



FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday 22 January 2026 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, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Chikandamina, G H Cook, E Davies, P Davis, F Doran, N A Dugmore, 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, 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 L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, K Tonks, R Tyrrell, O Vickers and D R W White

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

Apologies: Councillors S Davies, A J Eade, G C W Latham-Reynolds, H Rhodes, J Urey and P Watling

44 Former Councillor Malcolm Smith BEM

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Lee Carter, addressed Council.

Councillor Carter said it was with great sadness that the Council announced the passing of former Councillor Malcolm Smith, BEM and Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Telford and Wrekin. A devoted public servant and respected community leader, Malcolm dedicated nearly five decades to improving the lives of residents and shaping the future of the borough he loved.

Originally from St Georges, Malcolm moved to Hadley over fifty years ago with his wife Christine, where they built a family together. His career began as a miner at the age of 15, later progressing to roles in industry and business before entering public service. Elected as a Parish Councillor in 1970 and to the District Council in 1972, Malcolm went on to serve as Deputy Leader for 13 years and Leader for a further seven years. He held the position of Chair of Wrekin District Council twice and was also the Mayor of Telford and Wrekin three times, most recently in 2014/15.



Before the Mayor invited the Council's guest this evening to lead it in prayer, Councillor Carter asked all present to stand and join him in a minute's silence to mark the sad passing of former Councillor and Leader of the Council, Malcolm Smith BEM.

45 Prayers and Reflections

The Reverend Prebendary Jo Farnworth, Team Rector, Central Telford Parish and Associate Archdeacon of Salop, said prayers.

46 Declarations of Interest

None.

47 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

48 Leader's Report & Announcements

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

Before making specific announcements, the Leader began by wishing each and every one present in the chamber tonight, a slightly belated but very sincere Happy New Year.

(i) Malcolm Smith BEM

The Leader said that the Council had opened this evening and this year on a sombre note by lowering the Council flag to half-mast in memory of former Councillor and Alderman Malcolm Smith, a tremendous public servant. Malcolm had dedicated almost five decades of his life to the people of Telford and Wrekin, a community that he loved and served with great distinction. From even before his first election in 1970, Malcolm lived and breathed public service and left a legacy which ran deep in the borough. From an instrumental role in the regeneration of Hadley, by securing an investment to build a vibrant new centre, to a passion for local green spaces that included ensuring Telford Town Park became the first Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Field in the West Midlands, Malcolm left an indelible mark. As the Council reflected on Malcolm's life, the Leader was reminded of the quote, "one person can make a difference, and everyone should try." Malcolm embodied that truth and the Leader believed public service at its best still did.



(ii) New Year's Honours'

The Leader said this year's New Year's Honours List reminded everyone of the extraordinary contributions made by others across the borough also. He was proud to congratulate the following local recipients of MBE's and BEM's.

Traci Dix-Williams of Mayley for her work in Heritage.

Beverley Morris for outstanding public service through the Department for Work and Pensions.

Sally Crawford Angell-James for her commitment to the defibrillator provision.

Katie Foster of Newport for her tireless charitable and heritage work.

Scott Saunders of Telford for his service to the community.

These individuals represented the very best of Telford and Wrekin with compassion, commitment and an unwavering dedication to others. And already in 2026 public service in action had been seen on an impressive scale.

(iii) Storm Goretti

The Leader said that Storm Goretti had brought heavy snow and freezing conditions earlier this month. Once again, residents witnessed what made the borough special. Council staff, emergency partners and residents working side by side, gritters clearing major routes, snow champions helping neighbours and volunteers across local communities doing what they always did, stepping up. Their response was yet another demonstration of the spirit that helped the local authority earn it the title of Council of the Year.

No matter what noise swirled around nationally or internationally in politics, in Telford, every week, it got on with a job quietly, determinedly and with a shared sense of purpose. It was noted by other authorities that Telford and Wrekin worked well, acted responsibly and put residents first.

(iv) Looking Ahead (Government Funding and Pride in Place etc.) and Budget-Setting next month

The Leader reported on the recent national local government funding settlement that finally invested properly in local government. From the



multi-million-pound Pride in Place programme that would transform the south of Telford over the coming decade, to securing the future of the Ironbridge Gorge Museums by the National Trust. 2026 was already shaping up to be a year everyone could celebrate. Next month, the Council would meet again to set the budget, which would include significant investment in areas that mattered most to the borough's residents, such as jobs and skills, transport and roads, homes, schools and other essential services that the Council had fought to protect.

The Leader acknowledged that national pressures around adult social care continued to present significant challenges for all local authorities and outlined the Council's plans to prioritise support for vulnerable residents within the forthcoming budget proposals, stating that the Council was and always would be on the side of its residents. He thanked the MP for Telford who stood up and fought for Telford and Wrekin at every opportunity in Parliament.

He concluded by encouraging collective efforts and community involvement throughout the coming year.

49 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor asked Members to note the engagements undertaken since the last Council meeting in November 2025, shown on the list circulated.

She said that as this was the first Full Council meeting of 2026, she would like to begin by wishing everyone a very happy New Year. She hoped everyone had enjoyed a restful festive break with family and friends.

The Mayor said that since the meeting of the Full Council in November 2025, both she and the Deputy Mayor had had the pleasure of attending numerous festive events across the Borough from Christmas fayres to light switch-ons. A particular highlight for her was the True North Christmas Toy Run, which saw more than 80 bikes and trikes rumble through the streets and towns of Telford, finishing at the children's ward of the Princess Royal Hospital. It was a truly fantastic sight, and she was still not sure who was more excited, the children, the bikers or her.

Another wonderful moment was the My Options Christmas Fayre, where she had had a brilliant time with her friend Oliver and the whole team. The borough celebrated Telford and Wrekin's first-ever Christmas "Carol-Oke". Sadly, the Mayor could not attend in person, but she understood it was a great success and perhaps just as well, as it spared everyone from her questionable singing.



The Mayor also held a staff raffle, with the winner receiving a family ticket to the pantomime. She thanked all the staff who took part and so generously donated to her charity.

The Mayor had been challenging herself to face her fears, one on which was spiders and thanks to Scott at the Exotic Zoo she did this by holding Charlotte, the flame legged tarantula, and her next challenge would be announced soon.

Members would be aware that 27 January marked Holocaust Memorial Day a day for all to remember and honour the victims of the Holocaust, as well as the victims of all genocides since, such as in Cambodia, Rwanda and Darfur. She hoped many would be able to attend the commemoration event and take a moment for reflection. She said that further details have been emailed to you.

Finally, the Mayor asked that Members save the date for her Charity Ball on Friday, 6 March 2026. Invitations would be circulated shortly, and she truly hoped members would join her for an evening of fundraising and celebration in support of her charities, PODS and Hilbrae Dog Rescue. She asked people to think of it as the perfect opportunity to have fun whilst doing some good for local charities.

50 Public Questions

The following question to Councillor Lee Carter, Leader of the Council, was submitted by Ms Katie Woodland.

"Given the three million-signature petition and rejections by Councils like Cornwall, will the Council table a motion opposing the mandatory digital ID Scheme, citing local digital exclusion risks (10-15% of households)?"

In response, Councillor Carter thanked Ms Woodland for her question and said he fully respected and understood the feelings against the concept of mandatory digital ID. However, he pointed out that it was just a concept which was out to consultation with very few details of what the scheme would entail.

Since then, government ministers had clarified that mandatory elements of the scheme would be dropped, and other ID forms would still be accepted with full details to follow the consultation. Council would consider later an amended motion that welcomed that decision by ministers and opposed the mandatory introduction.



51 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

"There is much frustration among local residents that there is no easy or direct way for them to contact the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team when they see parking issues. My Telford and Ask Tom are cumbersome and not direct in these situations. We need to be able to alert the team as these issues are happening such as parking outside schools. Are there any plans to make contact with the NEO's easier and more direct for the public?"

In response, Councillor Overton said that the Council had been successfully working in partnership with town and parish councils as part of the Community Action Team offer and that this partnership, now in its 6th year, continued to go from strength to strength and had enabled this Council to expand its enforcement team to support and respond to local priorities.

While the Council's enforcement officers were proactive, it was important to note that they were not an emergency service. He did, however, understand residents' and ward members frustrations regarding unsafe or inconsiderate parking especially outside schools. Through the Council's enforcement action plans, it worked hard to tackle problematic parking as well as other issues such as dog fouling and fly tipping.

Safe parking around schools remained a priority. The Team regularly carried out high visibility patrols and worked closely with schools and West Mercia Police, enforcing restrictions where applicable and using engagement where they were not. This approach would continue to go from strength to strength alongside the continued introduction of parking restrictions where they did not currently exist in some areas, including Newport.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Scott, Councillor Overton explained that enforcement officers followed planned work schedules across the borough and could not be redirected at short notice. He advised that concerns should be reported through the usual channels so they could be incorporated into local action plans and addressed as part of scheduled activity.

- (b) Councillor N England to Councillor S Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People, Education, Employment and Skills

"Following recent meetings with Council officers to discuss young people's mental health provision in Telford and Wrekin. Recognising both the



significant pressures on services and the work this Council is undertaking to support children and families, can the Cabinet Member outline how our current mental health support for children and young people operates across the borough? In particular, could the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People, Education, Employment and Skills, set out how early intervention is being delivered in schools and community settings, how the Council ensures that the voices of young people and parents with lived experience are reflected in service design?"

In response, Councillor Reynolds said that mental health support was delivered through a whole system approach, which involved the local authority, schools, family hubs, voluntary and community sector partners and the NHS services commissioned by Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System and that the demand for mental health support had increased significantly, which reflected trends nationally.

The borough's schools played a central role in early intervention with each school having a designated mental health lead and the well-being charter mark, which supported whole school approaches to mental health and well-being.

Programmes delivered by the Council with public health, alongside training from Future in Mind and the virtual school, strengthened early identification and ensured staff were equipped to support children and families effectively.

All schools in Telford were members of the attachment research community, ARC, and had completed at least level one in relationship practice, attachment and trauma, with four schools acting as ARC learning hubs.

The mental health support teams currently worked with 35 schools and were working towards full borough coverage. These teams enhanced existing support by offering specialist mental health support, community-based early intervention programmes within family hubs, complemented school-based support and the youth office provided safe activities and targeted support, which included the youth social prescribing.

This was further strengthened by voluntary and community sector partners who created safe spaces and peer support opportunities for families. Young people and parents' voices were central to the service design and the Council's co-production charter ensured resident insight and feedback to inform decision-making and service improvements.

The Young Persons Year of Well-being Campaign encouraged small and achievable chains to improve well-being with more than 500 children participating. Additionally, the work with the West Midlands CAMHS cooperative and with the Virtual School was gathering the views of care-



experiencing people to inform a new support service for those working with Children in Care. The Children in Care Council provided a platform for lived experience insights that helped shape and improve local services for themselves and the community.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor England, which asked Councillor Reynolds if, drawing on personal family experience, while support may exist, navigating the system and understanding where to turn could be difficult, particularly before issues reached crisis point, could she set out how the Council was working with NHS partners, including BeeU and CAMHS, to improve access, quality and outcomes for local young people so that early help was easier to access so that families got the right help at the right time.

Councillor Reynolds said that the Integrated Care Board commissioned Midland Partnership Foundation Trust, the MPFT, to deliver children and young people's mental health services, CAMHS, known as BeeU.

The current contract would end on 31 March and following a full procurement process, it had been awarded the contract from 1 April.

In 2025, the service was jointly reviewed, redesigned and recommissioned with Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council. Engagement with children, young people and families ensured that lived experience directly informed the redesign and the procurement process. Feedback highlighted challenges in navigating the current support and the need for clearer communication and preferences for how it should be delivered.

Extensive engagement activity took place with many respondents. Online surveys, engagement with challenging perceptions, the Shropshire Youth Association and care leavers, and young people with lived experience.

A new service model had been developed and aligned to the Family First programme, with stronger focus on prevention, a single point of access, and improved integration for the local authority, and earlier support to prevent escalation into crisis.

Partnership principles underpinning the model included timely, flexible and responsive access, support within community settings, inclusive and equitable services, prioritisation of vulnerable children and care leavers, improved quality, communication and outcome measurement, co-production of children, young people and carers. Core elements of this new service included a single point of access, delivery through the Thrive Model, greater choice for young people, co-located practitioners within local authority and accelerated pathways for vulnerable children and a strengthened early help offer.



(c) Councillor T Janke to Councillor Z Hannington, Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services

“The Council budget is, for many tax-paying residents, a complex and difficult document to fully understand. In the spirit of transparency, and in light of the Council’s announcement that it must identify £7 million in savings—alongside rising adult and children’s social care costs totalling £15.8 million—will the Cabinet commit to clearly setting out and publishing where it proposes to make cuts to services?”

In response, Councillor Hannington said that households across Telford and Wrekin deserved absolute clarity about how their money was spent and how the Council was protecting the services they relied upon.

The Medium-term Financial Strategy set out a full breakdown of proposed savings, which included the £7m identified through service review, redesign and procurement, details of which were as set out in Appendix 9 to the report.

Group Leaders had already received the detailed figures behind this work, to ensure democratic oversight across the Council.

Firstly, the Council would be an efficient organisation and make savings where it could and publish details of these. Secondly, the Council would keep Council Tax the lowest in the Midlands and when the Council did increase it, be honest about where the revenue would be spent. Finally, the Council would invest wisely to generate revenue from other sources and would keep Council Tax the lowest and ensure savings and efficiencies did not affect front line services. The Council would continue to publish information, and it would be open with its consultation to ensuring its plans were scrutinised.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Janke, which asked Councillor Hannington should the Council look to Town or Parish Councils to subsidise the delivery of certain services given any cuts that may be coming forward and could the Cabinet Member provide details of any other services that could be considered to be fully devolved to a Town or Parish level in order that these Councils could consult local residents and factor any potential future budget settings, Councillor Hannington advised that these were detailed in Appendix 9 to the report, and were proposed savings not cuts to services. The majority of which came from service review, redesign and procurement, which included significant savings in social care and the Council was looking at prevention and reviewing types of care provided.



- (d) Councillor T Janke to Councillor R Overton, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Environment

"In light of the Government's recent announcement enabling local authorities to take stronger action against pavement parking and obstruction, could the Cabinet Member advise when we expect these powers and associated enforcement responsibilities to be devolved to the Council? Furthermore, given ward members' extensive local knowledge and experience of persistent pavement-parking hot-spots, will Councillors be given a formal opportunity to provide input into the development and implementation of this process to ensure enforcement is targeted, proportionate and effective from the outset?"

In response, Councillor Overton explained that the Government had recently announced proposals to give local authorities powers to tackle pavement parking and welcomed these powers. Pavement parking continued to blight the borough's communities and caused obstructions for many, including those with pushchairs and mobility aids.

The Government was yet to confirm implementation, and further updates were expected in Autumn 2026. While these enforcement powers would be another tool in the Council's armoury in supporting residents across Telford and Wrekin, it was important to note that the Police would still retain their relevant obstruction powers in relation to pavement parking.

The Council would continue to watch this closely and once it had clarity, a borough-wide communications plan would accompany implementation to ensure that all stakeholders were well-informed, and Member and parish briefings would be essential to support consistency and understanding throughout the process.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Janke, which asked Councillor Overton that, given Newport had recently welcomed a number of new traffic regulation orders, which was hoped would help mitigate a number of traffic related issues across the community and, further, that logic dictated that this may place additional pressure on the enforcement capacity as it stood, in this context, did the Cabinet Member recognise that these challenges were likely to further increase pressure if parking powers are devolved in those areas and would residents expect to see a recruitment drive for additional civil enforcement officers to ensure that the Council could continue to deliver a robust and consistent enforcement strategy that met the public's expectations, Councillor Overton said that any new enforcement powers could require additional resources and once further national guidance was available, the Council would consider what measures were needed to ensure effective enforcement for residents.



(e) Councillor T Janke to Councillor C Healy, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability

"Newport residents are rightly proud of and protective over their precious green spaces, not least Victoria Park, which has been awarded Green Flag status. Judges have described it as a "gem of a park" and highlighted its close proximity to Newport Canal, itself a Site of Specific Scientific Interest. Given the importance of this park to residents and its recognised environmental value, will the Cabinet Member commit to agreeing with me, and with my Newport Council colleagues and residents, that Victoria Park will never be developed on, including any expansion of the car park accessed via Water Lane?"

In response, Councillor Healy said that Victoria Park and Maryleth Park were protected by both Green Network and Green Guarantee designations, which meant that any changes had to preserve the function of the Green Network and in respect of Green Guarantee, had to be in the interest of the community.

A report would be presented to Cabinet next month that concluded the proposal for the park, the canal and Melbourne Park to be designated as a local nature reserve for Newport and she looked forward to working with Newport members on that.

Regarding the car park on Water Lane, Councillor Healy noted that issues at the site were recognised. She confirmed that an option to extend the car park had previously been considered but was not being progressed at this time, as the Council did not intend to take the proposal forward without clear community support.

(f) Councillor T Janke to Councillor C Healy, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability

"As ward Councillor, I have been contacted by representatives of Nova United FC who remain understandably concerned about progress on securing improved facilities at Shuker Fields, as the club approaches its 50th anniversary. I acknowledge the work officers have undertaken to date, including the allocation of S106 funding, the engagement with the Football Foundation and Shropshire FA. However given the length of time the project has been under discussion and the importance of this facility to grassroots sport in Newport, I would be grateful if you could provide any updates you are able to offer at this stage following the most recent site visit on 14 January between TWC officers, the Football Foundation and Shropshire FA to assess if the proposed works meet the Foundation's Priority Framework?"

In response, Councillor Healy said that the Football Foundation had agreed that the Council could submit a joint application with the Club, which she



thought was positive. The BIC Team was coming together from the higher-level estimates and indicative plans for the club to choose from in order that an application could be submitted.

The Football Foundation had outlined it should take around six months for that application to work through. Work had started at Burton Borough School for the 3G and access to the adjacent pitch and whilst there was six months for the application to be worked through and hopefully approval by the Football Foundation, the Club would then have access to Burton Borough through the Community Agreement or Programme of Use.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Janke, which asked Councillor Healy if she could advise whether there would be any further developments in securing funding for beyond existing S106 contributions to address the longstanding hydrology and drainage issues on sugar fields since these issues frequently resulted in matches being postponed and significantly reduced opportunities for wider recreational use at the site, due to persistently saturated ground, Councillor Healy said that the Council had recently audited all pitches around the borough to assess condition, which would help inform future investment planning to improve facilities where needed.

(g) Councillor H Morgan to Councillor O Vickers, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transport

"Please can the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transport provide an update on the Council-run Travel Telford bus services"

In response, Councillor Vickers said that Members of this chamber would be aware of the continual excellent progress this Council had made in providing affordable and well-connected bus services for residents across the borough.

The Council first launched the work express 100 service in December 2022, which continued to go from strength to strength, now achieving 14,000 passenger trips a month. The service was specifically designed to connect residential areas that were without a bus service to education, employment and health services. Since then, the Council had continued to evolve and grow the Travel Telford bus network, which now operated six separate routes across the borough from service 99 to 104.

Councillor Vickers was pleased to confirm that these services had completed well over 800,000 passenger trips since their inception, showing real value in the Council's investment. The Council's Travel Telford services had also been operated under contract to Arriva since July 2025, and during this time, passenger numbers had increased quicker than at any point since the services began, with an average patronage increase of 22% so far versus the same months in 2024.



All this enhanced connectivity came with what was among the lowest bus fares in the country at £2 an adult and £1 a child on the Travel Telford Network.

The Council continued to explore how it could further improve bus services, both on the Travel Telford and Arriva services for 2026.

(h) Councillor Nathalie Page to Councillor Richard Overton, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Highways, Housing and Environment

"As a Councillor in a ward with quite a number of HMOs, please can the Cabinet Member for Housing, Highways and Enforcement explain what the recent Cabinet paper on selective licensing and Article 4 will mean for HMO landlords as well as those who would be looking to turn their property into an HMO?"

In response, Councillor Overton said that HMOs played an important role in the borough, while serving professionals and students, they also provided much needed affordable accommodation for some of the borough's most vulnerable residents.

The Council also acknowledged and appreciated that many compliant landlords provided good quality and safe accommodation.

However, following its work with partners and the increasing number of comments and complaints from residents, the Council was also aware of a growing number of properties being converted into poorly managed HMOs, which could attract crime, antisocial behaviour and poor housing standards. Such properties where there were many occupants sharing facilities required careful management.

Properties such as these posed higher fire safety risks for tenants and the Council worked with partners such as the Police and fire services who dealt with the consequences of poorly managed HMOs.

As a Council, it was committed to ensuring safe homes and fair standards for all and therefore, it was currently consulting on two schemes relating to HMOs in the borough. The introduction of additional licensing for smaller HMO properties, those of more than five occupants, were already subject to licensing, which would apply to all existing and new HMOs; and an Article 4 direction meant all new smaller HMOs would need planning permission in future.

Article 4 would support the Council to manage the growth and concentration of HMOs, allowing the Council to consider the implications of new HMOs in



the area and the community and giving the Council much better information on where HMOs were being established.

It was important to note that Article 4 did not mean planning permission would not be granted. The timing of the proposals meant, along with the new provision under the Renters' Rights Act, landlords would not be able to evict their tenants in order to evade licensing. The changes sought to empower communities to ensure they felt protected and competent of property standards and the impact of HMOs on neighbourhoods that were being scrutinised.

For tenants, it meant a single consistent minimum standard for all properties with regular inspections to comply with landlords' analysis of something they could promote to tenants and would allow the Council to tackle the old landlords who gave the sector a poor reputation.

(i) Councillor Rachael Tyrrell to Councillor Lee Carter, Leader of the Council

"Please can the Leader provide an update on the status of the University of Wolverhampton Priorslee campus proposals? Whilst I appreciate the topic is subject to an NDA; the University of Wolverhampton is due to close the site in a few months, and it is not unreasonable for residents to receive an update"

In response, Councillor Carter clarified that because of a non-disclosure agreement between parties involved in a commercially sensitive transaction, the Council could not breach the terms of that agreement. He however acknowledged the importance of keeping residents informed once the Council was able to do so publicly.

He reiterated that the Council and its partners continued to be focused on securing the site for education, sport and business use. Councillor Carter noted that concerns raised publicly about alternative uses for the site were unfounded and confirmed that such uses were not being considered by any party involved in the discussions.

He also referred to previous budget decisions relating to the site and restated the Council's commitment to working with partners to secure its future for the purposes identified.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Tyrrell, which asked Councillor Carter when further information was expected to be made available to give to residents, Councillor Carter reiterated that the Council's intention, working with partners, was to secure the site for continued education, sport and business use. He noted that this had been the Council's position throughout, including during the previous year's capital budget allocation, which provided funding to support that objective.



He re-confirmed that, due to the non-disclosure agreement governing the transaction, the Council was not in a position to provide further detail at this stage. However, information would be shared with residents once negotiations had concluded.

Councillor Carter emphasised the Council's ongoing work with partners, including Harper Adams, to secure the future of the site for the intended uses.

(j) Councillor Rachael Tyrrell to Councillor Ollie Vickers, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transport

"I have previously asked a Question about this Council's implementation of the provisions of the Procurement Act 2024 and was advised work was underway. Please can we be advised of progress, in particular real-life examples of how the procurement and tendering process has improved outcomes to our local businesses successfully winning contracts where they were not previously? At a time when businesses are under great pressure, I think it is even more vital that this Council uses every tool at its disposal."

In response, Councillor Vickers said that the new Procurement Act, which came into force in February 2025, had made it easier for local suppliers to identify and compete for Council opportunities by simplifying procedures. The increased visibility of the Council's pipelines planned procurements and tender opportunities meant local businesses could now spot opportunities earlier and prepare stronger bids.

A key change was that the Council could now award contracts based on the most advantageous tender rather than simply the lowest price, which gave the Council greater flexibility to consider a wider range of factors such as social value, environmental impact and innovation. It meant local businesses could compete on the overall strength of their offer, not just cost, while still ensuring the Council secured good financial value for residents.

The Council had undertaken significant work to ensure full compliance with the Act, which included updating guidance and templates, improving the Council's processes to demonstrate best value, and to provide training for staff involved in commissioning and procurement.

The Council had also strengthened its transparency measures and refreshed its social value approach. Tenders now placed greater emphasis on local economic benefit, such as local supply chains, job creation and support for start-ups, giving local businesses a clearer route to success.

Although the Act was still new, the Council was already seeing positive examples. Recent frameworks for disabled facilities grant works and for



counselling services had included local providers helping ensure local expertise was recognised and utilised. All 15 suppliers on the disabled facilities grant framework were local SMEs.

In addition, the Council's contracts continued to deliver strong social value, including over 100 apprentice placements, nearly 60,000 of community contributions and £140,000 spent with borough suppliers and around £1.9 million with SMEs, alongside digital training and equipment for community initiatives.

The Council valued the contribution of both businesses and would continue to support them through the Procurement Act and through grants such as Start-up Shopfront, energy efficiency and diversification grants, all things that were voted on that you failed to vote for in the budget.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Tyrrell, which asked Councillor Vickers if he could confirm that the Council was going to switch its focus from photo-op certificate awarding to addressing real business challenges such as business rates, revaluation, skill shortage and procurement generally, Councillor Vickers referred to the Council's Pride in Our High Street programme and noted that it had supported the establishment of a significant number of new businesses and jobs in the borough.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the time allocated for Councillor Questions on Notice (30 minutes) had expired following the disposal of Question J above and accordingly, in respect of the four remaining questions, a written response by the relevant Cabinet Member would be prepared and copied to all Members.

52 Setting of the Council Tax Base 2026/27

Councillor Z Hannington, Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services, presented the report of the Director for Finance, People and IDT, which sought Council's approval to determine the Council Tax Base for General and Special Fund purposes for the financial year 2026/27.

The setting of the Council Tax Base was the first stage in the process of setting the Council Tax for 2026/27 and final recommendations on Council Tax levels would be presented to Full Council on 26 February 2026.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 22.5, a recorded vote was taken as follows:-



For (48)

Councillors E Aston, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Chikandamina, G H Cook, E Davies, P Davis, F Doran, N A Dugmore, 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, 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 L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, K Tonks, R Tyrrell, O Vickers and D R W White.

No Members voted against the motion or abstained from voting.

RESOLVED unanimously, that:

- (a) The calculation of the tax base for the financial year 2026/27, as detailed in paragraph 4.4 and Appendix A to the report, be approved.**
- (b) In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914), the amount calculated for Telford and Wrekin Council Tax Base for financial year 2026/27 for its Special Fund Area, as per the appropriate parish amounts detailed in Appendix A for the parishes listed in paragraph 4.5, be approved.**

53 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.

Councillor N Dugmore asked a question of clarity to Councillor Z Hannington, in respect of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on 6 January 2026, and asked why income generation had been included in Appendix 9 to the report since this was a schedule of additional savings proposals and was therefore not a saving, but an income.

In response, Councillor Hannington said she would issue a written response in due course.



54 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 January 2026, 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, be approved (details of the Capital Programme changes were included in Appendix A and Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators were included in Appendix B to the report).

55 Recommendations from Boards and Committees

(b) Statement of Licensing Policy

Councillor J Thompson, Chair to the Council's Licensing Committee, presented the report of the Director of Policy and Governance, which sought the Council's approval of the statutory five-yearly review of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy, made under the Licensing Act 2003.

The Statement, which had been completed following a public consultation, led to an amended policy being produced by officers and considered by the Licensing Committee at its meeting held on 13 January 2026.

RESOLVED, that the revised Statement of Licensing Policy, as set out at Appendix A to the report, to be implemented on 26 January 2026, be approved and adopted.

(c) Constitution Update

Councillor L Lewis, Chair to the Council's Governance Committee presented the report of the Director of Policy and Governance, which updated Members on proposed changes to the Constitution following the review undertaken last year and to seek approval for the adoption of the revised Constitution.

During the debate, several Members expressed concerns about the proposed changes to meeting duration. Points raised included the potential impact on opportunities for discussion, the ability for Members to raise matters in a public forum, and the importance of Full Council as a venue for open debate



on issues affecting local communities. Some Members also suggested that meeting frequency could be reviewed as an alternative approach.

In response, several Members noted that Full Council was one of several forums through which Council business was conducted, highlighting the role of committees and scrutiny in enabling detailed discussion and decision-making. It was also noted that Members had opportunities to engage with residents and address local issues outside of formal meeting arrangements. Members emphasised the importance of effective use of time and resources across all committees and working groups.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 22.3, a recorded vote was taken as follows:-

For (32)

Councillors E Aston, S Bentley, K T Blundell, M Boylan, A J Burford, S P Burrell, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Chikandamina, G H Cook, E Davies, P Davis, F Doran, N A Dugmore, 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, 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 L Tomlinson, W L Tomlinson, K Tonks, R Tyrrell, O Vickers and D R W White.

Against (13)

Councillors S Bentley, K T Blundell, S P Burrell, N A Dugmore, T Janke, T J Nelson, S Syrda, G Thomas, P Thomas, K Tomlinson, B Tomlinson, K Tonks and R Tyrrell.

Abstained (1)

Councillor P J Scott.

RESOLVED, that the revised and updated Constitution, as detailed at Appendix A to the report, to take effect immediately, be adopted.

As a result of the last vote, the Speaker advised that there was now a maximum two-hour time limit for meetings of the Full Council, and a motion would need to be put forward by Council to request the meeting to be extended by up to 30 minutes.

A motion to extend the meeting was proposed by Councillor Carolyn Healy and seconded by Councillor Richard Overton and following a vote, it was:-



RESOLVED, that the duration of the meeting be extended by up to a further 30 minutes.

56 **Motions on Notice**

The following motions were submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10:

(a) **Councillor Richard Overton**

"This Council celebrates the achievements of the Council's Building Safer and Stronger Communities Programme delivered with local partners, and the positive impact it has had across Telford and Wrekin. This has included many extracurricular activities for young people, funding to tackle antisocial behaviour across our borough, as well as enhanced CCTV coverage to keep our communities safe. This Council notes the Cabinet's determination to ensure a funding commitment to sustaining the programme as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. This Council notes with concern the decision by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to stop financial support for the initiative and calls upon him to reverse the decision."

Councillor Ollie Vickers seconded the motion.

Following a robust debate, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved.

(b) **Councillor Nigel Dugmore**

"This Council has serious concerns regarding the current consultation regarding proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which will severely restrict the ability of local planning authorities to control and influence development in their areas.

Such changes will have significant impact especially in rural areas and on developer contributions which are vital in ensuring that local infrastructure is in place to mitigate the impact on local communities of significant new developments. Consequently, this Council resolves to respond to the Labour Government's current consultation and reject the disastrous proposed changes to the NPPF in order to protect our Borough from unwanted and inappropriate building."

Councillor Stephen Bentley seconded the motion.



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

"This Council **notes** the current consultation regarding proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which **includes changes to the way** local planning authorities control and influence development in their areas. Such changes **may** have significant impact especially in rural areas and on developer contributions which are vital in ensuring that local infrastructure is in place to mitigate the impact on local communities of significant new developments.

Consequently, this Council resolves to **create a cross party working group to develop the response** to the Labour Government's current consultation **to show which aspects this Council supports and which it rejects** in order to protect our Borough from unwanted and inappropriate building **and ensure plan led development that meets our borough's needs.**"

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 unanimously.

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

(c) Councillor Rachael Tyrrell

"This Council wishes to convey to the Government that the introduction of Digital IDs is an egregious waste of public money at a time when resources are scarce and should be directed to frontline services, such as Defence and Education. It is also a dystopian and dangerous policy that undermines privacy, civil liberties, and public trust.

Council resolves to:

1. Formally oppose the introduction of mandatory Digital IDs across Telford & Wrekin.
2. Write to the Home Secretary and Minister for Digital Government, expressing this Council's opposition and calling for the scheme to be scrapped.
3. Request Telford & Wrekin MPs to oppose any legislation introducing mandatory Digital ID."

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 Richard Overton, moved that the summary of the motion above, be amended as follows:

“This Council wishes to convey to the Government that the introduction of **mandatory** Digital IDs is an egregious waste of public money at a time when resources are scarce as **a result of the former Conservative government’s mismanagement of the economy and cuts to public services. This Council supports the Labour Government investing more into** frontline services such as Defence and Education. **This Council has concerns that** a mandatory scheme would undermine privacy, civil liberties, and public trust.

The Council recognises that an optional digital ID scheme can make accessing public services, jobs and housing easier and more inclusive for the 10 percent of people who do not hold photo ID. The Council notes that optional digital ID would be like passports and driving licences and has been implemented successfully in other countries such as France, Estonia and Finland.

Council resolves to:

1. Formally oppose the introduction of **mandatory** Digital IDs across Telford and Wrekin.
2. Write to the Home Secretary and Minister for Digital Government, expressing this Council’s opposition and **welcoming the decision to scrap the mandatory aspects of the scheme.**
3. Request Telford and Wrekin MPs to oppose any legislation introducing **mandatory** Digital ID.”

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 unanimously.

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

(d) **Councillor Stephen Burrell**

“This Council endorses the U-Turn made by the Government on the family farm tax and confirms its support for the hardworking farms in our Borough.”

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 Carolyn Healy, moved that the summary of the motion above, be amended as follows:

“Following the reintroduction of inheritance tax for farms which removed an unfair taxation anomaly and encouraged wealthy investors to buy up small family farms, this Council endorses the recent changes made by the Government on the farm inheritance tax and confirms its support for the hardworking farms in our Borough including practical support on fuel poverty and energy, business support and access to grants, transport and housing as well as significant investments into local Agri-Tech Industries.”

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 unanimously.

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

The meeting ended at 8.38 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday 26 February 2026