



CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 24 September 2026 at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors L D Carter (Chair), C Healy (Vice-Chair), P Davis, N A M England, Z Hannington, A D McClements, K Middleton, S A W Reynolds and P Watling.

Also Present: Councillors Cllr A J Eade (Conservative Group Leader) and Cllr W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrats Group Leader).

Apologies: Councillor O Vickers.

CAB-15 Declarations of Interest

None.

CAB-16 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB-17 Leader's Announcements

The Leader referred to the recent attack on a bus driver in Madeley and welcomed the swift action taken by the Police which had resulted in an individual being charged in connection with the incident. He paid tribute to the victim, his family, members of the public who had offered assistance and local community representatives who had come together in response to the incident.

The Leader reaffirmed that there was no place in Telford and Wrekin for hatred, division, violence, racism or intolerance and emphasised the importance of continuing to support one another and uphold the values of a diverse and welcoming Borough.

CAB-18 Empty Homes Strategy 2026 - 2031

The Cabinet Member: Safer Streets and Better Housing presented the Empty Homes Strategy 2026-2031.

The report highlighted the success of the previous strategy which had exceeded its target by bringing 386 long-term empty properties back into use



against an original target of 375. Members were advised that this had created homes for more than 900 residents, including supported and adapted accommodation for vulnerable residents. The work had also contributed to a 41% reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour in affected areas, the recovery of £76,000 of debt owed to the Council and the refurbishment of 114 properties through partnership arrangements. The Council's approach had also received national recognition through shortlisting in the Local Government Chronicle Awards.

The Cabinet Member: Safer Streets and Better Housing outlined the range of interventions used to bring empty properties back into use including advice and support for owners, partnership working with housing providers, acquisition and refurbishment programmes and enforcement action, where necessary. The new strategy proposed a further ambitious target of bringing 400 additional empty properties back into use by 2031.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and praised the work undertaken by officers and partners. Members highlighted the benefits of returning empty homes to use, including increasing housing supply, supporting vulnerable residents, reducing neighbourhood blight and improving community safety. Members also highlighted the contribution the strategy made towards wider housing, regeneration and community safety priorities across the Borough. Members welcomed examples within the report of former empty properties being transformed into supported accommodation, independent living accommodation and affordable housing, noting the positive outcomes achieved for vulnerable residents as well as the wider benefits to local communities.

Members also welcomed the national recognition received for the Council's innovative approach to empty homes and supported the new target of bringing a further 400 properties back into use over the next five years.

The Leader of the Conservative Group welcomed the achievements of the strategy and recognised the significant benefits that bringing empty properties back into use had delivered for communities. Whilst expressing support for the new target, he noted that increasing use of existing housing stock should reduce pressure for additional development on greenfield land and congratulated officers on the national recognition received for the initiative.

In response, the Leader recognised the wider work already being undertaken to support the reuse of vacant properties across the Borough, including within town centres and high streets. He noted that vacancy rates across the Borough's high streets remained significantly below the national average but acknowledged that many empty properties involved complex ownership and legal issues, reaffirming the Council's commitment to providing resources to support both intervention and enforcement activity where necessary.



RESOLVED – that:

- a) the success of the previous long term empty property strategy 2021 – 2026 which has seen 386 empty residential properties brought back into use exceeding the Strategy target, providing homes for over 900 residents* including supported and adapted homes enabling some of our most vulnerable to live independently in their communities be welcomed;
- b) the new Empty Homes Strategy 2026 – 2031 setting a new, increased target to bring 400 empty properties back into use be approved; and
- c) to receive an annual update of delivery against the new target be agreed.

CAB-19 Telford & Wrekin Becoming Carbon Neutral and Climate Change Adaptation - update report

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability presented the annual update report on the Council's progress towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and on climate change adaptation activity.

Members were advised that since the 2018/19 baseline the Council had reduced its carbon emissions by 69%, leaving the authority approximately 5% ahead of its current pathway and on track to achieve a 70% reduction by 2027. The report highlighted the progress made through investment in energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies, low-carbon transport, building improvements and community-based projects.

Members noted that these measures had delivered an estimated £1.19m in avoided energy costs whilst supporting wider benefits including lower household energy bills, improved air quality and greater resilience to rising energy costs.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member highlighted recent improvements to Wellington Leisure Centre, which had reduced carbon emissions by 102 tonnes per annum and reduced energy costs by 35% as well as the continued rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, the work of Telford Energy Advice and the development of the new Matthew Webb Swimming and Fitness Centre which would be powered entirely by renewable energy. The report also noted the importance of climate adaptation, including preparations for extreme weather events and the continued development of the Council's Climate Change Risk Register.



Cabinet Members welcomed the progress achieved and recognised the positive environmental, financial and public health benefits resulting from the Council's climate programme. Members highlighted the importance of continuing to reduce emissions whilst maintaining and enhancing services for residents and noted the role that climate adaptation would play in protecting communities from the effects of extreme weather. Members welcomed the financial savings achieved through investment in energy efficiency and renewable technologies together with the continued focus on community resilience and preparedness for flooding, heatwaves and other severe weather events.

Members also recognised the health impacts associated with climate change, including heat-related illness and the disproportionate effect on vulnerable residents. Continued investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency measures and sustainable transport was also welcomed.

The Leader of the Conservative Group expressed support for reducing carbon emissions but raised concerns regarding the wider national approach to achieving net zero. He referred to the potential impact of rising energy costs on residents and businesses, questioned the pace of the transition away from fossil fuels and raised issues relating to energy security, food security and the costs associated with decarbonisation measures. Whilst supporting the long-term objective of reducing emissions, he advocated a more phased approach to achieving net zero.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group welcomed the report and stressed the importance of continued action to address climate change. Referring to recent extreme weather events and rising temperatures, he highlighted the importance of renewable energy, energy efficiency measures and climate resilience. He supported continued investment in insulation programmes, tree planting and measures to strengthen longer-term energy security.

In response, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member highlighted the scientific consensus around climate change and emphasised that addressing climate change required coordinated global action. She reiterated the environmental, financial and community benefits arising from the Council's programme, including reduced energy costs, improved energy efficiency and increased resilience. She further noted that climate action and sustainable development were complementary objectives and that future housing and infrastructure would continue to be planned with sustainability in mind.

The Leader further welcomed the progress being made and reiterated the Council's commitment to creating a clean, green and welcoming Borough.

RESOLVED – that:



- a) the positive progress the Council has made towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and that, by the end of March 2026, the Council has reduced its carbon emissions by 69% compared with the 2018/19 baseline be noted;
- b) the proposed actions the Council intends to take to continue progress towards carbon neutrality, as set out in the updated Corporate Carbon Neutral Action Plan attached in Appendix A be approved;
- c) the importance of climate adaptation and the additional work undertaken by the Council to develop a corporate climate change risk register, as set out in Appendix B be noted; and
- d) that this report is in relation to the Council's response to the Climate Emergency Declaration and will be referred to Full Council for information as part of the 'Matters Determined by the Cabinet' report be noted.

The meeting ended at 10.54 am

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Debbie Thomas-White
Interim Head of Service: Registrars, Legal and Public Protection

Signed

Date: Thursday 15 October 2026