

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Meeting of the Communities & Environment Committee Held in Committee Room, Livesey House, 7 St John's Hill At 6.00pm on Wednesday 4 February 2026

PRESENT

Councillors J Daniels (Chair), B Bentick, R Dartnall, A Fejfer, B Jephcott (substitute for Cllr Gratton), E Micklewright, A Mosley and R Wilson.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Clare Turner (Deputy Town Clerk), Ruth Jones (Office Manager), Ian Thorpe (Commercial, Markets & Events Manager), Stuart Farmer (Operations Manager) and Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer).

64/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies were received from Councillor Gratton.

Apologies were also received from Andy Hall (Youth & Community Manager)

65/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY & NON-PECUNIARY) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Shropshire Councillors	Those twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
Councillor Bentick	Portfolio Holder for Health & Public Protection, Shropshire Council
Councillor Dartnall	Group Leader – Labour Group, Shropshire Council
Councillor Jephcott	Deputy Portfolio Holder – Planning, Shropshire Council
Councillor Wilson	Portfolio Holder for Transport & Economic Growth and member of SC cabinet

66/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Communities & Environment Committee meeting held on 3 December 2025 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Communities & Environment Committee meeting held on 3 December 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

67/25 MATTERS ARISING

Min 54.1 – Parking Issues in Shrewsbury

The Town Clerk reported to members that at the meeting held on 3 December, they had invited Shropshire Council Highways and the Police to the meeting to answer questions on parking issues as Councillors received complaints about individuals parking inappropriately on pavements and blocking people from using the pavement. Confusion was around whether this was a Police matter or a Local Authority matter, and over the years both parties had tried to pass the matter onto each other.

Civil Enforcement at Shropshire Council attended the previous meeting and gave their side of the issue but there had been no response from the Police. The Office Manager had chased up a response, and the Inspector had replied stating that;

Road safety and community wellbeing were important to all of us. However, they needed to clarify the position regarding police involvement. Parking enforcement—whether for obstruction, inconsiderate parking, or general parking infringements—was not a function that the police were able to take on, except in very limited circumstances. Responsibility for enforcing parking restrictions, including issues around school streets, verges, and residential access, sat with the local authority. Where a clear criminal offence was being committed—for example, anti-social behaviour, dangerous driving, or an idling offence in specific circumstances, they would always respond where resources allowed. But routine attendance for parking concerns, or issuing advisory notices, was not something the Police were empowered or resourced to deliver. They remained committed to working constructively with partners, including Shropshire Council and local schools, to support broader road safety initiatives.

68/25 YOUTH

68.1 Young Shrewsbury activity

The Town Clerk provided an update on Youth activity in Shrewsbury in the absence of the Youth & Community Manager.

Young Shrewsbury's programme of youth activities resumed on Monday 5 January 2026, following the Christmas break. All youth clubs operating at the Grange, Ditherington, The Hive and Monkmoor Lodge had re-opened and were running as scheduled.

Unfortunately, during the first week of re-opening, an incident occurred at the Grange Youth Centre in which a window was damaged. This followed sustained snowball-throwing by four young people, despite repeated requests from staff for them to stop. The matter was reported to the Police, who through information provided by staff, had identified the individuals involved. In agreement with the Police, a Community Resolution Order would be issued, requiring the young people to contribute financially towards the cost of the window repair.

The delivery of the Alternative Curriculum continued this term. All current participants were attending from Shrewsbury Academy, and the programme was progressing as planned.

The Youth Council met on 22 January 2026 at the Grange Youth Centre. Attendance was lower than usual due to the number of members being unwell. The Youth Council was advised that Councillor Dartnall had stepped down from attending future meetings. The chairman recorded the Council's appreciation for Councillor Dartnall's valued support and past contributions. The meeting included a presentation from STC Communications Officer, Max Ball, who delivered the final report on the Future Services Survey and the Service Devolution review. Members held a detailed discussion on the findings, noting in particular the low engagement levels from young people. Notably, one member present had been aware of the survey prior to the meeting. Following discussion, and through the Chair, the Youth Council agreed in principle to support the proposed devolution of street sweeping, litter picking and public bin collection from Shropshire Council to Shrewsbury Town Council. Members requested that their position be communicated to Full Council for consideration during the decision-making process.

The Youth Council also agreed to hold meetings at a range of council locations including Weeping Cross and the Guildhall to strengthen their understanding of the wider remit and operations of both Shrewsbury Town Council and Shropshire Council.

A submission was made on behalf of the Youth Council to the National Crimebeat Awards 2026. Sadly, the entry was not shortlisted. Whilst they were naturally disappointed that their project was not selected as a finalist, it was important to recognise the efforts made by the Youth Council and that participation provided valuable experience and the efforts of the young people involved were acknowledged with appreciation.

In respect of recruitment, Young Shrewsbury was currently recruiting to fill several vacant Youth Support Worker posts. Interviews were scheduled to take place in February.

Planning was underway for Stay Safe Day 2026, which was provisionally scheduled for Wednesday 25 June – 11.00am – 2.30pm in the Upper Quarry, Shrewsbury. Youth Council had already considered many ideas for the event.

Councillor Mosley referred to the increase of £75,000 in the Youth Budget and asked how this was going to be spent and when; he felt more information was required.

The Town Clerk reported that the budget increase was to address Youth ASB issues in various locations and the recruitment of detached Youth workers. This was based upon a project plan to address youth ASB in the town centre. Subsequent to Full Council the National Lottery had approved the grant application to the Million Hours Community Fund to address youth ASB in Quarry & Coton Hill. This would mean the additional budget would be used to expand the project beyond the town centre. She was awaiting a meeting with the Funders to determine how the funding award could be spent and would report back on detail to a future meeting.

Councillor Dartnall asked the Town Clerk to confirm that the Youth Manager was now on reduced hours. The Town Clerk reported as this was a staffing matter, it was for the Personnel Committee to deal with but confirmed his request for reduced hours would be backfilled by other staff in the youth team. d

Councillor Mosley commented that Shropshire Council had received funding and were they working with Shropshire Council. The Town Clerk reported that Shropshire Council been successful in becoming a Youth Transformation Funding Pilot and would receive funding to build youth infrastructure and create youth partnership boards across the county. This wasn't a fund that would provide front line youth workers, more the strategic framework to deliver a cohesive and comprehensive youth delivery framework. Discussions have taken place with key officers and the Town Council as a principal youth provider will be actively involved in the pilot.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

68.2 National Youth Strategy

The Town Clerk reported that The National Youth Strategy had been published. This was a 10-year strategy and was Government's major policy framework for improving the lives of young people in England. It was developed in partnership with over 14,000 young people who helped shape its priorities.

Its Vision & Purpose was to ensure every young person could thrive — with somewhere to go, someone who cares, and opportunities to grow. It had been created to address the challenges young people faced, such as isolation, lack of youth spaces, mental health concerns, and uneven access to enriching activities. It had Core Themes and Actions including:

1. Helping young people have supportive, reliable adults in their lives.
2. Training and supporting youth workers and volunteers.
3. Improving connection among peers and communities.
4. Expanding access to activities, enrichment, school-based programmes and youth clubs.
5. Helping young people get careers support, apprenticeships, and life skills.
6. Investing in youth facilities and improved places where young people could go.
7. Supporting physical and mental health outcomes.
8. Giving young people a real say in policy shaping and progress monitoring.

The National Youth Strategy also aligned well with the Town Council's Youth Strategy;

- *National → Local: Shared Policy Framework*
The national strategy provided the direction and investment frameworks, and Shrewsbury's local strategy translated those into practical plans for young people in the town.
- *Supporting the Local Youth Offer and Provision*
The town strategy contributed to the national intention of rebuilding strong, inclusive youth services in communities.
- *Youth Voice and Co-Production*
Local practice mirrored the national strategy's push for youth co-production.
- *Partnerships and Local Government Links*
The local youth strategy development was happening alongside and because of national investment and restructuring — not in isolation.
- *Practical Impact on Shrewsbury's Youth Services*

As a result of this policy alignment:

- *Funding Influence* - in that their service was shaped by national youth service investment priorities and local transformation funding streams.
- *Strategic Alignment* - in that their goals were aligned with national outcomes.
- *Feedback* on what worked locally, which meets the national strategy's requirement to involve youth voices in shaping plans.

In terms of the Big Picture, Shrewsbury's Youth Strategy was not separate from the national strategy — it was an example of how local authorities interpreted and implemented those national commitments at a local level.

The Town Council's work in youth provision offered on-the-ground delivery that fed into the national strategy's goal of more empowered, connected, and supported young people across England.

When the Town Clerk originally presented the Town Council Strategy, she was conscious there may be a need to amend it reflect the National Strategy, but as it happened to align well with the national ambitions for youth.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

69/25 COST OF LIVING GRANT SCHEME 2026/27

The Town Clerk had provided a report that set out the rationale, scope, and delivery framework for the proposed Shrewsbury Town Council Cost of Living Fund, including the recommended funding model and the criteria against which applications for funding would be assessed. Officers had taken on board the amendment that Councillor Dean made to the budget setting at Full Council to develop a 3-year Cost of Living Grant Scheme to address some of those cost-of-living issues around:

- Supporting the elderly
- Public transport
- Debt Advice
- Energy Efficiency
- Food Debt

The report set out how they would review and evaluate applications to maximise the outputs they wanted to achieve. The Town Clerk believed this needed to be considered differently to the Grants Committee and had suggested a separate Sub Committee to do this. This would need some amendment but hopefully it addressed the intentions as set at the budget meeting.

The Fund was intended to support projects that:

- Reduced the day-to-day costs faced by residents
- Increased household resilience and financial stability
- Improved access to practical support, advice, and services
- Encouraged collaboration and reduced duplication across the local voluntary and community sector

Applicants would need to demonstrate how £20,000 per year would be used to deliver clear, cost-of-living-related benefits for Shrewsbury residents. Funding may be used for staffing costs directly related to service delivery, Project delivery costs, Advice, outreach, or support services or Equipment or resources essential to the project

Funding could not be used for core organisational overheads unrelated to the project, political activity or activities outside Shrewsbury town.

The key principle of the Fund was collaboration. Applicants would be expected to demonstrate how they currently work with other local organisations, set out proposals for collective working with other funded organisations or partners, identified opportunities to share referral pathways, data (where appropriate), or joint outreach and show how their work complements, rather than duplicates, existing provision.

Councillor Mickelwright thanked the Town Clerk for the report and paperwork and was happy to be part of a sub-committee.

Councillor Dartnall commented that she was hugely worried about this scheme. The Town Council had imposed a huge precept and residents were paying twice. She took exception to the Town Clerk saying the policy was put together by 'batting ideas around, this was not the correct way to spend £80,000. This scheme was the worst that she had ever seen and was deeply distressed by it. She added that it was no disrespect to officers, the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk who had worked hard to put this together, but she believed that this was not what the Town Council should be doing, they were adding another task to an already busy council. They had expressed their concerns about the rises, and the response was to add more to the precept. They stressed that the Town Council should not be taking money from people in a 'Robin Hood' style approach.

The Town Clerk responded that this was a considered approach between officers which looked at the Council's values and corporate plan and it was unfair for Councillor Dartnall to say it had been done in an unprofessional manner – the decision to do this was taken by Council so if the Committee did not want to do it, it would need to go back to Full Council to change that Policy.

Councillor Dartnall denied that she had said that officers worked unprofessionally. It was Councillors themselves who had behaved unprofessionally in accepting this proposal to spend £250,000 and members had only been given a 6-minute discussion each at the last Council meeting.

Councillor Bentick commented that to suggest it was not deprivation was nonsense. The targeted fund to Cost of living was well justified and charities would use the funding well. The money would be well spent and would target those who were in need. Councillor Dartnall replied to say she did not use the word deprivation.

Councillor Mosley commented that this scheme would be massively bureaucratic and wasteful and that it was gesture politics. The scheme would not go any way in helping social deprivation and poverty. He added that the report produced at the meeting was received late and the Town Council seemed to be giving money and then deciding later what to do with it. The money would be spent on bureaucracies. He added that it was ironic that on the evening it was voted to increase the precept the Town Council came in with an £80,000 budget to help people who would struggle to pay it; it was a bit sick.

Councillor Mosley further commented that Councillor Dean had found a trick to divert attention from the rise in precept and that it would not help social deprivation. They needed to look at what Shropshire Council were doing as their services were extensive with funding received from government. He confirmed he would be voting against this scheme and added that he did want to support residents, but this was not the way to do it.

Councillor Daniels commented that it was unfair to comment on Councillor Dean as he was not at the meeting to defend himself. He added that the report had a clear and staged process and it was not a hasty approach.

Councillor Jephcott was surprised at the stance being taken. This would set a mechanism on how other charities could do more and help further. If they compared £80,000 to the money Shropshire Council needed to find was a tiny fraction of the problem. He commended the Green Party councillors for putting forward the scheme.

Councillor Mickelwright commented that when charities applied for the Town Council community grants, they had not always been granted the full amount they had requested.

Councillor Wilson commented that funding was set up to support Ukraine and that had been successful. He fully supported Councillor Micklewright being part of the sub-committee and he was also happy to join it himself.

Councillor Daniels also offered to join the sub-committee and Councillors Mosley & Dartnall nominate Councillor Parry to join the committee.

The Town Clerk had spoken to charities and commented that in a single year funding didn't necessarily help but yearly funding could be far more strategic and allow for greater planning.

Councillor Dartnall asked if this would be subject to annual review and she would presume that the charities chosen would be subject to review and scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Cost of Living Gund fund be established for a three-year period;**
- (iii) That the annual budget be £80,000;**
- (iv) That the funding priorities and application criteria as set out in the report be approved;**
- (v) That delegated authority be given to officers to administer and monitor the Fund;**
- (vi) That a sub-committee be set up with Councillors Micklewright, Wilson, Daniels and Pardy to agree funding allocations.**

70/25 ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

The Town Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Shropshire Council regarding the nomination of the Wellbeing Church & Graveyard as an Asset of Community Value.

Further to previous correspondence in connection with the application by Save our Green Space nominating Wellspring Church and Graveyard for consideration as an Asset of Community Value, Shropshire Council had decided not to list the property. The reasons for declining the nomination were that the building was not in current community use nor had it been in recent years (5 years) and there as insufficient evidence of any credible future community use within five years.

The property would be added to the list of unsuccessful nominations which was available on Shropshire Council's website.

Councillor Mosley asked why this had been sent to the Town Council. The Town Clerk replied that under the Localism Act it was the duty of Shropshire Council to notify the relevant local councils of any requests for Assets of Community Value.

Councillor Dartnall commented that it was a shame the building had not been listed as an asset.

RESOLVED:

That the correspondence from Shropshire Council be noted.

71/25 TEAM SHREWSBURY

71.1 Update on the work of Team Shrewsbury

The Office Manager provided an update on Team Shrewsbury activities. West Mercia Police were currently holding drop-in engagement sessions where the local Safer Neighbourhood Teams were in a number of locations around Shrewsbury. The engagement sessions were for around 30 minutes, where the public could liaise with the Safe Neighbourhood teams regarding any issues / concerns within their areas. Details of the dates were listed on Shrewsbury Police social media pages.

Security continued to engage with the public and they regularly received positive feedback in making the areas feel safe. Shropshire Fire & Rescue continued to run the Fire Setters Intervention Scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted

71.2 Policing Priorities

The Office Manager provided an update on Policing Priorities. The submission presented at this meeting was submitted to the local Policing team prior to Christmas, in readiness for January 2026 start. The next submission would be April 2026, and requests for Councillor priorities would therefore be made during March and submitted in readiness for the April start. The April submission would then be ratified during the next meeting on 1 April 2026.

Councillor Wilson informed all Councillors that the Police did take notice of these priorities, and he encouraged all Councillors to complete them every three months and to remove any old entries so that they would not be wasting Police time by them looking at something that had already been actioned.

Councillor Dartnall confirmed that she did submit and remove necessary entries. She added that Inspector Tozer had asked her to remove parking issues from her report, but Councillor Dartnall refused to do this as some parking issues raised were dangerous and were a Police matter and they must continue to be raised.

Councillor Jephcott apologised that he had not submitted any responses for the last quarter. He was pleased to hear that the Police did respond to the priorities, and he

supported the comments of Councillor Dartnall in that parking issues were dangerous and should involve the Police.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Policing Priorities for January 2026 be approved.**

72/25 QUARRY EVENTS CALENDAR

72.1 Quarry Events 2026

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager provided an update on the Quarry Events Calendar. The schedule for 2026 was now starting to fill up with interest being received on a weekly basis for potential events to be held in The Quarry. It was encouraging to note that the vast majority were from local organisations who were looking to expand their existing portfolio and recognise the potential that the Quarry offered in a unique setting.

It was looking increasingly unlikely that the Flower Show or Let's Rock would be returning in the foreseeable future and therefore the Town Council's events strategy had been adjusted to reflect this. Negotiations were continuing with several local and national promoters regarding potential large-scale events they would like to bring to Shrewsbury.

These negotiations were being undertaken against a backdrop of an increasingly competitive market, expanding legislative requirements and rapidly rising costs. There was a noticeable trend towards smaller scale events, as organisers looked to lower costs and reduce associated risk, or for larger events to remain in a fixed location for a much longer period of time, therefore needing only one build and break period. As ever, any final decisions would always aim to achieve the right balance between holding an enjoyable, safe and appropriate event against the impact on both the park itself and the wider town centre.

Severn Trent Water and their contractors had begun the first phase of their large-scale sewerage infrastructure project and had been working in the area from St Julians to Kingsland Bridge. The next phase would see them re-lining the main sewer which runs across the main arena, and they had therefore suspended any of their own remedial work until this phase had been completed. They would continue to pay close attention to this project and assess the likely impact.

Planning for the "Summer of Music" 2026 programme was now in full swing as they looked to build on the success of last year. The aim was to continue to grow the total number of events which were held in the bandstand, but also to widen the variety of music and performance on offer.

They already had the vast majority of bands and performers from 2025 provisionally signed up for this year, alongside a number of fresh, new additions. They would aim to get the full programme agreed as quickly as possible, to enable them to take the same focussed approach to promotion and publicity. This provided audiences with a consistent message that there would be free musical performances to enjoy on the majority of weekends across the summer and this certainly helped with audience numbers and generated very positive feedback. The excellent weather also played its part. Officers were also looking at the possibility of sponsorship for the Summer of Music.

They would continue to encourage visitors to bring chairs, picnics etc to enhance their experience and look to champion local artists and organisations whenever possible. One exciting addition already confirmed was the Performing Arts and Musical Theatre groups, whose children performed at the last Christmas Light switch on event. They were currently planning performances which would take place on and around the bandstand on Saturday 11 July.

Councillor Bentick enquired about the long-term plans for the Flower Show to which the Town Clerk confirmed that nothing further had been communicated since their recent press release. Councillor Bentick asked if the Town Clerk would write to the Shropshire Horticultural Society to ask their intentions. The Town Clerk said that the SHS had issued their press release. The Town Clerk and Mayor had met with the SHS, and it was confirmed the show would not go ahead for 2026 as they would make a loss if they ran the show. They had looked at streamlining the show, but it wouldn't be the same. They are completing their duties as a charitable organisation and there may be possible smaller events in the Quarry/Dingle but there would be no big event. The Town Clerk added that it was not for the Town Council to comment any further and they needed to await further communications from the SHS, writing a letter would not achieve anything further than what was already in the public domain. The Town Council would support the SHS as much as they could, but they were not in a financial position to help their budget deficit.

Councillor Mickelwright asked if the Quarry would be more accessible as there were less big events. At present this would be correct, but the Town Council were in talks with companies who would like to hold bigger events. They were also looking at making the park less cut off from the public during big events.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

72.2 Quarry Management Plan Tender

The Town Clerk reported that the Policy & Resources Committee had been overseeing the procurement of a consultant to develop a Quarry Management Plan. They had received five applications and three had been shortlisted for interview on Friday 6 February. After which they would present a preferred consultant to the Policy & Resources Committee for approval.

At this stage the Town Clerk could not say anything more on the individual tenders, but the work was designed to look at a long-term plan for the park, reviewing flooding, drainage and bank stabilisation issues, tree management and landscaping, potential relocation of infrastructure out of the flood zone, Impact of usage and events, access and security.

Councillor Mosley asked if there was member involvement on the interview panel. The Town Clerk confirmed that Councillor Wagner & Wilson and a member of the Quarry staff would be present.

73/25 MARKETS

73.1 Indoor Market

The Commercial, Markets & Events Manager provided an update on the Indoor Market.

The market was extremely busy, both in the weeks running up to Christmas, as well as over the holiday period itself. Crucially, the feedback from traders was that the high footfall did translate into very healthy sales, with a number reporting record figures. Obviously, this did not necessarily result in record profits, especially when considering the ever-increasing costs with which everyone was all too familiar. However, it was clear that the indoor market was continuing to buck national trends and operate very successfully.

Demand for trading space remained high, with the entire market operating at 100% occupancy, including The Town Council's canopied section of regular traders with no rental arrears to report. Three Shropshire Council units became available in November, and encouragingly new tenants were able to open in the weeks before Christmas and become exciting new additions to the market.

The positive impact made by all the tenancy changes within the whole market over 2025 was a clear vindication of the collaborative approach they were continuing to adopt in relation to all aspects of the market operation. This had also been reflected in the healthy numbers being reported through their associated social media channels, the vast majority of which was consistently enthusiastic and supportive.

Regarding social media output, they were now approaching 50,000 followers across all platforms. They had focused more attention on growing their promotional video reels in recent months, the most successful of which reached over 112,000 views. A total reach of more than 370,000 was also achieved for a post welcoming their youngest trader, Alfie Jones, into the market earlier in the year. On Facebook alone it attracted 355,000 views, 2400 likes, 183 comments, 139 shares and an engagement of 46,259. Instagram also added nearly 15,000 further views.

This partnership approach remained key to ensuring the market continued to evolve, reinvent itself with fresh ideas and innovations, remained an integral part of the community and retained its distinctive identity as a 'proper market'. To some extent it had now become a visitor attraction in its own right, drawing people from across the UK, in addition to maintaining its loyal local customer base.

Every inch of space within the building was being utilized in creative ways to support the trading opportunities and that approach was now being extended into the immediate external areas with the launch of a brand new, innovative stall design which had recently gone on trial. The portable wooden stall had been designed and constructed in collaboration with Shrewsbury Men's shed with the aim of expanding trading into the pavement areas outside the market entrances. The stall was used by the existing Market florist to sell festive wreaths over the Christmas period and was so successful he had booked it again for other key dates in the calendar like Mother's Day.

The NABMA Great British Market Awards were taking place on 5 February which Officers from both the Town Council and Shropshire Council would be attending. Shrewsbury had been procluded from entering Britain's Favourite Market as past winner but Officers had entered the Market Hall award. Discussions were taking place with traders regarding late nights.

Councillor Wilson asked if there had been any recognition for Maddox after being in the market for 70 years. Ian confirmed they had been thanked and recognized for their commitment to the market and would be greatly missed.

Councillor Mosley asked what the expansion of trading space referred to and Ian said this was the space outside known as the 'Undercroft'. They were trying to improve this area, and a stall had been crafted by Men's Shed and used during the Christmas period to sell Christmas wreaths. This proved to be successful so they were looking to see if this area could be developed further with pop-up stalls. It would also highlight where the market was located too.

73.2 Sunday Market

After an encouraging late summer and early autumn period the operator of the Sunday Market, 'Places for Community Spaces Ltd', were hopeful that they had a solid base on which to build as they entered the traditionally very challenging late autumn and early winter for any outdoor events.

This challenge had proven to be even more difficult than anticipated with the weather taking a distinct turn for the worse and being consistently wet and windy for the majority of Sundays over this timeframe. The plan was to try and continue to build on the previously successful community elements, such as the West Mercia Police surgeries, together with some Christmas themed events to drive interest and engagement.

On one Sunday where the weather was favourable, December 14, this approach proved successful, with the highest number of traders and footfall figures recorded. However, all other Sundays were decimated by the persistent rain which gradually eroded customer numbers and consequently trader confidence. This culminated in the last Sunday in December being particularly poor, with a clear apathy for the market being demonstrated in all aspects.

With the operators then facing the prospect of the most difficult month of the year in January and no improvement in the weather forecast, they requested a face-to-face meeting with Town Council officers to discuss the best way forward. This meeting took place on 22 January in Livesey House, where the operators detailed the difficult position they currently faced, with continuing to operate the market and the decisions needing to be made with regard to their financial liabilities, particularly during the winter months.

The operators had resolved to consider their circumstances over the next few weeks, consult with as many of their traders as possible to obtain their feedback and then put forward a number of potential solutions for the Town Council to consider.

Officers had resolved to continue to provide as much advice and support as possible during this difficult period and had already made a number of recommendations and suggestions that, unlike the weather, were in the control of the operator to instigate in the meantime. These included elements like communication, promotion and proactive trader engagement which could certainly be improved.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

74/25 FISHERIES

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the work of Shrewsbury Town Council Fisheries.

The Shrewsbury Town Fisheries co-ordinator was currently busy with plans for the fisheries for 2026.

They had applied for an Environment Agency Fisheries Improvement Grant Round One, to contribute match funding with Fisheries funds, for three replacement fishing platforms for Emstrey Fishery, as the old platforms were badly eroded.

They had also received a communication from the Agency to acknowledge that Shrewsbury Town Fisheries had been expressed as champions for their works and projects.

In respect of fisheries maintenance, over the next month they would be inspecting all river & pool fisheries to look at any maintenance issues to include all fishing platforms, signage and car parks.

RESOLVED:

That the Fisheries report be noted

75/25 CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked Councillors for attending and taking part in this Town Council meeting and thanked the staff involved in this meeting. All papers related to the meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk.