

CABINET

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

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2025

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY 15 DECEMBER 2025)

Present: Councillors L D Carter (Leader of the Council), 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), S A W Reynolds (Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Learning, Employment & Skills) 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: Councillor P Watling (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health).

CAB-28 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor P Watling, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health. The Leader extended the Cabinet's good wishes to Councillor Watling and wished him a speedy recovery.

CAB-29 Declarations of Interest

None.

CAB-30 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CAB-31 Leader's Announcements

(i) Telford Day 2025

The Leader extended his thanks to everyone who had been involved in Telford Day last week, which, he said, was the start of a whole period of celebrations here in Southwater that were not just about celebrations to bring

the community together but also driving footfall into the town centre here and supporting local businesses.

He said that the focus last week had been about Telford Day and it had been a wonderful event, from start to finish and had included the raising of the Telford flag, which had been designed by a local, nine-year-old girl from Randlay.

The Leader thanked those from outside of the Council, which included Telford Live and Telford Memories Group, and to Paul Shuttleworth, who had been fantastic in terms of helping get the event off the ground.

(ii) Funding from Central Government

The Leader announced that, in the next week or so, the Council would learn the level of funding it would receive from the Government for 2026-27. He said he had travelled with a delegation to London to meet ministers and talk about fairer funding for local authorities. He said that 14 years of cuts had seen £180m cut from services in Telford and Wrekin over this time.

The Leader said it had been refreshing to hear not only the MP for Telford but also ministers from the Government recognise the fact that local government had been taken to the edge in terms of its funding. He said he had seen some positivity last year in terms of the settlement awarded and hoped with a new formula that had been announced, this would work out well for Telford and Wrekin to address some of those challenges that had arisen after 14 years of austerity.

CAB-32 Housing Strategy 2025-2030

Cabinet considered a joint report by Councillor Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Highways and Enforcement and Councillor Carolyn Healy, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability, which provided an update on the response to the consultation on the draft Housing Strategy 2025 to 2030 and proposed the final Housing Strategy 2025 to 2030 for adoption.

Councillor Overton said he was pleased to present the Housing Strategy 2025 to 2030, which set out the Council's vision for housing in Telford and Wrekin.

He said the Strategy was the result of extensive engagement with residents, partners and stakeholders and he wanted to begin by highlighting the importance of that engagement in shaping the Council's final approach.

Councillor Overton said that over a 12-week consultation period, the Council had reached out through multiple channels, social media and direct invitations to over 100 stakeholders; and face-to-face events, with more than 70 internal and external partners. He said the Council had also engaged directly with lived experience boards, which included the Health and Well-being Board, Ageing Well partnership, the Making it Real Board, care leavers and Town

and Parish Councils. He added that officers had attended Town and Parish Council coffee mornings and meetings to speak directly to residents about the key themes and objectives.

Councillor Overton said that the three strategic priorities identified were:

(i) Making the best use of the Council's existing homes

Residents had told the Council that improving the quality and availability of existing housing was just as important as building new homes and that this priority focused on raising standards, tackling empty properties and ensuring the Council's current stock met the needs of all residents, including the most vulnerable.

(ii) Supporting safe, clean, green, healthy and connected communities.

Feedback had highlighted the importance of neighbourhoods that were safe, well-maintained and environmentally sustainable and that this priority committed the Council to invest in infrastructure, green spaces and community facilities while addressing issues such as antisocial behaviour and climate resilience.

(iii) Providing homes to support and empower the most vulnerable people.

There had been strong feedback on the need for more supported and specialist accommodation, particularly for adults and young people with disabilities, care leavers and those at risk of homelessness and that this priority ensured inclusivity and continued partnership working to deliver homes and support for those who needed it most.

These priorities were chosen because they reflected the core themes raised on engagement, fairness, inclusion and practical solutions to address both immediate and long-term housing challenges.

He went on to say that a key topic raised during engagement was the impact of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) and that many residents had expressed concerns about the concentration and management of HMOs, linking them to issues such as antisocial behaviour, overcrowding and pressure on local services.

In summary, Councillor Overton said that this housing strategy was a product of genuine partnership with the borough's community, which set out clear evidence-based priorities that would guide the Council's work over the next five years.

Councillor Overton expressed his thanks to everyone who had contributed to the engagement process and to the Council's officers for all their hard work in reaching out and making sure people's views had been fed into this report. He said he looked forward to working together to deliver on these shared ambitions.

Members made a number of comments, which included:

- Everyone needed a safe and a good quality home to live in and, as a local council, members had that key role in shaping the borough and ensuring that the housing in it met the needs of its population.
- Following the consultation, there was overwhelming support for the housing strategy with the top three priorities above being those voiced by the borough's residents, partners and stakeholders.
- NuPlace, the Council's wholly-owned company providing open market rental houses, now worked in conjunction with Telford and Wrekin Homes, to provide rented accommodation that gave security of tenure and created homes that were more sustainable with high levels of insulation.
- The Strategy was not just about building for building's sake but about meeting the housing need within the Borough.

RESOLVED, that:

- (a) The outcome and response to the consultation process in relation to the draft Housing Strategy 2025 to 2030, be noted; and**
- (b) The final version of the Housing Strategy 2025 to 2030, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.**

CAB-33 Housing Management Board Update

Councillor Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Enforcement, presented a report, which provided an update on the work carried out since the formation of the Housing Management Board (HMB) to ensure that the management of properties owned by the Council under its Registered Provider status (RP), was responsive, consistent and supported a positive tenancy and accorded with the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing.

The HMB also considered and advised on other aspects of the Council's role as a Local Housing Authority (LHA), for example, development of policy and strategy where these did not form key decisions and/or ahead of these coming forward to Cabinet for consideration and decisions.

The update highlighted the progress of achievements of the Council's housing service over the past year, as well as its ongoing commitment to providing high quality responsive and inclusive housing for the residents of Telford and Wrekin. The HMB had been established to ensure robust oversight of the Council's responsibilities both as an RP and as LHA. Councillor Overton said the Council's aim was to deliver consistent, high quality housing management with a particular focus on supporting the borough's most vulnerable residents.

Since becoming an RP in 2020, the Council's housing portfolio had grown to 230 properties, which included both owned and leased homes. He said these properties were primarily used to meet homelessness needs and provided specialist accommodation for adults and young people with complex needs. He added that this targeted approach ensured the Council was addressing the most pressing housing challenges in the community.

The report indicated that the Council's tenant satisfaction rate stood at 82%, which was significantly above the national average of 71.8%. Council's tenants felt safe in their homes and the Council's repairs service was performing strongly with 96% of emergency repairs completed on time. These results, he said, reflected the Council's commitment to putting tenants at the heart of its service.

The report showed that, through improved nomination processes and close partnership working with local housing providers, the Council had successfully placed 417 families into social housing in the past year, which included 142 households who were previously homeless. This not only provided families with long-term stable accommodation but also delivered substantial savings by reducing reliance on costly emergency accommodation.

The HMB had implemented a comprehensive suite of policies, which covered all aspects of management from tenant involvement and complaints to antisocial behaviour and rent-setting. The Council was committed to meeting and exceeding the standards set by the regulator of social housing and to ensure that all of the Council's properties were managed to the highest standards. Looking forward, the HMB would continue to monitor housing needs and gaps in the local market and ensure that housing activities remained aligned with the Council's strategic priorities. In conclusion, the Council remained committed to providing safe, high-quality homes for supporting its most vulnerable residents to live well in their communities.

RESOLVED, that:

- (a) The work of the Housing Management Board, which provided oversight of the Council's responsibilities as a Registered Provider of housing and Local Housing Authority, be welcomed;**
- (b) The fact that the Board had opted to carry out annual tenant perception surveys to ensure best service for tenant and oversight of performance, although Registered Providers of social housing with fewer than 1,000 properties were only required to carry out tenant perception surveys once every two years, be acknowledged; and**
- (c) The fact that the proportion of tenants who reported they were satisfied with the overall service from Telford and Wrekin Council was 82%, compared to the National average of 71.8%, be acknowledged.**

Cabinet considered a joint report by Councillor Carolyn Healy, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability and Councillor Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Enforcement, which set out an evidence base for the introduction of an Article 4 Direction for Small Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), which would withdraw existing permitted development rights meaning all HMOs would require planning permission.

The report also set out proposals to introduce an Additional Licensing Scheme under the Housing Act 2004, which would require a licence for small HMOs comprising 3 to 4 occupants, which were not currently covered by the existing mandatory licensing regime, which required HMOs with five or more occupants to be licensed.

It was reported that this was a significant milestone in the Council's journey to improve the private sector in Telford and Wrekin. This joint report began with a clear ambition to ensure that everyone in the borough had access to safe, decent and affordable housing and it was recognised early on that while the private lending sector was a vital part of the borough's housing mix, it also presented unique challenges, especially for the borough's most vulnerable residents.

The Council had, too often, seen the consequences of poorly managed properties, antisocial behaviour, overcrowding and neighbourhood decline and that it was the Council's position that decent housing was the fundamental foundation for opportunity, health and community. That was why, in 2018, it launched the Better Homes for All programme, which took proactive intelligence-led enforcement action against rogue landlords and unsafe properties. Good progress had been made but the landscape had changed due to the cost-of-living crisis, welfare reforms and rising rents, which had driven more people into shared housing and HMOs.

The report set out that the number of HMOs in the borough had grown rapidly and with it, the concerns of residents about the impact on their communities. HMOs were necessarily an important part of the Council's housing solution, since they provided affordable accommodation for young people, students and those on low incomes and for many, they were the only viable option, but the nature of shared living meant that HMOs required careful management.

It should be remembered, however, that well-run HMOs offered a good start in life although, if poorly managed, they could be linked to antisocial behaviour, crime, overcrowding, and poor living conditions.

It was important to stress that these proposals had not been brought forward lightly and that considerable time and effort had been taken to gather the robust evidence needed to justify these measures. The Council had analysed local data, reviewed national best practice and had listened to the experiences of residents, landlords, and partners. The evidence base demonstrated clear

links between high concentrations of HMOs and increased crime, antisocial behaviour, and pressure on local services.

In response to the approach for both Article 4 and additional licensing, the evidence showed that issues linked to HMOs were not confined to one or two neighbourhoods and were present across the borough. A patchwork approach would risk simply displacing problems from one area to another but by taking a borough-wide stance, the Council could ensure consistent standards, protection of all communities and avoid creating new hot spots of concern.

The report set out the following two key proposals to address these challenges:

1. The proposed Article 4 direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of family homes, use Class C3, to small HMOs, use Class C4 across the borough. This meant that, in future, landlords would need to apply for planning permission before converting a property into an HMO. The purpose was not to ban HMOs but to give the Council greater control over where these were located to prevent over concentration and to ensure that new HMOs were only permitted where they were appropriate for the neighbourhood.
2. Alongside Article 4, the Council was proposing a borough wide additional licence scheme for all small HMOs, three to four occupants, which were not currently covered by mandatory licensing. This would require all small HMOs to be licensed, inspected, and held to consistent minimum standards for safety, amenities and management.

The scheme would include clear licence conditions, amenity standards, and a transparent fee structure with responsible landlords being rewarded for good practice. Importantly, the Council was also introducing an enhanced landlord and tenant support programme to help landlords comply with the new requirements and support tenants, especially those affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

It was reported that, at the heart of these proposals, was the Council's commitment to tenants to good quality housing and that additional licensing brought real benefits for those living in HMOs and ensured that all HMOs, not just the largest, were inspected and met consistent standards for safety, space, and amenities. It was hoped that tenants would have greater protection from poor conditions, overcrowding, and retaliatory eviction and since licensing enabled proactive checks rather than relying on complaints then, ultimately, this was about fairness and dignity and making sure that everyone, regardless of income or circumstance, had a decent place to call home.

It was believed that these proposals were the best way to manage HMOs and to address the issues linked to them, while still recognising their role in meeting the borough's housing need. The Article 4 measures would allow the

Council to take a strategic approach to planning, to protect the character of its neighbourhoods and to ensure balanced communities.

In conclusion, additional licensing would raise standards across the sector, protect vulnerable tenants and support reasonable landlords. It was important that each of these decisions were not being made in isolation and that was why the Council was launching a public consultation on both the Article 4 Direction and the additional licensing scheme to hear the views of residents, landlords, tenants and all stakeholders on what was an opportunity for everyone to have their say and to help the Council shape the final approach.

RESOLVED, that:

- (a) The two new proposed schemes, as detailed in the report, to help address the increase in shared housing in the Borough, to ensure the Council fulfilled its promise to its residents that it was 'on your side' by creating safe homes and fairer standards in HMOs, be approved;**
- (b) The Evidence Base Report, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, to support the making of an Article 4 (1) Direction in the area edged red on the plan within Appendix 6 to the report, in accordance with the relevant planning legislation as set out in this report, be adopted;**
- (c) The making of the Direction and the public consultation required prior to confirmation, in accordance with the legislative requirements, be approved;**
- (d) If supported by the outcome of the public consultation, authority be delegated to the Director of Prosperity and Investment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability, to exercise all powers conferred on the Council, regarding the making, processing and confirmation of the Article 4 Direction;**
- (e) The document attached at Appendix 1 to the report, which set out the evidence in support of the Borough-wide implementation of an Additional Licensing Scheme under the Housing Act 2004 for all small Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) comprising 3-4 occupants, not currently covered by the mandatory licensing scheme, be agreed;**
- (f) A period for public consultation on the proposed implementation of Additional Licensing for houses in multiple occupation, including proposed licence conditions, amenity standards and fee schedule, attached at Appendices 2 to 5 to the report, be approved and that a further report following the conclusion of the consultation to finalise and align all relevant fees for HMO licences, be prepared; and**
- (g) The introduction of an enhanced Landlord and Tenant Support Programme to help landlords and tenants comply with the requirements of the Renters' Rights Act 2025 and aid with the introduction of the proposed additional licensing scheme as necessary, be approved.**

CAB-35 Councillors' Pride Fund 2024/25: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

Councillor Paul Davis, Cabinet Member for Communities and Civic Pride, presented a report, which updated Cabinet on the impact of the Councillors' Pride Fund allocated during the financial year 2024/25.

The report outlined the incredible impact the Councillors' Pride Fund had had across the borough's communities during 2024 - 25. The fund continued to make a real difference where it mattered most, in the heart of the borough's communities and neighbourhoods. The report showed the full £270,000 budget allocated (£5,000 per Councillor) to support local projects had been spent and, that a further £145,000 had been secured in matched funding, meaning that a further 53p for every pound spent had added value and impact to those projects.

Since 2011, the Council had invested over £2.2m in such schemes and investing in the borough's communities was a key part of the Council's aim to protect, care and invest to create a better borough.

The report was full of inspiring examples which reflected the Council's priorities and some of these successes were highlighted, which included children, young people and adults having been supported to live well via trips to London and Stratford-upon-Avon for residents in Woodside, Madeley and Sutton Hill and Lawley. The scheme had supported the vibrant youth art project, which had built community pride and brought the Sambrook Centre to life with the help from local young people and a boxing programme to engage females had built confidence. An anti-vaping workshop had engaged over 800 students from multiple wards using an interactive theatre to explore peer pressure and health risks; a warm space in Priorslee had offered comfort in winter, and social clubs in Donnington had managed to keep people connected.

The scheme ensured that a thriving economy was championed through support to celebrate community and heritage with events in Malinslee and Dawley Bank, Lawley, Ironbridge Gorge and Priorslee; a market in Donnington, and heritage projects such as the reopening of Lawley Station in Horsehay and Lightmoor and supporting the move to create a new museum in Newport North.

Neighbourhoods had been invested to make them great places to live by improving play areas in Ironbridge Gorge, Muxton and Newport East, with a new community garden in Hadley and in Leegomery, nature-based artwork on the bus stops in The Nedge, and bulb planting in neighbourhoods and parks such as in Newport West.

Councillor pride applications had also ensured that the borough's natural environment was protected, and the Council continued to take a leading role in tackling climate emergency through the introduction of a bug hotel in

Oakengates and Ketley Bank, an orchard in Haygate and Park, climate training in Newport North and litter-picking kits for a school in Lawley. Community-focused, efficient, effective and quality services had been supported, such as road safety schemes in Church Aston and Lilleshall and in Ketley; defibrillators in Donnington, Priorslee and Ironbridge Gorge; improved lighting in Wrockwardine Wood and Trench and Oakengates and new noticeboards to help keep residents informed in Shawbirch, Dothill and Edgmond.

The report showed that the impact of the Councillors' Pride Fund could be seen clearly across all of the borough's communities and it provided more than just financial support – it was a lifeline for local ideas, a catalyst for community pride and a way for Councillors to respond directly to local needs whilst it also complemented wider Council programmes and supported some of the borough's most vulnerable residents, which ultimately helped to reduce demand on more intensive services.

In conclusion, members were asked to ensure that the current Fund allocation was spent early in the new year in order that it could be closed before the end of the current financial year. Councillor Davis thanked councillors, officers and volunteers who had made the delivery of these projects possible, made contributions to and improved the lives of residents. By working together, stronger, healthier and more connected communities were being built and that this was reflected in the report.

RESOLVED, that:

- (a) The continued impact of the Councillors' Pride Fund, which had allocated over £2.2m over the last 13 years and allowed Councillors to deliver the Council's five priorities in their wards to protect, care and invest in order to create a better borough, be welcomed;**
- (b) The importance of this funding in enabling a bespoke response to need in individual communities and in supporting community organisations to thrive and offer valued services to residents, be recognised;**
- (c) The additional funding that applications to this scheme had secured through match funding of projects, to the value of £145,221 in 2024/25 and in excess of £900,000 in the last six years, be noted; and**
- (d) The final deadline for receipt of applications in the year 2025-26 being 1 February 2026, be noted.**

The meeting ended at 10.58 am

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Anthea Lowe
Director: Policy & Governance
Date: **Wednesday 10 DECEMBER 2025**

Signed

Date: Tuesday 6 January 2026