SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting of Council
Held at Livesey House, 7 St Johns Hill, Shrewsbury at
6pm on Monday 29 September 2025

PRESENT

Councillors A Wagner (Mayor), J Daniels, J Dean, A Fejfer, R Gratton, B Jephcott, E Micklewright, V Moore, A Mosley, J Tandy, D Vasmer and R Wilson.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Clare Turner (Deputy Town Clerk), Stuart Farmer (Operations Manager), Andy Watkin (Head of Resources) and Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer).

44/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be received from Councillor Dartnall, Halliday, Hancock-Davies & Pardy.

45/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council
Councillor Wagner	Declared an interest in Item 14 of the agenda (SC Memorandum of Understanding) as he is the Deputy Leader of Shropshire Council and will not take part in any discussions

46/25 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 30 June 2025 be submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Full Meeting of Council on 30 June 2025 be approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

47/25 MATTERS ARISING

Min 27/25 – **Annual Accounts** - The Town Clerk reported to members that at the last meeting they approved the End of Year Accounts. As part of those End of Year Accounts they had approved the Annual Governance Statement at which they detailed any contingent liabilities featured in Assertion 8 of the AGAR.

The Town Council had received a request from Peter Day to remove his name from the Assertion 8 List of Contingent Liabilities where they had mentioned that there remained a dispute between Donors and the Greenfields Community Group regarding the status by which the group could spend any refunds of costs from the Supreme Court. Dr Day asserts that w*orking as an academic, reputational issues such as this, being wrongly associated with a lawful dispute by a town council and having this placed into the public domain on two occasions can cause damage. He advised that he would accept a retraction in writing and this needs to be at this Town Council meeting.*

The Responsible Finance Officer had amended Assertion 8 which was shown to members for their approval.

RESOLVED:

That amendments to the Annual Account as presented by the RFO be approved

48/25 ANNOUNCEMENTS

48.1 MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Mayor reported that he had a very busy calendar since the last meeting of Full Council and that there were to many announcements to go through. He wished to thank all officers involved in the Battle of Britain Memorial service that was held in the Quarry. This was a lovely event and organised perfectly.

Councillor Mosley asked Councillor Wagner of his wearing of the mayoral chain whilst in casual wear as he had received complaints regarding this with pictures of the Mayor at Greyfriars Bridge and Chester Street Bridge. Councillor Mosely commented that the mayoral chain should not be worn with casual wear.

Councillor Wagner informed Councillor Mosley that the attendance at Greyfriars Bridge had been a last-minute request to attend as the Mayor and that no mayoral chain had been worn in the photographs taken at the Chester Street Bridge, he was there as a Councillor and not the Mayor.

Councillor Daniels joined the meeting.

48.2 TOWN CLERK ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that Remembrance Sunday would be on 9th November. There would be the usual Parade from the Castle at approx. 10.30am to the Quarry for a short service, 2-minute silence & wreath laying.

There would also be a 2-minute silence in the Square on 11th November which the Mayor would be in attendance and all Members were invited to attend.

49/25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that standing orders had been followed in seeking questions ahead of the meeting, but she had accepted questions up until 4pm on the day of this meeting.

RESOLVED:

There were no questions from the public.

50/25 MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no motions submitted by Members.

51/25 END OF YEAR AUDIT

The Head of Resources reported that the deadline for publication was 30 September 2025 and that he had received the External Auditors report certificate for 2024/25 and they had commented that on the basis of their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR was in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. They were however unable to complete their review work on the AGAR and supporting documentation as a result of correspondence received in relation to 2024/25 and/or prior years. Once they had finalised their review and completed any additional work arising from that correspondence, a final report would be provided with the certificate of completion detailing any qualifications and ‘other’ matters.

A number of challenges had been received, and these were being worked through. The RFO was unsure when they would be completed. He recommended that members accept this update and then await the final audit report.

The RFO confirmed that the notices would be advertised following this meeting and would go on to the Town Council website and noticeboards. He hoped that outstanding matters would be concluded by the next Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED

(i) That the Town Council notes the update of the 2024/25 Audit;
(ii) That all relevant notices be uploaded to the Council Website and placed on Noticeboards.

52/25 SERVICE DELIVERY WORKING GROUP

The Town Clerk reported that the Service Delivery Working Group fed into the Policy & Resources Committee and the minutes of that committee within this agenda pack contained details of the discussion and decisions.

In brief, the discussion detailed:

1. The still protracted nature in which they were seeking a solution to the Horticultural Services Agreement that expired in March this year and the fact that Officers remained insistent on having a specification driven contract as opposed to the output driven service delegation that was agreed by Cabinet in December last year
2. There was a discussion about what declaring a financial emergency meant and what would be the implications of a s114 notice were they to have an agreement in place or not
3. They spoke about the leases for the countryside land as well as the Asset Transfers of the Grange and The Hive and it was felt that they needed a structural survey to determine the extent of any liability The Hive posed
4. The Group were generally in agreement with the Memorandum of Understanding, but they stressed that service delegations should not be micro-managed by Shropshire Council
5. They discussed issues around TUPE and impact for the Senior Management Team of those Central Costs that seemed to be absorbed elsewhere
6. They discussed the Stepping Up Team and how they could keep Councillors up-to-date on works in their areas

There were a number of recommendations for Council to consider. Those being

- To Sign the Memorandum Of Understanding
- To write to the Chief Executive & Leader of Shropshire Council requesting a meeting – which the Town Clerk had requested ahead of Full Council. The Leader of Shropshire Council acknowledged the request and asked the S151 Officer to arrange and to date the Town Council had heard nothing.
- To commission a Structural Survey – they were currently making enquiries around availability with local Structural Engineers

Councillor Wilson stated that the Service Level Agreement needed to be finalised, and this was a pressing issue. The lack of response from Shropshire Council was concerning.

Councillor Wilson also commented that the chairs of the Standing Committees had a separate meeting recently and it was suggested there was a need for a short-term Projects Officer as the Town Council staff were already working to capacity. He proposed that discussions on this could take place in the Personnel Committee meeting scheduled for 23 October.

Councillor Dean supported the recruitment of a Projects Officer. In regard to managing the SLA he commented that it would be useful for members to understand this more and could they have an outcome-based agreement, needing assurance that they were not setting cuts, what was the statutory requirement and what level of details was in the deal. The Town Clerk commented that it was very outcomes driven.

Councillor Mosley commented that the work of the Stepping Up Team was being placed onto a spreadsheet which was going to be circulated to all Councillors but has not to date, so he enquired if it could be circulated.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the spreadsheet was currently being formatted, and it would be distributed when it was ready.

RESOLVED:

(i) **That a further letter be sent to the Chief Executive & Leader of Shropshire Council requesting a meeting – which the Town Clerk had requested ahead of Full Council. The Leader of Shropshire Council had acknowledged the request and asked the S151 Officer to arrange and to date the Town Council had heard nothing.**
(ii) **That a Structural Survey be commissioned for The Hive**
(iii) **That a short-term Project Officer position is discussed at the Personnel Committee.**

53/25 DISPENSATIONS

The Town Clerk reported that she had discussions with the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer at Shropshire Council about those twin hatted councillors who sat on this council who had a significant role in the decision making of Shropshire Council and the need to consider Dispensations. As members were aware the granting of dispensations was delegated to the Town Clerk as per the resolution at Annual Council in May. Having had discussions with Councillors Wilson, Vasmer & Bentick, they had sought and been granted dispensations on the grounds of:

- without the dispensation the number of persons unable to participate in the transaction of business would be so great as to impede the transaction of the business
- without the dispensation the representative from different political groups of the Council transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business
- the dispensation was in the interests of persons living in the council's area

This left Councillor Wagner. He had considered his role as the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder with responsibility for special Communities and liaising directly with Parish Councils and felt that role overrides whatever happened at the Town Council. Councillor Wagner would continue to declare interests and remove himself from discussions and decision making at the Town Council meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the granting of Dispensations to Councillors Wilson, Bentick and Vasmer be accepted by the Town Council under delegated authority

54/25 QUARRY MANAGEMENT PLAN FEASIBILITY

Shrewsbury Town Council was seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced consultancy to develop a comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Quarry Park, a key historic and recreational asset in Shrewsbury. The CMP would provide a strategic and operational framework for the sustainable management, enhancement, and protection of the park, ensuring it remained resilient to environmental challenges and continued to support a wide range of community, cultural, and ecological functions.

This plan would build upon the strategic vision established by the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan and the Movement & Public Spaces Strategy and would complement existing Conservation Management Plans for other heritage assets in the town, including Shrewsbury Castle, Rowley's House, and the Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery. Collectively, these plans would inform a coordinated and place-based approach to conserving Shrewsbury's rich heritage environment.

The Town Clerk reported that the Draft Invitation to Tender for members' final comment ahead of uploading this onto Contract Finder had been distributed prior to the meeting. They were looking to have an eight-week window which hopefully would allow enough time to consider submissions, hold interviews and appoint a preferred contract by the December if not January Policy & Resources Committee. It was hoped the plan would be uploaded to Contracts Finder on 1 October 2025.

Councillor Wilson commented that this was a better document in securing the future of the Quarry and a great proposal for somebody to work on who had a set of fresh eyes.

The Town Clerk said that the plan integrated with the rest of the town, and it went beyond the park boundaries.

Councillor Mosley asked if the plan would be sent out to interested parties and if this was not planned it should be, and they should be alerted to it.

It was agreed that if there were any further comments from Councillors regarding this plan to send them to the Town Clerk and Operations Manager.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the update be noted
(ii) That the Town Clerk & Operations Manager be contacted with any further comments

55/25 SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Councillor Wagner left the meeting. In the absence of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Wilson chaired the meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that the Service Delivery Working Group and the Policy & Resources Committee had considered the Memorandum of Understanding previously distributed to all Town & Parish Councils by the S151 Officer.

Both had recommended that it be signed, but there were a few conditions to that, that had been appended in a draft letter to accompany the return of the MOU. This letter was shown to all Members prior to the meeting.

Councillor Dean commented on the draft letter saying that it was usually a longer response given but it did highlight the difficulties they were facing, and he supported the letter.

Councillor Mosley commented that it needed to identify the challenges and impact on staff and was there any idea how the Town Council may be helped financially if they took on services from Shropshire Council. Was there any financial assistance and would a budget be transferred over. He commented that TUPE may be an issue, and markers should be put down in the letter.

Councillor Wilson suggested appending the previous letter sent to Shropshire Council to this letter as what was written in that still stood.

Councillor Mosley also commented that in Appendix 1, no opposition members were noted or a Chief Executive. He questioned who most of the staff named were and how was the process going to be governed. Councillor Wilson confirmed the Memorandum of Understanding sat over everything else.

Councillor Jephcott assumed that Appendix 1 was an active document, and it implied it would be filled in as and when staff names were agreed.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the Memorandum of Understanding be signed
(ii) That the draft letter be circulated alongside the previous letter sent to Shropshire Council

Councillor Wagner re-joined the meeting and took over the role of Chairman.

56/25 CHANGE TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Wilson informed Committee of a procedural matter in relation to Committee Membership.

Councillor Bentick wished to end his role as the Chair of the Communities and Environment Committee and be replaced by Councillor Daniels. Councillor Bentick had agreed to be Chair of the Committee on a short-term basis only. Councillor Bentick would remain on the Communities and Environment Committee as a member.

Councillor Wilson thanked Councillor Bentick for his role as the Chair and proposed that Councillor Daniels would take over the role at the next meeting to be held on 8 October.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Daniels replace Councillor Bentick as Chair on the Communities & Environment Committee with effect from 8 October 2025.

56/25 OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Clerk informed Council that after the elections, they had circulated their usual list of outside organisations the Town Council had representations on. Some of these were informal whilst others were charities whose governance documents required representations.

The list had now been updated as some of them no longer required a representative. These were:

- Football Liaison Committee (was Cllr Moore)
- RAF Shawbury Helicopter Noise Liaison Group (was Cllr Bentick)
- Shrewsbury & District Arts Association (was Cllr Dean)
- Shrewsbury Carnival Committee
- Shropshire Welfare Trust (was Cllr Pardy)

Councillor Tandy asked why the football club were no longer having meetings as these used to be regular quarterly meetings.

The Town Clerk commented that it would now lie within the Football Foundation, so a representative was not required. Councillor Wagner confirmed that he was the previous representative for this and that they had only met once over a four-year period.

Councillor Wilson asked the Town Clerk if all gaps had now been filled and it was confirmed they had. He thanked Members for putting their names forward as representatives to the outside bodies listed.

Councillor Dean asked about the Big Town Plan listed and how the Town Council inputted into this. The Town Clerk confirmed that it was agreed an officer and decision maker would be on board and that it was a formal arrangement they had.

Councillor Wagner commented that the Big Town Plan were looking at Stakeholder groups in general and making it less political and have a central Shrewsbury Councillor meeting separately.

Councillor Wilson asked if the Town Clerk would put the Big Town Plan as a standing item on the Policy & Resources agendas.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the Outside Bodies representatives be noted

(ii) That the Big Town Plan becomes a permanent agenda item at Policy & Resources Committee

57/25 MEOLE ESTATE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Town Clerk advised Members of a request from Councillor Bentick and the Meole Estate Community Association (a newly formed Community Interest Company) for Shrewsbury Town Council's support in principle for the construction of a new community centre on Mary Webb Road, and to seek approval for the reallocation of existing funds and consideration of future funding opportunities.

Unfortunately, Councillor Bentick was not present at the meeting to discuss this request further.

Councillor Wilson suggested that as Councillor Bentick was not present, that this agenda item be deferred to the Communities & Environment Committee to discuss further.

RESOLVED:

That in the absence of Councillor Bentick this item be added to the Communities and Environment Committee for discussion

58/25 DEVELOPMENT AT LAND OFF LONDON ROAD

The Town Clerk informed members that Councillor Dartnall was not available for this meeting but had asked this item to go on the agenda. She has had a long aspiration that the greenspace at the new Cornovii development site off London Road be adopted by the Town Council. Officers spent an extensive amount of time reviewing plans, guiding the development company on the best use of open space and the level of specification needed to develop open space, to find that the land would now be managed through a Management Company, siting the Town Council's costs in demanding a 15-year maintenance contribution in lieu of management in perpetuity. Councillor Dartnall felt that this was grossly unfair to expect residents to pay both Council Tax and a Management Fee. This however happened elsewhere as the developer must determine the management arrangements for any public open space. They could site a number of developments which operated in this way – Shillingstone Drive, Weir Hill, Yew Tree Close off Whitchurch Road and Falcons Way opposite the hospital. Council was asked to consider whether there needed to be any changes to their approach to land adoption.

Councillor Mosley commented that this raised the issue of how competitive the Town Council were and an issue worthy of further examination. He suggested that this was an agenda item for a future Policy & Resources Committee with a report provided.

Councillor Jephcott asked if this was to manage the open space and not the road network and they needed to establish what their offer was compared to other contractors.

Councillor Wilson commented that this was bad as it was Shropshire Council's own company and should this topic be discussed at a Planning meeting under Planning Policy.

Councillor Mosley commented that they needed to look at the whole process and how they would calculate costs.

Councillor Wagner commented that they had a division of labour and if planning wanted to have a look at this they should.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair of Committees agree division of labour to discuss the Land Adoption Policy.

59/25 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE (MINUTES ENCLOSED)

The Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 14 July and 15 September 2025 were circulated as read.

Councillor Wilson commented that he was still looking into the issues raised regarding Belvidere Bridge.

In respect of the proposed Fees & Charges Working Group he asked if any further members wished to join, to contact the Town Clerk. Councillor Micklewright had already volunteered to join the group.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 14 July and 15 September 2025 be received and adopted.

60/25 COMMUNITIES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (MINUTES ENCLOSED)

The Minutes of the Communities & Environment Committee held on 6 August 2025 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Communities & Environment Committee meeting held on 6 August 2025 be received and adopted

61/25 OPERATIONS COMMITTEE (MINUTES ENCLOSED)

The Minutes of the Operations Committee held on 9 July and 3 September 2025 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Operations Committee meeting held on 9 July and 3 September 2025 be received and adopted

62/25 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 8 July, 12 August and 9 September 2025 were submitted as circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 8 July, 12 August and 9 September 2025 be received and adopted.

63/25 WORKING GROUPS

63.1 JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 2 July 2025 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 2 July 2025 be received and adopted

63.2 GRANTS SUB COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Grants Sub Committee meeting held on 23 July 2025 were circulated as read.

Councillor Micklewright asked if there could be more communication regarding the grants as they had gone from 13 applications down to just one. It was explained that this could happen and that the grants funds were being well publicised on the town council media platforms.

Councillor Dean asked if there was any feedback provided to applicants who were not successful in their grant application and the RFO confirmed that unsuccessful applicants would be contacted in writing.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Grants Sub Committee meeting held on 23 July 2025 be received and adopted.

64/25 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following items being considered involve the disclosure of confidential information.

The Mayor advised that live streaming of this meeting would now stop. He thanked members of the public for logging in. All papers relating to the meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk

65/25 APPEALS COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Appeals Committee meeting held on 14 July 2025 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Appeals Committee meeting held on 14 July 2025 be received and adopted.

66/25 CLOSING REMARKS

The Mayor thanked members and staff for their attendance and closed the meeting.