

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 12 February 2026 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors E Davies (Chair), E Aston (Vice-Chair), F Doran, S Handley, G Luter, P J Scott and G Thomas

In Attendance: R Cook (Executive Director: Place), P Fenn (Head of Service: Neighbourhood Enforcement), T Foran (Strategic Skills Lead), D Germany (Head of Service: Waste and Neighbourhood Performance), R Phillips (Head of Service: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal and Democracy), R Probert (Strategic Skills Lead), C Sweeney (Locum Governance Manager) and S Wellman (Director: Education and Skills).

Also Present: Councillors C Healy (Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning and Sustainability) and R Overton (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing and Enforcement).

COMSC12 Declarations of Interest

None.

COMSC13 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

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

COMSC14 Community Action Team Report

The Committee considered a report of the Director: Neighbourhood and Enforcement Services on the Community Action Team (CAT) partnership with Town and Parish Councils. The report provided an overview of the current arrangements, outcomes achieved to date, and opportunities for further development to strengthen local responses to community issues.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing and Enforcement introduced the report.

Members received a presentation outlining the development of the CAT programme since its introduction in 2021. It was noted that the initial three-year enhanced environmental maintenance and enforcement offer had been refined following partner feedback and was now operating under a five-year arrangement through to March 2029. The presentation highlighted the range of services provided through the partnership, including environmental

maintenance, neighbourhood enforcement, community engagement and biodiversity enhancement.

Members heard that Environmental Community Liaison Officers (ECLOs) worked with Town and Parish Councils to identify and address local priorities, undertaking regular inspections and coordinating works with contractors. Information was also provided on the work of the Grounds and Cleansing Team, which delivered services outside the scope of the core contract, including environmental improvements, vegetation management and sign cleansing.

The Committee noted the neighbourhood enforcement activity delivered through the CAT model, including parking enforcement, CCTV monitoring, targeted patrols, community engagement, and action to address environmental offences such as fly tipping and dog fouling. Officers also highlighted the programme's contribution to climate change objectives through biodiversity projects and the use of electric vehicles and equipment.

Examples of positive feedback received from Town and Parish Councils were shared, demonstrating the impact of the partnership at a local level.

During the discussion, Members raised questions regarding the sharing of performance information with Ward Members, communication and reporting arrangements between CAT, Members and Town and Parish Councils, and the role of Councillors in identifying local priorities. Members also discussed neighbourhood enforcement matters, including fly tipping, littering, dog fouling, parking issues, overgrown vegetation and the potential need for additional enforcement resources. The importance of effective local engagement, including the role of Parish Clerks as key points of contact, was also highlighted.

In response, Officers advised that opportunities to strengthen communication and reporting arrangements with Members would be explored, including the wider sharing of performance information and local activity updates.

Officers also explained that the use of surveillance powers was subject to legal requirements and appropriate authorisation processes. It was reported that fly tipping incidents across the borough had reduced to their lowest level in three years, supported by a range of monitoring measures including CCTV.

Officers confirmed that environmental maintenance activities, such as sign cleansing, formed part of the service where appropriate and that Town and Parish Councils could work collaboratively to maximise the benefits of the CAT offer.

The Committee expressed their thanks to Officers and Environmental Community Liaison Officers for their work in supporting local communities and improving environmental quality across the borough.

Members noted the update.

COMSC15 Telford & Wrekin Skills Strategy

The Committee considered a report of the Director: Education and Skills which provided an update on delivery of the Council's Skills Strategy. The report reaffirmed the Council's commitment to ensuring that every child, young person and adult could live well in their community and benefit from a thriving local economy.

The Head of Service: Education and Skills introduced the report and provided an overview of progress against the Strategy's five objectives, which focused on raising skills levels, supporting aspiration, creating progression pathways into employment, promoting inclusion and ensuring that the local skills system met the needs of employers and the wider economy.

Members received a presentation highlighting a range of initiatives delivered through the Skills Strategy, including the development of a local curriculum offer, work to tackle inequality, the Stay Near Go Far campaign, employer and school engagement activities, support for young carers, measures to address youth unemployment, adult learning provision through Learn Telford, and a range of employment support programmes.

The Committee heard that Learn Telford remained the largest provider of adult learning in the borough, supporting more than 3,000 learners, with a strong focus on residents with low or no qualifications and those furthest from the labour market. Members also noted the positive outcomes achieved through Job Box, Connect to Work and the annual Skills Show.

During the discussion, Members welcomed the breadth of activity being delivered through the Skills Strategy and the positive outcomes being achieved for residents.

In response to questions raised regarding the range of life skills available through learning programmes, including areas such as basic DIY and money management, Officers noted the importance of ensuring provision remained responsive to the needs of learners and communities.

Members highlighted the value of Learn Telford and the role of adult learning in providing progression routes into further education, training and employment. In response, Officers outlined the importance of the 'stepping stones' approach in supporting residents to develop confidence and core skills before progressing to higher-level opportunities.

Members also discussed access to employment support services, particularly for residents who might not be able to attend provision in person. In response, Officers highlighted the outreach activity delivered through Job Box and other programmes, which sought to engage people within local communities and improve access to support.

The Committee welcomed the support available for residents seeking to return to work and the continued success of initiatives such as the Skills Show.

Officers noted that these programmes played an important role in raising aspirations, connecting residents with employers and learning providers, and supporting progression into employment and training.

Members further welcomed the strong partnership working taking place across the borough with schools, colleges, training providers and employers, including the promotion of apprenticeships and work experience opportunities.

In response, Officers emphasised the importance of collaborative working in ensuring that local people could access the skills and opportunities required by current and future employers.

Members noted the report.

COMSC16 Work Programme Review

The Head of Service: Registrars, Public Protection, Legal and Democracy presented the updated work programme as set out in the agenda pack and highlighted that the next meeting would take place on 23 April 2026.

An email would be sent out to members of the Committee in due course, to ascertain whether members had any proposed items of business moving forward. The Chair was also keen to establish a list of any items the Committee may wish to take a deep dive into.

Members were informed that the matter of potholes, dealing with them and scrutinising the progress over the next few months was a proposed item for that meeting.

Members noted the updated work programme.

COMSC17 Chair's Update

The Chair asked that the Committee's thanks be recorded in recognition of the hard work and support that had been provided by Simon Wellman, the Council's Director: Education & Skills who was due to leave the Council over the coming days.

The meeting ended at 7.42 pm

Chairman:

Date: Tuesday 14 July 2026