

## **CABINET**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 3 April 2025 at 10.00 am in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford TF3 4JG**

**PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY 9 APRIL 2025**

**(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY 14 APRIL 2025)**

**Present:** Councillors L D Carter (Chair), R A Overton (Vice-Chair), C Healy, A D McClements, K Middleton, S A W Reynolds and O Vickers.

**Also Present:** Cllr T J Nelson (Conservative Group Leader)

**Apologies:** Councillor Z Hannington and P Watling and Councillor W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat Group Leader)

### **CAB-52 Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **CAB-53 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **CAB-54 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader gave details of several positive announcements from the government, which were truly encouraging and said it was great to work with a government that understood the challenges local government had faced over the past 14 years.

The Leader announced additional funding had been allocated for local highways, ensuring that Telford and Wrekin's roads remained among the best in the region, far surpassing those of neighbouring authorities.

The Leader spoke about funding for new nurseries and breakfast clubs that had been received which would be discussed later in the meeting.

The Leader was encouraged by news of defence spending that would secure jobs in Donnington, along with ongoing discussions with the government about attracting new jobs in that sector to Telford and Wrekin.

The Leader commented that these positive developments highlighted the impact of having a passionate voice and advocate for Telford in Parliament and the Leader was grateful for the continued efforts in that regard.

## **CAB-55 Vision 2032 Partnership Annual Review**

The Leader presented the Vision 2032 Partnership Annual Review which set out a ten-year vision for the borough.

The report set out the progress that had been made to date by the Council's strategic partners and the ambition and direction of travel for the borough. It recognised the key challenges and identified the aspirations and outcomes for achievement up to 2032 and sought to build a more inclusive borough.

Delivery of the vision would be through partnership working with key strategic organisations which were set out in the report and they would meet regularly to evaluate progress and identify new or emerging challenges and opportunities. Partnership working was essential to deliver the vision as this could not be achieved by the Council working alone.

Following the annual review it was noted that the a Community Diagnostic Centre was now offering services to patients, with almost 57,000 patients being offered appointments, a Town Centre Policing Team had been created to tackle shoplifting, the 'Work Express' Council-run bus service had been introduced with 5,500 trips per week, further community action teams and volunteers had been recruited, the Council's street champions had increased to over 1,500 and were working to keep the area clean and tidy. Investments of over £65m had been secured to develop Oakengates and Wellington Town Centres and The Quad a state of the art skills and innovation hub had started to thrive. An investment of over £45m had been allocated for improvements and modernisation of local schools together with an increase in school places. Antisocial behaviour had dropped by over 30% following investment through safer & stronger communities and nearly 500 people per year had been supported through the monthly Telford Autism Hub.

The Council would continue to lobby for investment to help address challenges, particularly in South Telford and around housing tenure and connectivity but that this could not be done alone. The government was receptive and open to discussion in relation to investment that would change and transform our local communities.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and considered that the Vision was a great roadmap for the future of development, economic growth, community pride, environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing and the skills agenda, which were all needed for future prosperity. The police, fire service, NHS, voluntary sector and the education sector were all helping to deliver the Vision up to 2032. By building confidence, trust and cooperation this would create strong and effective partnership and stakeholder working in all key areas and would continue to build a brighter future for the borough. This would continue to ensure that Telford & Wrekin remained a wonderful place to live, work and thrive and help to create a better borough which was cleaner, greener and safer.

The Leader of the Conservative Group commented that the Council should be

ambitious for the borough, talking it up rather than down as it is where we all live and would want the best for all residents. To tackle the big issues facing the borough, the Council had 18 or 20 of the most deprived areas in the country, and the vision should have aimed to reduce that number to a more attainable figure. The borough's design was very road-centric, with roads like the A41, A518, and M54 becoming increasingly full and there was mention of walking and cycling becoming more popular, which was good news, but he considered the Council should have included a mass transit system within the vision. Public health issues in the borough were significant and needed addressing, in particular, the performance of the healthy lifestyle service, particularly quitting smoking, was important to track. The report set out a 30% reduction in safeguarding referrals, but it was unclear what that meant. Good education remained key, with school attendance and secondary school performance being crucial. He felt the Vision was weak on secondary education, but this was an opportunity for improvement. The borough worked hard to protect and enhance green spaces and building 8,000 houses on farmland was not good for the environment. Tackling intergenerational worklessness was essential, with work being the route out of welfare and this was founded on skills and infrastructure, particularly secondary school attainment.

**RESOLVED – that the progress made by the Vision 2032 strategic partnership delivering “Vision 2032”, the ten-year vision for the borough be acknowledged.**

#### **CAB-56    5 by 5**

The Cabinet Member: Children, Young People, Education, Employment & Skills presented the 5 by 5 report which summarised the new initiative that the Council had created to encourage young children to participate in fulfilling, life enhancing activities in order that they achieved the best start in life possible and support them in becoming ready for school. This scheme would build on the highly successful 10by10 scheme which enabled children to try out 10 different activities prior to them reaching 10 years of age.

It was crucial that children aged 0-5 years had a great start in life for their overall development as at this stage they were highly receptive to learning and growth. Providing nurturing and stimulating opportunities helps to build a strong foundation for cognitive, emotional and social skills and early childhood experiences shapes future health and behaviour.

The Council would support parents and carers to prepare children for school through the 5by5 key themes: develop and grow, find my voice, make friends, creative curiosity and learning adventures. Each of the themes would have 10 learning activities for children to experience.

A clear design and marketing approach for 5by5 had been developed and although it would have a unique identity, this would compliment the existing 10by10 branding linking the two initiatives under one corporate brand. Families could access a webpage via multiple platforms and this would

promote existing facilities and resources across the borough as well as providing adventure cards and certificates that could be downloaded and printed out.

The 5by5 initiative was the perfect stepping stone to the 10by10 program and was a journey to enable you people to thrive and it would ensure the best start in life for children.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report. Early years were critical and had an impact throughout the lives of everyone and the emotional and social wellbeing of children was vital to build resilience and social skills. It was important to ensure that young people, the next generation, lived healthy and independent lives and that every child had the opportunity to take part in activities in order to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes.

The Leader of the Conservative Group considered that the report was not an easy read and his initial reaction was that the Council was walking a fine line between being supportive and dictating. He had reviewed the report as both a parent and as a Councillor and he felt he would not have been alone in this reaction. The world had changed and was a different place, and after reading the statistics in the national press, it had highlighted the proportion of children who were unable to sit down for prolonged periods, dress and feed themselves and use the toilet. The Council's marketing exercise aimed to provide additional support to parents and served as a reminder of some of the charming activities people had from their past. The targeted work should focus on ensuring school readiness, which was crucial for future prosperity and realizing opportunities.

**RESOLVED – that the implementation of the 5by5 scheme (five themed activities to try before the age of five) across Telford and Wrekin that focuses on supporting the best start in life for children be approved.**

The meeting ended at 10.34 am

**Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices**

Anthea Lowe  
Director: Policy & Governance  
Date: **Wednesday 9 APRIL 2025**

Signed .....

Date: Thursday 15 May 2025