

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 22 October 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors M Boylan (Chair), H Morgan (Vice-Chair), S Handley, T L B Janke, L Lewis, T J Nelson and P Thomas.

Also Present: Councillor R A Overton (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing & Enforcement).

In Attendance: P Fenn (Head of Neighbourhood Enforcement), E Meehan (Environmental Protection Team Leader), E Harvey (Lead Lawyer: Property & Commercial) and P Starkey (Senior Democracy Officer (Scrutiny)).

Apologies for Absence: Councillor H Rhodes.

ENVSC7 Declarations of Interest

None.

ENVSC8 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ENVSC9 Contaminated Land Strategy

By way of introduction, the Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing and Enforcement explained that the draft Contaminated Land Strategy was designed to safeguard public health and the environment while supporting sustainable development. He noted that the strategy reflected updated legislation and local priorities and invited Members to provide feedback to help shape the final document.

The Neighbourhood & Enforcement Manager and the Environmental Protection Team Leader presented the report to the Committee. Members heard that the draft strategy replaced the previous 2013 version and set out the Council's approach to managing land contamination under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It was confirmed that no sites within Telford and Wrekin were currently designated as contaminated land, following successful remediation and reclassification of a former chemical works site earlier in the year.

The strategy adopted a risk-based approach using the Source–Pathway–Receptor model and prioritised proportionate interventions in line with DEFRA

guidance. Key features included statutory inspection duties, maintaining a public register, and managing contamination primarily through the planning system and voluntary remediation. Officers highlighted the importance of multi-agency collaboration with the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England and neighbouring authorities. The strategy also addressed sustainability and climate resilience, recognising the potential impact of flooding on contamination risks. A full review of the strategy was scheduled to take place for 2030, with annual updates to remain responsive to emerging contaminants and legislative changes.

In response to questions raised about confidence in findings given limited inspection resources, the Environmental Protection Team Leader explained that statutory requirements were met through proportionate inspections and planning controls. Where development introduced new receptors, developers were required to investigate and remediate contamination before occupation. In response to questions regarding cross-boundary pollution and aquifer protection, the Environmental Protection Team Leader confirmed that the Environment Agency oversaw watercourse and drinking water contamination, while the Council regulated private supplies with annual testing based on risk assessments.

In response to questions about review frequency and emerging contaminants, the Neighbourhood & Enforcement Manager agreed to consider annual refreshes and incorporate new pollutants into future updates.

In response to questions raised around airborne pollutants and landfill gas emissions, the Environmental Protection Team Leader confirmed that air quality was monitored annually and reported to DEFRA, with statutory guidance determining what pollutants had to be assessed.

In response to questions about communication and public engagement, the Director: Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services advised that once adopted, the strategy would be published on the Council's website with FAQs explaining Part IIA thresholds and the approach to managing contamination.

Members welcomed the report and commended the Council's strategic approach, noting that the draft strategy provided a strong framework for managing contamination risks and supporting regeneration.

ENVSC10 Work Programme Review

The Lead Lawyer: Property & Commercial presented the updated work programme. Members were advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 4 March 2026 and would include an annual update from the Shropshire Good Food Partnership. The following meeting scheduled for 29 April 2026 would include annual updates on the Council's Climate Change agenda and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy following its adoption.

Additional items proposed for the two-year programme included a review of the Surface Water Flooding Strategy and a review of street waste

management. Members were invited to suggest further topics for consideration.

In response to a suggestion from the Committee regarding the timing of the work on the Surface Water Flooding Strategy, the Chair agreed that discussions would take place with officers to bring this item forward given that we were now heading into the winter period. Members also raised points about the scope of work on sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and their impact on natural habitats.

ENVSC11 Chair's Update

The Chair reported on a recent visit to the Shropshire Good Food schools project, noting positive feedback on the initiative and its role in promoting sustainability and healthy eating. The Chair also provided an update on Green Guarantee sites, advising that work was ongoing to promote these across the borough and encouraged engagement from ward members.

The meeting ended at 6.44 pm

Chairman:

Date: Wednesday 4 March 2026