

## **CABINET**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 25 September 2025 at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

**PUBLISHED ON FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER 2025**

**(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2025)**

**Present:** Councillors R A Overton (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing & Enforcement) (Vice-Chair), P Davis (Cabinet Member for Communities & Civic Pride), Z Hannington (Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance & Customer Services), C Healy (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability), A D McClements (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism, Culture & The Arts) and O Vickers (Cabinet Member for The Economy & Transport).

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

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors L D Carter (Leader of the Council), K Middleton (Cabinet Member for Public Health & Healthier Communities), S A W Reynolds (Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Learning, Employment & Skills) and P Watling (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health).

### **CAB-17    Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **CAB-18    Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **CAB-19    Leader's Announcements**

#### **(i)    Redefined Bus Service**

Councillor Overton encouraged people to hop onto one of the Council's new red buses and, at a cost of £2 was pleased to confirm this was one of the cheapest fares in the Country compared to other bus services provided elsewhere.

#### **(ii)    Councillor Lee Carter**

Councillor Overton announced that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lee Carter had been unable to attend this meeting of the Cabinet due to meetings

being held in Telford, with two secretaries of state, where an announcement was expected in respect of government investment within the borough.

## **CAB-20    Customer Strategy - 2025-2030**

Councillor Z Hannington, the Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance and Customer Services presented for approval by Cabinet, the new Customer Strategy 2025 to 2030, which built on the success of the 2021 to 2025 strategy, which culminated in Telford and Wrekin Council becoming the first local authority in the UK to receive the Institute of Customer Services' ServiceMark accreditation in April 2025, that recognised excellence in customer service.

It was reported that the new strategy set out a bold and inclusive vision for the next five years, which reaffirmed the Council's commitment to putting residents at the heart of everything it did and getting the basics right while embracing the transformative potential of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) in meeting the diverse needs of all of the borough's residents.

The strategy also outlined how the Council would continue to deliver excellent, accessible, and responsive customer services across digital, telephony, and face-to-face channels to ensure that all residents were able to access Council Services. The Strategy also expanded the Council's customer focus to include local businesses, tourists, and users of commercial services, which recognised their vital role in the Borough's vibrancy and resilience.

Councillor Hannington said that the Administration took great pride in this achievement, which reflected a shared dedication to innovation, continuous improvement and genuine care for the borough's community. She added that the progress made was testament to the hard work and forward-thinking spirit of everyone involved, which set a strong foundation for the future.

Councillor Hannington set out some of the accomplishments from the previous strategy, which included:

- 68% increase in positive customer feedback since 2021.
- A UK customer satisfaction index score of 74, well above the national average for Councils, which was 64.4.
- Successful implementation of the Ask Tom digital assistant, which had exceeded expectations by handling 30% of customer enquiries by providing access to an automated telephony system 24/7.
- Development of a pool of mystery volunteers who had played a pivotal role in testing the customer experience and helped to develop action improvement plans.
- Early adoption of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, which achieved new, reduced complaint response timescales.
- 33% reduction in calls to call centres due to increased digital engagement.

Councillor Hannington said that the new Strategy was focussed on enhancing access to Council services for all residents and actively responding to customer feedback. She said that this commitment to continual improvement and adaptability was vital in this ever-changing world.

Councillor Hannington said the Strategy emphasised making services accessible to everyone and delivering these across multi-channels, listening closely to customer feedback, supporting workforce development and building strong partnerships. She said that these priorities helped guarantee that services were not only excellent but also inclusive and adaptable to the needs of all residents. She said that, above all, the strategy was anchored in ensuring communications and service delivery through a variety of channels and residents were being offered a variety of ways to connect from traditional phone lines and face-to-face services to innovative, digital platforms and automated assistance.

Councillor Hannington said that the Council would ensure that every individual, regardless of circumstance or preference, could access the support they needed. She said this approach not only enhanced accountability in inclusion but also enabled more efficient handling of enquiries and allowing resources to be directed where they were needed most.

Councillor Hannington said the integration of digital tools alongside established channels would empower residents to engage on their own terms, fostering trust and transparency. She said that as the Council continued to adapt and evolve, multi-channel service delivery would remain essential in meeting the diverse needs of the borough and driving improvements in customer service.

Councillor Hannington expressed her thanks to officers for all their dedication and hard work, which had been instrumental in developing and delivering this strategy. She said their commitment to innovation, accessibility and service excellence had and would make a meaningful difference to the borough's residents and the wider community.

Members spoke on embracing the use of AI but not to lose sight of the requirement still to provide face-to-face contact for service users where there was such a need.

Whilst it was acknowledged there was still work to do, Members highlighted the high level of satisfaction amongst front facing service users (90%) and recognised that as technology advanced the Council's service delivery would improve further.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) In noting the progress delivered to date, the update to the Customer Strategy be approved and the refreshed action plan be endorsed.**

**(b) The Council's commitment to providing multi-channel access to services, with the continuation of telephone and face-to-face services where appropriate, alongside the development of digital contact channels, be confirmed.**

**(c) Authority be delegated to the Director of Housing, Commercial and Customer Services, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services, to take the necessary steps to implement these recommendations and to agree on future updates to the action plan, with an interim progress report to Cabinet in early 2028.**

#### **CAB-21    Results of the Residents Survey 2024/25**

Councillor P Davis, Cabinet Member for Communities and Civic Pride, provided Cabinet with an update on the results of the Residents Survey that was carried out, in-house, between 15 November 2024 and 31 January 2025, which shared the feedback from services in response to the findings, set out the Council's next steps and put forward recommendations for conducting future Residents Surveys.

It was reported that this Residents Survey had been conducted to gather residents' views on the borough as a place to live and made this an opportunity to refresh the Council's data and help shape future policy and service provision. It was noted that this also reflected the Council's cooperative values and commitment to shaping services through continuous engagement with residents.

Councillor Davis said that this survey had been one of over 100 surveys, which had been undertaken over the past two years. He said that, as a co-operative Council, it did not listen every few years but had ongoing dialogue with its residents. He added that the previous survey, carried out in 2020, had included the printing and posting to every household in the borough, which had attracted response levels of less than 7% and that feedback did not appear as representative of Telford's communities as it might have been.

Councillor Davis said that, as a result, and to refine the Council's approach to ensure the views of the broad and diverse range of residents, a random sample of 300 households per ward across the borough (9,600 addresses in total) had been invited to take part. He said that 1,384 responses (14.4%) had been received, which had been in line with LGA expectations. He added that, alongside this, a dedicated Young Persons Survey, which attracted 103 responses, had provided a valuable insight into the views of 11- to 18-year-olds across the borough.

Councillor Davis said that the covering report set out a summary of the main findings, which focussed on keeping residents informed, satisfaction with the Council services and the area as a place to live. He said it should be noted that the latest local survey had provided overwhelmingly positive feedback on

services in every area where comparable LGA benchmarking was available, in every case outperforming the averages.

Councillor Davis said that when thinking about Council services, two-thirds of respondents (66%) said they were satisfied with the way the Council ran its business, which compared very favourably with the LGA figure of 56%. Councillor Davis said satisfaction levels were particularly high in respect of recycling and waste (c.88%) (well above the LGA average), and whilst satisfaction levels with highways was only 46%, this was still much stronger than the LGA benchmark of 30%. On communications, he said that 77% of residents felt well informed of the services and benefits the Council provided (nationally, this figure was 47%). He said that this information told the Council that its efforts to keep people updated whether through print, online or community channels were being recognised.

Councillor Davis said that when it came to the issue of the borough as a place to live, three out of four (75%) respondents were satisfied with Telford and Wrekin as a place to live and 78% were satisfied with the borough's local neighbourhood, both of which were above the LGA average.

Councillor Davis said that whilst satisfaction levels were higher in less deprived areas, residents who lived in the borough's most deprived neighbourhoods were three times more likely to say their area had improved over the last two years, which was a clear sign that the Council's investment in its communities was making a difference where it mattered most.

On listening to residents, Councillor Davis said that 41.4% agreed that the Council listened to their views, with a further third saying they did not know. This, he said, was now an area the Council wanted to strengthen further since no matter where residents lived within the borough, it was important that their voices were heard.

Councillor David addressed some of the priorities residents had shared, which included:

- On highways, more maintenance on potholes and drainage (the Council was investing around £42m over the next four years on roads, footpaths, draining and structures).
- On planning and housing, more affordable housing and more empty homes being brought back into use.
- On greenspaces and play, protect, maintain and improve the borough's parks and play areas.

Councillor Davis said the Council was working towards eight green flag awards with 89% of its households within 300m of accessible green space. He added that the Council was also working to boost biodiversity, develop the local nature recovery strategy and work towards strategies for play and recreation.

Councillor Davis said that while these results were overwhelmingly positive, and every area the Council could benchmark exceeded the LGA average, he acknowledged the Council must not be complacent. He said there were areas where residents wanted more from the Council and that was what it intended to deliver.

Councillor Davis said that the next steps were clear in that the Council would carry out further engagement sessions to deepen the Council's understanding of feedback and respond in a targeted way; would build on the success of the young persons' survey and strengthen its engagement with young people; develop an action plan with directors accountable for ensuring delivery across services; formally report back to residents using a clear "you said, we did" approach in order that residents knew how their voices were shaping decisions.

In conclusion, Councillor Davis said the Council was proposing to make the residents' survey a regular biennial exercise to help track trends, identify emerging issues early and ensure services remained aligned with the borough's communities.

Members said that checking in with residents and collating feedback from them was critical to make Telford and Wrekin a better Council and that the survey was key to this.

In relation to feedback, Members said that this had been taken on board and had had been acted upon, which had recognised overwhelming support from residents in respect of services such as recycling, waste, parks, libraries and education etc.

**RESOLVED that:**

**(a) The results from the latest Residents Survey, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, which highlighted the following findings, be noted:**

- **70.1% of respondents felt Telford and Wrekin Council keep their residents informed.**
- **78% of respondents were very/fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live.**
- **75% of respondents were satisfied with the borough of Telford and Wrekin as a place to live.**

**(a) The overwhelmingly positive feedback from Telford and Wrekin residents, in comparison to the latest national benchmark - Local Government Association (LGA) Resident Satisfaction Survey – be noted.**

**(b) The work being done by services to respond to the survey findings, as set out in section 4.11 to the report, be recognised.**

**(c) The proposals for future Residents Surveys – as set out in section 4.12.6 to the report, be approved.**

The meeting ended at 10.41 am

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

Anthea Lowe  
Director: Policy & Governance  
Date: **Wednesday 1 OCTOBER 2025**

Signed .....

Date: Thursday 6 November 2025