

**Committee and Date**

Council

24 September 2026

COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2026****In the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ
10.00 am - 1.05 pm****Responsible Officer:** Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Councillors Duncan Borrowman and Heather Kidd (Leader), Gary Groves (Vice-Chair), Alex Wagner (Deputy Leader), Sho Abdul, Caroline Bagnall, Elizabeth Barker, Bernie Bentick, Neil Bentley, Ed Bird, Jeremy Blandford, Andy Boddington, Thomas Clayton, Rosemary Dartnall, David Davies, Pamela Davies, Andy Davis, Julian Dean, Joshua Dickin, Mandy Duncan, Greg Ebbs, Susan Eden, Donna Edmunds, Craig Emery, Brian Evans, Roger Evans, Adam Fejfer, Rhys Gratton, Andy Hall, Kate Halliday, Nick Hignett, Alan Holford, George Hollyhead, Ruth Houghton, Dawn Husemann, Peter Husemann, Benedict Jephcott, Robert Jones, Duncan Kerr, Nigel Lumby, Brendan Mallon, Sarah Marston, David Minnery, Vicky Moore, Mark Morris, Alan Mosley, Malcolm Myles-Hook, Chris Naylor, James Owen, Mark Owen, Wendy Owen, Vivienne Parry, Ed Potter, Rosie Radford, Sharon Ritchie-Simmons, Carl Rowley, Charles Shackerley-Bennett, Colin Stanford, Jon Tandy, Colin Taylor, Dan Thomas, Teri Trickett, David Vasmer, Beverley Waite, David Walker, Sam Walmsley and Rob Wilson

20 Apologies for Absence

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman read a statement acknowledging the tragic murder of Ann Widdecombe and the Council joined in a minute's silence in her memory.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Susan Coleman, Rachel Connolly, Tom Dainty, Harry Hancock Davies, Chris Lemon and Alison Williams

21 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

22 Minutes**RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2026, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

23 Announcements

Chairman's Engagements

The Chairman referred Members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Vice Chairman since the last meeting of the Council on 14 May 2026, which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

24 Public Questions

The Chair advised that 6 questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 14.

Question from Graham Betts regarding responses to various highways matters he had raised

Question from Kate Fejfer regarding pedestrian safety on Monkmoor Road

Question from Jamie Russell regarding Far-Right Marches

Question from Angela Vnoucek regarding the closure of Meole Brace Park and Ride. In response to a supplementary question the Portfolio Holder advised that when he talked about consolidation, he was referring to the consolidation of services from three sites into two

Question from John Palmer regarding the Spatial Development Strategy.

Question from John Adams concerning building regulations at a retirement development. In response to a supplementary question the Portfolio Holder commented that as it is a private development there were different regulations and, in the case mentioned it was the NHSBC that were monitoring the building not the Council.

The full questions and responses can be found here [PUBLIC QUESTIONS COUNCIL 16 JULY 2026 with responses.pdf](#)

PETITION

A petition, bearing over 1000 signatures has been received from Marianne Aitken requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme.

The petition requested that Shropshire Council withdraw its proposal to close the Day Care Service at Ludlow's Helena Lane Centre.

Derek Young presented the petition to the meeting., and a period of debate by councillors followed.

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health responded on behalf of the administration and proposed that no further action be taken.

RESOLVED:

That no further action be taken.

PETITION

A petition, bearing over 1000 signatures has been received from Christine Hart requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme.

The petition requested that the Council overturn the closure of the Meole Brace Park and Ride

Angela Vnoucek presented the petition to the meeting., and a period of debate by councillors followed.

The Portfolio Holder for Transport and Regeneration responded on behalf of the administration and stated that he was happy to meet with the petitioners and stated that he would be writing to the new Prime Minister and relevant Secretary of State to explain the decisions that had been made in Shropshire as a result of the decisions taken in Westminster

25 Questions from Members

The Chairman advised that 6 questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.

Question from Councillor Adam Fefjer regarding a collaborative approach to addressing the infrastructure backlog.

Question from Councillor Andy Boddington regarding the removal of bins in Ludlow. In response to a supplementary question the Portfolio Holder confirmed that he would continue to work with the Town Council to find a solution to the problem.

Question from Councillor Greg Ebbs regarding the roll out of ANPR cameras.

Question from Councillor Dawn Husemann regarding financial commitment to PWC.

Question from Councillor Brendan Mallon regarding extensions to decision making time for planning applications. In response to a supplementary question the Portfolio Holder stated that work was ongoing to restructure the service to make it more efficient and to manage the workload to make the service as efficient as possible.

Question from Councillor Donna Edmunds regarding the Dutton Close, Stoke Heath asylum placements. In response to a supplementary question the Leader of the Council commented that it would be useful if Councillor Edmunds wrote to the Home Office lobbying for more transparency and openness.

The full questions and responses can be found here [MEMBER QUESTIONS COUNCIL 16 JULY 2026 with responses.pdf](#)

26 Financial Outturn 2025-26

It was proposed by Councillor Roger Evans, Portfolio Holder for Finance, and seconded by Councillor David Minnery that the report and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Members:

In respect of the revenue budget:

- a) Note that the outturn variance in the year is £49.428m above budget.
- b) Note that £19.637m has been funded by EFS, leaving £29.278m to be funded from the General Fund reserves and balances.
- c) Note the consequent level of the General Fund Balance is £5.000m.
- d) Note the increase of £5.658m in Earmarked Reserves & Provisions and the resulting level of earmarked reserves of £29.812m (£25.113m is the balances held by schools are excluded).
- e) Note the £17.722m level of savings delivery achieved over the year.
- f) Note that the current combination of earmarked and un-earmarked (General) reserves of £34.069m is at a level that is below that would normally seen as appropriate for a Council of this size.
- g) Note that the MTFP sets out an agreed plan to restore these balances to more appropriate levels over time, including further requests for Exceptional Financial Support in 2026/27 and beyond.
- h) Note that £61.8m of EFS has been applied in 2025/26, some £9.6m less than what was requested originally and approved by MHCLG.

Related to ringfenced funding:

- i) Note the performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) this is an account associated with Shropshire Councils housing stock - £1.372m (5.75%) surplus outturn for 2025/26 on £23.861m turnover, and the resulting level of the HRA reserve of £13.489m.
- j) Note the £28.029m overspend for the DSG and the consequent level of the DSG reserve of £45.655m in deficit.
- k) Note that the level of school balances has decreased by £1.994m, from £6.693m in 2024/25 to £4.699m, in the financial year.

In respect of the capital programme:

- l) Note the net budget variations of £26.932m to the 2025/26 capital programme (in Appendix 7) and the re-profiled 2025/26 capital budget of £77.375m.

- m) Note the re-profiled capital budgets of £145.380m for 2026/27, including slippage of £15.258m from 2025/26, £129.536m for 2027/28 and £89.113m for 2028/29 as detailed in Appendix 11.
- n) Accept the outturn expenditure set out in Appendices 8, 9 and 13 of £68.698m representing 88.79% of the revised capital budget for 2025/26.
- o) Approve retaining a balance of capital receipts set aside of £22.309m as at 31st March 2026 to generate a one-off Minimum Revenue Provision saving of £0.363m in 2026/27.

General

- p) Note that these outturn results will now be incorporated in financial statements for external audit and oversight by the Audit and Governance Committee
- q) Note that the Finance risk register is subject to review and will be incorporated in the July Cabinet report that will provide an updated MTFP?

27 Annual Treasury Report 2025/26

It was proposed by Councillor Roger Evans, Portfolio Holder for Finance, and seconded by Councillor David Minnery that the report and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Members

- a) Approve the actual 2025/26 prudential and treasury indicators in this report.
- b) Note the annual treasury management report for 2025/26.
- c) Note the inclusion of EFS borrowing in the 2025/26 position

28 Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review

It was proposed by The Leader, Councillor Heather Kidd, and seconded by Councillor Alex Wagner, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Economic Growth that the report and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Full Council

- a) Note the report of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review undertaken on 12th May 2026.
- b) Note that the CPC recommendations, along with subsequent feedback from the Progress Review, will continue to inform the Council's plans for improvement and financial sustainability

29 Audit and Governance Committee Annual Assurance report to Council 2025/26

It was proposed by Councillor Sharon Ritchie Simmons, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee and seconded by Councillor Kate Halliday that the report and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Council

- a) Endorse the Audit and Governance Committee's opinion that it has operated effectively in accordance with its terms of reference.
- b) Note the limited assurance provided over the Council's Governance, Risk management and internal control arrangements.

30 Political Balance and Allocation of Committee Seats

It was proposed by The Leader, Councillor Heather Kidd, and seconded by Councillor Alex Wagner, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Economic Growth that the report and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Council

- a) Agree the composition and revised allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the remainder of the 2026/27 as detailed in the report.
- b) Note the following changes to committee membership:

Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Gary Groves to replace Councillor Ben Jephcott as a Member of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Ben Jephcott to replace Councillor Gary Groves as a Substitute Member of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Southern Planning Committee

Councillor Beverley Waite to replace Councillor Jon Tandy as a Member of the Southern Planning Committee

Councillor Chris Naylor to replace Councillor Andy Boddington as a Member of the Southern Planning Committee

Councillor Jon Tandy to replace Councillor Jeremy Blandford as a Substitute Member of the Southern Planning Committee

Northern Planning Committee

Councillor Caroline Bagnall to replace Councillor Rosemary Dartnall as a Member of the Northern Planning Committee

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Viv Parry to replace Councillor Rhys Gratton as a Member of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Rhys Gratton to replace Councillor Duncan Borrowman as a Substitute Member of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

31 Localism Act 2011 - Appointment of Independent Persons

It was proposed by The Chairman, Councillor Duncan Borrowman, and seconded by Vice Chairman, Councillor Gary Groves that the report and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Full Council agree the appointment of Alan Boyd, Tim Griffiths and Tom Senior as Independent Persons for an initial period of four years

32 Motions

The following motion had been received from Councillor Alan Holford, supported by Councillors Bernie Bentick, Neil Bentley, Gary Groves, Ben Jephcott, Sarah Marston and Chris Naylor

This Council:

1. Celebrates the homecoming performance of William Shakespear's 'As You Like It' by the Shropshire Youth Theatre, which took place at Soulton Hall on 8 May 2026.
2. Recognises the deep historical and literary importance of this production, which returns the play to the specific North Shropshire landscape that influenced its creation.
3. Observes that Soulton Hall was the childhood home of Thomas Lodge, whose work Rosalynde served as the primary source for the play; and was the estate of Sir Rowland Hill, the individual who inspired the character of Old Sir Rowland.
4. Acknowledges the significant cultural heritage of the site, including the ancestral connections between the Hill family and Mary Arden, the mother of William Shakespeare.

5. Applauds Soulton Hall for its continued dedication to the arts, specifically its support of youth performance groups and its achievement in staging a substantial portion of the Shakespearean canon within the county.
6. Supports the ongoing collaboration between charitable organisations and the private sector as a powerful method for driving civic renewal and economic vitality in rural areas.
7. Resolves to promote and celebrate the unique international literary legacy of Shropshire, ensuring that the contributions of our local heritage continue to inspire future generations of residents and visitors.

This was seconded by Councillor Sarah Marston

By way of amendment Councillor Julian Dean proposed that the following be added

8. Requests the relevant portfolio holder to bring forward proposals for a refresh of the council's "Vibrant Shropshire - cultural strategy" in the light of changes to the council's capacity to deliver since it was drafted in 2021, recognising and addressing the threat to cultural assets and opportunities that the financial situation presents

Councillor Holford indicated that he was willing to accept the amendment and on taking a vote it was **RESOLVED**

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3. Observes that Soulton Hall was the childhood home of Thomas Lodge, whose work Rosalynde served as the primary source for the play; and was the estate of Sir Rowland Hill, the individual who inspired the character of Old Sir Rowland.
4. Acknowledges the significant cultural heritage of the site, including the ancestral connections between the Hill family and Mary Arden, the mother of William Shakespeare.
5. Applauds Soulton Hall for its continued dedication to the arts, specifically its support of youth performance groups and its achievement in staging a substantial portion of the Shakespearean canon within the county.

6. Supports the ongoing collaboration between charitable organisations and the private sector as a powerful method for driving civic renewal and economic vitality in rural areas.
7. Resolves to promote and celebrate the unique international literary legacy of Shropshire, ensuring that the contributions of our local heritage continue to inspire future generations of residents and visitors.
8. Requests the relevant portfolio holder to bring forward proposals for a refresh of the council's "Vibrant Shropshire - cultural strategy" in the light of changes to the council's capacity to deliver since it was drafted in 2021, recognising and addressing the threat to cultural assets and opportunities that the financial situation presents

33 Report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

It was proposed by Councillor Adam Fejfer that the report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, be received and noted.

RESOLVED:

That the report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority be noted.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: