

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 6 August 2025

PRESENT

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Clare Turner (Deputy Town Clerk), Ruth Jones (Office Manager) and Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer).

Also in attendance were Rebecca Sweeney, Catherine Webb and Alex Tree (Severn Trent Water).

18/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be received and accepted from Councillors Micklewright & Wilson.

**Apologies also received from Ian Thorpe (Commercial, Markets & Events Manager),
Andy Hall - Youth & Community Manager.**

19/25 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.
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20/25 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Communities & Environment Committee meeting held on 11 June 2025 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

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

21/25 SEVERN TRENT BIOSWALES – ROUNDHILL GREEN

Representatives from Severn Trent Water attended the meeting to provide an update on the proposed Bioswale SuDs feature at Round Hill Green.

Severn Trent were proposing to install 2 sustainable drainage features (Suds). The proposal was one of several in the Cotton Hill area which would help to reduce flooding on the footpath known as Pig Trough. They were currently aiming for a September 8 start with an estimated eight-week construction duration. A road closure would be required on Roundhill Green whilst they installed the pipework to take the highway flows to the bioswale. They would be coordinating this closely to ensure as much access as possible could remain for residents. During construction a welfare unit would be on site and if any grass got damaged during the construction period it would be replaced.

The overview of the proposal was:

- SUDS element within the public open space at Roundhill Park
- A conventional pipe separation on Berwick Avenue/Road and Gravel Hill Lane
- To upsize the existing sewer at Pig Trough footpath.

The proposal was to redirect surface water from the highway on Roundhill Green that currently discharged directly into the combined sewer network in the area into a bioswale (a shallow vegetated grass channel) where it would be attenuated and discharged either into the ground or back into the combined sewer network at a reduced rate.

Bioswales had been designed to attenuate surface water and infiltrate/soakaway. A high-level exceedance gully would be installed so additional flows can be discharged gradually back to the sewer network. They were designed to drain down within 48 hours so the feature doesn't retain a permanent water level.

The Northern Bioswale has an approximately 100m³ and a catchment of 3556m² feeding into it. The Southern Bioswale has an approximately 23m³ and a catchment of 980m² feeding into it.

The features were designed with a top water level control to prevent the bioswale from flooding overland in rainfall events in excess of the design storm. These features were typically up to 1.5m in depth (depending on how much drained into them) with up to 450mm peak surface water level.

Bioswales were designed in line with guidance from ROPSA (Royal Society for the prevention of accidents) key safety features included knee rail fencing near public footpaths and a 1:4 gradient slope allowing for self-rescue should someone accidentally fall into the feature. They were designed to have aco-inlets to bring highway water into the features. These features were designed to filter out common

pollutants from surface water including suspended solids, metals and hydrocarbons.

The bioswales were to be turfed with “Purple Haze” turf as it was drought tolerant. These features and the associated pipework and gullies would be owned and maintained by Severn Trent following construction.

There had been several levels of communication from Severn Trent to the public regarding this proposal. Over 500 letters were sent initially letting the community know about the work taking place and they would continue to send letters to residents at each phase of the works. They had also arranged two well attended Customer Drop's to meet the project team and look at their designs. The Severn Trent website would provide regular updates once the scheme had started and a direct phone number to contact a Communications Officer to ask questions or raise concerns had been provided. There would also be regular updates posted on social media platforms and via press releases.

Councillor Bentick enquired if the River Severn in flood came up to the bioswales and it was confirmed no. He also asked if the work would be completed during normal working hours and if contact numbers would be provided on site? It was confirmed that work would be completed under normal working hours, and they would try as much as possible to reduce any road closures that would be required. The bioswales phase of the project would start in September and the second part of the scheme would start in the new year. Contractors would fully co-operate and accommodate the residents and contact numbers would be provided.

Councillor Dartnall asked if the capacity of both bioswales would cope with high storms. Severn Trent confirmed that testing had been done and that they should be able to cope.

(Councillor Jephcott joined the meeting at 6.24pm.)

Councillor Mosley enquired if this area actually flooded and it was confirmed there was flooding on Pig Trough from the combined sewer and this proposals aim was to reduce this flooding. Councillor Mosley also asked who would maintain the site and if there was a maintenance plan in place. It was confirmed that Severn Trent would maintain the site and there was a maintenance plan in place which they would share out to Councillors.

RESOLVED:

That the update from Severn Trent be noted.

Rebecca Sweeney, Catherine Webb and Alex Tree left the meeting.

22/25 BUDGET SETTING PROCESS

The Town Clerk informed the Committee on this year's budget process and the Committees input into that process.

The Responsible Financial Officer took a report to the last Policy & Resources Committee about engaging with the standing committees regarding setting the budget for 2026/27.

They had Committee meetings scheduled for the 8 October and 3 December ahead of the Policy & Resources Committee starting budget setting on the 8 December. That meeting sets the policy direction for the budget and a draft budget was then prepared for consideration on the 12 January which then recommends the final budget to the Full Council meeting on the 26 January ahead of our 31 January 2026 deadline.

Over the next two meetings, the Town Clerk would put together agenda items to start to look at any funding requirements that the RFO needed to consider. She asked members if there was anything at this stage that members required her to look at and she would make note.

In considering any budgetary item, they had to be mindful of their general powers to deliver and that it aligned with the Town Council Corporate Plan and the six pillars of;

- Building Resilient Communities
- Supporting Shrewsbury residents to live active and healthy lives through the provision of quality services
- Preserving Shrewsbury's Heritage
- Creating a greener and better-connected Shrewsbury
- Advancing a sustainable, resilient and efficient organisation
- Taking Positive action to tackle climate change

Councillor Dartnall asked about possible funding for Bathing Water.

Councillor Mosley asked if a request could go out to all Councillors for input that could then be sent to the relevant Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk would contact all Councillors asking for any funding requirements.

23/25 CLIMATE & NATURE RECOVERY FORUM

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Policy & Resources Committee set out the format for the consideration of Councillor led Forum to assist the Committees in making informed decisions. Councillors had expressed an interest in establishing a Climate & Nature Recovery Forum taking into account the sterling work the original committee undertook with a variety of external partners being part of the committee. For a forum to be considered it needed a member champion to lead the meetings. This item was raised at the previous Communities & Environment Committee held on 11 June seeking volunteers for a member champion and the Town Clerk asked if there were any volunteers.

Councillor Dartnall asked if it needed to be councillor lead, if external members could be brought in and what was the objective of the forum.

The Town Clerk confirmed they could look at previous attendees of the Climate Committee and look at new attendees also with the aim of the Town Council achieving carbon neutrality.

Councillor Mosley commented that the previous Committee failed in its goal as it became a talking shop for external attendees. The council had a direct concern with climate and this forum could comment on this. He commented that they needed direction the forum was to take. The forum needed knowledgeable attendees but to get representatives the purpose of the forum needed to be explained.

Councillor Bentick commented that they needed to work out the relationship between the forum and this Committee.

The Town Clerk suggested creating some terms for the forum and the work that needed to be done and the key thing the forum needed to do. She could then circulate this out to all members and invite them to take part.

Councillor Dartnall suggested setting 4/5 objectives which would include getting to net zero and possibly looking at a greener fleet for the council.

Councillor Tandy asked if there was a budget for this i.e. the fleet and the Town Clerk confirmed that the Climate Committee originally had around £250,000 but the previous committee had spent it on several things so there was probably around £80,000 left. With regards to the fleet there were budgetary funds elsewhere for this.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk creates Terms for the Climate & Nature Recovery Forum to send out to all members.

24/25 SAFETY BARRIERS AT WOODFIELD SCHOOL

The Town Clerk informed Committee that she had received a number of valid concerns about not just the safety of the barriers outside Woodfield primary School but the safety of Copthorne Road which had become more of a rat run for drivers wanting to get to Porthill roundabout. A few weeks ago, saw the second accident in twelve months that had demolished the safety railings outside of the school entrance on Copthorne Road.

She had contacted the Highways Manager at Shropshire Council as a safety concern. He had advised that replacement barriers were on order, but the public concern around safety of the road still remained.

At Shropshire Council Cabinet on 11 June, Councillor Dean asked about Shropshire Council's commitment to working towards a 20mph scheme within Porthill and Copthorne. Councillor Dean had also asked for additional crossing points.

Cllr Rob Wilson, Portfolio Holder for Transport & Economic Growth, detailed the Liberal Democrat manifesto at the council elections of introducing 20mph speed limits where there was the support of the parish council and local councillor. He advised that there had been initial discussions with Council officers about reviewing Shropshire Council's policy on the use of 20mph speed limits. The hope was that it would make the process for implementation simpler and more cost effective. For Shrewsbury, this would bring council policy in line with the Movement and Public Space Strategy which suggested that "most residential roads across Shrewsbury with a current speed limit of 30mph should be changed to a speed limit of 20mph, though some main roads could be exempt from this speed limit and remain at higher speed limits, where required." In regard to crossing points, it was hoped that the recruitment of a new Active Travel Manager would move forward the installation of pedestrian crossings where they are needed across the county.

Given the above, the Town Clerk asked if the Committee were content that Shropshire Council would progress safety measures or if the Committee wished to seek their own representations.

Councillor Mosley commented that this item should not be on a Town Council agenda when it was outside the Town Council's remit and the public should be contacting Shropshire Council directly.

Councillor Tandy agreed with Councillor Mosley, it was a Shropshire Council issue, and they should sort the problem out and not involve the Town Council.

The Town Clerk added that the Town Council had an adversary role and asked if the members were content where it stopped and did the committee want to progress this further.

Councillor Bentick stated that the barriers were the responsibility of Shropshire Council and that it was not clear what the public wanted the Town Council to do. The Town Clerk commented that they wanted the Town Council to represent their interests to Shropshire Council Highways and to slow down the traffic outside the school.

Councillor Dartnall commented that all Councillors wanted schools within their wards protected but the Town Council could not get involved.

Councillor Bentick was concerned on setting a precedent. He suggested that he spoke to the local member outside of this meeting as they were not present this evening, and to defer the issue until he had spoken to them.

Councillor Mosley said no to the deferring of the item and that it was a matter for the local member and Shropshire Council and that the Town Council could not make representations on individual casework that Shropshire Council were already dealing with.

Councillor Bentick asked the Town Clerk for advice on the next steps to take. The Town Clerk re-iterated that the Town Council had an advocacy role and wanted to assist by sending a letter supporting the concerns raised.

Councillor Jephcott commented that the local member was absent from the meeting and agreed they should defer to see what the local members suggested as the course of action.

Councillor Bentick suggested that he liaised with the local member and determine with the Town Clerk whether the item came back to this Committee and to also request an acceleration with Shropshire Council for 20mph being imposed.

Councillor Dartnall commented that if that was the case all members should be asked as they all had issues with this within their wards.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) That the Town Clerk writes to each Councillor for their views on 20mph speed limits in their wards for schools and to compose a letter to Shropshire Council as a whole**
- (ii) That this item is deferred from this Committee**

4 members were in favour of the above recommendation and 3 voted to abstain.

25/25 LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that the LNRS consultation was launched today. The consultation would remain open for 10 weeks, closing on Tuesday 15 October and they hoped this extended period would give everyone plenty of time to review the materials and share their views at a time to suit them.

The link was now available, and the Town Clerk would send this out to all Councillors. The survey was quite large but if members had any viewpoints the Town Clerk could formulate a response and bring it to the next Committee meeting

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the link to the survey be sent out to all Councillors**
- (ii) That the Town Clerk would formulate a response for the next Committee meeting to be held in October.**

26/25 BATHING WATERS

The Town Clerk reported to Committee that she continued to meet with the Environment Agency every month and she had a couple of items to update the Committee on.

Statutory Monitoring – They were now over halfway through the Bathing Water Season. Results had continued to come in and there had been some elevated readings. These were likely due to the intense rain events upstream and at the site, but they would be investigating these as the season progressed. Given the number and strength of these readings, it was looking likely that the classification for Shrewsbury 2025 would remain Poor, but this won't be officially determined until the end of the Bathing Water Season.

Monitoring project – The results coming back from this had been very interesting and showed just how dynamic the River Severn at Shrewsbury was. The results had complemented the statutory monitoring results and actually indicated that on a day-to-day basis, the river readings were probably higher (worse) than that of the statutory results. This was all important when it came to providing the general public with informed choice. There also appeared to be a strong correlation between temperature and results. The Environment Agency would be testing these hypotheses over the rest of the season.

The Town Clerk also announced that the Environment Agency had been awarded extension funding to allow them to continue the bacteria monitoring for the project to the end of the year, not just to the end of July. They were also hoping to bring Shrewsbury onto the bathing app in the next few weeks, and the data would be presented in that. The Town Clerk has another meeting scheduled with the Environment Agency in August.

Councillor Bentick asked if Tom Coekin from the Environment Agency could be invited to join the next meeting to provide a further update.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the update be noted**
- (ii) That Tom Coekin from the Environment Agency is invited to the next meeting on 8 October to provide an update**

27/25 TEAM SHREWSBURY

27.1 Update on the work of Team Shrewsbury

The Office Manager provided an update on Team Shrewsbury activities. There had been a number of spikes during the past three months. Security continued their regular patrols with the Town Rangers, Quarry Security and Taxi Marshals engaging with members of the public & businesses. They regularly received positive feedback thanking them for the vital work they undertook in keeping the Town Centre safe.

Homes & Communities Department at Shropshire Council had confirmed that the Tannery was currently full with all 60 rooms being occupied. The Tannery had now been operating for 6 months.

Coton Hill House was expected to be completed in late August and open in late September. An open day for local residents and stakeholders was currently being planned for September, which details would be shared.

The re-opening of No 70 Castle Foregate, had similar timescales to Coton Hill House, however expected to be open during October. Both Coton Hill House and No 70 would have staff presence 24/7.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted

27.2 Policing Priorities

The Office Manager provided an update on Policing Priorities. The policing priorities presented at this meeting were for ratifying for the July submission. The next submission would be October and requests for Councillor priorities would therefore be made during September. The Office Manager informed Committee that Councillor Wilson had been liaising with the Inspector and Parking Enforcement Supervisor at Shropshire Council, and both had been asked to attend a future

meeting to discuss Traffic Management responsibility in relation to parking issues. This would be arranged when both parties were available at the same time.

Councillor Jephcott asked if members received regular feedback from the priorities they submitted as there was a potential for the Police to progress some of the issues raised especially driving issues and he would like to address the Police to discuss this further. The Office manager confirmed that feedback received was sent out.

Councillor Tandy commented that there was an issue with modified bikes around the town.

Councillor Fejfer commented that there was a rise in the use of electric scooters, and he would like to know what the Police did about this as he believed they were still illegal to use. The Office manager would ask the question to the Police.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted**
- (ii) That the Town Clerk writes to the Inspector regarding the concerns raised**
- (iii) That the Chief Inspector & Parking Enforcement Supervisor be invited to a future meeting.**

28/25 QUARRY

The Town Clerk provided an update to Committee in the absence of the Commercial, Markets & Events Manager.

They had two of the more significant events take place since the last report with the Food Festival held at the end of June and Let's Rock in the middle of July. Both events proved to be popular once again with the Food Festival reporting its best crowd numbers for many years and Let's Rock holding up well considering it was their only date for 2025.

There were obvious legitimate concerns about the future of several of their long running shows and festivals at the present time and, partly with that in mind, officers had held initial meetings with several successful event organisers and promoters. This process would continue as they looked towards building their calendar in 2026. Officers had also met with the licencing and environmental protection representatives within Shropshire Council with regard to the potential impact new events could have on their current premises licence for the quarry and they were supportive of considering a variation to the existing licence on the basis of the economic benefit these events brought to the town centre.

The 'Summer of Music 2025, live in the bandstand' season had continued with just three further performances left during the second half of August. The feedback continued to be extremely positive from both the general public and the bands

themselves, with attention already turning to how the season can be developed further in 2026.

The Town Clerk confirmed that there was no update on the Flower Show and that she had a meeting scheduled with them this month to hear any plans they had.

Councillor Mosley asked if the Quarry would be taken out of commission more if there were to be new events, but the Town Clerk confirmed it would not.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

29/25 GRANTS

The Town Clerk informed Committee that the notes of the Grants Sub Committee following their meeting with applicants had been circulated to all members. Their grant funding recommendations were contained within the minutes for this Committee's ratification.

	Organisation	Amount Awarded
1.	Crane Quality Counselling	£2500
2.	Feed the Birds	£900
3.	The Group the Musical	£1231.60
4.	The Hive (HMM Arts Ltd)	£1500
5.	Lingen Davies Cancer Support	£1000
6.	Mumma's Emporium	£500
7.	Shrewsbury & Oswestry Crucial Crew	£2000
8.	The Shrewsbury Ark	£1000
9.	Shrewsbury Arts Trail	£0
10.	Shrewsbury Food Hub	£3000
11.	Shrewsbury Street Pastors	£650
12.	Shropshire Youth Association	£350
13.	We are Listening	£0
	TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED	£14,631.16

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the amounts shown above were awarded to the organisations**
- (ii) That the notes of the Grants Sub Committee meeting held on 6 August be received and adopted**

30/25 YOUTH

The Town Clerk provided a brief update on Youth as it was the summer holidays so there was little to report. The Young Shrewsbury youth activities had now finished for the summer break.

HAF Summer dates had now started at the Grange and Monkmoor, they began W/C 21 July.

The Alternative Curriculum delivery continued with attendees all being from Shrewsbury Academy.

The Youth Councillors attended the Stay Safe Day that was held in the Quarry in June. The day was a great success with a good turnout. The Chair & Deputy Chair of the Youth Council were assisting the High Sherriff with her young people's project.

The Deputy Town Clerk had met with the Youth Support Manager at Shropshire Council regarding their recent funding award and discussed how that funding might impact on the young people of Shrewsbury. This was early days, but it was hoped that the Deputy Town Clerk would be given the opportunity to shape the direction for youth services in this town.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

31/25 MARKETS

The Town Clerk provided an update to the Committee on all market operations in Shrewsbury.

The market had been particularly busy in recent weeks with the cafes and restaurants often full to capacity and traders reporting brisk sales volumes. The collaborative working relationship between the Town Council and Shropshire Council management teams had undoubtedly helped to address and mitigate the on-going operational and logistical issues caused by the age of the building itself and the demands being placed upon it by such a busy market. There were also small encouraging signs of progress with improving the building infrastructure, however, significant long-term investment was still urgently needed to avoid an increasingly negative impact on the operation of the market and ultimately the experience being provided to customers.

Preparations were beginning to ramp up for the celebratory events in September to acknowledge the market building turning 60 years of age. A 60th birthday template had been designed to provide a consistent thread throughout, and the plan was to create various storyboards for all of the longest running traders which would be sited

on the market floor. There would also be smaller storyboards for all the other traders to be located on the viewing deck alongside other exhibition elements, including screens showing archive films and drone footage.

The final 3 'late nights in the market' events for 2025 were scheduled for September, November and December.

(Councillor Tandy left the meeting.)

Sunday Market Update - The operator of the Sunday Market, 'Places for Community Spaces Ltd', had continued to report difficulties in attracting and retaining significant numbers of stallholders and as a result footfall had remained relatively low. As officers had consistently reported the operator had continually argued for the reintroduction of a car boot sale element, because they believed this would help to improve footfall and therefore the financial viability of the Sunday Market. Although they had been unable to provide any substantive evidence to support their case. However, to some extent this discussion had been going round and round without much progress being made and therefore officers had agreed to allow the operator to bring back car boot sales to essentially try and bring the matter to a conclusion. This change was agreed on an initial 3-month trial basis and was subject to additional conditions being met. Unfortunately, since the change had been made the weather conditions had not been particularly favourable and both trader uptake and customer footfall had remained low. Officers would continue to closely monitor the situation over the next few months

Councillor Mosley asked if the cost of the new work to tidy up the indoor market was split between the Town Council and Shropshire Council, and it was confirmed that it was split. The Town Clerk commented that costings could be provided to all if required.

Councillor Mosley also commented that the new approach with the Sunda market was a good way forward to see if it would work. The Town Clerk confirmed they had been allowed a three-month grace to see if it was successful or not. If it was not, they would revert back to discussions.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

(Councillor Tandy re-joined the meeting).

32/25 FISHING

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

They were currently in the height of the fishing season and during the months of June and July, permit sales had been exceptional, and the fisheries staff had been kept very busy at all hours of the day. There was an increase in local members and also outside members from all over the country including Scotland, London and even Kent. The bailiffs were proactive around the fisheries, and they had increased patrols with West Mercia Police's Wildlife Police Officer plus also on a couple of occasions help from the Safe Neighbourhood Team in dealing with poachers.

The hot weather had not been kind to fish. The high temperatures had resulted in fishing being suspended in some of the pools.

Improvement works continued with new replacement river platforms being installed at Sydney Avenue, Monkmoor and Emstrey. New pathways were to be installed at Radbrook Pool where it gets very wet under foot.

On Saturday 19 July the Fisheries ran another successful coaching event that was fully booked for junior anglers at Mousecroft Pool.

Councillor Fejfer commented that the platform and bailiffs set up that was in Monkmoor was great, but some fisherman did not use the platforms and used the banks instead. The Town Clerk agreed to speak to the bailiffs on this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the Fisheries report be noted

33/25 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.