

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**SLA WORKING GROUP  
HELD AT LIVESEY HOUSE**

**20 MARCH 2024**

**PRESENT**

Councillors Pam Moseley, Alan Mosley & Alex Wagner

Helen Ball (Town Clerk) & Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk)

**7/23 APOLOGIES**

Councillors Julian Dean & Rob Wilson; Andy Watkin (Head of Resources) & Danny Powell (Operations Manager)

**8/23 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

**All Councillors present declared personal interests in being members of Shropshire Council**

**9/23 NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The notes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February were circulated as read.

**AGREED** – That the notes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February be signed as a true and accurate record.

**10/23 SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

It was reported that since the last meeting Shropshire Council had published their Financial Strategy in which there was a requirement to make £62m of cuts to the revenue budget. The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Head of Resources had scrutinised the schedule of proposed savings to determine the level of cuts that would generally affect Shrewsbury but might also impact on any operational arrangements that the Town Council had with Shropshire Council.

The Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk had arranged informal discussions with the key budget holding Assistant Directors to determine impact on Shrewsbury; they had provided a confidential overview that officers had committed to remaining confidential but would help with discussions with elected members without breaking any trust.

**11/23 PROGRESS SO FAR**

It was reported that officers had continued discussions with the Assistant Director (Infrastructure) which had been tasked with leading on the SLA discussions. He has shared

with officers the levels of savings that he was looking to make across the whole of the Service Level Agreement and officers had been discussing how this might be achieved with minimum disruption. Officers had agreed a schedule of works.

### **12/23 APSE**

The Town Clerk reported on an initial meeting with a representative from Association of Public Sector Efficiency (APSE) who had been commissioned to undertake a strategic review of the SLA and recommend a course of actions. She and the Contracts Officer had been able to provide an overview of the SLA and rationale for its set up back in 2010. This was crucial because they were the only officers from that time who were left from those discussions. Details of the Town Councils operations were also provided so that APSE understood how the Town Council had operated the SLA.

It had been a productive meeting as the representative had previously worked in a Borough Council Director Labour Organisation so who first hand the benefits of in-house operations as opposed to contracted out services.

Officers had agreed to help populate various KPI matrices that APES had to compare other principle councils to determine whether Town Council operations proved value for money. Staff were currently working on preparing the necessary information.

### **13/23 DATA CAPTURE**

As part of any continuation of the Service Level Agreement, Shropshire Council were insistent that any data capture had to be via their Confirm System and not via paper tick-off sheets that had been converted to excel spreadsheets. It was understand that officers had not used any of the captured data. The Operations Managers and the Town Clerk had met with Shropshire Council IT to understand how Confirm worked and how any data might b captured. IT Officers had been given details of the paper data captured to determine how best the information could be captured. All agreed that this would not be a simple task given the size of the information already captured. The Operations Managers had agreed to work on one individual grass cutting round to see how best to present it. I was recognised that this would not be ready for the start of the 2025/6 financial year when any new SLA would commence. Shropshire Council was keen to start the process.

### **14/23 ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

Whilst much of the discussion had been on reviewing the SLA, members thoughts turned to the various services that were at risk of closure/loss. Members were keen that any additional transfer of services played to the Town Council's existing strengths around managing the public realm. Some local services might be best placed run by other organisations. Greenspace and public space management including street cleansing and CCTV were discussed, especially how these might be excluded out of a wider county contract without affecting the viability of those wider contracts.

Any transfer of services, however was incumbent of Shropshire Council meeting existing commitments of transferring the Countryside Land, Monkmoor Recreation Ground and

Shorncliffe Recreation Ground to the Ground; a commitment that had been in existence for some 10 years.

Officers were instructed to continue those discussions.

**15/23 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 5pm at Livesey House