern' Stokes OBE MVO DL as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough in recognition of having rendered eminent service to the people of Telford and Wrekin through his esteemed military career.

Council may pass a resolution to admit an honorary freeman provided that not less than two-thirds of Members present and voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for this purpose, voted in support of the admission.

The admission of Garrison Sergeant Major Andrew 'Vern' Stokes OBE MVO DL was proposed by Councillor L D Carter, seconded by Councillor R A Overton and

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED – that Garrison Sergeant Major Andrew 'Vern' Stokes OBE MVO DL be admitted as Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Telford and Wrekin.

Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council

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The meeting ended at 5.57 pm

Chairman: ---

Date: Thursday 21 May 2026

Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest to create a better borough

FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday 21 May 2026 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors E Aston, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Chikandamina, G H Cook, P Davis, F Doran, A J Eade, A R H England, N A M England, S Handley, Z Hannington, C Healy, T L B Janke, A S Jhawar, J Kaur, L Lewis, G Luter, A D McClements, R Mehta, K Middleton, H Morgan, T J Nelson, R A Overton, N Page, L Parker, I Preece, S J Reynolds, S A W Reynolds, H Rhodes, R Sahota, P J Scott, S Syrda, G Thomas, P Thomas, J Thompson, K L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, K Tonks, R Tyrrell, J Urey, O Vickers, P Watling and D R W White

In Attendance: A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance) and D Sidaway (Chief Executive)

Apologies: Councillors E Davies, N A Dugmore, J Jones and G C W Latham-Reynolds

1 Declaration

Councillor J Kaur read the following declaration:

“Colleagues, aware of our responsibilities to promote democracy and the well-being of all local people, on behalf of the Council, I make this commitment to our office as elected representatives. Elected to serve the public good, we recognise that public office is a privilege granted by the people and not a right. We, elected representatives of the people of Telford and Wrekin, declare that we will, to the best of our ability, uphold the Council’s constitution and serve the community above any private or personal interest.”

Members signified their affirmation of the Declaration.

2 Prayers and Reflections

Eve Clevenger and Cathy Landau of the Jewish Community, led the Council in prayers.

3 Presentation of Special Recognition Award

Councillor Carolyn Healy, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability moved, seconded by Councillor R A Overton, that a Special

Recognition Award be presented to Mark Pemberton OBE, Chair of Trustees, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, in recognition of distinguished public service and a significant contribution to safeguarding the preservation of the Borough's industrial heritage.

Mr Pemberton was unable to attend this evening's meeting in person.

RESOLVED - that a Special Recognition Award be presented to Mark Pemberton OBE, at a future meeting of the full Council.

4 Election of Mayor

It was moved by Councillor E Callear, seconded by Councillor N England, that Councillor N Page be elected as Mayor of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED - that Councillor N Page be elected as Mayor of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

5 Election of Speaker

It was moved by Councillor K Middleton, seconded by Councillor DRW White, that Councillor ARH England be elected as Speaker of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED - that Councillor ARH England be elected as Speaker of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

6 Election of Deputy Speaker

It was moved by Councillor A S Jhawar, seconded by Councillor R Mehta, that Councillor J Kaur be elected as Deputy Speaker of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED - that Councillor J Kaur be elected as Deputy Speaker of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

7 Election of Deputy Mayor

It was moved by Councillor I Preece, seconded by Councillor A S Jhawar, that Councillor R Mehta be elected as Deputy Mayor of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED - that Councillor R Mehta be elected as Deputy Mayor of the Council for the 2026-2027 Municipal Year.

8 Vote of Thanks to Retiring Mayor

A vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor E Callear, was proposed by Councillor C Healy and seconded by Councillor G Luter.

RESOLVED - that the Council record its thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor Eileen Callear, for her service throughout the 2025-2026 term of office.

9 Reply to Vote of Thanks

In response, the retiring Mayor thanked Members for their kind messages and stated that it had been a great honour to serve as Mayor. She showed a short video of a recent skydive she had undertaken to raise money for her charities and highlighted a number of engagements that she had attended with businesses, dignitaries and charities.

10 Declarations of Interest

None.

11 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 February 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

12 Announcements

The Leader welcomed those visitors who had attended this evening's meeting.

The Leader said it was always a privilege to address this Chamber, especially this evening, but more importantly, it was a responsibility and that leadership was not about titles or ceremony but always delivering for the people that Councillors served.

Looking back over the past year, progress and ambition had been turned into action for the borough's residents and had stood tall which resulted in it being formally recognised last year as Council of the Year for the second time.

The Council had kept a strong financial footing and had continued to invest while facing difficult decisions head on.

At Station Quarter, there was a bold vision now taking shape with new homes, new businesses, new education facilities, new opportunities and it would be a development that was not just transforming a place but transforming life chances.

In Wellington, a high street with history had been secured for the future with a market that had served generations now modernised and thriving again, not by accident, but through deliberate investment and commitment.

In Oakengates, a transformation was underway with a new theatre built to last for the next two generations now taking shape and would provide new energy and a renewed identity for that community.

In the south of Telford, in Sutton Hill, the first community and health hub would be built for the borough, which would bring new opportunities for that community.

The Council's vision for a child-friendly Telford mattered so much, because it said something fundamental about who the people of the borough were, a borough that believed every child mattered and a borough that invested in future generations.

The Council had expanded family hubs, increased its support for families and was creating more school places where these were needed, which included 100 new special educational needs places.

It was supporting residents through the lowest council tax in the region, on average £600 pounds less than neighbouring Shropshire, Staffordshire and Walsall, and there remained an ongoing commitment to keep it the lowest.

Also, the Council was keeping transport affordable by extending a £2 bus fare cap across the entire network.

The Council would maintain its commitment to its local high streets by investing and driving footfall to support local businesses. It was investing in safer communities, to ensure residents felt safe in their neighbourhoods and was reacting rapidly for any problems to be fixed, such as two hours for a litter pick, 24 hours for some fly tips; offensive graffiti in two hours; reported potholes responded to within seven days; next day replacement of household bin when needed etc.

The Council was taking its services to the streets with a new Here to Help bus and was supporting young people through youth provision, activities and opportunities and was expanding youth clubs from the 32 already in play.

The Council was also delivering for veterans. The Christopher Turley Armed Forces hub in Dawley, had already been named the only VALOUR hub in the region, with 10 homes for veterans to be delivered soon.

The Council was also investing in health and supporting projects such as the new cancer treatment centre to bring care closer to residents in Telford and Wrekin.

The Leader went on to talk about pride, which was equally important. Over the past year, communities had come together to celebrate where they lived and taking ownership of their place.

There remained the ambition to become the UK's first town of culture which reflected a confidence the Council and residents had in its borough and what could still be achieved. A borough where every child had the opportunity to thrive. A borough where communities felt proud, where they felt safe, and where they felt connected. A borough where opportunity was not limited by background but lifted by ambition.

The next chapter would not be written by chance, but by people who cared about the borough, who believed in its potential and who were prepared to put in the hard work to realise it.

He urged that the Council go forward with confidence in what it had achieved, in what it stood for and in what it could become. This borough did not stand still, it moved forward, stronger, fairer, more ambitious with every step and that his administration would be there, leading with honesty, serving with purpose and delivering and always on the side of its residents.

<u>The Leader of the Conservative Group</u>

Councillor Eade said it was the Council's duty to protect its communities, its countryside, its well-being, and to be on the side of the borough's residents yet applications had already been submitted to rip up the local countryside, even before plans to do so had been approved by the Government's inspectors.

He questioned why the Administration had not sought help or even represented tenants and homeowners that faced high and sometimes increasingly extortionate estate management fees for unadopted roads, footpaths and maintenance while having to pay Council Tax for the same services?

<u>The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group</u>

Councillor Tomlinson said he would like the pledge taken by Councillors at the Annual Meeting to include that, as individual Councillors and as political groups, a pledge to make Councillors' own wards and borough a better place for everyone to live in and that they work strenuously to that point to see if that could be achieved.

He took the opportunity to thank the officers on the Council for the sterling work they did. They tried their hardest with fewer resources and he recognised it was not an easy task.

He referenced the Council of the Year Award, its Children's Social Services Team, which had been recognised as "outstanding" again and its Adult Services which had been recognised as "good."

Not many authorities around the country could say this and as well as thanking all the officers for all the work that they did, he particularly wanted to recognise the valuable contributions made by those voluntary groups that worked within the borough, for no financial reward.

He spoke of individuals, families and groups who were trying to play their part voluntarily and hoped the Council would pledge not just to be the traditional Council of the past, which provided services, but that it also use its funding with discretion to help those voluntary groups, the Council's partners, in supporting them and promoting them in all that they did.

He hoped for a much more positive approach to Council meetings, with less vitriol thrown around on all sides and that the business carry on as it had to carry on, whilst challenging everything it did.

13 Appointment of Cabinet

Councillor L Carter, Leader of the Council, notified the meeting of his appointments to Cabinet for the 2026-27 Municipal Year, as follows:

Cabinet Member	Area of Responsibility
Cllr Richard Overton	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Safer Streets and Better Housing
Cllr Paul Davis	Cabinet Member for Strong Communities, Local Pride and Veterans
Cllr Zona Hannington	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resident Services
Cllr Carolyn Healy	Cabinet Member for Planning, Neighbourhoods and Sustainability
Cllr Angela McClements	Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Leisure

Cllr Kelly Middleton	Cabinet Member for Public Health and Unlocking Opportunities for All
Cllr Shirley Reynolds	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Education and Skills
Cllr Paul Watling	Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Independent Living
Cllr Ollie Vickers	Cabinet Member for Jobs, Transport and Digital Connectivity

14 Delegation Scheme

It was proposed by Councillor Z Hannington and seconded by Councillor R Overton that the Council reassert the delegation scheme as detailed in the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED - that the discharge of Council functions by Committees, as set out in the Council's Constitution dated 5 March 2020, be approved under the provisions of Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

15 Appointment to Boards and Committees

Councillor L Carter moved and Councillor Z Hannington seconded the Appointments to Boards and Committees (Governance update.)

RESOLVED - that:

a) **the Committees and Boards, as detailed at Appendix A to the report, for the 2026/2027 Municipal Year, together with the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair for each body, be approved.**

b) **the Monitoring Officer be authorised to give effect to nominations to Committees and Boards notified to her, in writing, by Group Leaders.**

c) **the approval of the Terms of Reference for each Committee and Board be delegated to the relevant Committee or Board.**

16 Programme of Ordinary Meetings of the Council

The programme of dates for ordinary meetings of the Council for the 2026-2027 to 2027-2028 Municipal Years, were set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 7.29 pm

Chairman: --

Date: Thursday 16 July 2026

MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS
May 2026 – July 2026

MAY	**27**	**DM**	Citizenship Ceremony, Wellington
	31	**M**	All out for Alex 2026, Wellington
JUNE	**01**	**M**	LGBTQIA+ Pride Month Flag Raising, Telford
	05	**M**	Hotshot Awards, Wellington
	07	**DM**	Chinese Dragon Event, Telford
	13	**M**	Police Engagement on Hate Crime, Telford
		M	Family Community Event, Wellington
		M	Dawley Funday, Dawley
		M	Welli-Art Workshop, Wellington
		M	Medieval Summer Parade, Wellington
		M	Prom Store, Wellington
		M	The Maples Care Home Summer Fair
	18	**M**	Lingen Davies Summer Garden Party, Telford
	19	**M**	Shropshire Community Foundation Afternoon Tea, Telford
	20	**M**	Bridge Cheese Fun Day, Telford
	22	**M**	Windrush Day, Ironbridge
	25	**M**	Virtual School Dance, Hadley
	27	**M**	Royal Yeomanry Freedom of the Borough, Telford
		M	Dawley Barracks BBQ, Dawley
		M	Lilleshall Summer Fete, Lilleshall
		M	Kushdil Biggest Teeyan Mela, Hadley

	28	**M**	Newport Parade, Newport
			Severn Lounge Opening, St Georges
	30	**M**	LGBTQIA+ Picnic, Telford
JULY	**02**	**M**	Crucial Crew VIP Day, Wellington
	04	**DM**	Virtual School Football Competition, Wellington
		DM	One Voice Afternoon Tea, Hadley
	05	**M**	Hollinswood Annual Summer Fayre, Hollinswood
	08	**M**	Make a Change Awards, Ironbridge
	12	**M**	Krazy Races, Telford

Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council

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Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Full Council

Thursday 16 July 2026

Cabinet Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting of the Council

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance and Resident Services
Lead Director:	Anthea Lowe - Director: Policy & Governance
Service Area:	Policy & Governance
Report Author:	Paige Starkey - Lead Democracy Officer
Officer Contact Details:	**Tel:** 01952 380110 **Email:** paige.starkey@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Not Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Report considered by:	Full Council – 16 July 2026

1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

1.1 None. For information only.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 This report sets out those matters determined by the Cabinet at its meeting on 26 March 2026, 14 May 2026 and 11 June 2026.

3.0 Background

3.1 The report sets out those matters determined by the Cabinet since the Full Council meeting on 26 February 2026 for the information of Full Council.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1 This report is for the information of Members.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Key Risks

6.1 Key risks are described in each individual report presented at Cabinet. Copies of these reports have been circulated to all Members of the Council previously.

7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 The relevant Council Priorities for each Cabinet decision are described in the relevant report.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 As described in each report considered by Cabinet. Copies of all reports have been previously circulated to all Members of the Council.

9.0 Legal and HR Implications

9.1 Legal implications are described in each individual report presented at Cabinet. Copies of these reports have been circulated to all Members of the Council previously.

10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 Implications for individual wards are set out in the reports previously considered by Cabinet.

11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

11.1 These implications are considered with every report presented to Cabinet and make up a section of each individual report. These reports have already been circulated to all Councillors

12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 As described in each report considered by Cabinet. Copies of all reports have been previously circulated to all Members of the Council.

13.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1 The climate change, biodiversity and environmental implications of reports are described in each individual report.

14.0 Background Papers

None.

15.0 Appendices

A Cabinet Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting of the Council

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Appendix A

Cabinet Business

Matters that have been determined by Cabinet are listed below:

	2.1	<u>26 March 2026</u>
NK	2.1.1	Adoption of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin
K	2.1.2	Contaminated Land Strategy
K	2.1.3	Economic Development Strategy Update
	2.1	<u>14 May 2026</u>
NK	2.1.1	Annual Governance Statement 2025/26
K	2.1.2	Better Homes for All Update
K	2.1.3	Building Safer & Stronger Communities in Telford and Wrekin
	2.1	<u>11 June 2026</u>
K C	2.1.1	2025/26 Financial Outturn Report
NK	2.1.2	Pride in Our High Street
K	2.1.3	Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy Refresh
NK	2.1.4	Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Update
NK	2.1.5	Representation on Outside Bodies 2026-27

<u>Key</u>

K	= Key Decisions
NK	= Non-Key Decisions
E	= Exempt Items
PE	= Part Exempt Item
C	= Council
PC	= Part Recommendation to Council

Delegation of Powers Granted by the Cabinet

REPORT HEADING	DELEGATION GRANTED TO	DETAIL OF DELEGATION GRANTED
Adoption of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin	Director: Prosperity & Investment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability.	To agree to appropriate amendments as required to meet parallel approvals from other stakeholders.
Better Homes for All Update	Director: Housing, Commercial & Customer Services, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement.	To take such steps as are necessary to finalise and implement the Additional Licensing designation.
Building Safer & Stronger Communities	Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement.	To submit bids for external funding that enhances neighbourhood safety.
Contaminated Land Strategy	Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Housing and Enforcement.	To make ongoing changes to the strategy as required.
2025/26 Financial Outturn Report	Director: Finance, People & IDT, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance and Resident Services	To make any changes required.
Representation on Outside Bodies 2026/27	Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance and Resident Services.	To decide which bodies to nominate to and which Councillor is nominated.

JOINT CSE REVIEW GROUP

2026 ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In addition to the two-year review report from the Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Telford (IITCSE), this is the fourth annual Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) report presenting data, analysis and trends in relation to CSE in Telford & Wrekin together with information about the activity that has taken place to safeguard those at risk. The core focus of this report is:

   - the contacts that were made to Telford & Wrekin Council's children social care Family Connect[1] because of concerns about CSE; and,

   - CSE crimes recorded by West Mercia Police and a profile of those suspected of committing these crimes.

2. Each annual report covers a financial year. The reporting period for this report is April 2025 to March 2026. The headline findings of the report are set out below.

<u>CSE Contacts into Family Connect</u>

3. In 2025/26 there were 105 contacts about 92 children into Family Connect where risk factors associated with CSE were a concern. In 2023/24 there were 115 contacts about 94 children and in 2024/25 118 contacts about 95 children.

4. When assessed by a qualified social worker to identify what action and support should be taken, of the 105 CSE contacts, 46 (42%) were referred to the Council's Children Abused Through Exploitation team (CATE) and/or traditional statutory safeguarding for additional detailed assessment and allocation. This mirrors the finding from the 2024/25 report where 43% of CSE contacts into Family Connect were referred to the CATE team for further detailed assessment.

5. The CATE team provides specialist support to children and young people who are at the greatest risk of, or are, a victim of exploitation. When a child is referred to CATE, a detailed second assessment is completed of the context of the referral and the child's family dynamics to ensure that the most appropriate support is provided to them. Those contacts into Family Connect that were not referred to the CATE team all received appropriate support informed by the level of assessed risk. Detailed information on these outcomes can be found in paragraph 36 of the main report.

6. From the 46 contacts that were referred to CATE, 33 contacts were "opened" to receive appropriate support from the team. These contacts related to 28 children and young people. In addition to these 28 children, 4 other children were referred to CATE in 2025/26 because of concerns about CSE. These

[1] Family Connect is the first point of contact into children social services when an individual (whether member of the public or safeguarding professional) has a concern about the safety of a child.

referrals were from statutory safeguarding services or from a referral that had been made in the previous year.

7. Of the 32 children and young people that were opened to CATE because of CSE, 18 (56%) children and young people were found to have been sexually exploited and 14 (44%) were found to be at risk of becoming a victim of CSE. In 2024/25 there were 11 (38%) children found to be a victim of CSE and 18 (62%) at risk of becoming a victim of CSE. Again, following detailed assessment by CATE, where a child or young person was not opened to CATE, appropriate support was provided. Detailed information on these outcomes can be found in paragraph 39 of the main report.

8. In terms of the profile of children and young people that received support from the CATE service in 2025/26, 93% were female (87% in 2024/25), the average age was 14 (15 in 2024/25), 78% were of a 'White' background (89% 2024/25), 47% were in receipt of support for special educational needs and disability (SEND) (46% in 2024/25), and, 42% had persistent absence from education (50% 2024/25).

<u>West Mercia Police Crime and Suspect Profile</u>

9. Against the 64 children open to CATE, 34 offences and incidents were investigated by the Police. Of these, 14 related to child protection incidents which were notification of concerns about a child's wellbeing and so were not recorded as an offence. The 20 recorded offences were modern slavery (7), make or distribute obscene publications (3), rape (4), sexual activity with a child (2), sexual assault (1), engage in sexual communication with a child (1), arrange or facilitate travel with a view to exploitation (1) and blackmail (1).

10. In terms of the 2025/26 suspect profile, there were 12 suspects recorded against the 34 crimes and incidents which involved the 64 children and young people open to CATE for support because of concerns about CSE. Further analysis of this data shows that there was one suspect who was recorded against two crimes, therefore this suspect profile is based on 11 unique suspects.

11. Of these 11 suspects, all were male and 8 were aged less than 25. In terms of ethnicity, for 4 perpetrators, no ethnicity was recorded, of those where their ethnicity was recorded, 4 were 'White British', 1 was from 'Any Other Asian Background', 1 was 'Black African' and 1 was from 'Any Other Black Background'.

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INTRODUCTION

12. This report is the fourth annual child sexual exploitation (CSE) report presenting data and information in relation to CSE in Telford & Wrekin, and the activity taking place to respond to CSE and safeguard those at risk. Additionally, in 2023, a further report presenting the review of Tom Crowther KC, the Chair of the Independent Inquiry was presented to Telford & Wrekin Council's full Council. Based on financial year, the reporting period for this report is April 2025 to March 2026.

13. In July 2022, Tom Crowther KC, the Independent Chair, of the Independent Inquiry into CSE in Telford (IITCSE) commissioned by Telford & Wrekin Council, published his report which contained 47 recommendations and 148 specific actions for several organisations, including the Council, West Mercia Police, the NHS and West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner.

14. Recommendations 1 to 5 required the publication of an annual CSE report whilst other recommendations set out other information to be included in this report.

15. In 2023, a first annual report was published that focussed on three years' data from 2020/21 to 2022/23 to ensure a robust baseline. A second annual report was published for the period April 2023 to March 2024, followed by a third annual report covering the period April 2024 to March 2025.

16. In July 2024, the IITCSE chair, Tom Crowther KC published a 2-year review of his assessment of progress against the 47 recommendations of his IITCSE Report. Of Recommendations 1 to 5 his review report commented:

> ***'This data collection and analysis not only meets what I contemplated in Recommendation 1, it goes beyond it. In my view, the stakeholders have taken the Recommendation as a foundation and have gone further, creating a framework for data sharing and analysis which is plainly relevant not only to the direction of support and disruption resources, but also to a greater public understanding of the nature and extent of CSE within Telford. This is an extremely positive approach which shows in my view a wholehearted adoption of the spirit of the Recommendation'***[2]

Recommendations 1 to 5: publication of CSE DATA and information from the Council, Police, health and schools

Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements

17. Telford & Wrekin Council, West Mercia Police and the NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin have a statutory duty to have in place multi-agency safeguarding

[2] twoplusyearplusreviewplusreportplus-plus16plusjulyplus2024.pdf Paragraph 109, Page 33.

arrangements that ensure vulnerable children are protected and supported. This responsibility is discharged through the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Partnership. Membership of the partnership includes representatives from:

- Telford & Wrekin Council including Education & Skills (representing early years, schools and colleges), Children's Safeguarding and Family Support, Licensing, and Housing
- NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust
- Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
- Shropshire Community NHS Trust
- West Mercia Police
- Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Probation
- Youth Justice Service
- Community & voluntary organisations.

18. Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Partnership works to:

- create an environment where Child Exploitation (CE), and specifically CSE, is prevented, identified, and challenged, and;
- ensure that children, young people and families whose lives are affected by CSE will receive a high level of support as well as protection, and the perpetrators are held accountable for their actions, and brought to justice.

<u>Threshold Guidance</u>

19. The Safeguarding Children Board has developed and adopted 'threshold guidance' to ensure that anyone who works alongside children, young people, their families and carers work together, share information and ensure that effective support is provided.

20. The guidance describes a range of different needs and the intervention that will meet that need. Consistent application of threshold for statutory intervention and early help provision is crucial in identifying and meeting the needs of families and maintaining quality of provision of support across all services.

21. This approach should ensure that all partners respond to concerns about CSE in the same way. It enables partners to understand each individual report or case, share information with partners and ensure that those who have been subject to CSE, and those at risk of CSE, are receiving the right support.

22. The document describes factors associated with CE (which includes CSE) such as:

- Running away/going missing
- Coercion/control
- Contacts with abusive persons and/or risky environments
- Substance misuse
- Education

- Use of social media/technology
- Emotional & physical health and sexual health
- Accommodation and family relationships
- Offending/criminal activity
- Community/social isolation factors

23. The CE threshold guidance has four levels of need. For each of the above factors the guidance sets out the relevant signs and behaviours for each of these levels of risk:

    Universal - a child or young person's needs are adequately met by universal services and no additional support is required.

    Vulnerable - children and young people defined as needing some additional support as there are early indicators of potential exploitation. Without support, these issues may develop into more worrying concerns. An Early Help Assessment may be undertaken to identify need and the support required to be undertaken by a single agency.

    Complex - the child or young person remains vulnerable to exploitation. They are potentially at risk of developing acute/ complex needs if they do not receive targeted intervention. A multi-agency response will be provided.

    Acute - exploitation is known or suspected and there are urgent and immediate safeguarding concerns for the child or young person. A multi-agency response will be provided, informed by specialist assessments.

24. The threshold document sets out the concept of significant harm and how harm should be understood and managed. In the context of CSE and CE, the guidance sets out how harm outside the home should be assessed through 'contextual safeguarding'.

25. When an agency or practitioner has safeguarding concerns about a child or young person, they assess the information known to them to identify the level of risk and harm. Where the risk is assessed as 'complex' or 'acute' then this information is shared with Family Connect. As well as practitioners from partner organisations, members of the public, family and friends share safeguarding concerns with Family Connect.

<u>Family Connect</u>

26. Family Connect is the Safeguarding Children Board's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (known as the MASH) comprising qualified professionals from the Council, NHS (including mental health services, hospitals and '0 to 19' services), Youth Justice, Probation, education, Wrekin Housing Group and the Local Authority Designated Officer (responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children). They work to build a picture of a child or young person's safeguarding risk. This is developed from the information that comes directly to Family Connect and their own organisation's information

systems. This picture is screened by qualified social workers to identify what immediate action should be taken to safeguard the child or young person.

Child Abused Through Exploitation (CATE)

27. The Council's CATE team and the partnership 'CATE pathway' are a core part of the Safeguarding Children Board's response to CSE and CE more widely. Research has established that, using traditional safeguarding procedures which see children being identified as children in need or placed on a child protection plan, is not always the most effective approach to support young people at risk of / suffering from exploitation. To address this, the Council's Child Exploitation Care & Support Pathway is a process for safeguarding children underpinned by a contextual safeguarding approach to understand and respond to children and young people's experience of significant harm beyond their family and outside the family home.

28. The Council's CATE Team, alongside the local Child Exploitation Police Team from West Mercia Police, takes a central position within this pathway. For those children and young people where it is not appropriate for them to be supported solely by this pathway, they also receive support by statutory children's safeguarding services ensuring that they continue to receive specialised CATE team support.

CSE Contacts into Family Connect

29. Since publication of the 2023 baseline report, changes have been made to better support those who make referrals to Family Connect with concerns about CSE, to improve the quality and appropriateness of those referrals and to enhance understanding of the indicators of CSE and the threshold guidance. These actions are:

- **Review of the CATE pathway** - since an initial review in line with IITCSE Recommendation 10, the CATE Pathway has been further reviewed. Lived experience consultees played a fundamental role in challenging the Council's processes and testing the thinking around what the documents said versus what the Council did in practice. This work has led to the production of a suite of documents which set out when a child might be supported through the CATE team. It was also updated to reflect those changes brought about by other recommendations, such as the introduction of the adulthood transition meeting (known as the post-17 transition meeting) required by IITCSE Recommendation 11.

- **Development of 'Explore More' document** – this was coproduced between lived experience consultees and practitioners. The document, which addresses the potential indicators of CSE and provides wider context around the questions that practitioners can ask when receiving details of concerns about CSE, helps to ensure that any decisions are based upon all relevant information available at the time of referral. The Explore More is used by a wide range of people, e.g. school professionals and health professionals to enable them, when making a referral, to better articulate factors that have led to concerns about CSE.

- **Introduction of weekly consultation sessions with the CATE team to support practitioners with concerns over CSE** – these consultation meetings were established to develop practitioners' understanding and knowledge of CSE and the CATE pathway, to drive improvement in the quality, appropriateness and outcome of CSE and Child Exploitation referrals.

- **Introduction of anonymous referrals through an online referral form** (IITCSE Recommendation 21) – for many different reasons, an individual may not wish to provide their personal details when making a referral to Family Connect about CSE. Recommendation 21 of the IITCSE report called for the implementation of a fully anonymous online child exploitation referral reform to Family Connect. This has been implemented (https://webforms.telford.gov.uk/form/489).

- **Development of "Pathway to Support"** – in 2025/26, the threshold guidance was reviewed as part of the Safeguarding Children Partnership's response to the Government's Family First policy agenda. This agenda is about supporting families earlier, keeping children safe within their families where possible, and making services more joined-up and easier to navigate. The threshold guidance was updated and renamed "Pathway To Support" and now includes the Explore More guidance for Child Sexual Exploitation – so providing integrated, consistent guidance to practitioners. This revised guidance was launched on the 15th April 2026 at a Family First Conference which was attended by 407 practitioners and leaders from the Council, Police, NHS provides and education settings.

30. In 2025/26, there were 105 contacts about 92 children to Family Connect where CSE was reported to be a concern. Compared to 2024/25, whilst there were fewer contacts (118 vs 105) the number of children and young people these contacts were about was similar (92 vs 94).

31. The ratio of "contacts to children" in 2025/26 was 1.1 and in 2024/25 this ratio was 1:2, as it was in 2022/24. This compares with a ratio of 1:4 for the baseline study. A lower ratio means that fewer contacts are required before a case is acted upon by Family Connect. This ongoing improvement reflects the work described above to improve the quality of contacts into Family Connect about CSE, enabling a more thorough assessment to take place at an earlier stage. It is reassuring that this impact has improved from the baseline report through to 2025/26. The improved quality of information provided to Family Connect has enabled better-informed decision-making at an early opportunity.

32. An important contributing factor to this improvement in the quality of the information provided to Family Connect about those children and young people with CSE risk factors has been "CATE consultations". These provide the opportunity for a practitioner who has concerns about indicators of CSE to meet with a CATE practitioner to discuss the child or young person's circumstances.

In 2025/26, 142 consultations were completed. A majority of these consultations - 97 - were at the request of a member of Telford & Wrekin children's social care, 35 were from an education setting, the others were from a mix of Telford Stars, Youth Justice, Steer Clear or external social care services.

33. In 2025/26, the Police made 41 contacts into Family Connect (39%, 37% 2024/25), the Council 31 contacts (30%, 27% 2024/25), schools/colleges 20 contacts (19%, 15% 2024/25), the NHS made 3 contacts (3%, 8% 2024/25), there was 1 anonymous referral (1%, 3% 2024/25) and 7 from individuals (7%, 6% 2024/25) and 2 from other agencies (2%, 5% 2024/25)).

34. As can be seen by the percentages in the brackets, there were some changes in this profile compared to 2024/25. Together the Police, Council and schools/colleges accounted for 88% of the contacts in 2025/26 compared with 80% in 2024/25. The proportion of contacts from the NHS, anonymous referrals, individuals and from other agencies fell.

35. In response to the small number of contacts from NHS providers, an assurance exercise has been completed by each provider concerning how they ensure that all practitioners are appropriately trained to identify risk indicators of CSE and the appropriate safeguarding response, and, in addition, what other awareness raising activities are undertaken. All NHS providers demonstrated that they had appropriate training in place and worked to the threshold guidance.

ACTION: A 'dip sample' audit activity should be completed of NHS referrals and information sharing with Family Connect and reported to the Safeguarding Children Board.

ACTION: A rolling communication campaign targeting both practitioners and members of the public should be implemented to raise awareness of CSE. Progress and the reach of this campaign should be reported quarterly to the Safeguarding Children Board.

36. Following initial screening by qualified social workers in Family Connect, the outcomes for the 105 contacts were:

- 45 (44%, 41% 2024/25) contacts were referred to another agency for early help. This support is given to a family when a problem first emerges to avoid concerns escalating, with the objective to quickly improve outcomes for the child or young person. The support provided can take many forms and might include home visiting programmes, school-based programmes and mentoring schemes. For example, a school has identified concern around a child not adhering to agreed boundaries with parents, coming home late and peer group association. This case would be referred to the Council's Strengthening Families service for support around risks to safety and wellbeing. The Strengthening Families service will also provide support to parents.

- 14 (14%, 16% 2024/25) CSE contacts were provided with information, advice and support. For example, a parent contacts Family Connect as they are concerned about their child's online safety and want to know how best to monitor usage and broach the issue with their child. The parent would be provided with relevant information and advice and with links to appropriate websites.

- 46 (42%, 43% 2023/24) contacts met the threshold for referral to CATE and/or traditional statutory safeguarding. These contacts related to 39 children. This happens when the child who is the subject of the contact is deemed to be at significant risk of becoming a victim of CSE. For example, the child has been contacted by adults online or in person and the content of messages indicates that the child is being targeted for grooming. In such a case, the contact is referred to CATE and/or statutory safeguarding for additional detailed assessment and allocation. This second assessment process is a very detailed analysis of the context of the referral and the child's family dynamics to ensure that the most appropriate support is provided to them.

37. Compared to the 2024/25 reporting year, the outcomes of CSE contacts in 2025/26 were broadly comparable. The proportion that received early help support had increased to 44% from 41%. The proportion that received information, support and advice at 14% was down from 16% in 2024/25, whilst the proportion that were referred to CATE and/or traditional statutory safeguarding at 42% was broadly comparable to 43% in 2024/25. It is important to highlight that the proportion in both 2025/26 (42%) and 2024/25 (43%) that were referred to CATE was significantly higher than the baseline report (32%). That more cases in these years than in the baseline report were referred to CATE is symptomatic of improved quality to the information contained in referrals as a result of the process changes described in paragraph 29 of this report enabling practitioners to have a more holistic view of the child's circumstances.

38. From the 46 contacts, relating to 39 children, that were referred to CATE and/or statutory safeguarding, 28 children were "opened" to receive appropriate support from CATE. In the year, an additional 3 children were opened to CATE who were identified from existing statutory safeguarding cases and another child was opened from a contact in the previous year.

39. The outcome of the other 11 children and young people that were referred to CATE and/or safeguarding by Family Connect following detailed assessment were:

    - 3 were from out of the borough and were supported through their home local authority.
    - 6 following Child & Family (C&F) assessment found that CSE was not a factor. Of these:
        - 3 were safeguarded and supported through a statutory child in need plan;

    - 2 were referred to another agency for early help. This support is given to a family when a problem first emerges to avoid concerns escalating, with the objective to quickly improve outcomes for the child or young person; and,
    - 1 was supported through a proactive parent safety plan.

- 2 following C&F assessment where CSE was a factor were referred to another agency for early help. This support is given to a family when a problem first emerges to avoid concerns escalating, with the objective to quickly improve outcomes for the child or young person

<u>Children and Young People Receiving Support from CATE for CSE</u>

40. As part of this review, detailed qualitative case analysis was undertaken by senior managers in the CATE and Safeguarding Service to identify which of the 32 children were a victim of CSE and which were at risk of becoming a victim of CSE – these are the new cases opened to CATE in 2025/26. This analysis was based upon the definition used by the Inquiry Chair to describe CSE. It found that 18 (11 2024/25) met the definition and 14 (18 2024/25) were at risk of becoming a victim of CSE.

41. With 18 cases meeting the definition of CSE, this has increased on earlier years. The baseline report found that, across the three years, there was an average of 12 new confirmed cases of CSE each year and an average of 13 cases that were at risk of becoming a victim of CSE. In comparison in both 2024/25 and 2023/24, there were fewer (11 and 6) confirmed cases of CSE and more children and young people (18 and 28) at risk of CSE.

42. The characteristics of ***all*** children and young people receiving safeguarding support from CATE because of CSE in 2025/26 is presented below. There are 64 children in this cohort as almost all children and young people that receive safeguarding support from CATE do so for more than 12 months.

43. Sixty of the 64 children and young people receiving support were female. At 93%, this is higher than the 87% in the 2025 report and the 89% in the 2024 report with the baseline report rate being 98%. Together, these reports highlight that ***both*** males and females are at risk of CSE.

44. At 14, the average age of these children and young people was younger than in previous reports, which all reported an average age of 15 (2025 report, 2024 report and the 2023 baseline report).

45. Forty-six (72%, 81% 2024/25) of these children and young people were ‘White British’, with a further 4 (6%, 8% 2024/25) ‘Other White’. A further 7 (11%, 8% 2024/25) were of a ‘Mixed’ ethnicity, 3 were ‘Black’ (5%, 1% 2024/25) and 4 were ‘Asian’ (6%, 1% 2024/25). Compared to previous reports, this ethnicity profile is more diverse with fewer numbers of children and young people from a ‘White’ (‘White British’ and ‘White Other’) background (78%) compared to previous years (89%) and larger numbers of children from ‘Mixed’, ‘Black’ and ‘Asian’ backgrounds.

46. Eleven children and young people had an Education, Health and Care Plan ('EHCP') (17%, 17% in 2025) compared with 5.5% borough-wide) and 30 were in receipt of support for special educational needs and disability (SEND) support (47%, 46% in 2025 compared with 23% borough-wide). SEND covers a wide variety of need and, broadly, can be categorised as social, emotional and mental health, communication and interaction, cognitive and learning and sensory and physical difficulties. In 2023/24, a multi-agency case file audit was completed to aid better understanding of the way in which we can support children and young people with SEND and who are at risk of CSE. This led to greater integration between the CATE team, Strengthening Families and SEND team, specialist training for schools' staff curriculum adaptations around healthy and appropriate relationships involving SEND pupils, and raising parent awareness.

47. Twenty-seven (42%, 50% 2024/25) had persistent absence from education (attendance <90% and >50%), 8 (13%, 17% 2024/25) had severe absence (<50% attendance), and 26 (41%, 30% 2024/25) had satisfactory attendance. In comparison with the 2023 baseline report, there was a smaller proportion of children with severe absence (26% 2023 baseline report) and more with satisfactory attendance (26% 2023 baseline report). Compared with attendance in all secondary schools within the borough, school attendance of those children and young people that have been in receipt of safeguarding support from CATE because of CSE was noticeably lower.

48. Support for pupils with absences may be in the form of early help or more targeted support which can take a variety of forms, including working with other agencies, consideration of an adapted timetable to support a return to school or referral to a local authority alternative provision or targeted work with the child, their family members, care-givers, and the school.

49. There were 34 (38 2024/25) missing episodes[3] recorded against 8 (12 2024/25) children and young people, all of which were eligible for a return home interview. Return home interviews are undertaken to help identify any support that children and young people might need to help keep them safe. All received an interview, with 97% (97% 2024/25) completed in timescale (3 days) – a sustained improvement on 91% from the 2023 baseline report. Reasons why return home interviews are not completed within the 3-day target include there being back-to-back missing episodes or when episodes occur over a bank holiday period.

50. Of the children and young people open to CATE, 63% (54% 2024/25), had also been open to statutory safeguarding based on presenting needs in comparison to 59% in the 2023 baseline report. This is an important element of the CATE pathway model; a child or young person can receive specialist support from CATE and statutory safeguarding services to ensure that all children and young people are given all appropriate support and are safeguarded based on their needs.

[3] A child reported as 'missing' to the Police by their family or carers.

Other Support Pathways

51. As well as referrals and support through the CATE pathway, there are other support pathways available to victims of CSE and their families. Two of these are Catch 22 and the Holly Project.

Catch 22

52. Catch 22 was commissioned by the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner to deliver an integrated Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) service across Telford and Wrekin. Prior to this, these provisions were delivered separately, with CCE support provided by Climb at The Children's Society and CSE support provided by Purple Leaf at WMRSASC. The new, integrated service provides support to children and young people aged 8–18 years, and up to 25 years where a young person has additional needs. The service offers both prevention and protection interventions for children and young people who are vulnerable to, at risk of, or experiencing exploitation.

53. The CCE element of the service is focused on prevention and early intervention and generally provides up to 12 weeks of tailored one-to-one support. Children open to Child in Need or Child Protection plans would not ordinarily be eligible for this pathway. The CSE element of the service provides support to children and young people at all levels of risk and can include those already open to partner agencies. In Telford and Wrekin, a local agreement is in place with the CATE Team to support early intervention responses. CSE interventions are typically delivered over a period of approximately six months. Each child or young person receives an individual support plan, with interventions tailored to their circumstances, vulnerabilities and identified risks. This may include work relating to emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships, consent, sexual health, identity, resilience and reducing vulnerability to exploitation. The service also delivers Awareness and Prevention activity within educational and community settings, including staff workshops, targeted group work, awareness-raising sessions and support for a whole-setting approach to preventing and responding to child exploitation.

54. In 2025/26, Catch 22 provided support to 18 children and young people from Telford & Wrekin. The average age of these 18 children was 15 years. The majority (15) were ‘White British’. Seven of the 18 children and young people were also receiving support from either children safeguarding or another early help provider.

The Holly Project

55. The Holly Project provides a free, independent support service for the survivors of CSE and their families who are aged 17+. Individuals can self-refer or can be sign-posted by other organisations. In 2025/26, the Project received 14 new requests for support. Of these requests, 8 were from survivors of CSE and 4 were from a family member of those who had been a victim of CSE.

56. Of the survivors who received support, all were female and the majority had seen their abuse commence in the 1990s or the 2000s with one more recent case. Whilst some had also been trafficked to the wider West Midlands, all survivors had been abused in Telford. In terms of ethnicity, of the 14 individuals who had requested support from the Project, 11 were ‘White’ and the other 3 were of a ‘Mixed’ ethnicity.

57. Each person received tailored support from the Project to meet their individual needs. Examples of support include holistic recovery, a listening service and counselling referrals. In some of the cases practical support was co-ordinated and provided for example about debt, housing and benefit support.

58. In terms of the ethnicity of the perpetrators, where known, individuals from a range of different ethnic backgrounds were identified including ‘White’, ‘Black’, and ‘Asian’. The majority of perpetrators were male although in some cases abusers were also female.

<u>West Mercia Police Criminal Justice Data</u>

59. Through a CSE key word search, West Mercia Police identified 134 offences or incidents that took place in Telford & Wrekin recorded on their systems in 2025/26 that had a CSE marker applied to them. There were 94 children and young people identified against these offences and incidents as some children and young people were involved in more that one offence or incident.

60. All of these offences or incidents with a CSE marker were triaged and risk assessed and the appropriate response provided to support those children and young people who were at risk of CSE in line with multi-agency safeguarding processes. For some of these offences and incidents with a CSE marker, the subsequent risk assessment process found that the CSE marker had been misapplied and that there was not a risk of CSE.

61. To improve the application of CSE markers, West Mercia Police have now implemented bi-monthly meetings to review the application of CSE and CE markers on offence and incident records. These are also considered in force-wide monthly victim and perpetrator panels. In addition, information processing staff have been retrained on the use of these markers.

ACTION: West Mercia Police CSE-marker audit activity should be reported quarterly to the Safeguarding Child Board.

62. As part of the development of this report, details of ***all*** CSE cases open to CATE in 2025/26 were shared between Telford & Wrekin Council and West Mercia Police analysts to:

- ensure that all relevant cases were known to the Police and that relevant investigations were undertaken and their outcome;
- identify and profile suspects; and,
- identify the location of criminal activity.

63. Following analysis, it was confirmed that all children and young people who were open to CATE for support because of CSE were known to West Mercia Police. All children known to West Mercia Police Child Exploitation Team were known to the Council.

64. Against the 64 children open to CATE in 2025/26 to receive support for CSE, 34 offences and incidents were investigated by the Police. Of these, 14 related to child protection incidents and were notification of concerns about a child's wellbeing and so was not recorded as an offence. The 20 recorded offences were modern slavery (7), make or distribute obscene publications (3), rape (4), sexual activity with a child (2), sexual assault (1), engage in sexual communication with a child (1), arrange or facilitate travel with a view to exploitation (1) and blackmail (1).

65. Analysis of the 34 offences and incidents found that 47% (18) took place online, at least initially, and many involved the sharing of indecent images. This is a similar proportion of online offences that were identified in the 2025 report. Analysis of the type of social media platform accessed by the child or young person showed, where recorded, that Snapchat was the most used (7), followed by TikTok (3), Discord (1), Instagram (1), Roblox (1). There were five offences with online elements where the platform accessed was not recorded. There were also offences where the victim and suspect met on one platform and then switched to another, this was generally either Instagram or Telegram.

66. In addition to the online analysis, geographic analysis has been completed. This has not been presented in this report due to the small number of cases which may present an unrepresentative picture of where CSE does or does not take place in the borough. This intelligence has been shared appropriately with partners.

67. The criminal investigations into the 20 recorded offences resulted in the following outcomes: 4 investigations remain ongoing; 6 concluded with no suspect identified; 4 involved an identified suspect but the victim did not support further Police action; 2 confirmed that a crime had occurred but no suspect was identified; 2 involved an identified suspect but evidential difficulties prevented further action; 1 resulted in diversionary, educational or intervention activity, with no further action considered to be in the public interest; and 1 was concluded because further investigation to support formal action against a suspect was not considered to be in the public interest.

68. Of the 14 incidents, 86% (12) were filed with no further action because these incidents were a 'Child at Risk' notification which were reviewed and dealt with appropriately. Of the other two incidents, for one, appropriate safeguarding action was taken by the child's parents and for the second, an investigation was conducted but no offences were disclosed or established.

West Mercia Police CSE Suspect profile

69. Analysis of the demographic characteristics across the three CSE annual reports has found variation in the annual suspect profile. For example, the 2023/24 suspect cohort was different to the 2023 baseline report suspect profile in that, overall, the cohort was older, and more ethnically diverse. These differences illustrate that perpetrators of CSE can, and do, come from any background or community.

70. In terms of the 2025/26 suspect profile, there were 12 suspects recorded against West Mercia Crimes/Incidents, involving the 64 CATE list children. Further analysis of this data shows that there was one suspect who was recorded against two crimes, therefore this suspect profile is based on 11 unique suspects.

71. Of these suspects, all were male and 8 were aged less than 25. In terms of ethnicity, for 4 perpetrators, no ethnicity was recorded. Of the other suspects, four were 'White British', 1 was 'Any Other Asian Background', 1 was 'Black African' and 1 was from 'Any Other Black Background'. The composition of this profile, although a small number, again reinforces that suspected CSE perpetrators can come from any background or community.

ACTION – in accordance with Recommendation 4 of the National Audit on Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse undertaken by Baroness Casey, all suspects involved in child sexual abuse should have their ethnicity recorded. In-year audit activity should take place to drive this objective and should be reported quarterly to the Safeguarding Children Board.

72. In response to CSE and as part of a force-wide review, West Mercia Police has transferred the investigation of Child Exploitation from Crime and Vulnerability to Serious Organised Crime ('SOC') to allow for a more robust approach to tackling offenders and supporting exploited children.

NRM Referrals

73. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive appropriate support. Modern slavery is complex and may involve multiple forms of exploitation.

74. In 2023/24 the Council adopted a new policy in relation NRM referrals such that any child that is open to CATE has an NRM referral made. This change was in recognition that if a child has an open CATE case, then, they are *at risk* of modern slavery which is the essential criteria for a referral to the NRM.

75. As a result of the introduction of this new policy, there has been a significant increase in the number of NRM referrals made by the Council. In 2022/23 there were 11 NRM referrals made, in 2023/24 49, in 2024/25 53, and in 2025/26 52.

76. In July 2025, the Council in partnership with the NHS and West Mercia Police became 1 of 8 authorities chosen by the government for a third phase pilot of local decision-making for the NRM specifically for child referrals.

77. Commencing in November 2025, twice monthly NRM Panels are convened and, by April 2026, had heard 20 cases.

78. The Panel has received very positive feedback from the Home Office, particularly regarding the quality of evidence, decision rationale and alignment with safeguarding pathways. Early impact analysis has found faster and more defensible NRM decision-making.

Recommendation 7. Ring-fencing of CATE Team resource and Recommendation 2.3 Staffing Workloads Telford & Wrekin Council CATE & West Mercia Police CE team

<u>Telford & Wrekin Council CATE Team</u>

79. Alongside calling for the Council to commit to the continued existence of the CATE Team within Telford at no less than its current strength in both numbers and budget (adjusted for inflation), for a period of no fewer than five years from the date of publication of the IITCSE report, the IITCSE report called for the Council to publish information regarding the resourcing and workloads of the CATE Team as part of the CSE Annual Report.

80. The current structure of the team is:

- 9 CATE workers (case holder)
- 1 Social worker (case holder)
- 1 Team Leader (case holder)
- 1 Group Manager (case holder)

81. As to creating a benchmark for the current strength and workloads of the CATE team, the baseline has been taken as July 2022 when the IITCSE report was published.

82. In developing a baseline for the CATE team, an assessment of all cases held by the team has been undertaken and not just CSE cases. Processes have been put in place to monitor, on a monthly basis, the caseloads of the CATE workers by the Director: Children's Safeguarding and Family Support.

83. As of July 2022, the average caseload for CATE workers was 8, in March 2024 7, in March 2025 6 and in March 2026 6.

<u>West Mercia Police Child Exploitation Team</u>

84. The structure of the team is currently:

- A Detective Inspector

- Two Detective Sergeants
- Eight Detective Constables – with four reporting to each of the two Detective Sergeants.
- A CE coordinator
- A Child Exploitation Analyst

85. The team has a caseload of 43 (35 2024/25) open investigations with a caseload of 33 (26 2024/25) victims.

Recommendation 2.7: Details of PCC funded resources and initiatives and Recommendation 40. PCC to commit to continued funding of CSE initiatives: Taxi Marshall scheme and Street Pastors.

86. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) commissioned the following services to support those at risk and victims of CSE across West Mercia Police footprint:

- **Catch22 – Supporting Through Exploitation & Prevention Service (STEPS)**
    - Early Intervention & Prevention CCE & CSE service focusing on diversionary activity.
    - Launched in April 2025
    - following the recommissioning of CCE/CSE services formerly Climb & Purple Leaf).
    - 1:1 support for 8-18s at risk of Criminal Exploitation (not open to Social Care)
    - 1:1 support for 8-18s at any level of risk of Child Sexual Exploitation
    - Awareness and prevention programmes for education and community setting.
    - Short to long term 1:1 support offered to referrals open to all partner agencies.
    - Group work in schools and specialist youth education settings.
    - Diversionary activity offered as a primary outcome for those going through the CCE route.
    - Funding £1,200,000

- **AXIS Counselling for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Services in Shropshire & Telford:**
    - Axis is subcontracted to provide allocated support of:
        - Child ISVA (ChISVA)
        - CYP Disabilities ISVA
        - Family & Civil Court ISVA
    - Funding £1,724,000 (full funding across West Marcia)

Paediatric Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

- Funding was provided to the NHS England Sexual Assault and Referral Service (SARS). This region-wide service offers expert care to children and young people who have disclosed sexual assault or may have experienced sexual abuse.

- Funding £173,135

AXIS Counselling – Children's Counsellor in Shropshire/Telford

- Funding was granted for two neurodiversity counsellors and a specialist neurodiversity navigator, providing therapeutic support for survivors of sexual abuse, aged 11+ who have an identified learning disability or are neurodiverse.
- Funding £134,561

Shropshire, Telford, and Wrekin SARC Redevelopment

- The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Telford & Wrekin re-opened In February 2026 following Phase 2 redevelopment work, undergoing significant changes designed to minimise contamination risks and preserve forensic evidence. The work, shaped by those with lived experience, was done through strong partnership between the PCC's Estates team, NHS England, WMP Forensic Services and Mountain Healthcare.
- The Commissioner is committed to establishing a Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) compliant SARC in Shropshire, Telford, and Wrekin. An assessment timetable for West Mercia SARCs is awaited from UK Accreditation Service to ensure that the SARC meets strict medical and forensic standards.
- Funding £44,879 Regional Co-Commissioning

2026 – 2027 Recommissioning

- All current contracts for ISVA, IDVA and DAPP have been extended to the maximum of their current contractual terms. As such the Commissioner decided to undertake a single procurement activity covering all 3 Lots to maximise process efficiency.
- The highest scoring providers for the ISVA and IDVA services were from a combined service organisation, Axis Counselling.
- Axis was notified of the result of the procurement process on the 29th of December 2025, with standstill periods concluded in early 2026. The new combined service commenced operating across the force area on 1st April 2026.
- For 2025/26, the PCC has funded Taxi Marshalls £7,100 and Street Pastors £16,000.

Recommendation 2.10 A summary of any complaints received by any of the member authorities regarding the handling of a CSE matter

87. Telford & Wrekin Council and NHS Telford & Wrekin ICB did not record any complaints in 2025/26 with regard to how they have responded to cases and incidents of CSE.

88. West Mercia Police recorded 1 complaint in 2025/26 relating to a CSE matter. This complaint was received from a partner agency in connection with a case that had been withdrawn at court. The victim felt that they hadn't formally been

informed of the reason why the case was withdrawn and concerns were raised that the evidence hadn’t been presented. Following a review the outcome was recorded that the ‘service provided was acceptable’.

Schools and Education Settings

89. During 2025/2026, the strategic approach to CSE within education was strengthened through the enhancement of core training for all staff across Early Years Foundation Stage and post-16 settings. Content was aligned to emerging local and national intelligence, with a clear focus on recognising CSE within the wider context of exploitation.

90. A targeted programme of specialist training was delivered to Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to build system-wide consistency and depth of expertise. This approach supports the development of sustainable capacity within settings, with trained DSLs expected to cascade knowledge and embed a culture of heightened vigilance and informed practice.

91. Updated CSE pathways and supporting resources have further reinforced a coherent multi-agency response, strengthening early identification, information sharing, and intervention. Education settings are positioned as key partners in contributing intelligence and identifying emerging vulnerability, supporting both safeguarding and disruption activity at a strategic level.

92. During the 2025/2026 reporting period, strategic assurance of CSE practice within education has been strengthened through the Section 175/157 safeguarding audit process. Settings are required to identify a named CSE Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and demonstrate compliance with mandatory training expectations, including initial training, two-year refreshers, and ongoing termly updates involving DSLs and safeguarding governors.

93. Senior leaders are required to provide a RAG-rated self-assessment evidencing that all staff understand CSE and are confident in recognising its indicators. This forms a key line of assurance regarding workforce awareness and readiness.

94. The audit framework is designed to test both compliance and impact. RAG ratings are used to inform lines of enquiry during validation activity, including engagement with staff and children to assess the effectiveness of the CSE curriculum. This includes evaluating how well children understand and can articulate contextual risks within their communities and online environments.

95. Findings from the audit process directly inform targeted recommendations where gaps are identified, supporting continuous improvement. The approach remains dynamic, enabling responsiveness to emerging local and national intelligence, including adapting curriculum and practice where new risks are identified. Site safety and safeguarding procedures also form a core element of assurance within this process.

96. During 2025/2026, the introduction of a devolved National Referral Mechanism (NRM) decision-making model has strengthened the strategic understanding of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) within education, particularly its links to modern slavery and the presence of multiple and overlapping forms of exploitation.

Training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), including both new and refresher programmes, has been updated to reflect these developments, with an increased emphasis on the quality and detail of evidence required from education settings to inform decision-making.

97. Access to enhanced safeguarding training has been widened, with a specific focus on all forms of exploitation, including CSE. High levels of engagement demonstrate the sector's commitment to strengthening workforce knowledge and practice, supported by regular delivery aligned to key points in the academic calendar.

98. A coordinated programme of awareness sessions relating to the devolved NRM model has been delivered across the wider children's workforce, reinforcing a shared multi-agency understanding and approach. The move to local decision-making has further embedded timely identification and response, improving pathways to support for children at risk of or experiencing exploitation.

99. Communication of resources, referral pathways, and consultation mechanisms has been prioritised through DSL networks, with a continued focus on strengthening professional curiosity and the role of education in contributing to disruption activity. Training has reinforced expectations around individual accountability in recognising and reporting concerns, supporting the development of a more robust multi-agency evidence base to address CSE effectively.

100. Progress against these areas is monitored through the established audit and assurance processes outlined above. Education safeguarding visits consistently identify any gaps in practice, with clear recommendations and defined timescales for improvement. Where required, additional support and challenge are provided by the Education Safeguarding Team to secure compliance.

101. Follow-up activity ensures that actions are implemented and that there is demonstrable impact, with a continued focus on assurance that children are effectively safeguarded within each setting. During this reporting period, targeted improvements have been required in relation to the quality of recording and the timeliness of information sharing to support effective safeguarding decision-making.

102. The Education Safeguarding Team has maintained a strong and accessible advisory offer throughout 2025/2026, with CSE-related advice, guidance and training widely accessed through central contact routes and direct engagement. The service has prioritised a responsive and solution-focused approach, supporting education settings to build confidence in identifying and responding to CSE, particularly where experience of referral processes has been limited.

103. This approach has contributed to strengthening practice across settings, ensuring that staff feel supported to make informed safeguarding decisions and take appropriate action to protect children and young people.

104. An emerging strategic theme during this period has been the need to further embed understanding and use of multi-agency resolution and escalation processes. Work has focused on empowering education staff to confidently engage in these processes where required, ensuring that safeguarding concerns are effectively challenged and progressed to achieve appropriate outcomes for children at risk of CSE.

Recommendation 26.1 The Council should publish annually, as part of the 'Joint CSE Review Group's' Annual Report, a taxi licensing review.

105. It is estimated that there are around 900 taxis operating in Telford & Wrekin, of which around a third are licensed by Telford & Wrekin Council with the remainder licensed by other authorities. In 2025/26, the Council received 40 complaints about taxi drivers:

- 29 related to drivers licensed with Telford & Wrekin Council
- 11 were about drivers licensed with other local authorities

106. These complaints related to a number of different concerns, such as service standards, vehicle standards or driving standards.

107. For many years, Telford & Wrekin Council has referred complaints about drivers licensed with other local authorities to the relevant licensing authority. However, under the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022, this was introduced as a duty for licensing services from 31 May 2022. The Act also requires complaints about taxi drivers which relate to safeguarding or road safety concerns to be acted upon in a specified timeframe. This covers relevant information indicating that a person has committed a sexual offence (regardless of whether the person was charged with, prosecuted for, or convicted of, the offence). All complaints referred to other authorities are followed-up by Telford & Wrekin Council Licensing team for a response on the outcome of the complaint.

108. On conclusion of a complaint, or upon relevant information being received, the Council can take the following actions:

- For a new or renewal application, the authority can refuse to grant a licence or put conditions / time limits on a licence.
- Once licensed, the council can suspend a licence, issue warnings, retrain drivers or revoke a licence.

109. The actions taken against taxi driver complaints in 2025/6 were:

- All of the 11 complaints for drivers licensed with other local authorities were referred to the relevant authority. Of these, 2 were safeguarding-related. None of these safeguarding matters were of a CSE nature.

- Of the 29 complaints that related to drivers licensed with Telford & Wrekin Council, none were of a safeguarding nature and the outcomes were:
    - 13 had advice issued;

- 1 driver was referred to complete and pass the Council's Knowledge and Driver Course;
- 5 cases resulted in enforcement action and driver licence review hearings, which resulted in written warnings
- 10 complaints were found to be unjustified because of inadequate evidence.

Licensing Enforcement Activity

110. In October 2025, the respective regulatory committees approved joint authorisation for Telford and Wolverhampton Licensing and Compliance Officers. This reciprocal enforcement arrangement, under Sections 68 and 73 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, allows officers to suspend vehicles deemed mechanically unfit in either local authority area and carry out a check on the driver, allowing for better enforcement and a visual deterrence for illegal practices/ breaches of licence conditions. i.e. Signage and plates and driver ID being visible.

111. In 2025/26 the Council's licensing team carried out 14 multi-agency taxi licensing enforcement exercises. This included:

- 10 vehicle stop checks conducted in partnership with the Police under the multiagency targeted enforcement strategy (MATES) initiative, focusing on roadworthiness and safety.
- 25 checks on designated taxi ranks to monitor compliance.

112. On all operations both the driver and vehicle are checked to ensure compliance with their licensing conditions. These include checks on the driver's identity against their licence. This has not identified any concerns about potential badge swapping, although advice and warnings have been given to drivers not wearing their badge in accordance with their licence conditions.

113. Alongside licensing compliance activity, Taxi Marshals carry out checks on private hire vehicles collecting passengers to ensure that journeys have been pre-booked. They also discourage individuals from entering un-booked vehicles while performing their duties in the night-time economy.

Recommendations 2.6, 37, 42 call for CSE training

CSE Awareness Training

114. In 2023, the lived experience consultees developed a training package that set out what CSE is, the behaviours and risk factors, and the action which should be taken when a child or young person was identified as being at risk of CSE. It was agreed that the content of this package was the minimum level of knowledge that **all** staff, irrespective of role, across the three statutory partners should have and, as such, would ensure consistency in the understanding of and response to CSE. It is important to emphasise that this training is a minimum, and that depending on role, practitioners will continue to receive other relevant CSE training of an appropriate level.

NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

115. The roll out of the CSE awareness training across the health system has continued to progress, with all trusts working towards staff compliance. Each trust has developed a trajectory to ensure the teams who are a high priority has the training first and are continuing to roll out the session across the rest of the trusts. Due to the high numbers of staff that required this training, this has been rolled out in stages, with and aim that the training will be embedded into their training platform systems to allow all staff to access this. There have also been discussions regarding the option of delivering this training face to face for some staff groups if required. The current compliance data is below:

- Integrated Care Board – 91% (94%)
- Shropshire and Telford Hospital Trust – 90% (94%)
- Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust – 43% (48%)
- Shropshire Community Health Trust – 93% (73%)
- Robert Jones Agnes Hunt - 92% (92%)

116. CSE is also discussed as part of each trust's learning and development programme, with trusts sharing information leaflets, posters within their areas. The ICB monitor referrals to children's social care with a concern related to CSE through safeguarding committee meetings.

West Mercia Police

117. West Mercia Police have commissioned NWG Network, a charity that is focused on tackling child exploitation through working with organisations and parents and carers to deliver appropriate training on CSE in the context of modern slavery that includes the core training described above. Roll-out of this face-to-face training focussed on Police officers and relevant civilian staff, initially prioritising Safer Neighbourhood Teams who work out in the community. Rollout of this training is currently at 30%.

Telford & Wrekin Council

118. Completion of the CSE training package is mandatory for all Council employees and is monitored to ensure compliance. The completion rate for this course in 2025/26 was 96% with the main reasons for the 4% non-completion being parental leave, sickness absence or new starters who complete it as part of their initial induction training.

Telford & Wrekin Co-operative Council | Protect, care and invest to create a better borough

Borough of Telford and Wrekin

Full Council

16 July 2026

2025/26 Financial Outturn Report

Cabinet Member:	Cllr Zona Hannington – Cabinet Member: Finance and Resident Services
Lead Director:	Michelle Brockway – Director: Finance, People & IDT
Service Area:	Finance, People & IDT
Report Author:	Ed Rushton – Head of Service Corporate & Capital Finance
Officer Contact Details:	**Tel:** 01952 383750 **Email:** edward.rushton@telford.gov.uk
Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key Decision:	Key Decision
Forward Plan:	Yes – 26 February 2026
Report considered by:	Senior Management Team – 12 May 2026 Business Briefing – 21 May 2026 Cabinet – 11 June 2026 Full Council – 16 July 2026

1.0 Recommendations for Decision/Noting

Full Council is recommended to:

1.1 Note the performance against the 2025/26 Net Revenue budget which resulted in outturn being within budget by £133k;

1.2 Note the revenue outturn position for 2025/26, which remains subject to audit by the Council's external auditors, and related virements in Appendix C;

1.3 Note the transfers to reserves, and associated approvals to the relevant members of the Senior Management Team after consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to spend the reserves detailed in Appendix E. In relation to the

Income/Budget equalisation reserve, to grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to approve its use;

1.4 Note the capital outturn position and approvals related to supplementary estimates, re-phasing and virements shown in Appendix D and as summarised in the report;

1.5 To grant delegated authority to the Director: Finance, People & IDT to make any changes required, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services; and

1.6 To note the performance against income targets.

1.7 To approve The Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 included at Appendix F.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To present the final outturn position for the year to members, relating to: the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection and seek the necessary approvals to comply with financial regulations.

3.0 Background

3.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26 – 2028/29 was approved at Full Council on 27 February 2025, which included the 2025/26 revenue budget and medium-term capital programme. Since the MTFS was approved, the economic climate has continued to be challenging with costs pressures being experienced, particularly in relation to the provision of Adult Social Care

3.2 Good financial management is an essential element of good governance and long-term service planning which are critical to ensuring that local service provision is sustainable and the use of resources is maximised in order to meet the needs of our residents.

3.3 Financial monitoring reports have been provided during 2025/26 showing the projected outturn position i.e. how projected net revenue spend compares to the budget set for the year; progress against the 2025/26 capital programme; the key issues to be highlighted; together with a summary of collection information in relation to Council Tax, Business Rates and Sales Ledger income. This report now shows the final financial outturn position for 2025/26.

The funding outlook for the medium term remains challenging with councils across the country continuing to face significant budget challenges arising from increasing costs and increasing demand for services. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2026/27 – 2029/30 was approved at Full Council on 26 February 2026 and regular updates of the projected financial position for 2026/27 will be provided to Cabinet throughout the forthcoming financial year.

4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1.1 Nationally, Councils continue to face extreme challenges with unprecedented pressures fuelled by inflation and high demand for services – particularly Adult Social Care, Children's Safeguarding, Homelessness and Home to School Transport.

4.1.2 While inflation is expected to reduce in the medium term, current indicators show that the economy will be slower to recover than was expected when the Council's 2025/26 budget was set. The Bank of England base rate for interest was 4.5% in April 2025 and following several steady cuts throughout the year it ended the year at 3.75% (March 2026). Whilst the forecast trajectory for interest rates at the time the Council set the 2026/27 budget was anticipated as downward, the war in Iran and across large parts of the Middle East, which commenced on 28 February 2026, has led to a period of instability within the markets and interest rates have remained elevated with any cuts in the short-term deemed unlikely. In April 2025 CPI inflation stood at 3.5% compared to 3.4% in March 2026 which is above the Bank of England's 2% target. During the year CPI peaked at 3.8% (July, August & September). Inflationary pressures impact on the cost of delivering services, which has been evident during 2025/26.

4.1.3 Despite the significant pressures faced during 2025/26, the Council ended the year within budget which is a considerable achievement and clearly demonstrates the strong financial management and financial resilience which is embedded in the authority, a testament to Cabinet Members, Management Teams and all employees. This has been achieved through a range measures including, maximisation of external income including grants received in year and trading income, capitalisation of revenue expenditure under the flexibilities of the capitalisation directive, one off savings from vacancy management and use of earmarked reserves.

4.1.4 The gross revenue budget for 2025/26 was £545.0m and the net budget was £167.6m. The revenue outturn position is within budget by £0.133m (which is equivalent to -0.08% of net budget). The year end position allowed a small number of one-off investments in key areas to be made which support the Council's priorities and future financial sustainability. These are detailed in Appendix E and are included in the overall year end position shown.

A summary of the year end position is:-

	£m
Net Revenue Budget	167.640
Net Revenue Outturn	167.507
Underspend	**(0.133)**
Underspend as a % of Net Budget	-0.08%

It is pleasing to report that the Council has not had to make any unplanned use of the budget strategy reserve, which remains at £21.7m and has retained a prudent level of balances which will support the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and support financial resilience in future years, as we will continue to feel the impacts of inflationary pressures in the economy, continued increasing demand for services.

Clearly, given the scale and complexity of the Council's budget, the vast number of different services provided to our residents and the pressures faced, there were a number variations from the approved budget in 2025/26. The prudent inclusion of specific contingencies within the budget have helped to support the key pressure area of Adult Social Care (ASC), with £6.8m essential additional investment being required relating to the cost of providing care and support across all client groups. This includes the impact of market price increases, more complex needs, higher demand and longer periods of care being required. This is after additional net investment of £7.9m into ASC in 2025/26 as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Work continues in the service to deliver care which maximises prevention and independence where possible. Other pressures were also experienced in Children's Safeguarding, £2.8m driven by a combination of increases in the number of Children in Care and higher placement costs and Education & Skills, £1.6m driven by pressures on High Needs budgets especially School & Post 16 Transport, historic pension costs and pressures on income budgets.

4.2 **2025/26 Capital Outturn**

Capital spend ended the year at £113.25m against an approved budget of £124.32m. Some re-phasing of expenditure into 2026/27 will take place as a result of re-profiling spend. The re-phasing will generate some treasury management benefits in 2026/27.

4.3 **Corporate Income Collection**

At the end of the year Council Tax, NNDR collection and Sales Ledger Debt were slightly behind targets set.

Ultimately, all debt will be rigorously pursued and will continue to be collected after the end of the financial year with appropriate recovery avenues being pursued at appropriate times.

4.4 **NuPlace Ltd**

NuPlace Ltd is the Council's wholly owned housing investment company. It was set up primarily to improve standards in the private rented sector and to offer homes for life to tenants operated by a responsible and responsive landlord. It is a separate legal entity and as such prepares its own accounts; in addition, the Council is also required to prepare consolidated group accounts as part of its financial statements which incorporates Nuplace Ltd's financial position. The unaudited accounts show that NuPlace received rental income of £6.25m in 2025/26 and generated an operating profit after interest and taxation of £0.588m. The company issued a dividend of £0.327m in 2025/26 which was paid to the Council as its sole investor. Including the dividend, the Council received a total of £2.0m from Nuplace Ltd during 2025/26, net of additional interest and other marginal costs. The financial benefits that arise from NuPlace are invested in providing front line services such as providing Adult Social Care services to vulnerable residents and have helped to reduce the budget savings that would otherwise have had to have been made as a result of Government grant cuts.

The Councils investment, through a mix of equity and debt, in Nuplace Ltd is £97.7m at 31 March 2026 and the company's assets are valued at £135.4m.

4.5 **General**
The draft formal statement of accounts will be considered at the Audit Committee and audited by KPMG, the Council's external auditors. The accounts will also be available for public inspection as required by legislation. The Statutory deadlines for publishing the audited accounts for the financial years 2024/25 to 2027/28 were amended in 2024 to help address the national backlog of local authority audits. The backstop date for 2025/26 is 31 January 2027; KPMG will begin their audit work in July and we expect to be well within this deadline. The Council was able to meet the back stop for the publishing the audited Statement of Accounts for both 2023/24 and 2024/25 and an unqualified/unmodified audit opinion (which is the best possible opinion) was issued by KPMG in both years. Approximately 40% of bodies in the sector received unmodified audit opinions at the back stop date for 2024/25, 27 February 2026, with over 50% having modified opinions, the majority of which were disclaimed opinions, and 8% remained outstanding.

4.6 Summaries of the outturn on revenue and capital along with major variations are shown as appendices to this report.

5.0 Additional Information

5.1 **2025/26 Revenue Budget**
The Council had a gross revenue budget of £545.0m for the 2025/26 financial year and the final net revenue outturn position is as follows (a more detailed summary is provided in Appendix A):

	£m
Net Revenue Budget	167.640
Net Revenue Outturn	167.506
Underspend	**(0.133)**
Underspend as a % of Net Budget	-0.08%

5.2 Variations by Service Delivery Unit are summarised below and further detail is provided in Appendix B.

Service Area	**Final Net Revenue Budget £**	**Outturn £**	**Variation £**
Finance, People & IDT	14,282,775	14,399,966	117,191
Policy & Governance	1,237,888	1,304,856	66,968
Adult Social Care	81,958,675	88,740,714	6,782,039
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	5,921,716	5,603,904	(317,812)

Service Area	Final Net Revenue Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	49,312,041	52,117,586	2,805,545
Education & Skills	7,972,912	9,549,343	1,576,431
Health & Wellbeing	458,569	438,146	(20,423)
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	24,617,755	24,502,929	(114,826)
Prosperity & Investment	(10,731,244)	(10,142,530)	588,714
Council Wide	(7,391,407)	(19,008,274)	(11,616,867)
Total	**167,639,680**	**167,506,639**	**(133,041)**

This table shows the position for each service area after transfers to reserves detailed in the report. The figures in the above table exclude budgets and variances on capital, IFRS 16 Leasing and pensions charges which are "non-controllable" accounting entries.

5.3 Service variances over £0.250m are highlighted; all other variances over £50k are detailed in Appendix B.

Service Area	Variance £m
<u>Finance, People & IDT</u>	
Treasury – impact of higher than budgeted interest rates during the year	+0.270
<u>Adult Social Care</u>	
Longer Term Care Purchasing – expenditure relating to block and spot contracts. Additional investment has been required due to the continued increase in the costs of care and demand for care. The service continues to work on delivering care which maximises prevention and independence where possible	+9.123
Income – overall benefit on income targets	(1.432)
My Options – Adults & Children's Services – pressure on staffing budgets to meet demand	+0.266
Operational efficiencies – variations arising from vacancies, various working patterns and other operating expenditure	(1.256)

Service Area	Variance £m
<u>**Housing, Commercial & Customer Services**</u>	
Solar Farm – additional costs associated with break in plus transfer to reserves of compensation payment received towards rectification works	+0.863
Housing Strategy – utilisation of HPG Fund	(0.303)
Affordable Housing – income target shortfall linked to the delivery of housing schemes	+0.268
Homelessness Prevention – maximisation in the use of grant funding	(0.623)
Service wide pressures – including budgeted vacancy factors which are delivered through services areas and pressures on savings that have not been delivered	+0.281
<u>**Children's Safeguarding & Family Support**</u>	
Children in Care, Leaving Care Team & Speciality Services, Family Solutions:	
CIC Placement, Post 16 Staying Put & Leaving Care Support – increases in placement numbers and inflation associated with the cost of placements outweighed savings from the work with Impower and ongoing work on prevention, early intervention and review of all placement costs	+4.380
Health Funding – anticipated health contributions in relation to health needs are greater than budgeted, impacted by increased overall placement costs	(1.889)
Income – increase in actual grant income received and use of specific reserve to offset placement costs	(0.367)
Operational expenditure & Income – increased pressures on assessments, legal charges and placements costs associated with NRPF and intentionally homeless families offset by staffing vacancies within the service and use of reserves	+0.580
<u>**Education & Skills**</u>	
School & Post 16 Transport – expenditure previously funded by Dedicated Schools Grant	+0.695
Employee costs – additional costs due to inflationary pressures relating to historic staffing costs	+0.296
Skills – shortfall in income targets	+0.423
<u>**Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services**</u>	
Severe weather & Winter Maintenance – increased pressures due to bad weather	+0.317

Service Area	Variance £m
<u>Prosperity & Investment</u>	
Operational Buildings – one off underspends, including NDR rebates, due closures from developments at Leisure sites and The Place.	(0.711)
Property Investment Portfolio – income pressure due to phasing of Growth Fund capital expenditure, offset by approved one-off use of reserves	+0.531
HCA Land Deal – budgeted use of reserve not utilised	+1.011
<u>Council Wide</u>	
Budgeted Contingency	(7.200)
Other Council Wide items – including lower than budgeted contract and pay inflation, benefits from an increase in WME dividend and rebate offset by discount foregone from not taking up an option to prepay pension contributions	(6.943)
Transfers to Reserves – see Appendix E	+2.803

Transfers to reserves are detailed in Appendix E.

5.4 **Public Health**

The Council receives a ring-fenced grant to support its Public Health responsibilities. In 2025/26 this grant totalled £14.96m. The conditions of the grant are that it must be used to address health needs and improve health and well-being in the community and work to support improving public health outcomes is delivered across a number of the Council's Service Areas. A summary of the grant in 2025/26 is shown in the table below:

	£
Public Health Reserve (grant b/fwd from 2024/25)	**1,539,316**
Add Public Health Grant allocation 2025/26	14,959,878
Total Funding available for 2025/26	**16,499,194**
Less Funding applied during 2025/26	14,972,101
Public Health Reserve (grant c/fwd to 2026/27)	**1,527,093**

5.5 **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

Excluding funds passed to academies and colleges, Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) totalled £135.729m in 2025/26. There was an overspend of £4.55m during the year. As a deficit balance of £4.66m had been carried forward into 2025/26 from the previous year, a year-end deficit of £9.21m has been carried forward to 2026/27.

This deficit arises because of high needs budget pressures. This is a national issue, illustrated by most upper tier Councils having a DSG deficit by the end of 2024/25 with a national, net deficit of £3.5bn. This figure is almost certain to have substantially increased in 20025/26. To alleviate pressure on the 2026/27 High

Needs budget, Telford & Wrekin's Schools Forum again agreed to transfer 0.5% of the Schools Block to High Needs, amounting to £0.9m. This agreement illustrates the positive relationships with schools and other providers, which are invaluable in assisting the Council to maintain budgetary control of DSG, whilst ensuring that we meet our responsibilities to young people.

There is no like-for-like increase in the Government's 2026/27 high needs funding allocation to Councils, including Telford & Wrekin. The High Needs DSG has increased in cash terms, but this is due to previously separate grants being brought within the high needs block. However, additional resources have been allocated to fund local SEND reform plans. Once a local authority's SEND reform plan has been approved by government, 90% of the high needs DSG deficit incurred up until 31 March 2026 will be covered by an additional allocation of funds. The government has said that it will take a 'proportionate approach' towards further deficits incurred in financial years 2026/27 and 2027/28. The current 'disregard' of DSG deficits in local authority accounts will apply up to 31 March 2028, after which central government will take direct responsibility for deficits incurred. The Council will be required to fund 10% of the deficit accruing up to 2025/26 (£0.92m) plus a proportion of the deficits accruing in 2026/27 and 2027/28 when the statutory override ends on 31 March 2028.

6.0 Reserves and Balances

6.1 The main General and Special Fund balances were £4.444m at 1 April 2025. The position on the main General and Special Fund Balances is now:

	£m
Balances at 1st April 2025	**4.444**
2025/26 Final Contribution to Balances	+0.133
Balances at 31st March 2026	**4.577**

The General/Special Fund balance forms part of the Council's overall reserves and balances.

6.2 In addition to the General and Special Fund Balances, the Council has a general contingency of £3.95m in 2026/27 (which is ongoing) and £4.6m held centrally for inflation and pay awards in 2026/27. Further, there is a prudent level of reserves and provisions available to support the medium-term financial strategy including the uncommitted balance of £21.7m held in the Budget Strategy Reserve.

6.3 A number of specific transfers to reserves are proposed which support the Council's priorities. These are included in the overall outturn position as reported above and are detailed in Appendix E.

6.4 The balance of the Public Health ring-fenced grant has also been carried forward to 2026/27 (in line with the grant conditions see section 5.4 above) as has the residual balance of other grants received in year, in line with accounting requirements.

7.0 2025/26 Capital Programme

7.1 The capital programme for 2025/26 totalled £124.32m. Some re-phasing of expenditure into 2026/27 will take place as a result of re-profiling capital schemes in delivery. Expenditure at the end of the year was £113.25m and is summarised in the table below:

Service Area	**Budget £m**	**Actual £m**	**Variance £m**	**%**
Finance, People & IDT	7.39	5.68	(1.71)	77%
Policy & Governance	0.09	0.12	+0.03	138%
Adult Social Care	0.02	0.00	(0.02)	0%
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	9.66	8.98	(0.68)	93%
Education & Skills	18.06	14.28	(3.78)	79%
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	19.31	17.41	(1.90)	90%
Prosperity & Investment	69.79	66.78	(3.01)	96%
Total	**124.32**	**113.25**	**(11.07)**	**91%**

7.2 The main scheme re-phasing to future years is shown below:

Service Area	**Variance £m**
Finance, People & IDT	
ICT/eGov – spend slipped into 2026/27 to meet schemes in delivery	(0.76)
Capitalisation of Efficiency Schemes – costs in accordance with eligible spend during 26/27 and available capital receipts in year	(0.94)
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	
Local Authority Housing Fund – accelerated delivery following new government allocation	+0.56
Warm and Well Grant programmes – spend on several initiatives slipped to future years	(0.19)
Disabled facilities grant – spend fully committed in future years	(0.24)
Climate change – initiatives funded in future years	(0.36)
Swimming pool in the Dawley area – reprofiled in accordance with build profile	(0.49)
Education & Skills	
Other School Schemes – schemes in delivery, spend reprofiled in accordance with build profiles	(3.78)

<u>Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services</u>	
Highways, Carriageways, structures, drainage, footways and Integrated Transport – fully committed to schemes currently in delivery	+0.20
Service and Financial Planning approved schemes in locality – fully committed in future years	(0.33)
Flooded Communities Grant in Aid – retained for Ironbridge area	(0.55)
On Street residential charge point scheme – spend rephased to 2026/27	(0.68)
Active Travel Grant – rephased to 2026/27	(0.53)
<u>Prosperity & Investment</u>	
Property Investment Portfolio – rephasing of schemes identified for delivery	(2.45)
Local Regeneration Fund projects – reprofiling of spend in line with revised programme of delivery, all fully committed	(0.67)
St Georges Regeneration Project – scheme ahead of budgeted delivery timescale	+0.33
Housing Company – spend ahead of budget for regenerated homes portfolio	+0.71
Site preparation, playing pitch strategy & HE land deal – rephasing of works	(0.78)

7.3 There are a number of new approvals and slippage transactions which are detailed in Appendix D and require formal approval. New allocations include additional capital receipts of £27m from Nuplace Ltd across 2026/27 & 2027/28 for the purchase of properties at Station Quarter, additional grant funding of £9.6m in 2026/27 to support Education and Housing projects and additional prudential borrowing of £17.0m across 2026/27 to 2028/29 to support the Pride in Place programme, Local Regeneration Fund, Leisure schemes and Playing Pitch Investment.

7.4 The funding for the capital programme in 2025/26 included £6.9m estimated income from capital receipts. The actual income received in year was higher at £7.1m – the difference was mainly due to improved property investment portfolio capital receipts offset by the slippage of corporate receipts in line with delivery profiles.

8.0 Nuplace Ltd

8.1 Nuplace Ltd, is the Council's wholly owned housing investment company. It was set up in 2015/16 primarily to improve standards in the private rented sector and to offer homes for life to tenants operated by a responsible and responsive landlord. The principal activity of which is the procurement of the construction and management of private and affordable residential property for rent, responding to the Borough's housing needs including the availability of accessible and adaptable housing. Nuplace Ltd also operates a sub brand known as Telford & Wrekin Homes, intended to acquire and refurbish existing housing stock, which focusses on refurbishment and ensuring we make the best use of homes in the borough.

8.2 At 31 March 2026, Nuplace Ltd's housing portfolio comprised of 675 homes. Upon completion of the dwellings currently under construction, the programme will have resulted in the regeneration of over 47.94 acres of brownfield land and refurbished or converted 4,656 sqm of redundant floor space, addressing stalled sites and bringing back into use redundant and underused premises.

8.3 During the year, works were completed at Main Road, Ketley Bank; The Gower, St Georges; Limes Walk, Oakengates and Walker Street, Wellington. Collectively these schemes have added a further 60 homes to the Nuplace Ltd portfolio. The Telford and Wrekin Homes portfolio has increased by 7 properties over the year, bringing the total number of properties held to 63 against a target of 100.

Work has progressed at pace on the residential element of a mixed-use scheme within the Station Quarter area of Telford Town Centre, which will see the delivery of 117 town houses and apartments for Nuplace Ltd, kick-starting the creation of a "city living" offer within Nuplace Ltd's predominantly suburban portfolio. The first 84, one-and two-bedroom apartments are due to be handed over in Spring 2026, followed by a further 33 town houses in early 2027.

8.4 In addition there is a strong pipeline of properties at feasibility stage as part of an ongoing programme with further planning applications being brought forward in the year ahead.

8.5 In accordance with the Company's accounting policy, the housing portfolio was revalued at the year end, which has resulted in an increase in value of 2.63% (£3.4m) over all completed sites.

The Council has invested £97.7m and the total value of fixed assets at 31 March 2026 is £135.4m

8.6 Nuplace Ltd is a separate legal entity and as such will prepare its own Statement of Accounts and comply with company regulations. The accounts will be independently audited. As Nuplace Ltd is wholly owned by Telford & Wrekin Council, the Council is required to prepare Group Accounts as part of its Statement of Accounts for 2025/26 which will consolidate the Council and Nuplace Ltd's financial position.

8.7 During 2025/26, Nuplace Ltd

- distributed a final dividend of £0.012 per ordinary share registered on 30th September 2025, totalling £327,600,
- received rental income of £6.3m, and
- reported an operating profit before taxation of £0.871m, £0.587m after tax.

It should be noted that the Council has received income totalling £2.0m from Nuplace Ltd during 2025/26 net of additional interest and other associated costs which is a combination of interest paid relating to the loan agreement, dividend income and services Nuplace Ltd purchased from the Council. The Council will also benefit from additional Council Tax as Nuplace Ltd properties are completed. The financial benefits that arise from Nuplace Ltd are invested in providing front line services such as providing Adult Social Care and have helped to reduce the budget savings that would otherwise have had to been made as a result of Government grant cuts.

9.0 Corporate Income Monitoring

9.1 The Council's budget includes significant income streams which are regularly monitored to ensure they are on track to achieve targets that have been set and so that remedial action can be taken at a very early stage. The three main areas are Council Tax, NNDR (business rates) and Sales Ledger. Current monitoring information relating to these is provided below. The Council pursues outstanding debt vigorously, until all possible recovery avenues have been exhausted, but also prudently provides for bad debts in its accounts.

9.2 In summary, NNDR collection is ahead of target, but council tax and sales ledger collection are slightly behind target.

INCOME COLLECTION – 2025/26			
	Actual	**Target**	**Performance**
Council Tax Collection	96.89%	97.3%	0.41% behind target
NNDR Collection	97.24%	98.1%	0.86% behind target
Sales Ledger Outstanding Debt	9.34%	6.0%	3.34% behind target

9.3 **Council Tax (£130.0m)**

The percentage of the current year liability for council tax which the authority should have received during the year, as a percentage of annual collectable debit. The measure does not take account of debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. The final collection figure for all financial years exceeds 99%.

Year End performance 2024/25	97.1%
Year End Target for 2025/26	97.3%

Performance is cumulative during the year and expressed against the complete year's debit.

Year End Target	Year End Actual	Prior Year Actual
97.3%	96.89%	97.1%

Council Tax collection performance out turned at 0.2% below last year's performance. A comparison of performance across the West Midland authorities is currently underway. A major reason for this fall in performance is the number of benefit recipients that have transitioned from legacy benefits to Universal Credit and are receiving less Council Tax Reduction as a result.

9.4 **NNDR-Business Rates (£84.5m)**

The percentage of business rates for 2025/26 that should have been collected during the year. This target, as for council tax, ignores our continuing collection of earlier years' liabilities.

The measure does not take into account the debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. As a general rule the final collection figure for any financial year exceeds 99%.

Year End performance 2024/25	98.1%
Year End Target for 2025/26	98.1%

Year End Target	Year End Actual	Prior Year Actual
98.1%	97.24%	98.1%

Collection has out turned 0.86% behind last year's performance. We have identified a number of large accounts where balances were created towards the end of the financial year and were unpaid. We will continue to pursue these debts.

9.5 **Sales Ledger (£106.6m)**

This includes general debt and Social Care debt. Debt below 2 months is classified as a normal credit period.

The target percent is set relating cumulative debt outstanding from all years to the current annual debit. The targets and performance of income collection for 2025/26 are as follows:

Age of debt	Annual Target	March 2026	
		£m	%
Total	6.0%	£9.771	9.34%

Sales ledger is outside of target although can tend to fluctuate from one month to the next. There is a large balance outstanding with the ICB which we are seeking to recover.

10.0 **Pay Policy Statement 2026/27**

Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the "power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit". The Pay Policy Statement, included at Appendix F, sets out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

The purpose of this Statement is to provide transparency about the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees (excluding those working in local authority schools and/or employed under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and apprentices as they are employed under a Training Contract) by identifying:

- the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined;
- the detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff, i.e. 'chief officers', as defined by the relevant legislation; and
- the Committee responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to the full Council.

The Pay Policy Statement has been updated and is effective from 1st April 2026 and requires formal approval.

11.0 Alternative Options

11.1 Budget holders will have investigated a number of options to seek to deliver required service outcomes from within available resources during the year. Decisions made by the Chief Financial Officer and Senior Management Team as part of the closure of accounts process aim to safeguard the Council's financial position in 2026/27 and optimise the Council's position in terms of financial sustainability and resilience.

12.0 Key Risks

12.1 Budget holders actively manage their budgets and the many financial risks and challenges that council services face, examples include the risk of a particularly harsh winter which would impact adversely on the winter gritting and adult social care budgets, the increasing dependency on income from a wide range of activities and the risk of interest rate movements and further inflationary pressures, the risk of changes in legislative or accounting requirements impacting on budgets etc. The Council has comprehensive risk management arrangements in place, which are reviewed and updated by the Senior Management Team. It is considered that there is an adequate level of reserves and provisions set aside to cover anticipated risks.

13.0 Council Priorities

13.1 Delivery of all Council priorities depends on the effective use of available resources. Strong and effective financial management ensures the best use of resources.

14.0 Financial Implications

14.1 The financial impacts are detailed throughout the report.

15.0 Legal and HR Implications

15.1 The Council's s151 Officer has a statutory duty to monitor income and expenditure and to take action if overspends/shortfalls emerge.

The Statutory deadlines for publishing the audited accounts for the financial years 2024/25 to 2027/28 were amended in 2024 to help address the national back-log of local authority audits. The backstop date for publishing the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts is 31 January 2027; KPMG will begin their audit work in July and it is expected to be complete well before this deadline. Audit Committee has delegated authority to approve the SoA and updates will be provided to the Committee as appropriate.

16.0 Ward Implications

16.1 Funds have been set aside as part of financial outturn towards an additional Community Action Team in the Brookside Ward. There are no specific impacts on any other wards.

17.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

17.1 There are no Health, Social and Economic Implications directly arising from this report.

18.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

18.1 There are no Equality & Diversity implications directly arising from this report.

19.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

19.1 There are no Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications directly arising from this report.

20.0 Background Papers

1	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29	Council 27/02/2025
2	2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report	Cabinet 17/07/2025 Council 17/07/2025
3	2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report	Cabinet 06/11/2025 Council 13/11/2025
4	2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report	Cabinet 06/01/2026 Council 22/01/2026
5	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30	Council 26/02/2026

21.0 Appendices

Appendix A	Summary Revenue Outturn
Appendix B	Detailed Revenue Outturn
Appendix C	Virements
Appendix D	Capital Approvals
Appendix E	Reserves
Appendix F	Pay Policy Statement 2026/27

22.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	**Date sent**	**Date signed off**	**Initials**
Director	30/04/2026	07/05/2026	MLB
Finance	30/04/2026	07/05/2026	ER
Legal	30/04/2026	05/05/2026	RP

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APPENDIX A

2025/26 SUMMARY OUTTURN POSITION

Service Area	Final Net Revenue Budget	Outturn	Variation	<<<<<< Analysis of Variation >>>>>> Capital & Pensions Technical Entries	Public Health	Service
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Finance, People & IDT	18,737,535	18,167,473	(570,062)	(687,253)	0	117,191
Policy & Governance	1,239,448	992,230	(247,218)	(314,187)	0	66,969
Adult Social Care	81,976,435	87,521,914	5,545,479	(1,236,560)	0	6,782,039
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	5,957,456	4,641,234	(1,316,222)	(998,410)	0	(317,812)
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	49,359,561	50,916,526	1,556,965	(1,248,580)	0	2,805,545
Education & Skills	13,961,752	26,040,839	12,079,087	10,502,657	0	1,576,430
Health & Wellbeing	458,569	294,056	(164,513)	(144,090)	0	(20,423)
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	32,062,075	31,454,194	(607,881)	(493,055)	0	(114,826)
Prosperity & Investment	(7,546,294)	(771,883)	6,774,411	6,185,696	0	588,715
Council Wide	(28,566,857)	(51,749,944)	(23,183,087)	(11,566,218)	0	(11,616,869)
Total	**167,639,680**	**167,506,639**	**(133,041)**	**0**	**0**	**(133,041)**

Note, there are further technical entries in relation to Capital Charges and IFRS 16 Leases which will be made as part of finalising the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Account (which forms part of the formal Statement of Accounts). These will not impact on the Service position or the Council's General Fund position shown in Appendices A and B.

2025/26 DETAILED VARIATIONS **APPENDIX B**

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000									
					Analysis of Variation				
Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Finance, People and IDT									
	Treasury	16,317,120	16,587,068	269,948				269,948	Impact of higher interest rates than forecast within the budget
IDT	Staffing	4,646,778	4,588,841	(57,937)				(57,937)	Temporary vacancies in structure
	Premises	71,000	152,159	81,159				81,159	Annual charges associated with data centre/PFI
	Supplies & Services	3,082,588	3,493,658	411,070				411,070	One off overspend re VOIP/WAN contract due to new contract arrangements with Capita and overlaps between start and end dates. Internal computer system software costs.
	Income	(12,568,037)	(12,644,615)	(76,578)				(76,578)	Income to offset the above
Finance	Staffing	2,950,396	2,774,925	(175,471)				(175,471)	Temporary vacancies in structure
Revenues	Staffing	2,894,706	2,773,016	(121,690)				(121,690)	Temporary vacancies in structure
	Income	(1,161,340)	(1,293,668)	(132,328)				(132,328)	Council tax income
Human Resources	Income	(1,118,405)	(1,211,413)	(93,008)				(93,008)	Increase in traded fee income
Variations under £50k		3,622,729	2,947,502	(675,227)	27	(687,280)		12,026	
Total Finance, People & IDT		**18,737,535**	**18,167,473**	**(570,062)**	**27**	**(687,280)**	**0**	**117,191**	
Policy & Governance									
Electoral Registration	Supplies & Services	97,810	188,795	90,985				90,985	Overspend re postage, licence fees & printing
Licensing	Income	(250,170)	(304,636)	(54,466)				(54,466)	Additional licensing income received
Legal Services	Land Charges	(220,982)	(156,187)	64,795				64,795	Shortfall of land charges income due to reduced demand reflective of current market position
Scrutiny	Staffing	190,360	106,612	(83,748)				(83,748)	Vacancy savings
Procurement	Staffing	213,437	149,016	(64,421)				(64,421)	Vacancy savings
Variations under £50k		1,208,993	1,008,630	(200,363)	73	(314,260)		113,824	
Total Policy & Governance		**1,239,448**	**992,230**	**(247,218)**	**73**	**(314,260)**	**0**	**66,969**	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000									
					Analysis of Variation				
Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Adult Social Care									
All long term care purchasing-Spot & block for all ages plus enablement	Spot & block purchasing	110,348,431	119,471,751	9,123,320				9,123,320	The long term care budget has been under significant pressure this year from growth in care costs due to increasing demand and unit rates. However, interventions (see final paragraph) to mitigate have impacted and the trajectory of growth has slowed significantly in the second half of the year, compared to that seen in the earlier months. The demand for care support remains high from new older people with complex needs needing long-term care and short-term enablement; residential care; new clients in the 18-64 age group from carer breakdown etc and continued but recently stayed increases in fee rates. The position continues to be monitored closely, as demand for the service has historically been volatile. The pressures have been mitigated by the delivery of >£12m of savings and cost avoidance in the year. This made certain that from the previous forecast of around £14m total service oversend increasing net expenditure was managed and produced an overall reduction to a position before virements of over £11m, and with further in year Council savings to around £6.7m. Further measures are being implemented across the service to continue to reduce budget pressures with a focus on a home first approach and delivering care which maximises prevention and independence wherever possible.
Health funding contributions-all ages and care types	Joint Funding	(7,486,218)	(5,863,659)	1,622,559				1,622,559	The team are continuing to focus on maximising health funding contributions, and there is a dedicated team responsible for progressing and negotiating current and historical funding claims. The income received is dependant on the number and complexity of care where a health intervention is required and is variable year on year. In 25/26 the level of income was lower than the initial estimates.
Income	Client Contributions	(14,195,690)	(16,701,792)	(2,506,102)				(2,506,102)	Over achievement on income from client contributions which is linked to the continuing increased level of care expenditure in year
Income	Direct Payment Clawbacks	(710,000)	(1,168,678)	(458,678)				(458,678)	Direct payments are paid to a person in order for them to commission and pay for their own care. Payments include estimated amounts and enough to cover risks. The level of payments are reviewed and surpluses are refunded to the Council.
	My Options-Adults & Children's services	178,819	444,414	265,595				265,595	The variance reflects the costs of My Options services and offset mainly by internally generated income, and is the latest forecast cost pressure from trading activity. This position has improved significantly over the year
Sevice Wide	Staffing & Operational expenditure	10,481,773	9,226,184	(1,255,589)				(1,255,589)	Variations arising from mainly staff vacancies or part time working. The remainder being from other operating costs or income generation
Variations under £50k	Variations under £50k	(16,640,680)	(17,886,306)	(1,245,626)	(210)	(1,236,350)		(9,066)	
Total Adult Social Care		**81,976,435**	**87,521,914**	**5,545,479**	**(210)**	**(1,236,350)**	**0**	**6,782,039**	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000

Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Analysis of Variation: Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Housing, Commercial and Customer Services									
Service Wide	Employees	(278,940)	2,148	281,088				281,088	Includes vacancy factor saving, the underspends materialise within each service area. Historical saving target of £132k part delivered, with the remaining pressure shared on HCC and NES equally.
Arts & Culture:									
Telford Theatre	Net Position	790,390	714,743	(75,647)				(75,647)	Underspend within the BIT team as a result of premises cost savings.
	Supplies & Services	0	123,300	123,300				123,300	Contribution to reserves to fund future pressures
Customer Relationships & Welfare Services:									
Housing Benefits Subsidy	Net Position	310,000	169,567	(140,433)				(140,433)	(£200k) underspend due to an increased level of recovery of overpayments plus £112k pressure adjustment to reflect impact of bad debt provision relating to the housing benefit overpayments. A net (£53k) underspend from housing benefit expenditure/subsidy variation including B & B spend (£33k) whereby no subsidy can be claimed back and supported accommodation where only 60% subsidy can be claimed.
Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support Team	Employees	696,590	632,718	(63,872)				(63,872)	One off vacancy management.
Community Services:									
Community Engagement	Employees	293,648	234,987	(58,661)				(58,661)	One off vacancy Management.
Solar Farm	Supplies & Services	70,000	932,890	862,890				862,890	Additional cost associated with break in plus transfer to reserves of the compensation payment received towards rectification works
Strategic Housing & Regeneration:									
Housing Strategy	Employees	393,650	90,572	(303,078)				(303,078)	Utilisation of HPG Funding.
Affordable Housing	Income	(268,140)	0	268,140				268,140	HIF income target shortfall; target is £268k and will be delivered when Housing Schemes become operational
Private Sector Housing	Employees	311,970	117,996	(193,974)				(193,974)	One off vacancy Management & grant funding for staffing.
Leisure Services:									
Telford Ice Rink	Net Position	466,106	380,669	(85,437)				(85,437)	Overachievement of income and reduced leasing costs.
Oakengates Aspirations	Income	(377,930)	(500,656)	(122,726)				(122,726)	Overachievement of income.
Oakengates Swimming Lessons	Income	(149,200)	(214,689)	(65,489)				(65,489)	Overachievement of income.
Horsehay Golf Course	Income	(436,830)	(630,552)	(193,722)				(193,722)	Overachievement of income.
Ice Rink Cafe	Net Position	(13,350)	48,428	61,778				61,778	Impact of mid year closure of café which has been outsourced just before peak periods.
Town Park	Supplies & Services	104,730	299,193	194,463				194,463	Subcontrator costs for various works.
	Third Party Payments	283,220	338,084	54,864				54,864	Subcontractor costs linked with R&M at outside pools across the Borough.
Housing Solutions:									
Homelessness & Prevention	Net Position	428,590	(193,925)	(622,515)				(622,515)	Maximisation of Grant use.
Housing	Employees	65,610	520	(65,090)				(65,090)	Grant funding for staffing.
Variations under £50k		3,231,602	2,015,791	(1,215,811)		(1,042,120)		(173,691)	
Variations under £50k	Asset Rentals	35,740	79,450	43,710	43,710			0	
Total Housing, Commercial & Customer Services		**5,957,456**	**4,641,234**	**(1,316,222)**	**43,710**	**(1,042,120)**	**0**	**(317,812)**	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000

Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Analysis of Variation: Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support									
Children in Care, Leaving Care Team & Speciality Services, Family Solutions	CIC Placements, Post 18 Staying Put & Leaving Care Support	29,910,512	34,336,775	4,426,263	(54)			4,426,317	The number of Children in Care increased from 362 in April 2025 to 386 at the end of March 2026, peaking at 395 at the end of November 2025. 2025/26 costs, including inflationary increases, were £3.5m (11.4%) higher than 2024/25, as increased placement numbers and inflation outweigh savings from the work with Impower and ongoing work on prevention, early intervention and review of all placement costs.
	Health funding	(6,437,780)	(8,326,569)	(1,888,789)				(1,888,789)	Over achievement against budgeted health income, directly linked to increase in placement numbers (particulalrly residential placements) and increased costs (demand and inflationary)
	Children with Disabilities	2,086,020	2,221,873	135,853				135,853	Shortbreaks – we are seeing rising complexity of need for CWD supported through shortbreaks provision with an increase in requests for 2:1 support for CYP, increased day time support and increased overnight respite. Whilst resulting in increased costs, it is support CYP to remain within the care of their family thus preventing entry to care and increased residential care costs.
	Income	(914,080)	(1,270,812)	(356,732)				(356,732)	Difference between budgeted grant income and actual grant received plus use of specific reserve to offset placement costs
Service Wide	Staffing expenditure	20,755,468	20,549,946	(205,522)				(205,522)	Includes vacancy factor saving of £299,000 and historic pressure of out of hours team, offset by savings from vacancies across service.
	Assessment	468,160	812,808	344,648				344,648	Includes expenditure of £469k relating to 6 Mother & Baby Assessment placements.
	Legal	284,210	688,953	404,743				404,743	Increase in demand on both internal and external legal support due to increased number of children in care leading to increase in number of care orders, supervision orders, interim care orders and emergency protection orders.
	NRPF & Homelessness	110,500	662,259	551,759				551,759	Accommodation (housing) costs of NRPF and Intentionally homeless families
	Operational expenditure	3,135,816	3,044,532	(91,284)				(91,284)	Small variations against operational expenditure budget lines across service area
	Income	(6,473,103)	(6,897,449)	(424,346)				(424,346)	Use of one-off reserves
Independent Review	Staffing expenditure	817,230	877,774	60,544				60,544	Use of one agency staff to cover sickness
Variations under £50k		5,616,608	4,216,436	(1,400,172)	(2,116)	(1,246,410)		(151,646)	
Total Children's Safeguarding & Family Support		**49,359,561**	**50,916,526**	**1,556,965**	**(2,170)**	**(1,246,410)**	**0**	**2,805,545**	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000									
Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Analysis of Variation: Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Education & Skills									
School & Post 16 Transport		4,031,468	4,726,704	695,236				695,236	£598,742.49 transport related expenditure previously funded by DSG
Specialist Services		818,917	763,837	(55,080)				(55,080)	The pressure from the Educational Psychology Service due to demand in statutory assessments has been mitigated through the impact of ITS funding enabling a stronger structure from September that is reducing use of agency. Flexible use of grant funding has also assisted the position. Further work is planned to increase traded income following recruitment into key posts.
Employee Costs		1,121,024	1,416,725	295,701				295,701	This policy ceased some years ago however, the local authority remains responsible for any historic pension costs and additional costs are due to inflationary pressures.
Skills		869,698	1,292,602	422,904				422,904	Historic, income target of £255k linked to Learn Telford plus shortfall in budgeted income for Supported Internship, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Connect to Work. Continued uncertainty over funding resulted in movement to previously reported position (included in variations under £50k)
Insurance		25,806	76,849	51,043				51,043	The conversion of maintained schools to academies has led to a reduction in insurance contributions from schools.
Arthog		246,713	337,852	91,139	8			91,131	Current projections are that the budgeted income at the outdoor education centre and the Skyreach facility are not going to be achieved. An external review has been commissioned in order to identify ways to ensure the financial sustainability of the facilities going forward.
Asset Rentals		5,968,320	19,267,579	13,299,259	13,299,259				
Variations Under £50,000		879,806	(1,841,308)	(2,721,114)		(2,796,610)		75,496	
Total Education & Skills		**13,961,752**	**26,040,839**	**12,079,087**	**13,299,267**	**(2,796,610)**	**0**	**1,576,430**	
Health & Wellbeing									
Public Health Grant	Variations under £50k	(5,371,312)	(5,447,977)	(76,665)			(76,665)	0	
Public Health Grant-Sexual Health Services	Supplies & Services	1,456,821	1,401,153	(55,668)			(55,668)	0	Underspend on provision for NHS pay award
Public Health Grant-Healthy Child Programme	Supplies & Services	3,365,817	3,306,498	(59,319)			(59,319)	0	Underspend on provision for NHS pay award
Public Health Grant-Supervised toothbrushing	Supplies & Services	50,984	29	(50,955)			(50,955)	0	Grant income - contract commencing 2026/27
Public Health Grant-Stop smoking service	Staffing	144,270	66,378	(77,892)			(77,892)	0	Vacanices due to secondment of staff to other funded projects
Public Health Grant-Healthy lifestyles	Staffing	353,420	283,561	(69,859)			(69,859)	0	Vacanices due to secondment of staff to other funded projects
Public Health Grant	Underspend to Reserve		390,358	390,358			390,358	0	Ring-fenced Public Health grant transferred to/(from) Public Health reserve
Variations under £50k		458,569	294,056	(164,513)		(144,090)		(20,423)	
Total Health & Wellbeing		**458,569**	**294,056**	**(164,513)**	**0**	**(144,090)**	**0**	**(20,423)**	

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000									
					Analysis of Variation				
Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services									
Severe Weather & Winter Maintenance	Various	446,970	764,782	317,812				317,812	Unexpected costs due to bad weather
Special Fund Areas - Street Lighting	Premises-Related Expenditure	813,751	724,065	(89,686)				(89,686)	Reduction in Maintenance and Energy costs on special fund street lighting
Waste & Neighbourhood Services	Various	11,573,680	11,490,458	(83,222)				(83,222)	Overall reduction in waste collection tonnages
NRSWA – New Roads & Streetworks Act	Income	(1,252,600)	(1,359,442)	(106,842)				(106,842)	Overachievement of income
Enforcement Control	Income	(70,000)	(6,570)	63,430				63,430	Shortfall against budgeted income
On Street Car Parking	Income	(60,000)	0	60,000				60,000	Shortfall against budgeted income
Off Street Car Parking	Income	(326,080)	(219,063)	107,017				107,017	Shortfall against budgeted income
Variations under £50k		20,936,354	20,059,964	(876,390)	42,795	(535,850)		(383,335)	
Total Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services		**32,062,075**	**31,454,194**	**(607,881)**	**42,795**	**(535,850)**	**0**	**(114,826)**	
Prosperity & Investment									
BIT:-									
BiTs - Architecture & Building Hold Ac	Net Position	(1,922,450)	(1,697,547)	224,903				224,903	Fee pressure due to slippage of capital schemes, offset with one off vacancy management, although an improved position to 24/25 Outturn.
FM - Building Support Services	Income	(469,630)	(668,217)	(198,587)				(198,587)	Over achievement of income due to various one off Housing schemes and testing works.
Admin Buildings	Admin Buildings - Premises & Third Party payments	2,161,280	1,695,140	(466,140)				(466,140)	Planned underspends on R&M at Darby House giving rise to the contribution to reserve on line below. Underspends on utilities, given up as saving in 26/27 along with one off NNDR rebates received.
	Supplies & Services - Contributions to reserves	0	331,510	331,510				331,510	Planned one off contribution to reserve to fund Darby House Refurb works in 26/27.
Operational Buildings	Premises - Related Expenditure	5,045,537	4,334,150	(711,387)				(711,387)	One off underspends due to closures from developments at Leisure sites and The Place. One off NNDR rebates in addition to underspends on utility costs to be given up as saving in 26/27.
	Income	(175,940)	(255,460)	(79,520)				(79,520)	Unbudgeted rental income from Wellington Civic Offices, budgets realigned in 26/27 across this wider site.
Travellers & Gypsy sites	Premises-Related Expenditure	242,570	336,205	93,635				93,635	Ongoing R&M works at these sites.
Regeneration & Investment:-									
PIP	Wellington Market	(385,420)	(212,202)	173,218				173,218	Development at Wellington Market resulting in reduced rents charged to tenants.
	Net Position	(10,695,350)	(10,164,226)	531,124				531,124	Income pressure due to phasing of Growth fund capital spend, there is a benefit in relation to lower borrowing costs. Includes approved one off use of reserves.
Service charges	Net Position	(551,320)	(734,183)	(182,863)				(182,863)	Improved occupancy levels resulting in a positive void position with an underspend against budgeted voids.
HCA Land deal	Income - Contributions from reserves	(1,011,000)	0	1,011,000				1,011,000	Budgeted contribution from Reserve not utilised
Inward Investment:-									
Management	Employees	111,730	178,757	67,027				67,027	Vacancy management target held here with savings actually being delivered across the wider team.
LEP Growth Hub	Income	0	(52,637)	(52,637)				(52,637)	Grant Receipt off set on Expenditure lines above.
SDM Management Account	Income - Contributions from reserves	0	(82,761)	(82,761)				(82,761)	Approved one off use of reserves to support overall financial position.
Development Management:-									

2025/26 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000									
					Analysis of Variation				
Description		Budget £	Outturn £	Variation £	Capital Charges £	IAS19 £	Public Health £	Service £	Comments
Planning	Net Position	1,133,260	1,178,028	44,768				44,768	Downturn in year to date trends compared to a more buoyant year in 2024/25 with an income shortfall of £105k, this is offset from one off salary underspends from vacancy management of (£135k) net of consultancy for conservation advice. Anticipating an improved position in 26/27 with the Local Plan approved.
Variations under £50k		(4,214,511)	(4,786,786)	(572,275)		(457,700)		(114,575)	
	Asset Rentals	3,184,950	9,828,346	6,643,396	6,643,396			0	
Total Prosperity & Investment		**(7,546,294)**	**(771,883)**	**6,774,411**	**6,643,396**	**(457,700)**	**0**	**588,715**	
Council Wide									
Depreciation & Revaluations	Depreciation	(21,175,450)	(24,040,764)	(2,865,314)	(2,865,314)			0	
	Impariments / Revaluations		(17,161,574)	(17,161,574)	(17,161,574)			0	
Budgeted Contingency		7,200,000	0	(7,200,000)				(7,200,000)	Released to support pressures in ASC and Safeguarding.
Other Council Wide		(18,733,337)	(25,635,539)	(6,902,202)				(6,902,202)	Includes contract and pay inflation contingency, release of other contingencies and use of unbudgeted general reserves.
	Purchase Rebates - Income	(430,000)	(799,174)	(369,174)				(369,174)	Additional WMS Dividend & WME Rebates Received
	Pensions - including FRS17 adjustments	(345,000)	8,443,300	8,788,300		8,460,670		327,630	Prepayment option not taken in 25/26 to benefit from cash flows
	Transfers to Reserves		2,802,700	2,802,700				2,802,700	
Variations under £50k		4,916,930	4,828,584	(88,346)				(88,346)	
Total Council Wide Items		**(28,566,857)**	**(51,562,467)**	**(22,995,610)**	**(20,026,888)**	**8,460,670**	**0**	**(11,429,392)**	
		167,639,680	**167,694,116**	**54,436**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**54,436**	
Corporate Funding									
Funding	Revenue Support Grant	(12,689,130)	(12,688,915)	215				215	
	Business Rates (inc. Section 31 Grant and Top Up Grant)	(58,442,850)	(58,630,976)	(188,126)				(188,126)	Additional Top Up Grant and Section 31 Grant for Green Plant & Machinery
	Council Tax	(93,858,630)	(93,858,556)	74				74	
	Collection Fund Surplus	(2,649,070)	(2,648,710)	360				360	
Variations under £50k		0	0	0				0	
Total Corp Items Funding		**(167,639,680)**	**(167,827,157)**	**(187,477)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(187,477)**	
TOTAL		**(0)**	**(133,041)**	**(133,041)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(133,041)**	

APPENDIX C

2025/26 Revenue Virements for Approval

Virements To:	£	Virements From:	£
Finance, People & IDT			
Treasury Management	269,948	IDT - Employees	(57,937)
IDT Premises	81,159	IDT income	(76,578)
IDT Supplies & Services	411,070	Finance - employees	(175,471)
Variations under £50k	12,026	Revenues - employees	(121,690)
		Revenues - income	(132,328)
		Human Resources - income	(93,008)
		Capital Charges	27
	774,203		(656,985)
Policy & Governance			
Electorial Registration - supplies & services	90,985	Licensing - income	(54,466)
Legal Services - land charges	64,795	Scrutiny - employees	(83,748)
Variations under £50k	113,824	Procurement - employees	(64,421)
		Capital Charges	73
	269,604		(202,562)
Adult Social Care			
Long term care purchasing	9,123,320	Client Contributions	(2,506,102)
Health Funding Contribution	1,622,559	Direct Payments clawbacks	(458,678)
My Options services	265,595	Service wide - employees	(1,255,589)
		Capital Charges	(210)
		Variations under £50k	(9,066)
	11,011,474		(4,229,645)

2025/26 Revenue Virements for Approval

Virements To:	£	Virements From:	£
Housing, Commercial and Customer Services			
Place - employees	281,088	Housing Benefit Subsidy	(140,433)
Telford Theatre	47,653	Customer Relationships & Welfare Services - employees	(63,872)
Solar Farm	#REF!	Community Services - employees	(58,661)
Affordable Housing - income	268,140	Strategic Housing & Regeneration - employees	(303,078)
Ice Rink Café	61,778	Private Sector Housing - employees	(193,974)
Town Park - supplies & services	194,463	Telford Ice Rink	(85,437)
Town Park - third party payments	54,864	Oakengates Aspitations	(122,726)
Capital Charges	43,710	Oakengates swimming lessons	(65,489)
		Horsehay Golf Course	(193,722)
		Homelessness & Prevention	(622,515)
		Housing Solutions - employees	(65,090)
		Variations under £50k	(173,691)
	#REF!		(2,088,688)
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support			
Placements - CIC Placements, Post 18 Staying Put & Leaving Care Support	4,426,317	Placements - Funding	(1,888,789)
Children with Disabilities	135,853	Service wide - Operational expenditure	(91,284)
Service wide - assessments	344,648	Service wide - employees	(205,522)
Service wide - legal costs	404,743	Service wide - income	(781,078)
Service wide - NRPF & Homelessness	551,759	Capital Charges	(2,170)
Independent Review - employees	60,544	Variations under £50k	(151,646)
	5,923,864		(3,120,489)

2025/26 Revenue Virements for Approval

Virements To:	£	Virements From:	£
Education & Skills			
School and Post 16 Transport	695,236	Specialist Services	(55,080)
Service wide - employees	295,701		
Skills	422,904		
Insurance	51,043		
Arthog	91,131		
Capital Charges	13,299,267		
Variations under £50k	75,496		
	14,930,778		(55,080)
Health & Wellbeing			
		Variations under £50k	(20,423)
	0		(20,423)
Neighbourhood & Enforcement			
Severe weather & winter maintenance	317,812	Street lighting (Special Fund areas)	(89,686)
Enforcement control - income	63,430	Waste & Neighbourhood Services	(83,222)
On Street car parking	60,000	New Roads & Streets Act - income	(106,842)
Off Street Car Parking	107,017	Variations under £50k	(383,335)
Capital Charges	42,795		
	591,054		(663,085)

2025/26 Revenue Virements for Approval

Virements To:	£	Virements From:	£
Prosperity & Investment			
BIT - Architure & Buildings	224,903	Facilities Management - income	(198,587)
Administration Buildings - supllies & services	331,510	Administration Buildings - premises and third party payments	(466,140)
Travellers & Gypsy Sites - premises	93,635	Operational Buildings - premises	(711,387)
Wellington Market	173,218	Operational Buildings - income	(79,520)
Property Investment Portfolio	531,124	Service Charges	(182,863)
HCA Land Deal - income	1,011,000	Inward Investment LEP Growth Hub - income	(52,637)
Inward Investment Management - employees	67,027	Inward Investment - income	(82,761)
Development Management Planning	44,768	Variations under £50k	(114,575)
Capital Charges	6,643,396		
	9,120,581		(1,888,470)
Corporate			
Pension Adjustments	327,630	Budget Contingency	(7,200,000)
Contingency reserve transfers	2,802,700	Other Contingencies	(6,902,202)
		Purchase Rebate - income	(369,174)
		Funding	(187,477)
		Capital Charges	(20,026,888)
		Variations under £50k	(88,346)
	3,130,330		(34,774,087)

APPENDIX D

Capital Approvals - by Service Area

New Allocations

Scheme	Service Area	Funding Source	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
			£	£	£	£
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	Grant	79,398	6,007,625		
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	External	7,523,962			
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People & IDT	Revenue	5,275			
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People & IDT	External	24,150			
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People & IDT	Prudential	37,077			
Housing	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Grant	294,945	3,587,588		
Housing	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Capital Receipt	28,915			
Housing	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	76,225			
Leisure Capital Schemes	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Revenue	10,180			
Affordable Housing Programme	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Grant	(180,000)			
Culture	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential		55,000		
Service & Financial Approved Schemes	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	10,000			
Integrated Transport	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	External	386,864			
Integrated Transport	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Revenue	3,700			
Highways & Bridges Capital Maintenance	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	External	311,066			
Flood Defence Grant in Aid	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	14,796	(9,204)		
Flooding Repair and Renewal Grants	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	40,533			
St Georges Regeneration	Prosperity & Investment	Capital Receipt	306,222			
St Georges Regeneration	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	3,834			
Local Regeneration Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Capital Receipt	20,000			
Local Regeneration Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	62,728		4,500,000	4,500,000
Property Investment Portfolio	Prosperity & Investment	Capital Receipt	1,607,000			
Property Investment Portfolio	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	152,030			
Asset Management Plan - General Works & Surve	Prosperity & Investment	Revenue	28,175			
Asset Management Plan - General Works & Surve	Prosperity & Investment	Revenue		303,335		
Rights of Way	Prosperity & Investment	External	22,940			
Rights of Way	Prosperity & Investment	External	7,500			
Housing Company - Housing	Prosperity & Investment	Capital Receipt		17,000,000	10,000,000	
Pride In Place	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential		1,000,000	3,300,000	
Playing Pitch Investment	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential		1,000,000	2,500,000	
Cemeteries	Policy & Governance	Revenue	2,187			
Effciency Schemes Capitalisation	Corporate items	Capital Receipt		(900,000)		
			10,879,703	**28,044,344**	**20,300,000**	**4,500,000**

Slippage

Scheme	Service Area	Funding Source	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
			£	£	£	£
Family Hubs & Start for Life	Childrens Services	Grant	(40,208)	40,208		
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People & IDT	Prudential	(823,426)	823,426		
Housing	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Capital receipt	(217,436)	217,436		

Housing	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	(314,857)	314,857		
Housing	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Grant	(687,499)	687,499		
Affordable Housing Programme	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	650,000	(650,000)		
Affordable Housing Programme	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	171,709	(171,709)		
Swimming Pool in the Dawley Area	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Capital receipt	(10,620)	10,620		
Swimming Pool in the Dawley Area	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	(475,866)	475,866		
Leisure Capital Schemes	Housing Commercial & Customer Services	Prudential	(24,827)	24,827		
Highways & Bridges Capital Maintenance	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	(553,266)	553,266		
Highways & Bridges Capital Maintenance	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Prudential	(20,172)	20,172		
Environmental Improvements/ Enhancements	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Prudential	(46,973)	46,973		
Integrated Transport	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	(794)	794		
Integrated Transport	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Prudential	68,538	(68,538)		
Pride in our Play Areas	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Prudential	(6,844)	6,844		
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	(677,676)	677,676		
Flood Defence Grant in Aid	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	(568,389)	568,389		
Service & Financial Approved Schemes	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Prudential	(335,685)	335,685		
Active Travel Grant	Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	Grant	(526,914)	526,914		
Legal Fees	Policy And Governance	Prudential	42,482	(42,482)		
Stronger Communities	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(84,081)	84,081		
St Georges Regeneration	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	16,279	(16,279)		
Stalled Sites	Prosperity & Investment	Capital receipt	(24,380)	24,380		
Local Regeneration Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Grant	353,182	(353,182)		
Local Regeneration Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(1,107,731)	1,107,731		
Local Regeneration Fund	Prosperity & Investment	External	(127,628)	127,628		
Local Regeneration Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Capital receipt	72,926	(72,926)		
Housing Company - Housing	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	712,956	(712,956)		
Property Investment Portfolio	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(2,421,328)	2,421,328		
Property Investment Portfolio	Prosperity & Investment	Capital receipt	(1,606,948)	1,606,948		
Property Investment Portfolio	Prosperity & Investment	External	(124,000)	124,000		
Captial Receipts Site Preparation	Prosperity & Investment	Capital receipt	(379,302)	379,302		
HE Land Deal	Prosperity & Investment	External	(154,870)	154,870		
HE Liability Sites	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(28,052)	28,052		
Playing Pitch Investment	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(216,395)	216,395		
Playing Pitch Investment	Prosperity & Investment	External	(28,778)	28,778		
Pride in Your High Street	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(63,533)	63,533		
Pride in Your High Street	Prosperity & Investment	Revenue	(55,000)	55,000		
Rights of Way	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(10,974)	10,974		
Asset Management Plan - General Works & Surve	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	76,348	(76,348)		
Condition Works - Leisure	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(31,507)	31,507		
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	Capital receipt	71		(71)	
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	Grant	(11,343,716)	11,343,716		
Effciency Schemes Capitalisation	Corporate items	Capital receipt	(949,719)	1,849,719		(900,000)
Managing the Funding of the Capital Programme	Corporate items	Capital Receipt	1,344,288	(2,244,288)		900,000
Managing the Funding of the Capital Programme	Corporate items	Prudential	(1,344,288)	2,244,288		(900,000)
Integrated Community Schemes	Adult Social Care	Prudential	(20,000)	20,000		
			(21,944,902)	**22,844,973**	**(71)**	**(900,000)**

APPENDIX E

TRANSFERS TO RESERVES - YEAR END 2025/26

Description	Amount £
Invest to Save / Capacity Fund - to support the delivery of future ongoing savings	746,000
SEND/DSG	600,000
Community Flooding	500,000
Contribution to fund DSG deficit	460,000
EPC upgrade works	396,566
Accommodation works	331,510
Community Initiatives	314,000
Solar Farm	265,000
Pot Hole Resources	260,000
Lingen Davies	250,000
Adult Social Care Client Contribution adjustments on full assessment	231,000
Housing Solutions	127,810
Theatre Developments	123,300
Amphitheatre redevelopment	100,000
Aged Debt project	70,000
Safeguarding Partnership - prevention	62,955
Leisure e-gym	50,000
Community Services - Cllrs Pride Fund	37,722
Supports work opportunities for ALD Clients	32,000
Uitility meter updates	31,758
Specialised Housing	31,650
Leisure App	30,000
Armed Forces Hub events	30,000
Support nursery sustainabilty	26,891
Self Insurance Fund	26,455
Groundworks Neal Court	10,700
Contribution to Capital Schemes within Leisure Services	10,180
FF&E Replacement costs	3,460
Other transfers below £1k	903
	5,159,860
Grant Income - various grant funding received, including Public Health Grant, to be carried forward to new year	4,263,165
Third Party/External Funds	481,791
	9,904,817

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Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

Pay Policy Statement

2026/27

Pay Policy Statement 2026/27

1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the "power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit". This Pay Policy Statement (the 'Statement') sets out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to provide transparency about the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees (excluding those working in local authority schools and/or employed under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and apprentices as they are employed under a Training Contract) by identifying:

- the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined;
- the detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff, i.e. 'chief officers', as defined by the relevant legislation; and
- the Committee responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to the full Council.

1.3 This policy statement has been updated and is effective from 1st April 2026.

2. Legislative Framework

2.1 In determining the pay and remuneration of all of its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Equality Act 2010, the Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, the Agency Workers Regulations 2010, the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations. With regards to the requirements contained within the Equality Act 2010, the Council ensures that there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials are objectively justified through the use of well-established job evaluation mechanisms which directly relate salaries to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

3. Pay Structure

3.1 Based on the application of the job evaluation process, the Council uses the Local Government Association nationally negotiated pay spines as the basis for its local grading structure. This determines the salaries of the large majority of the non school-based workforce, together with the use of other nationally-defined rates where relevant.

3.2 The Council adheres to national pay bargaining in respect of the national pay spines noted below and any annual cost of living increases negotiated in those pay spines:-

Joint National Council for Chief Executives

Joint National Council for Chief Officers

Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth & Community Workers

National Joint Council for Local Government Services

Soulbury Committee

3.3 All other pay-related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having been determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery and/or as determined by Council Policy. In determining its grading structure and setting remuneration levels for all posts, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to recruit and retain employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high quality services to the community, delivered effectively and efficiently and at times at which those services are required.

3.4 New appointments will normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade; this can be varied in exceptional circumstances, having regard to all legislative requirements. From time to time it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources available from within and outside the local government sector.

3.5 The Council pays a minimum of the 'Real Living Wage' to employees. This is £13.45 per hour with effect from 1st April 2026 (This does not include those on apprenticeships who are employed under a training contract).

4. Senior Management Remuneration

4.1 For the purposes of this Statement, senior management means 'chief officers' as defined within s43 of the Localism Act. The posts falling within the statutory definition are set out below, with details of their basic salary as at 1st April 2025.

a) Chief Executive
The substantive salary of this post is £179,088 per annum. This is a single 'spot' salary and has no incremental range. The post holder is designated as Head of Paid Service. No supplement is payable for Returning Officer duties for local elections (borough and parish).

b) Executive Directors
The salaries of the posts designated as Executive Directors have four incremental points ranging from £134,924 to £144,834 per annum.

c) Directors
The salaries of the posts designated as Directors have four incremental points ranging from £103,839 to £114,004 per annum.

5. Recruitment of Chief Officers

5.1 The Council's policy and procedures with regard to recruitment of chief officers is set out within the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in Part 3 of the Constitution. When recruiting to all posts the Council will take full and proper account of its Equal Opportunities Charter and the Recruitment and Redeployment Policies. The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed chief officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment. Where the Council is unable to recruit to a post at the designated grade, it will consider the use of temporary market forces supplements in accordance with its relevant policies.

5.2 Where the Council remains unable to recruit chief officers under a contract of employment, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a vacant substantive chief officer post, the Council will, where necessary, consider and engage individuals under 'contracts for service'. These will be sourced through a relevant procurement process ensuring the Council is able to demonstrate the maximum value for money benefits from competition in securing the relevant service. The Council does not currently have any chief officers engaged under such arrangements.

6. Additions to Salary of Chief Officers

6.1 The Council does not apply any bonuses to chief officers.

6.2 In addition to the basic salary set out, the Council may pay other elements of 'additional pay' which are chargeable to UK Income Tax and do not solely constitute reimbursement of expenses incurred in the fulfillment of duties which could include:

- responsibility allowances/salary supplements for fulfilling statutory officer duties and salary supplements,
- market forces supplements,
- additional payments for undertaking other responsibilities.

This list is not exhaustive.

Authority for any 'additional pay' for ~~Executive Directors and Directors~~ Chief Officers is delegated to the Head of Paid Service and/or S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer. For the avoidance of doubt, authority for any additional pay will only be agreed after consultation with the Leader of the Council or Deputy Leader of the Council in their absence.

The following market forces supplement are currently payable:

Post	Amount per annum
Executive Director: Children's Services	£18,080.00

All mileage is reimbursed at HMRC rates.

7. Payments on Termination

7.1 The Council's approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment of chief officers will be in accordance with contractual and statutory requirements

7.2 Any other payments falling outside the provisions or the relevant periods of contractual notice shall, in respect of the Head of Paid Service, Executive Directors and Statutory Officers, be subject to a decision made by the Personnel Committee which has otherwise delegated authority to the Head of Paid Service to approve such payments to other Chief Officers.

7.3 The Council's policy is not to re-employ, for a period of at least 12 months after their employment with Telford & Wrekin Council ends. This relates to anyone who has been made redundant or who has left the Council in the interest of the efficiency of service where a severance payment has been made in accordance with the Council's policy. The re-engagement of an individual on a consultancy, agency or private service provider basis is also prohibited in circumstances where this arrangement could have reasonably been foreseen at the time the individual left.

7.4 Flexible retirement under Regulation 30 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 or Regulation 11 (2) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 will, in the majority of cases be permitted only where savings to fund the cost of such release are achieved. However in exceptional circumstances and in order to retain specialist or critical skills, flexible retirement may be approved to support a period of succession planning/training in which case savings may not be realised to fund the release.

8. Publication

8.1 This Pay Policy Statement is published on the Council's Website. In addition, for members of the Council's Senior Management Team and for those who report directly to the Head of Paid Service where the full time equivalent salary is at least £50,000, the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts will include a note setting out the total amount of:

- salary, fees or allowances paid to or receivable in the current and previous year;
- any bonuses paid or receivable in the current and previous year (N.B. The Council does not operate a bonus system);
- any sums payable by way of expenses allowance that are chargeable to UK income tax;
- any compensation for loss of employment and any other payments connected with termination of employment;
- employers pension contribution;
- any benefits received that do not fall within the above.

8.2 This information will be listed individually by job title where the salary is £50,000 or more. Persons whose salary is £150,000 or more will be identified by name.

8.3 Additional information relating to pay is published in accordance with the MHCLG Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and is available on the Council's website as part of its annual Workforce Information report.

9. Lowest Paid Employees and the Median Salary

9.1 The lowest paid persons employed under a contract of employment with the Council are employed on full-time (37 hours per week) equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum spinal column point currently in use within the Council's grading structure with the exception of employees who have transferred in to the Council's employment under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2016. As at 06 January 2026, this was £24,413 per annum. The Council employs Apprentices who are not included within the definition of 'lowest paid employees' as they are employed under a Training Contract.

9.2 The statutory guidance under the Localism Act 2011 recommends the use of pay multiples as a means of measuring the relationship between pay rates across the workforce and that of senior managers, as included within the Hutton 'Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector' (2010). The Hutton review was asked by Government to explore the case for a fixed limit on dispersion of pay through a requirement that no public sector manager can earn more than 20 times the lowest paid person in the organisation.

9.3 The pay levels within the Council as at 06 January 2026 define the multiple between the lowest paid (full time equivalent) employee and the Head of Paid Service as 1:7.3 and between the lowest paid employee and average Chief Officer as 1:5 The Council's pay multiples therefore fall well below Lord Hutton's public sector threshold set out in 9.2 above.

9.4 The full-time equivalent median (mid-point) pay level within the Council as at 06 January 2026 was £30,518 per annum (£15.82 per hour). The multiple between the Head of Paid Service and this median point was 1:5.9 and the average Chief Officer is 1:4.

9.5 As part of its overall and ongoing monitoring of alignment with external pay markets, both within and outside the sector, the Council will use available benchmark information as appropriate.

10. Accountability and Decision Making

10.1 In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, the Personnel Committee is responsible for decision-making in relation to the recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements for employees of the Council.

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