

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT LIVESEY HOUSE, 7 ST JOHNS HILL
ON 15TH APRIL 2026

PRESENT

Councillors Alan Mosley, Alex Wagner & Rob Wilson

Staff Adam Clifford, Andy Hall, Amy Jones, Chris Kane, Sally Nicholson & Ian Thorpe

Union David Burton (Unison)

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Clare Turner (Deputy Town Clerk), Andy Watkin (Head of Resources), Danny Powell (Operations Manager – Horticulture) & Stuart Farmer (Operations Manager – Infrastructure & Logistics)

26/25 APOLOGIES

None received

27/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Those twin-hatted members declared an interest in Shropshire Council. Councillor Wagner also declared the fact that he was the Deputy Leader of Shropshire Council and had previously declared his interest in the Delegation Process, but as the decision had now been made by both Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council, he no longer need to register that interest

28/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 21st January 2026 had been circulated prior to the meeting

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 21st January 2026 be agreed as a correct record

29/25 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

30/25 ITEMS RAISED BY COUNCIL

30.1 Devolution of Services

It was reported that the Street Cleaning Service had started on 1st April. All staff had been recruited and equipment procurement undertaken. Most staff started a week early for onboarding. There had been positive feedback from residents and businesses. The previous contractor hadn't undertaken bin emptying for the week before service transfer which meant that the team were playing catch up. The Team were now starting proactive work including removing the residue detritus from the bottom of litter bins which meant that bins were filling up too quickly. Rotas were now starting to take shape. It was reported that no shift rotas had been received from the previous contractor, so staff were having to start from scratch working from a spreadsheet of streets and bin locations. Generally speaking, staff were pleased with progress. Admin Officers had received some complaints on the first day, but the public were generally appreciative of the process.

Councillor Mosley offered his congratulations all round. He asked what happened if the main street sweeper broke down; The Operations Manager – Infrastructure, advised that the Town Council had a service and repair contract with the Dawson Group and reported on the quick repair to a recent breakdown.

Councill Wagner reported what a massive achievement this had been to mobilise a service so quickly.

The Deputy Town Clerk explained the reporting mechanism for Councillors and the public. Administration staff had done a great job in taking calls while the Customer Services Staff come on board. Stepping Up Team were continuing to undertake Ward Walks; this information would be input into CRM system to ensure all tasks were captured.

The Deputy Town Clerk was working with the Customer Services Team at Shropshire Council to ensure that they knew exactly what the Town Council was now responsible for so that they could direct enquiries appropriately. Fix My Street was being upgraded to allow forwarding of Town Council related tasks directly to the Town Council, but the Town Council wouldn't be able to contact the Customer directly through Fix My Street but would instead send confirmation of work undertaken directly.

30.2 Health & Safety

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that Worknest had been commissioned to carry out General and Fire Risk Assessments of all buildings; there would be a number of actions that would arise from those assessments. The Deputy Town Clerk was developing a training programme on H&S for all staff. All COSHH Risk Assessments were being updated. Risk Assessments would be reviewed taking into account a new Risk Assessment template to be used across the whole council.

30.3 Local Government Pay 2026/27

Pay negotiations for 2026/27 had commenced. The Employers had issued their full and final offer to the Unions for their consideration. The Deputy Town Clerk would forward details to all representatives. David Burton reported on the Union's disappointment with the offer; Unison would shortly ballot their members; local government salaries had reduced significantly in value terms over the last few years. The Deputy Town Clerk reported that negotiation often took 6 months meaning back pay was usually in the November/December pay. David Burton advised that the Council might need to consider staged payments were any staff on universal credit.

30.4 Employment Rights Act

Deputy Town Clerk reported on key changes that were initiated from 1st April 2026 under the Employment Rights Act 2025. These changes would be incorporated within various HR Policies. These changes included:

- Statutory Sick Pay from Day One
- Family Friendly Leave from Day One
- Holiday Records
- Collective Redundancy
- Trade Union Rights recognition
- Creation of the Fair Work Agency

All staff would be written to on the new changes

Councillor Mosley queried the rules on flexible working and whether the Town Council had any employees on zero hours contracts. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that some staff had casual contracts, but none had zero hours contracts. A Casual Contract was a contract with hours to meet the service and allowed flexibility whereas zero contracts did not require the employer to allocate any hours. Casual Contracts offered the employee a choice, whereas Zero Contracts were generally to the detriment of the employee in what they were working.

RESOLVED:

That the JCC notes the changes brought about by the Employment Rights Act 2025 and supports the following:

1. Policy update:

- **Absence Management Policy to reflect new SSP changes**
- **Paternity Leave Policy, Parental Leave Policy and Leave Policy to reflect new family friendly day one entitlements rights to statutory leave from day one of employment.**

2. Time Management and Payroll systems Readiness

- **Ensure providers' systems are ready for accurate holiday records and correct payments in line with new statutory requirements.**

3. Manager and Workforce Communication

- **Provide targeted communication to managers to manage expectations and promote understanding on:**
 - **New family-friendly rights**
 - **SSP changes and absence management**

4. Compliance and Risk Management

- **Strengthen internal controls in anticipation of enforcement activity by the Fair Work Agency including:**
 - **Policy review; update, approval, version control and accessibility to staff and managers.**
 - **Employment contracts and standard letters review to ensure they do not contain outdated qualifying periods or other eligibility criteria.**
 - **Collective redundancy processes review to mitigate increased financial exposure from higher protective awards.**

5. Trade Union Engagement

- **Review and strengthen consultation arrangements, ensuring recognition agreements, JCC processes and escalation routes are clear, current and consistently applied.**
- **Equip managers with clear guidance and support on the revised trade union framework to promote lawful, constructive engagement and reduce the risk of dispute.**
- **Maintain proactive oversight of employee relations, using early engagement with trade unions and regular reporting through established governance arrangements.**

30.5 Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Duties

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a report on the changes the Town Council had made in meeting that statutory requirements of the Worker Protection Act 2023. This extended not just to staff but also ensured that the Council monitored arrangements of contractors' staff through the Town Council procurement process.

Councillor Mosley enquired whether there were other policies that prevented harassment for other protected characteristics. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that they were already in place.

RESOLVED:

That the JCC :

- (i) Notes the increased legal and regulatory risk arising from the statutory duty effective October 2024 and the anticipated strengthening of the framework in 2026;**
- (ii) Supports the inclusion of the 2024 and expected 2026 changes within the revised *Dignity and Respect at Work Policy* and *Whistleblowing Policy*; and**
- (iii) Supports the delivery of mandatory manager training and workforce awareness activity to evidence reasonable preventative steps.**

31/25 STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

31.1 Uniforms

Amy Jones raised whether there could be consideration of different uniforms for different departments. Cllr Wagner felt that branding was important. Cllr Mosley felt that this was a derogatory step; this could potentially create silos. The Operations Manager – Horticulture questioned whether this could work as staff moved between teams. The Town Clerk referred back to the start of the Council in 2009 and the need to have an identified branding for all staff, to distinguish them from other public sector operatives.

31.2 Length of Service

Amy Jones asked whether there was recognition for length of service. The Head of Resources advised that there was recognition for 10 and 25 years' service; staff database was looked at on an annual basis to see whether any members of staff were due recognition. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Town Clerk had delegated authority to recognise long service.

31.3 Geopolitical Unrest

Andy Hall asked whether the organisation considered any effect as a result of the Trump effect. The Town Clerk advised that this was looked at in terms of the impact on the Medium-Term Financial Plan on the financial impact of supply chains but more recently the resilience of local markets particularly around food.

32/25 MEETING DATES

Next Meeting 15th July 2026