

## FULL COUNCIL

### Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday 13 November 2025 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, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, G H Cook, 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, 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, R Sahota, P J Scott, S Syrda, G Thomas, P Thomas, J Thompson, K Tonks, J Urey, O Vickers and D R W White

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

**Apologies:** Councillors A J Burford, C Chikandamina, E Davies, S Davies, G C W Latham-Reynolds, H Rhodes, K L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, R Tyrrell and P Watling

#### **31        Prayers and Reflections**

Natalie Headley, founder and Chair of Trustees at TAARC (Telford African and Afro-Caribbean Resource Centre) said prayers.

#### **32        Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **33        Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Meeting of the previous meeting of the Council held on 17 July 2025, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.**

#### **34        Leader's Report & Announcements**

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

- (i)        Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Campaign Board



The Leader acknowledged Members had been signing the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Campaign Board and hoped all members would sign it.

(ii) "Swift Brick" Nesting Facilities for Endangered Birds

The Leader referred to the last meeting of the Council, following which, Councillor Healy had secured a response on swift boxes, which she would circulate after this meeting.

(iii) Platinum Award – Council's Planning Team

The Leader congratulated the Council's Planning Team for its Platinum Award, which recognised it as one of the best planning departments in the whole country. He said this was a fantastic effort on the part of the Team and he again extended his congratulations to staff on receiving the award.

(iv) Councillor Paul Watling

The Leader invited all in the Chamber to join him in sending the Council's best wishes to Councillor Watling, who was recovering from surgery and an eleven-month battle against cancer and who had received the all clear this week.

(v) Pride in Place Programme

The Leader said that, in September, Telford had been chosen as a national launch site for the Pride in Place Programme, and he had welcomed Chancellor Rachel Reeves and Secretary of State, Steve Reed to Woodside.

The Leader said that the Pride in Place Programme had secured £20m of investment into South Telford and as a Council, it had topped this up with another £10m, which meant that a large part of South Telford, Woodside, Brookside and Sutton Hill would benefit from significant investment over the next decade. He wanted to place on record his sincere thanks to Telford MP Shaun Davies for his instrumental role in the Pride in Place Programme and recognised that his efforts would ensure communities in Telford would benefit from a scheme designed to tackle inequalities and unlock fresh opportunities.

The Leader said that this decade-long programme promised to deliver lasting, visible change for local people and places and he promised that the Council would not let this once in a generation opportunity pass to address challenges that had existed in those areas for generations. He said these were great communities, and the Council was committed that it drive this new investment into their neighbourhoods.

(vi) Visitation by Lisa Nandy MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

The Leader thanked Councillor Shaun Davies MP for his hard work in securing the visit by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Lisa Nandy MP, who confirmed a £9m investment to safeguard the borough's internationally important heritage in Ironbridge, with the transfer of ownership of the Iron Bridge Gorge Museum's trust to the National Trust. The Leader said that the Museum Trust and the many local people who had worked for the Trust over the years had been outstanding custodians of Ironbridge's industrial heritage.

The Leader said that the transition to the National Trust ownership preserved a history made by hands and on the backs of local people of this area and delivered a multimillion-pound boost to the borough's visitor economy, which supported jobs and education. Both of these developments, he said, showed very clearly that only an ambitious Labour Council working in step with a hardworking Labour MP and a Labour government prepared to listen and act for the borough's common good, delivered results for Telford and Wrekin, and the Council would not stop there. He said that, in the weeks ahead, the Council had several meetings with the Government to push the Telford and Wrekin cause, all in the name of doing the very best by residents.

(vii) Remembrance Day Commemorations

The Leader said that, over the last week or so, he was sure members across this chamber had attended remembrance services as everyone paused to reflect and express heartfelt gratitude to all those who had served, and especially to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for this country and its people's freedoms.

He said that Telford and Wrekin had a long and proud association with the armed forces, with more than 16,000 serving personnel, veterans and their families, living or working in the borough. He said that this time of year carried particular significance and it was pleasing to see that the Council was able to officially open the new Christopher Turley Armed Forces Community Hub in Dawley at the end of October, in time for these remembrance activities. This welcoming space was, he said, a partnership between the Council, Great Dawley Town Council and Telford Mind, and would offer advice, support and a sense of community to serving personnel, veterans and their families for years to come.

The Leader said that these items of good news showed how much residents had to be proud of in this fantastic borough. He said it was this pride that the Council was looking to share with everyone who lived and worked here.



(viii) Telford Day

The Leader was delighted to announce that, here in Telford with the introduction of Telford Day, the Council would dedicate a day to celebrate all things Telford at the end of this month to kick-off Christmas in style. He said that Telford Day, on 29 November, was a day to come together to celebrate Telford, a new town, formed on that date in 1968 and there were lots of ways residents could get involved in the first Telford Day celebrations.

The Leader said that, here in Southwater, there would be activities and music in the Christmas yurt through to 7 December and would include workshops, free live music, jazz Sunday sessions, film screenings, and more. He said that Telford Memories Coffee Morning would be a great opportunity to share memories of what residents loved about Telford. The Leader went on to say that Telford Day would also feature the new Telford flag being raised, which was the subject of a competition launched in June with schools in the borough and more than a thousand children took part. He said that almost 4,000 people voted for their favourite design with the winning flag announced today, which would be raised in Southwater on Telford Day as a focal point for the celebrations.

The Leader said that this was more than about a celebration of a flag but was about bringing together communities in the borough to celebrate its people, their spirit and their place. He added it was about saying to those who wished to create division and hatred that they would not succeed because this was a place that was home to hundreds of international businesses, a university - which attracted thousands of students from overseas - and a proud record of welcoming people from all over the globe. These people, he said, made a living and made a contribution in building this fantastic place in the shadow of the Wrekin, the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. He said that members were proud to serve this community and as a Council, which he led with his Labour administration, would always do its duty and go the extra mile and would always stand against those who hated and divided and who would always argue to divest. He said the Council would always protect, always care and would always invest.

**35                    Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor asked Members to note the engagements undertaken since the last Council meeting in July, shown on the list circulated.

She said that since that meeting, both her and the Deputy Mayor had been very busy attending a wide range of events across the Borough. She said that, over the summer, she had had the pleasure of attending the Telford Balloon Fiesta, which had been a truly amazing event and how wonderful it had been to see so many residents enjoy the occasion. She extended her

sincere thanks to all the staff who worked tirelessly to ensure everything ran smoothly.

The Mayor said she also attended the launch of the Telford and Wrekin edition of the Monopoly board, and it had been such a delight to see so many familiar local landmarks featured, which had brought the borough's community to life in a fun and creative way.

The Mayor announced that October had marked Black History Month, a time to reflect on and celebrate the remarkable achievements and contributions of Black people throughout history and in the borough's communities today. She said she had had the privilege of attending several engagements that highlighted inspiring stories, cultural heritage, and the ongoing work to promote equality and inclusion. These events, she said, served as a powerful reminder of the importance of representation and the role everyone played in building a society where everyone felt valued and empowered.

The Mayor went on to say that there had been countless fantastic events and far too many to name, but each one had truly showcased the energy, creativity, and community spirit that made the borough so special.

Last weekend, she was sure many attending tonight had attended a remembrance service across the Borough. She said it had been deeply moving to see communities come together to honour those who had served, sacrificed, and fought for the freedoms people enjoyed today.

Looking ahead, the Mayor said she was excited to share that on 11 December, the Council would be hosting the first-ever "Christmas Carol-Oke", which would take the place of the traditional Civic Service. She said it promised to be a joyful and festive occasion, with some exciting performances lined up. She said she would love to see as many members and staff there as possible, singing along and celebrating together. She said that more details were available from the Mayor's Office.

The Mayor announced that preparations were underway for her next event in the New Year, and she looked forward to welcoming those attending.

The Mayor expressed her thanks to the Deputy Mayor, Nathalie Page, for all the support she had given to the Mayor throughout her term of office so far.

In conclusion, the Mayor wished to express her heartfelt thanks to everyone who had supported her during her term so far. She said she was truly grateful and very much looking forward to the engagements ahead and the start of the festive season.

## 36 Public Questions

The following question to Councillor Lee Carter, Leader of the Council, was submitted by Mr Ashdown.

*“Fundamental to efficient and effective delivery of services for taxpayers is that the Council has competent officers. Competency is recognised as a relevant qualification with suitable experience and employed currency. A FOI reply highlighted the employment of officers who were not competent. As Council Leader what assurances can you give that officers are competent going forward.”*

In response, Councillor Carter said that as a local Council, it had more than 700 services that it provided and, like all organisations, not all roles required qualification. He said that did not mean the Council's teams were incompetent - far from it. Councillor Carter said that the Council had a workforce, which was hardworking, dedicated and committed to delivering their very best. He said they frequently went above and beyond to support the borough's residents, whether that was hand-delivering school meals during COVID, delivering library books to the elderly who were not able to leave their house, or taking time over their lunch break to guide someone who needed support.

Councillor Carter confirmed he had seen information regarding the FOI, to which Mr Ashdown's question referred and said what was clear from the FOI was that it actually made reference to a clear career development pathway for officers who, until qualified, operated under clear supervision. This, he said, was the action of a responsible Council that took steps to ensure it continued to develop its staff, and it was the action of a Council that ensured it was succession planning to ensure core services continued to be delivered. Councillor Carter went on to say that it was also the actions of a Council, which was one of the biggest employers in the borough, which was named Council of the Year just a few months ago and he gave Mr Ashdown the assurance that all of the Council's officers would continue in the vein that he had laid out.

### **37            Councillor Questions On Notice**

The following questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 6.2.2:

- a) Councillor P Scott to Councillor R Overton, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Environment

*“Following the recent independent report on road safety on the A41, is the suggestion for average speed cameras still a viable option? If not, what future plans are there for making this road safer?”*

In response, Councillor Overton said that following the publication of the independent A41 route study, he wanted to be very clear that no decisions had been made by this Council regarding the installation of average speed cameras. He said he had written to both the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Member of Parliament for Telford and Wrekin constituency to



confirm the Council's support of such measures while confirming completion of the independent route review.

Councillor Overton said, to be clear with the Chamber and the borough's residents, the decision to instal cameras, whether average, fixed or mobile, rested with the Police and the PCC. He said that this Council's position remained clear in that it welcomed the installation of average speed cameras as part of a wider package of safety improvements on this road and the Council was committed to working collaboratively with the PCC and partners accordingly. He added that the Council had already identified funding to deliver works that would improve road safety along the A41 and complement the PCC's investment. He said the Council was committed to acting on the findings of the report while building on the extensive improvements, which had already been made along the A41 in the last few years. The Council, he said, was already progressing the details associated with the identified improvements referenced in the report and that he hoped to meet with the PCC in the near future to discuss the report and the next steps.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Scott, which asked Councillor Overton how soon he (Councillor Overton) would be prepared to meet with the PCC, Shropshire Council and the MP to discuss this, Councillor Overton said that based on the announcement today (PCCs in England and Wales were to be stood down), as soon as possible before the PCC left his position. Councillor Overton went on to say that despite the Council having already written to the PCC offering dates on which to request a meeting, no response had yet been received by the PCC.

b) Councillor P Scott to Councillor R Overton, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Environment

*"Parking in Newport continues to be a problem for many. We have an increased population, an increasing amount of student accommodation and now we are losing around 16 car park spaces to electrical vehicle charging points. Public car parks are full by 9am most days. This is having a big effect on our residential streets and some of our other roads, particularly those that are close to the High Street. People are now parking anywhere they can find a gap and causing upset among residents who can no longer park near their properties. The few Traffic Regulation Orders that are due to commence do not go very far to alleviating the situation. All local councillors continue to receive many regular complaints. Are the council properly aware of these parking problems? What will they do to help us?"*

In response, Councillor Overton assured members that the Council was fully aware of the parking pressures in Newport and recognised the impact this was having on residents and businesses. He said the Council had taken a number of steps to address these challenges and had recently implemented a



number of traffic regulation orders in key areas and was working with ward members with a view to exploring further options to manage on-street parking more effectively. Councillor Overton said that the Council's Electric Vehicle Strategy committed to balancing the need for charging infrastructure while maintaining parking provision. Where spaces were designated for each of the charging points, Councillor Overton said that the Council was working to make sure that this was done in a way that minimised disruption and supported the transition to cleaner greener transport while ensuring the infrastructure was accessible for all users.

Councillor Overton said that the Council was one of very few local authorities across the country that remained committed to providing free parking in its district centre car parks for the benefit of residents and businesses. This, he said, was a key principle for this administration and believed it supported the vitality of Newport's high street and local economy. He said that, alongside this, the Council continued to work closely with Newport Town Council to understand the issues and explore options to improve parking provision in the town, whilst ensuring that any future measures reflected local needs and priorities. In addition, he said, the Council also promoted sustainable travel alternatives, including improvements to public transport and investment in active travel infrastructure such as walking and cycling routes. These measures, he said, aimed to reduce reliance on car use, ease pressure on parking and support healthier, greener travel choices for residents and visitors.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Scott, which asked Councillor Overton if he (Councillor Overton) could see a time in the future when the Council might invest in more car parking spaces in or around Newport, Councillor Overton said the Council would do everything it could, and would work with the borough's Town and Parish Councils to look at alternative options although these would depend upon land provision, finance etc. In conclusion, Councillor Overton said that, at the moment, and as mentioned previously, the Council was committed to having free parking in the borough's district centres.

c) Councillor L Parker to Councillor O Vickers, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transport

*"In light of the Reform Leader of Warwickshire County Council writing to the Government asking them to change the law so the Council can take home to school transport away from children as young as eight years old, forcing them to walk a 10 mile round trip each day to access education, please can the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transport outline Telford and Wrekin's position on home to school transport?"*



In response, Councillor Vickers said that the Council would always be on the side of residents, which included providing travel assistance to the borough's children and young people. He said that Telford and Wrekin's existing School Travel Assistance Policy, which determined eligibility, had been developed using the national statutory guidance on providing home to school transport and that this would continue.

He said that, over the last few years, here in Telford and Wrekin, the Council had bucked the national trend and had expanded its in-house travel offer that had both improved the quality of service while supporting children and young people get to school.

Councillor Vickers said that this was in parallel with the growing Travel Telford Bus Network that now not only provided improved connectivity, but independence with these routes now supporting a staggering 38,000 passenger trips each month, which was testament to the service and commitment provided by this Council. He said that, as well as this, the Council had maintained its two-pounds fare cap for adults and just one pound for children, meaning the Council had the lowest fares in the country.

In conclusion, Councillor Vickers said that transport costs were down, complaints were down and compliments were up and the future of the borough's children was that they were cared about and cared for, which is what residents would receive from a Labour-led Council and that was what the Council would continue to deliver.

d) Councillor S Handley to Councillor C Healy, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability

*"Many people in our borough are rightly proud of our independent museum trust and most of us have fond memories of visiting the museum sites over the years. With the news that the National Trust are to take over the Ironbridge Gorge Museums, what can we do to ensure our communities benefit from the transfer?"*

In response, Councillor Healy said that people in the borough should be proud because for over 60 years, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust had brilliantly told the story of how the ingenuity and backbreaking work of the people in this area changed the world. She said she had had the privilege of being an observer on the board for the last few years and had seen how hard the trustees and the museum staff had worked to sustain the museums in an increasingly competitive market for people's leisure time.

Councillor Healy said that the impact of the COVID pandemic and the cost-of-living pressures had meant that this independent trust had struggled in recent years. She said that the transfer of the museum and its assets to the National



Trust was largely down to the Chair of Trustees, Mark Pemberton, and that he deserved huge credit for the transfer that would be a massive boost to the borough.

Councillor Healy said that, as a Council, it provided crucial support, but this would also not have happened without the MP for Telford, Shaun Davies, who had secured the £9m investment from the Government to facilitate the transfer.

Councillor Healy said the National Trust had 600,000 members within an hour's drive of Ironbridge and, of course, membership across the country. That, she said, opened up a fantastic borough to new visitors, a whole new market of visitors who could come to the borough, not just to support the museums but also other parts of the borough's visitor economy and its hospitality sector, a sector that already contributed £440m to the borough's economy every year. She added that working more closely with a countrywide organisation like the National Trust would bring lots of opportunities to the borough, lots of opportunities for jobs, would bring some challenges, parking and traffic in her ward being one of them, but the Leader had asked that she, along with the Council's Executive Director for Place, lead on those discussions with the National Trust to ensure that the Council got the very best from this transfer and that the borough's museums and its history continued to be enjoyed by the borough's residents as well as visitors here.

e) Councillor G Luter to Councillor A McClements, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism, Culture and the Arts

*"I would like to join the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism, Culture and the Arts in celebrating the Council's decision to establish the Telford Day. This fantastic new initiative gives residents a moment to come together and take pride in our borough. Alongside the competition to design a new Telford flag, which involved all the schools in Telford, this marks another positive step in strengthening our local identity and showcasing Telford's creativity and community spirit. Could the Cabinet Member outline how these initiatives will build on our growing cultural offer and continue the excellent work already being done to promote pride of place across our borough?*

In response, Councillor McClements said that the Leader had already spoken on Telford Day in his speech this evening, which was a fantastic opportunity to bring residents together to celebrate all that people loved about Telford, including arts and culture.

Councillor McClements said it had been great for her and the Leader to have met with Amelia today, a nine-year-old pupil from Randlay Primary School, who was the winner of the Telford Flag Competition. Councillor McClements said the flag looked amazing and had a design, which featured the borough's



iconic iron bridge, a cog as a nod to the borough's proud industrial heritage, and the colour green to represent the borough's many wonderful parks and open spaces, which certainly captured the hearts and votes of local people.

Councillor McClements said she looked forward to seeing Amelia's flag raised at South Water Square on Telford Day on 29 November, when she hoped that all councillors would join her as part of that Telford Day celebrations, which was an opportunity to show local pride, and hoped that it would be adopted by local businesses and residents to fly the flag for Telford.

Councillor McClements said that Telford Day had the power to connect and revitalise communities and achieve a sense of togetherness. Equally, she said, cultural activities tackled challenges around health and well-being by improving mental and physical health while addressing social isolation and the positive impact that had on children and adults should never be underestimated. She said that, as a Council, it had a commitment to making arts and culture accessible to all and supporting in the borough's vibrant creative sector, including the borough's network of community venues and businesses.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Luter, which asked Councillor McClements if she could outline all the cultural initiatives that were part of the borough's cultural offer across the borough, Councillor McClements said that the Council-run festivals and events were attracting ever-increasing audiences. These, she said, included events and performances through a significant range of arts, heritage, dance, music, and theatre experiences and that 75% of those attending was local.

Councillor McClements said that the Council was proud to host a packed programme of free or very low-cost events with the headline Telford Balloon Fiesta this year seeing a record number of over 50,000 visitors. She said it was a highlight of the events calendar enjoyed by Telford and Wrekin residents, which put Telford on the map, drew visitors from across the Midlands and across the UK. She added that this event had grown in 2025, which included the Telford Community Carnival on the Sunday, an amazing spectacle of diversity, creativity, colour, and music.

Councillor McClements said that the Council had received positive feedback from residents and visitors, with visitor survey feedback showing an overwhelming 90% positive support for the Council's event and culture offer. She said the Council could not underestimate the economic boost events provided and was excited about the redevelopment of the Telford Theatre building in Oakengates, which would be at the heart of the Council's culture offer, whilst the building was undergoing a major redevelopment. The Telford Theatre Team, she said, had been taking shows and events to venues across the borough through the Telford Theatre on Tour project. From Shakespeare



in Bowring Park to Tina Turner Tribute Acts at the Little Theatre in Donnington and Children Theatre shows at the Anstice in Madeley. In conclusion, Councillor McClements said that the Council was already looking forward to 2026 and building on its existing culture and events programmes with new events and partnerships. She said that the touring programme would continue once Telford Theatre opened, working with a network of venues across the borough.

f) Councillor N England to Councillor G Luter, Chair to the Council's Boundary Review Committee

*"Can the Chair of the Boundary Review Committee join me in welcoming the outcome of the recent Borough Boundary Review, which received an impressive level of engagement from local residents? I'm particularly pleased that thanks to the Council listening carefully to those views, proposals to merge certain parish areas were not taken forward. Could the Cabinet Member outline how the consultation responses shaped the final recommendations and how this process demonstrates our continued commitment to local democracy and empowering communities to have their say?"*

In response, Councillor Luter said that, as a Co-operative Council that engaged and listened to the community it served, when it sets out to undertake the community governance review of arrangements for town and parish councils in February this year, the Committee was very clear that it wanted to ensure that the outcome of the review was shaped by robust community engagement. Councillor Luter said that the process and outcome that the Committee had delivered had shown that this was anything but the case. When the Boundary Review Committee made its final decision on the community governance review, three phases of community engagement had been completed. He said that it had first sought views on current town and parish council arrangements. The Committee wished to know what worked, what it should change, and where and how, for example, could community identity be strengthened. He added that over 292 responses to this first phase had been received and that the responses from this, together with consideration of legal requirements for the community governance review, were then used to shape the development of a proposed set of town and parish councils for the borough.

Councillor Luter said that these proposals were then the subject of a second phase of community engagement, whereby people were able to share their views with the Council via an online questionnaire, by email or simply writing in. He said that officers also ran a series of drop-in sessions in different parts of the borough to discuss and gather feedback about the proposals. He extended his thanks to Anthea Lowe for her work on that.



Councillor Luter said that the engagement was promoted via social media, through town and parish councils and by other key community stakeholders too. He said the Council had received more than 1,000 responses to this phase of the consultation and informed by the responses to this engagement, a revised set of proposed parish and town councils were considered by the Boundary Review Committee.

Councillor Luter said that whilst the Committee felt able to agree in principle to town and parish councils' arrangements for a significant part of the borough, there were seven areas it felt further community engagement was required in order to make final decisions. He said that this third phase of engagement was completed with over 210 responses being submitted, which the Committee had taken into consideration as part of its deliberations.

**38        Cabinet Decisions Made Since the Last Meeting of the Council**

Members received the report on the Cabinet decisions made since the last meeting of the Council.

No questions of clarification were raised.

**39        CSE Annual Report**

Councillor Lee Carter, Leader of the Council, presented the report of the Director of Policy and Governance, which provided Members with the Annual CSE Report 2024/25, that was built upon data from the Council and partner organisations. The Annual Report provided all statutory safeguarding organisations and other stakeholders with data and information that allowed for continuous challenge of the Council's procedures and practices.

The Leader announced he would present a report to Council in summer next year, which was the first possible opportunity after the end of the reporting period in March 2026.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. The Council's commitment to continue its work, through co-production with lived experience consultees and partners as appropriate, and to respond to the challenge of CSE within the Borough, be restated.**
- 2. The Annual Report in respect of 2024/25, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted.**



3. The continued steps taken by Telford and Wrekin Council, being the first in the country to publish an annual report of this nature, to raise awareness of CSE, be noted.
4. The continued commitment of Telford and Wrekin Council, as set out in the Annual Report, to maintain the specialist team of practitioners to provide support to children and young people at risk of CSE, being one of only a small number of authorities nationally to have such a dedicated team, be noted.
5. The approach of Telford and Wrekin Council, which had received national recognition and that the recommendations made by Baroness Casey, which had adopted the actions taken by the Council to be implemented at a national level, be noted.
6. The fact that Telford and Wrekin Council was one of eight local authorities chosen to pilot a new approach to the National Referral Mechanism, a process by which individuals at risk of modern slavery were provided with comprehensive support, be noted.
7. The work the Council was doing to share learning within the local government sector, be noted.

**40 Councillor Leave of Absence**

Councillor Z Hannington, Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services, presented the report of the Director for Policy and Governance (Monitoring Officer), which sought Council's approval to a leave of absence for:

- a) Councillor Gilly Latham-Reynolds, owing to a period of maternity leave, until 1 December 2026; and
- b) Councillor Paul Watling, owing to a period of ill-health, until 31 March 2026.

**RESOLVED – that a leave of absence for Councillors Gilly Latham-Reynolds and Paul Watling, for the purposes of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 until 1 December 2026 and 31 March 2026 respectively, be approved.**

**41 Recommendations from Cabinet**

- (a) 2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report

Councillor Z Hannington, Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services, presented the report of the Director for Finance, People and IDT, which referred to the financial monitoring report to Cabinet on 6 November 2025, that provided an update on the revenue budget and progress relating to the Capital Programme. The report included some changes to the Capital Programme, which now required formal approval by Full Council.

**RESOLVED that the changes to the Capital Programme and all associated changes to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, including Treasury and Prudential Indicators, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be approved.**

**42      Recommendations from Boards and Committees**

(a)      Treasury Management 2024/25 Annual Report and 2025/26 Update

Councillor Z Hannington, Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services, presented the report of the Director for Finance, People and IDT, which updated members on the outcome of Treasury Management activities for 2024/25 and detailed the position for 2025/26 to 31 May 2025.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. The contents of the report, be noted.
2. The performance against Prudential Indicators, be noted.

***Council stood adjourned from 7.05pm until 7.15pm to allow for a comfort break.***

**43      Motions on Notice**

(a)      Councillor S Bentley will propose the following Motion:-

(a) Councillor Stephen Bentley moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following Motion:

“This Council undertakes to follow the Secretary of State’s acknowledgement that small modular reactors (SMRs) will, unlike wind turbines, provide a constant source of reliable energy, and will include potential future provision for the same within the current Draft Plan.”

Councillor Tim Nelson seconded the motion.

Following a robust debate, the Motion was lost by a majority vote.



**RESOLVED – that the motion be NOT approved.**

(b) Councillor J Urey will propose the following Motion:-

(b) Councillor Jenny Urey moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following motion:

"April this year I requested a motion to be brought to Full Council updating PSPO due to increased dog attacks in our Borough. Whilst I have not had the opportunity yet to bring this to Council until now, I was pleased to see amendments made to the PSPO in September with regards to dog fouling and prohibiting dogs in play areas. The 'Wrekin Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2025' is now online for public however is just an extra policy including original orders.

This is not enough in my opinion as it does not deal with the bigger issue preventing dog attacks.

In Telford and Wrekin, the number of offences titled 'Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control injuring any person or assistance dogs' are:

2023 – 113

2024 – 147

2025 – 132 up to 13th October

(Source: Athena investigations provided by West Mercia Police on request)

In 2024 there were 31,920 dog attacks in England and Wales and they continue to increase.

The above is based on attacks that have been reported. Many are not reported, with victims' opinions that the 'police won't do anything' or 'I didn't know I could report it'. Without data, we cannot see the full picture.

Implementing stricter regulations for dogs wearing leads in high traffic areas including public parks and highway and mandating the use of disposable bags for dog waste cleanup, can significantly enhance safety and promote responsible pet ownership. These measures not only protect pedestrians and other animals from potential accidents or aggressive encounters but also foster a cleaner environment, boosting community well-being and encouraging more people to enjoy parks and public spaces. Telford and Wrekin need to cultivate a culture of responsibility among dog owners while enhancing the quality of life in the community.

A local elderly couple had their dog "ripped and tossed like a ragdoll" whilst on a lead and killed on the Esso fields in Donnington, the attacking dog was off



lead. The distraught husband carried the blood-soaked body home to his wife. She reached out to me.

I've personally had 2 small dogs off lead attack my dog on a lead in Donnington, where the owners were too scared of getting bitten by their own dogs to intervene. Lady in Newport dragged out of her wheelchair with dog off lead, horse attacked at the Granville by off lead dog, Elderly gentleman and son attacked by off lead dog in Muxton last year,....I am sure all Councillors in this room are aware of an attack by an off lead dog and continual reports on social media within their ward.

It is crucial for dog owners to respect the space and comfort of both people and other animals by keeping their dogs on a lead unless they have explicit consent for their dogs to approach. Phrases like "don't worry, they won't bite" are misleading and dismissive of the varying levels of comfort and vulnerability of others, including residents and other animals. Responsible pet ownership includes being aware of the impact one's dog may have on the community and ensuring that all interactions are consensual and safe.

Residents and I are not prepared to wait for more deaths, injuries and continue to tread in dog mess anymore. I am sure the following motion will be of good news to respectful dog owners, those who have been victims and members of the public.

To summarise, my motion is:

1. Enforcement of 'dogs on lead policy' in nominated public areas and all public highways.
2. Areas of order to be discussed with Ward councillors with 'best option' to eliminate or reduce risks fairly in their location, days and times.
3. Automatic fines implemented for owners found not carrying a dog waste bag."

Councillor Peter Scott seconded the motion.

By way of an amendment, with additional words shown in bold and underlined, Councillor Carolyn Healy, seconded by Councillor Richard Overton, moved that the summary of the motion above, be amended as follows:

1. Enforcement of 'dogs on lead policy' in **designated** public areas and all public highways.



2. **Potential** areas of order to be discussed with Ward councillors with 'best option' to eliminate or reduce risks fairly in their location, days and times.
3. **Potential dogs on lead areas to be consulted on to ensure public support prior to designation.**
4. **Work with the Police to address owners with dogs dangerously out of control.**
5. **Continue to tackle dog fouling using existing powers under the PSPO, which includes** automatic fines implemented for owners found not carrying a dog waste bag.

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Following a robust debate, the substantive motion was carried by a majority vote.

**RESOLVED – that the motion, as amended, be approved.**

(c) Councillor K Middleton will propose the following Motion:-

(c) Councillor Kelly Middleton moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following motion:

“Council Notes:

- Domestic abuse remains a pervasive issue affecting individuals and families across Telford & Wrekin, with long-term impacts on physical and mental health, housing, education, and employment.
- An estimated 25,500 adults in Telford & Wrekin have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16, with two-thirds of victims being women.
- Victims typically experience multiple incidents of abuse before reporting and live with abuse for 2 to 3 years before seeking help.
- Domestic abuse/VAWG is a key priority for Telford and Wrekin Council, whom has developed a multi-agency strategy to address the issue.

Council Resolves To:



- Reaffirm its commitment to the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023– 2025 and ensure its full implementation across all departments.
- Continue to work with partners to improve access to safe accommodation spaces, counselling, and legal support for victims and survivors.
- Continue to support awareness campaigns in schools, workplaces, and public venues to challenge stigma and promote healthy relationships.
- Ensure all Council staff receive appropriate training to identify and respond to signs of domestic abuse.
- Write to the Domestic abuse commissioner for increased and more sustained funding for domestic abuse services and prevention programmes.
- To ensure that the 2025/26 Council Budget includes:
  - A dedicated funding allocation for domestic abuse services, including safe accommodation provision, outreach, and children's support.
  - Sustained grant funding for voluntary sector partners delivering specialist domestic abuse services.
  - Investment in early intervention and prevention, including education programmes, perpetrator interventions, and community engagement.

Councillor Raj Mehta seconded the motion.

Following a robust debate, the motion was carried by a majority vote.

**RESOLVED – that the motion, be approved.**

(d) Councillor A J Eade will propose the following Motion:-

(d) Councillor Andrew Eade moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following motion:

"This Council notes the delay in finding an acceptable person to chair the Government's "Independent Commission on Grooming Gangs" and undertakes to write to the Home Secretary to urge the speedy appointment of an independent Judge to get the Inquiry underway without further delay."

Councillor Tim Nelson seconded the motion.



By way of an amendment, with additional words shown in bold and underlined, Councillor Lee Carter, seconded by Councillor Shirley Reynolds, moved that:

**This Council notes the delay by the previous Conservative Government in implementing all of the recommendations of the IICSA Inquiry and welcomes the current Labour Government's commitment to hold a National Inquiry.** This Council notes the delay in finding an acceptable person to chair the Government's "Independent Commission on Grooming Gangs" and undertakes to write to the Home Secretary to urge the speedy appointment of an independent Judge to get the Inquiry underway without further delay. **This Council strongly believes that the process should be victim and survivor informed through the newly formed National Survivors Advisory Group; this Council further restates its position to support other areas with their inquiries and stand ready to cooperate with the National Inquiry once it is established.**

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Following a robust debate, the substantive motion was carried by a majority vote.

**RESOLVED – that the motion, as amended, be approved.**

(e) Councillor S P Burrell will propose the following Motion:-

(e) Councillor Stephen Burrell moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following motion:

"This Council notes the positive statements made by the Leaders of both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Councils concerning the installation of average speed cameras along the A41 highway which runs through the Borough.

This Council also notes the very high number of fatalities on the A41 and so reinforces its commitment to work alongside all stakeholders, including Ward members, to bring about the installation of average speed cameras, together with other measures such as mobile speed cameras and engineering works as deemed necessary."

Councillor Andrew Eade seconded the motion.

By way of an amendment, with additional words shown in bold and underlined, Councillor Richard Overton, seconded by Councillor Ollie Vickers, moved that:



"This Council notes the positive statements made by the Leaders of both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Councils concerning the installation of average speed cameras along the A41 highway which runs through the Borough. **The Council welcomes the independent commissioned report into the accidents recorded on the A41 that runs through Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Council area, acknowledging the majority of the A41 in this report is in Shropshire.**

This Council also notes the **above average** number of fatalities on the A41 and so reinforces its commitment to work alongside all stakeholders, including Ward members, **Shropshire Council and the West Mercia PCC** to bring about the installation of average speed cameras, **should their installation be deemed necessary. If so, they would be fully funded by the PCC who has £400,000 specifically allocated for this reason. The Council will, in any event, work** together with **stakeholders to look at all** other measures such as mobile speed cameras and engineering works as deemed necessary **in the independent report.**

**The Council notes that the independent report concludes that the installation of average speed cameras is not necessary, but that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) retains the discretion to take action on speeding along the A41 as they see fit.**

**And finally, that this Council expresses its disappointment that the PCC and the local Conservative Wrekin MP are making political statements, misrepresenting the comprehensive and independent nature of this report, which was commissioned to objectively analyse the issues and propose solutions to reduce accidents and fatalities on the A41. The Council now calls on the PCC to meet the relevant cabinet members of both Councils to work on an action plan together, taking a solution based approach to make the A41 safer for motorists."**

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Following a robust debate, the substantive motion was carried by a majority vote.

**RESOLVED – that the motion, as amended, be approved.**

(f) Councillor S Bentley will propose the following Motion:-

(f) Councillor Stephen Bentley moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following motion:

"This Council resolves to write to the Justice Secretary to request that she intervene and strongly oppose the potential early release on parole of Abdel



Ali, a member of the notorious 'Telford Grooming Gang,' as such an early release is not commensurate with the lifetime fears, damage and traumatic memories inflicted on his victims."

Councillor Nigel Dugmore seconded the motion.

By way of an amendment, with additional words shown in bold and underlined, Councillor Lee Carter, seconded by Councillor Shirley Reynolds, moved that:

**"This Council notes the letter sent by the Leader to the Justice Secretary and the Chairman and Chief Executive of the independent judge-led Parole Board to request that they intervene and strongly oppose the potential early release on parole of Abdel Ali, a member of the notorious 'Telford Grooming Gang,' as such an early release is not commensurate with the lifetime fears, damage and traumatic memories inflicted on his victims. This Council resolves to further write to the Judge led independent Parole Board to urge it, in the event that it makes the regrettable decision to release Ali, to subject Ali to strict conditions including not entering Telford, Shropshire or the wider West Midlands or contacting any victim, survivor or any of their family members."**

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Following a robust debate, the substantive motion was carried by a majority vote.

**RESOLVED – that the motion, as amended, be approved.**

(g) Councillor A J Eade will propose the following Motion:-

(g) Councillor Andrew Eade moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following motion:

"This Council urges the Chancellor of the Exchequer to relieve financial pressures placed upon local and national businesses at the last budget to help stimulate the economy and promote growth."

Councillor Stephen Burrell seconded the motion.

By way of an amendment, with additional words shown in bold and underlined, Councillor Lee Carter, seconded by Councillor Richard Overton, moved that:

"This Council urges the Chancellor of the Exchequer to relieve financial pressures placed upon local and national businesses at the last budget, in



order to pay for the £22bnn black hole that the last government left in the public finances and to pay for the urgently required investment in our public services including the NHS, to help stimulate the economy and promote growth. This Council believes that economic growth is essential, after years of financial mismanagement between 2010 and 2024, which saw inflation increase to 10% which impacted on the cost of everyday items, and sent interest rates through the roof, hitting renters and mortgage holders alike. This Council also notes that during the same period public services were cut by up 70% which damaged support for business.”

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Following a robust debate, the substantive motion was carried by a majority vote.

**RESOLVED – that the motion, as amended, be approved.**

The meeting ended at 9.18 pm

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** Thursday 22 January 2026