



Telford & Wrekin
COUNCIL

Addenbrooke House Ironmasters Way Telford TF3 4NT

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Date **Wednesday, 4 May 2016**

Time **6.00pm**

Venue **Meeting Room G2, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT**

Enquiries Regarding this Agenda:

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Committee Membership: Councillors S A W Reynolds (Chair), S Bentley, A J Burford, N A M England, V A Fletcher, E J Greenaway, K R Guy, J M Seymour

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Minutes** Appendix A
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 17 March 2016.
- 4. Holding the Executive to Account**
 - The Board will put questions to Cllr Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Public Health & Protection;
 - The Board will put questions to Cllr Gilly Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Employment & Skills.
- 5. Update on Scrutiny Co-optees**
The Scrutiny Chairs will update the Board on any appointments made since the last meeting.
- 6. 2015/16 End of Year Scrutiny Work Programme Report and Scrutiny Annual Report** Appendix B
To consider the end of year report and the 2015/16 Scrutiny Annual Report, and for Scrutiny Chairs to raise any other matters arising.

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on Thursday 17 March 2016 at 6.00pm in Meeting Room G4, Addenbrook House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT

PRESENT: Councillors S A W Reynolds (Chair), A Burford, N A M England, V A Fletcher, J Greenaway, K Guy, J M Seymour.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor S Davies, Cabinet Member Business, Neighbourhood & Customer Services; Councillor E Clare, Cabinet Member Leisure Services & Culture; A Astley, Assistant Director Customer & Neighbourhood Services; J Eatough, Assistant Director Legal, Procurement & Commissioning; F Mercer, Assistant Director Commercial Services; K Kynaston, Assistant Director Business, Development & Employment; P Hudson, Arts & Culture Manager; F Bottrill, Scrutiny Group Specialist; D Moseley, Democratic Services Officer; S Jones, Scrutiny Officer.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors G Cook, P Scott, B Tillotson.

SMB-14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. S Bentley (Scrutiny Management Board) and J Ashford (Customer, Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee)

SMB-15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Fletcher declared an interest as a member of St George's and Priorslee Parish Council.

SMB-16 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 4 November 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SMB-17 HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT: CLLR. S DAVIES, CABINET MEMBER BUSINESS, NEIGHBOURHOOD & CUSTOMER SERVICES

After welcome and introductions, the Chair set out that one of the roles of scrutiny is to hold the Executive to account. The Scrutiny Management Board carries out this role but the sessions also enable scrutiny members to consider matters of importance that are not covered by the work programme. Members of the Customer, Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee had been invited to ask questions about issues within the committee's remit.

Cllr Davies thanked the Board for inviting him and then responded to questions.

What are your main achievements as Cabinet member in the first 9 months of the administration?

Cllr Davies summarised achievements in key areas as:

- Business – Telford & Wrekin has become recognised nationally as a ‘Business Supporting, Business Winning’ Council. Telford is an Enterprise Town and the Telford Business Growth Hub has been launched to provide tailored business support packages to rival the Enterprise Zones. The £25m investment in the Property Investment Portfolio would further improve the offer. Businesses are being drawn into the borough and are committed to staying.
- Neighbourhood services –the Pride programme is delivering some excellent projects. In terms of highways, there has been a focus on ‘pothole busting’ but the priority should be to get things right first time and the £2m additional funding agreed in the budget for planned maintenance should reduce the need for reactive repairs. The Council has a good track record of securing funding from the LEP and would be working to achieve a fair share of investment through the West Midlands Combined Authority. The Veolia waste contract has delivered significant savings, recycling rates have increased and there is good feedback from residents.
- Customer services – a priority had been to address wait times at the contact centre and there have been tangible improvements in wait times and call abandonment rates. The longest wait in June 2013 had been 1 hour 10 minutes and in January 2016 was down to 19 minutes. Corporate communications has been transformed with the use of Twitter, Facebook, other social media and the introduction of video technology enabling the Council to interact daily with residents. The Council has over 3,000 followers on Twitter.
- Commercial services (overseen by the Commercial Board) include the housing investment in Nuplace where the first tenants had moved into Randlay and half the houses in Madeley, which would be complete by the end of the year, were already reserved; the solar farm had generated a profit of £185k which has been invested in adult care packages and services for children in care; Services for Schools have generated record amounts of income from schools in Telford and Wrekin and increasingly out of the borough.

Have you formed any views on the implications of the Chancellor’s budget for services in your area?

Cllr Davies said he welcomed the increase of the cap on business rates as good for the many small businesses in the borough but was concerned about the cost to the Council in lost income and how the loss from the discount would be made up. The Council currently retains 50% of business rates set to rise to 100% by 2020 as government grant is phased out.

What do you see as the main challenges for the Council over the next 4 years?

Income will be the key challenge. Of the main funding streams -

- Government grant will be phased out by 2020
- Income from business rates will be affected by the business rate reform although details are not clear. The UK growth forecast has been downgraded which would

potentially impact on income from business rates. Telford has relatively few large businesses and the loss of even one business would have an impact.

- Council Tax – Telford & Wrekin has the second lowest level of Council Tax in the West Midlands and a low Council Tax base with the majority of properties in Bands B/C. By the government's calculation this means that Telford & Wrekin has the equivalent of £11m p.a. less spending power than the national average.
- Commercial income is important but there are risks and limitations for local authorities raising commercial income and it will not be enough to bridge the gap.

In terms of budget pressures:

- The majority of expenditure is on adult social care and services for children in care. The introduction of the living wage will impact on care provider costs and demand will continue to increase with the ageing population.
- The borough has pockets of above average levels of deprivation which puts pressure and expectations on public services.
- Telford is a New Town and infrastructure and assets are failing at the same time.

The uncertainty of income and increased pressure on expenditure will mean that more difficult decisions will need to be taken.

Why do you think it is important for the Council to invest in commercial projects like Nuplace or the solar farm?

The solar farm generated £500k revenue in its first year of which £185k was net profit which went towards supporting adult care and children in care. The land is Council owned and at the end of the project will still be owned by the Council. As a legacy of Telford Development Corporation, the Council is asset poor. Nuplace will create 400 homes owned by the Council as assets to pass on. Each home will generate rental income and Council Tax for the authority as well as raising the bar in standards in the private rented sector. The houses are built on Council owned brown-field sites that had been dormant for 15 years and had not attracted private developers.

If the Council does not make these investments it would mean making further cuts to services. Other authorities have approached Telford & Wrekin to find out more about the commercial approach including Shropshire Council which is exploring solar.

In response to further questions about Nuplace Cllr Davies clarified that:

- The model is based on ownership and there are no plans to sell the properties;
- As private lets there is no Right to Buy provision for tenants.
- Registered Providers (RPs) have not expressed concerns about Nuplace either with Phase 1 or Phase 2. RPs have a different product – they provide discounted social housing and Nuplace rents at market rates - and as such private landlords are more likely to feel the impact. Nuplace is building on Council owned land which RPs had chosen not to develop.
- Cllr Davies disagreed that Nuplace, by letting at market rents, is not meeting a social need. The first tenant at Randlay had previously rented in the private sector and had welcomed the opportunity to rent from the Council as a trusted landlord, to have good quality accommodation with a simple registration and

occupation process. Nuplace is therefore meeting a social need. 100% of the Phase 2 houses in Newport would be let at affordable rents.

- No income assumptions from New Homes Bonus had been built into the financial model and Nuplace would not be affected by changes to NHB. The government has consulted on reducing NHB from 6 to 4 years but the details are as yet unclear.

Given the uncertainty around income, from your position on the Commercial Board, are you looking to expand the portfolio of commercial projects?

Nuplace Phase 2 would continue to develop the housing stock, the solar farm would continue and Services for Schools would be working to retain and develop new business – there are challenges and opportunities around ‘academisation’ – and the Commercial Board would consider other ventures. All propositions take into account the cost of borrowing and the potential to generate a surplus.

There were a number of questions about Pride in Your High Street.

Cllr Davies clarified that:

- There had been a robust bidding process and not all bids had been successful.
- Some areas were over-subscribed and others were under-subscribed.
- The underspend of the fund would be ring-fenced for projects in Wellington, Donnington and Oakengates which had been under-subscribed. Options for using the money were being considered such as a retail challenge.
- There were no plans to re-run the programme.

Are you considering any different ways of working when the remaining elements of the waste services contract are handed over to Veolia?

The remaining contracts with TWS (residual and green waste collection, green waste disposal and community recycling centres) are due to expire in 2019 and will be managed by Veolia as part of the new contract. The plans for the community recycling centres have been brought forward to move from 4 centres to 2, one in the north and one in the south, managed by Veolia. The possibility of bringing forward the red-top collection service is being looked at.

In terms of environmental services, the Parish Environmental Teams (PETs) have transformed local services such as litter picking and leaf clearing and will be a factor in specifying the environmental services contract when it is put out to competitive tender. In response to further questions about the PETs Cllr Davies clarified that:

- In terms of roll-out, 3 new PETs had just been agreed taking the total to 13 (out of 33 parishes) which cover the majority of the population.
- PETs were set up to enhance the basic contracted service. The basic service has reduced over recent years and will be reduced further when the contract is re-tendered. The issue for small parishes is that they lack capacity to set up their own PET but the Council would support a joined-up model where parishes could work together.
- Parish Councils valued the PET and had made them a priority for funding.
- PETs had created apprenticeship opportunities, some of whom had progressed to full time employment.

- The PETs provide an enhanced local service and offer value for money. Members of the Board commented on the good work of the PETs.

In response to further questions about recycling rates Cllr Davies responded:

- There is no evidence to suggest that a reduction in the number of recycling centres will impact on recycling rates. The two new centres will have extended opening hours compared to the existing centres so there will be better access.
- Compared to ten years ago residents can now recycle most waste at the kerbside and recycling has been made simpler with the mingled recycling containers.
- Recycling rates are increasing. Telford & Wrekin is 116 in the table of 352 local authorities and is improving. Figures could be provided to show the increase in recycling rates, savings on operating costs of the new contract and associated reduction in landfill charges. Veolia are contractually obliged to show a year on year improvement in recycling rates.
- Cllr Davies would look into the disposal of plastic compost bags.

What is the scope of the funding for the St Georges and Gower Street regeneration, what is the Council's role and when will work be completed?

Cllr Davies explained that £650k had been earmarked in the 2015 budget for the regeneration of St Georges including the refurbishment of the old youth centre building on Gower Street. Further money was then allocated under the Pride In Your Community programme for the improvements to the Square and the Timbers Roundabout leaving the £650k available for the refurbishment of the Gower Street building. The funding is held by the Council and a Gower Street Project Board has been set up including local stakeholders and community groups to oversee the project. In the meantime a lottery bid has been submitted for £2m and a condition of lottery funding is that it cannot be allocated to projects which are significantly underway. If the lottery bid is successful, the project will move full steam ahead, or if unsuccessful the Project Board will consider how the money can best be allocated but progress would be evolutionary as additional funding is identified and secured for different phases of work. Cllr Davies assured members that the project was in control and on track.

Members asked further questions about how issues with waiting times at the contact centre were being addressed.

A significant amount of work had been done to reducing call waiting times. Working patterns and staff terms and conditions had been changed. A call-back facility had been introduced after five minutes giving customers the option of a call-back within half an hour and use of call-back was increasing. Alternative ways for customers to contact the Council are being developed such as Apps, on-line services and the introduction of an appointment system at First Point to reduce the number of calls to the contact centre. The key is to get things right first time, e.g. making sure waste is collected at the right time, to avoid the need for customers to contact the Council. The contact centre is relatively small for the volume of calls, handling 26,000 calls in January.

The Assistant Director clarified that the waiting times discussed earlier in the meeting were the longest recorded waits and not the average waiting time. Data showed that

in January, 15 customers had waited 15-19 minutes which was an improving trend but still not acceptable for those customers. The call-back service had been beneficial and customers were learning to trust that they would be called back within 30 minutes. The contact centre and benefits teams were joining up to create additional capacity and would drive on-going improvements through efficiencies of scale and sharing of skills.

The borough has key assets like the Town Park and Ironbridge. What commitment is there to promoting Telford, and will you keep T-Live?

Tourism is crucial. Destination Telford now has a dedicated team who actively promote Telford at trade shows and link into the tourist industry. The borough does not have many fiscal assets but it has a lot of community assets and punches above its weight as an events town. With regard to T-Live, if an act is available at an affordable price that the residents want to see it will be considered but if we are not confident of demand then it would not be recommended. The Council is putting on many other events to attract visitors such as the Spring into the Park programme.

What sort of organisation will the Council be at the end of the administration and what will success look like?

The organisation will be smaller. The Combined Authority and LEP will play a greater role; Telford & Wrekin has been good at securing money from the LEP and is well placed to benefit. There will be a greater role for Town and Parish Councils and they will be asked to do more. Local democracy will prevail and it will be up to voters to decide if they want to pay more to keep Council services.

When there were no further questions the Chair thanked Cllr Davies and he left the meeting.

**SMB-18 HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT: CLLR E CLARE,
CABINET MEMBER LEISURE SERVICES & CULTURE**

The Chair welcomed Cllr Clare to the meeting and opened the questioning.

With regard to key achievements in the first 9 months of the administration Cllr Clare highlighted key achievements as:

- Developing the relationship with Energize had been key to increasing their level of activity in Telford and Wrekin. Recent activities had been held in Brookside and Donnington, and the Telford Trust is looking at a small awards programme for community sports projects backed by Energize.
- A key event was the Rugby World Cup visit to Telford at the T-Party in July
- Supporting local groups and clubs to develop provision, including gym and tennis clubs for the over 50s
- Improvements to facilities including the new gyms at Stirchley Recreation Centre and Horsehay Village Golf Centre including activities for the over 50s
- A leisure services portal had been set up to provide information and make it easier for customers to book and pay on-line and to set up direct debits

- The impact of the decision to end free swimming for the over 50s had been reconsidered and a new scheme would be introduced to allow over 50s with a Telford Loyalty Card to swim for £1
- The income strategy has continued with many successful bids
- The Council's First Aid training (brought to bear recently in Newport when leisure staff used CPR and the defibrillator to resuscitate a customer) has been developed as a commercial service and money has been raised locally in Newport for three new defibrillators
- There has been a focus on developing football provision including the need for 3G pitches and enhanced facilities. This has included a task and finish group looking at football provision in Newport, and discussions with AFC Telford about developing a football hub at the ski slope.

Cllr Clare then addressed a number of detailed questions:

- With regard to progress on a new football pitch in Newport, the Playing Pitch Strategy had been developed as recommended by Sports England to assess provision across the borough – what pitches and playing fields there are, where, who owns them and which have secured community use. Newport had been identified as having limited capacity for football. The discussions with Newport would continue over the possible sites but nothing had been agreed yet. Cllr Clare would discuss the problem of the moles on one of the potential sites with the Town Council.
- In response questions about the future of the libraries, the reduced budget for the book fund and the cessation of the mobile library services, Cllr Clare responded:
 - There have been positive discussions with Town and Parish Councils about taking over library services. Opportunities for co-location, self-service libraries and the use of trained volunteers were being looked at as ways of increasing capacity and sustaining the service. Cllr Clare was proud that the Council had continued to fund the libraries until now and it was right for Town and Parish Councils to play a greater role if local people wish the service to be sustained.
 - The budget for the book fund had been reduced but other ways of generating income – one idea was a pulping contract for old books – and ways of increasing donations were being explored to invest back into the service.
 - The use of the mobile library would be looked at once decisions have been made about the libraries so that any gaps in service can be identified. However, the financial viability of the mobile library needs to be considered and if there are alternative ways of filling gaps such as a home 'book buddy' volunteer service.
- On the question of the Council's role in encouraging girls and women into sport, especially under-represented sports, Cllr Clare replied that there is a role for the Council. The Council has worked with Energize who were responsible for delivering the national This Girl Can campaign locally, and rounders and hockey had been developed to attract more people into sport particularly targeting women. (Over 100 women now play rounders in Telford.) Other issues were being looked at, for example ensuring car parks at venues are well lit. The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies specific actions to increase participation of girls

and women in under-represented sports and work is being done with cricket and football clubs to encourage girls into the sports. The Council is also working with partners and clubs to help access external funding for segregated facilities. Volunteers play a key role and Energize provides training for volunteer coaches. Many people want to give back to the community, for example Kelly Holmes had attended the Shropshire Homes Sports day at Shrewsbury and was enthusiastic about giving back to the community who had supported her over the years. However, schools had to qualify to be invited and Cllr Clare wanted to explore who tried and were unsuccessful and if the same schools were there every year. It is important for all schools to have an equal opportunity.

- There was a question about how serious the discussions with ACF Telford about the football hub were and how they are being pushed forward. The question was put in the context of increasing childhood obesity and the lack of provision in some areas. Cllr Clare replied that the discussions were very serious and they were working closely with AFC but were linked to the sale of the Buck's Head. It is key to invest in all-weather 3G pitches for the future.
- In terms of assessing demand and extending provision for over-subscribed activities, concerns about public access to facilities in academies and the cost of joint use agreements where facilities are already fully booked, Cllr Clare said that the fact that activities are over-subscribed showed that the right provision is in the right place and it would be more worrying if activities were under-subscribed. Before expanding provision, the reason for the popularity of an activity is considered to assess whether there is a sustainable demand or if the activity is a passing 'fad'. With regard to community use agreements, there are currently negotiations with the new school in Priorslee about shared access and better access had been negotiated with the tennis centre provider. Other establishments with facilities - such as Harper Adams or New College - could be approached to potentially negotiate access on a paid basis.
- Members were pleased to hear that £40k had been allocated from an underspend in the Public Health budget to update the Definitive Map for Rights of Way. Work would be done with the Access Forum, the Ramblers Association and local partners to update the map. It was noted during the discussion that the Definitive Map had been lacking for a number of years and that the footpaths which provide connectivity across the borough must be registered by 2026 to keep their historic Rights of Way.
- With regard to developing the Town Park Visitor Centre, including as a commercial asset, Cllr Clare replied that the centre was used for various activities by parties of school children, for example an archaeological dig. Officers added that there is an education officer as a funded post to develop the programme of activities to offer to schools as a traded service and they were looking at how the use of the centre could be broadened.
- Cllr Clare was asked, given the link between sport and public health, if a return to free swimming for the over 50s would be considered. Cllr Clare said free swimming would not be reintroduced but from 1 April over 50s with a Telford

Loyalty Card would be able to swim for £1. TLC customers over 50 would be informed in writing and Members could help in making people aware.

- In terms of arts and culture events coming up, there will be a full programme of events though to Christmas including the Spring into the Park event, a new world picnic, a carnival and events on the river at Ironbridge using Arts Council funding
- Members were informed that a fund raising strategy would be developed once the restructure had been completed and the Board requested this to come back to a future meeting.
- In terms of what kind of organisation the Council would be and what success would look like at the end of the administration, Cllr Clare replied that:
 - The Council would be a leaner organisation with a more commercial approach
 - There will be a focus on maximising income (for example increasing gym membership) to sustain and reinvest in services (such as the new gym at Horsehay Village)
 - New products will be developed to trade commercially e.g. First Aid training
 - It was important to recognise the needs of individual communities and ensure provision meets the needs of the whole community and all age groups
 - A priority is consultation on libraries to ensure the sustainability of the service
 - A key success would be to have an equitable playing field provision

When there were no further questions the Chair thanked Cllr Clare and she left the meeting with the officers.

SMB-19 REVIEW OF SCRUTINY CO-OPTees

The Board noted the appointment of scrutiny co-optees since the last meeting as Carolyn Healy (Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee) and Roy Williams and Cindy Mason-Morris (Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee).

SMB-20 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Board noted the update report circulated as Appendix B and discussed matters arising from the report.

RESOLVED –

- **That the Scrutiny Suggestion to consider the work of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust was not appropriate for scrutiny and that the person making the suggestion would be notified accordingly**
- **That Cllrs Overton and A England be invited to the next meeting for the Holding to Account session (date to be agreed by email)**

SMB-21 CHAIRS' UPDATES

The Scrutiny Chairs updated the meeting on the work of the Scrutiny Committees since November. Key items were the Children & Young People scrutiny review of

CSE which was on track to be finalised in May and presented to Cabinet and the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and the work of the Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee on the budget scrutiny.

SMB-22 UPDATE ON SERVICE RESTRUCTURE

The Assistant Director Legal, Procurement and Commissioning was in attendance to update the Board on the restructure of the service. However the Chair recommended that the discussion be held in exempt session as it would involve discussing individual members of staff.

RESOLVED – that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for this item of business on the grounds that it may involve the disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm

Chairman:

Date:

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD - 4 MAY 2016****2015/16 END OF YEAR SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT AND
SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT****REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY TEAM****1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an end of year report on delivery of the 2015/16 Scrutiny Work Programme to enable the Board to monitor performance and agree any actions arising from the report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Management Board note the report and agree any actions deemed necessary arising from the report.
- 2.2 That the Scrutiny Management Board approve the draft 2015/16 Scrutiny Annual Report for presentation to Full Council.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Work Programme is reviewed annually by the Scrutiny Management Board at the start of the municipal year. The Board is responsible for determining the strategic priorities for scrutiny, allocating scrutiny resources and monitoring delivery of the work programme. The Scrutiny Committees agree their own work programme having regard to the views and wishes of the Board and progress is reported back to the Board.
- 3.2 The Board met in July 2015 to review the work programme and agreed:
- A full work setting process was not necessary due to the number of items carried over from the previous year;
 - That the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee review of Multi-Agency Working Against CSE would be prioritised for resource but resources could be balanced out over a two year period;
 - The allocation of resources using a benchmark number of supported meetings per committee as a way of managing the workload;
 - Recommendations about the work programme for the Scrutiny Committees to consider.
- 3.3 The Board has monitored delivery of the work programme through interim reports and Chairs' updates at meetings on 4 November 2015 and 17 March 2016.

4.0 DELIVERY OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

- 4.1 A summary of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Management Board and the Scrutiny Committees in 2015/16 is provided in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 4.2 The information is presented in the form of a draft Scrutiny Annual Report with the dual purpose of reporting end-of-year performance to the Board and for the Board to consider the content and format for presenting the Annual Report to Full Council and to make available to the public. The format streamlines information provided in previous Annual Reports to focus on the range of issues scrutinised and how scrutiny has made a difference.
- 4.3 The Board may wish to note some key achievements from this year:
- The in-depth review of Multi-Agency Working Against Child Sexual Exploitation by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee is an excellent example of how scrutiny can engage and work with a range of key partners at a strategic and operational level, engage local people and communities on a sensitive issue, and importantly to give people affected by CSE and their families a voice through a range of media. The report is due to be published on 10 May and will make a number of recommendations to local and national bodies. The Local Children Safeguarding Board was engaged early on to secure the support and commitment of the Board and individual member organisations. Cabinet and the LSCB will respond to scrutiny's recommendations in June or July.
 - The Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee focused on individual savings proposals which Members felt would impact on service users and members of the public. The Committee made a number of recommendations to Cabinet as a result of which some of the savings proposals were reconsidered or reversed in the final budget strategy taken to Council.
 - The Customer, Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee has shown what can be accomplished by working flexibly and with efficient use of resources. Allocated only a limited amount of resource, the committee has maximised opportunities to feed into policy development in several key policy areas including the Housing Allocations Policy, Council Tax Support and Bus Subsidies. The committee provided an independent view to Cabinet on traffic signals which had become a controversial issue for some members of public and had received significant media attention.
 - The Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee has monitored the Adult Care budget and savings. The Committee supported the development of the new ways of working and will continue to monitor delivery of the savings against the target and the feedback from service users and their carers. The Committee has also scrutinised the changes to the provision of GP services in the Town Centre, the future of the NHS Walk in Centres, responded to the consultation on the future of Castle Lodge and the subsequent commissioning review for Community mental health services.
 - The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Shropshire has monitored the planning and consultation on the NHS Future Fit Programme, deficit reduction strategy, strategic transformation plan, plans

to improve the hospital discharge process, the future provision of community services through the Community Fit Programme, Future provision of rural urgent care centres, commissioning arrangements for the emotional health and wellbeing service for 0-25 year olds and the provision of out of hours GP services and the 111 NHS non-emergency telephone service.

- The Scrutiny Management Board has remained committed to Holding the Executive to Account. Challenging the Executive to explain and justify their actions is an important scrutiny function which helps ensure decision making at the Council remains democratic, open and transparent. The Board has also provided strong leadership in setting the priorities for scrutiny and managing the competing interests of individual Scrutiny Committees.

4.4 The following sections of this report contain information additional to that provided in the draft Scrutiny Annual Report.

5.0 SCRUTINY MEETINGS

5.1 At the start of the year the Board set a benchmark number of supported meetings per Scrutiny Committee as a way of managing the workload and targeting resources on priority issues. The table below shows the benchmark allocation and the actual number of meetings held during the 2015/16 municipal year.

5.2 Four meetings held jointly with more than one Scrutiny Committee have been attributed to the lead Scrutiny Committee to avoid duplication of counting. Members of the relevant Scrutiny Committee were also invited to the Scrutiny Management Board Holding to Account sessions to ask questions on issues within the committee's remit.

Committee	Benchmark set	Committee meetings actual	Working groups actual	End of year total actual
Scrutiny Management Board	4	4	0	4
Children & Young People	30	2	25	27
Customer, Community & Partnership	3	4	2	6
Finance & Enterprise	4	5	0	5
Health & Adult Care (including Joint HOSC)	6	7	1	8
Total	47	22	27	50

6.0 REVIEW OF SCRUTINY CO-OPTEEES

6.1 In July 2015 the Scrutiny Management Board agreed to review non-statutory scrutiny co-optee arrangements. Under the Terms of Reference for the

Scrutiny Committees there is provision to appoint up to 4 non-statutory co-optees per committee. The statutory co-optees on the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee were not included within the scope of the review.

6.2 In November 2015 the Board received a detailed report on the review and the recruitment process carried out in accordance with the process in the Scrutiny Handbook. The aim was to open up fresh opportunities for people to get involved, to enhance the skills-set of the committees and to encourage applications from Town and Parish Councillors to strengthen links with Town and Parish Councils.

6.3 Some non-statutory co-optee positions are allocated to certain groups who nominate their representative:

- Healthwatch and the Senior Citizens' Forum nominate a representative to sit on the Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee
- The Primary Heads' Forum Executive Committee nominates a representative to sit on the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

6.4 The table below shows the appointment of co-optees confirmed to date.

Committee	Co-optee	Organisation (where appropriate)	New or re-appointment
Children & Young People	Carolyn Healy Sandra Osman Lyn Fowler	The Gorge PC Primary Head Newport TC	New Re-appointment New
Customer, Community & Partnership	TBC		
Finance & Enterprise	Cindy Mason-Morris Roy Williams	Wellington TC	New Re-appointment
Health & Adult Care	Jean Gulliver Rajash Mehta Barry Parnaby Dag Saunders	Ketley PC Healthwatch Senior Citizens' Forum	Re-appointment New Re-appointment Re-appointment

7.0 OTHER SCRUTINY WORK

7.1 National and Regional Scrutiny Networks

7.1.1 Telford & Wrekin scrutiny Members and officers have continued to participate in national and regional scrutiny networks to keep up to date with legislation, national policy and share learning with other authorities. The relevance of agenda items and an assessment of the likely benefits determine which meetings are attended and by whom.

7.1.2 This year officers and/or Members have attended 2 County & Unitary Councils' Scrutiny Officers Network, 1 Regional Health Scrutiny Network and 2 West Midlands Scrutiny Network meetings. Key issues discussed include

the impact of austerity cuts on scrutiny, scrutiny and the West Midlands Combined Authority and key issues for health scrutiny.

7.2 Scrutiny Suggestions

- 7.2.1 A total of seven scrutiny suggestions were received from members of the public and considered by the Board:
- Six suggestions related to one planning application and associated matters. The suggestions were rejected by the Board as scrutiny cannot look at planning decisions but the Board requested a report on complaints about the planning process and how they are used to improve the service.
 - One suggestion related to the work of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust which the Board rejected as there are no powers of scrutiny over the Trust.

7.3 Call-in and requests for urgent decisions to be taken

- 7.3.1 There were no call-in requests during 2015/16.
- 7.3.2 Provisions in the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require that:
- Where a Key Decision is not published with 28 clear working days' notice, the relevant Scrutiny Chair must be notified of the decision to be taken, or
 - Where a Key Decision is not published with 5 clear working days' notice, consent must be sought from the relevant Scrutiny Chair for the decision to be taken, or
 - Where a decision contains information exempt under legislation and at least 28 clear days' notice has not been given, consent must be sought from the relevant Scrutiny Chair for the report to be exempted.
- One such request was received during the year seeking consent to exempt a report to Cabinet on the Telford Land Deal. Consent was granted by the Chair of the Customer, Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee.

8.0 SCRUTINY TEAM

- 8.1 A restructure came into effect on 1 April 2016 which brought scrutiny within the wider team under the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team Leader. The structure was designed to enable scrutiny skills to be spread across the wider team to build resilience and capacity to support scrutiny work.

9.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Scrutiny Committees consider the equal opportunities implications for the issues within their work programmes.
- 9.2 The process to appoint scrutiny co-optees was carried out in accordance with the Council's equalities policies and equalities legislation.

10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The direct cost of delivering the Scrutiny Service during 2015/16 was £0.113m and was met from within the overall budgets available which included the additional capacity to support the Review of Multi-Agency Working Against Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 10.2 Scrutiny played an important part in the budget consultation process and held a series of meetings during January and February 2016 to review the 2016/17-2017/18 Service & Financial Planning (budget) Strategy published by Cabinet and alternative proposals put forward by the main opposition group. Their response fed into the decision making process for the final budget strategy which was approved at Full Council in March 2016.

PH – 22/4/16

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The work undertaken by the Scrutiny Management Board and Scrutiny Committees is subject to the defined requirements for the scrutiny function, as set out in part 1A, Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) and in associated legislation and statutory instruments.
- 11.2 Locally the Council's Scrutiny Rules are published at pages 62 to 72 of the current version of the Council's Constitution and further details are contained in The Scrutiny Handbook.

KF 25/04/2016

12.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Environmental issues fall within the remit of the Customer, Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee and implications will be considered as part of a review.
- 12.2 Environmental implications are considered as part of a scrutiny report where relevant.
- 12.3 Democratic and Scrutiny services are committed to moving to electronic working which will reduce paper waste.

13.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are no direct ward implications arising from this report.
- 13.2 Scrutiny considers matters on a borough-wide basis but any ward implications would be considered as part of a scrutiny review.

Report prepared by:

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Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16

The purpose of this report is to provide information about what scrutiny did in 2015/16.

What is the purpose of scrutiny?

Scrutiny acts as a check and balance to ensure decision making in local government is democratic, effective and transparent. Local authorities with a Cabinet system – where a relatively small number of elected members are responsible for day-to-day decision making – must have a scrutiny function. Scrutiny is a way for elected members who are not on the Cabinet to have a greater influence in policy decisions and the work of the Council.

There are four nationally accepted principles set out by the Centre for Public Scrutiny:

- Providing "critical friend" challenge
- Reflecting the voice and concerns of the public
- Taking the lead and owning the scrutiny process
- Making an impact on the delivery of public services

Who carries out scrutiny work?

Scrutiny is carried out by elected members who are not on the Council's Cabinet and members of the public co-opted for expertise in a particular area or to represent certain groups. They sit on Scrutiny Committees which carry out scrutiny work. The committees reflect the overall political balance of the Council.

In 2015/16 Telford & Wrekin had five scrutiny committees:

- Scrutiny Management Board
- Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
- Customer, Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee
- Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee
- Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee – certain members of this committee also sit on the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

How is scrutiny work carried out?

Scrutiny is can be carried out in many different ways.

The Scrutiny Management Board takes the role of 'holding the Executive to account' and holds regular sessions to question Cabinet members in public.

The Scrutiny Committees carry out the majority of other scrutiny work. This usually involves reviewing services or policies at Scrutiny Committee meetings. A review can be a one-off item discussed at a meeting or may be considered in detail over a series of meetings. Reviews may involve discussions with Cabinet members, officers at the Council, managers and officers from other organisations,

organisations providing a service, service users or members of the public – whoever may be relevant to the topic being discussed.

At the end of a review the committee may make recommendations where they think things could be improved. Where possible the Scrutiny Committees meet in public but scrutiny members can also hold working group meetings to gather evidence for a review.

How do we monitor the effectiveness of scrutiny?

The priority for any piece of scrutiny work is that it has an impact and makes a difference for local people. There are many ways that scrutiny can make a difference – some are easier to measure than others. Some of the commonly used measures of effective scrutiny work are listed below but sometimes scrutiny can make a difference simply by raising an issue for public debate.

- **Holding the Executive to account** - questioning Cabinet members in public about their policies and actions helps ensure decision making is open and transparent. Many people argue this is an end in itself.
- **Recommendations to Cabinet** – a common measure of the impact of scrutiny work is the number of recommendations made to and accepted by Cabinet. The majority of scrutiny recommendations in the past have been accepted.
- **Recommendations to external organisations** – there are certain organisations with a statutory duty to respond to scrutiny but they do not have to accept scrutiny recommendations. Our approach is to engage partners positively in a scrutiny review so that recommendations are relevant, realistic and more likely to be acted on.
- **Policy development** – examples include examining draft policies to consider the implications for local people and suggesting improvements, or giving feedback as part of a consultation on a proposed new policy or policy change.
- **Holding health service commissioners and providers to account**
- **Monitoring performance of health services**

The number of meetings provides an indication of how resources were committed to scrutiny over the year.

What issues did we look at in 2015/16 and what difference did we make?

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Cllrs. Kevin Guy (Chair), Steve Barnes, Jayne Greenaway, Joy Francis, Janice Jones, Jackie Loveridge, Jane Pinter, Karen Tomlinson Co-optees: Austin Atkinson, Carolyn Healy, Sandra Osman, Steve Rayner, Mel Ward		No. of meetings 27
Issue	What we did	What difference we made
Multi-Agency Working Against Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	<p>Following high profile reports which had criticised local authorities in other areas, a priority for our committee was to review in detail how organisations in Telford and Wrekin are working together to prevent CSE, to protect and support victims and their families and to prosecute perpetrators</p> <p>This was a wide ranging and complex review involving senior managers and key workers from the Council, police, health services, education, criminal justice system, housing, voluntary and community groups, parents/carers and young people. Key to our review was evidence provided by victims and survivors of CSE and their families.</p>	<p>Recommendations to Cabinet and external organisations</p> <p>We concluded that on the basis of evidence presented organisations in Telford and Wrekin are working well to respond to known cases of CSE. Of particular note is the multi-agency hub at Family Connect and the work of the CATE team.</p> <p>However we made a total of 38 recommendations to the Council's Cabinet, key partners and national bodies where we felt things could be strengthened. Our recommendations focus on a number of key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection to understand the scale and nature of the issues locally to inform strategies and resourcing • Awareness raising, particularly by schools and colleges, to help keep children and young people safe • Awareness raising with parents • Support for victims/survivors and their families • Information sharing to help disrupt CSE activity and prosecute perpetrators. <p>The Council's Cabinet and Local Children Safeguarding Board will respond to scrutiny's recommendations in June/July 2016.</p>

Customer Community & Partnership Scrutiny Committee Cllrs. Nathan England (Chair), John Ashford, Graham Cook, Kevin Guy, Stephen Reynolds, Peter Scott, Jacqui Seymour, Barry Tillotson		No. of meetings 6
Issue	What we did	What difference we made
Bus Subsidy Policy	<p>The existing Bus Subsidy Policy had become out of date and was no longer fit-for-purpose for evaluating routes for subsidy ahead of contract renewals later in the year. We examined the proposed new Bus Subsidy Policy and assessment framework for evaluating routes for subsidy.</p> <p>We also considered how Arriva was consulting on proposed changes to their commercial network.</p>	<p>Recommendations to Cabinet</p> <p>By examining the draft Policy we were satisfied that the Policy and score weightings were as fair as possible for local people. Further, we recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underpinning data is kept up to date to ensure the validity of the scoring process • The use of the Council's fleet should be considered to help deliver services • There should be continued lobbying of government about strengthening the requirement for private operators to consult on changes to their networks <p>All our recommendations were considered and responded to by Cabinet.</p>
Engagement in the Local Plan	<p>We examined the communication and engagement strategy for the Local Plan to ensure local people were given every chance to take part.</p>	<p>Recommendations to Cabinet</p> <p>The engagement strategy was comprehensive but we made recommendations to strengthen some areas so that people would have the best possible opportunity to get involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Parish Councils should be engaged early on • Holding more open sessions for the public • Documentation should be easy-to-read • The consultation programme should be published so people in one area could attend sessions in relevant neighbouring areas <p>All our recommendations were fully implemented.</p>

Housing Allocations Policy	<p>We took part in consultation on the draft Housing Allocations Policy and Tenancy Strategy, drawing on previous scrutiny work.</p>	<p>Policy development</p> <p>We submitted a comprehensive response as part of the consultation with the aim of supporting and strengthening key elements of the Policy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the use of strong local connection as a priority for housing and the use of Local Lettings Plans • Improving awareness about and accessibility of housing information and advice for local people • Supported the development of the Overall Nominations Agreement with Registered Providers and expectations of providers Tenancy Strategies • That the draft Policy should be shared with all elected members during the consultation period – this was actioned immediately.
Council Tax Support Scheme	<p>We worked with the Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee to examine the implications of the range of options for Council Tax Support put forward for consultation. We also considered the consultation process and how easy it was for members of the public to put forward their views.</p>	<p>Policy development</p> <p>We examined the options in the consultation document, and other options considered by Cabinet, from the point of view of affected groups, other Council Tax payers and affordability for the Council to support the recommended option as the fairest and most balanced option.</p>
Traffic Signals	<p>There had been strenuous calls from some members of the public to remove or operate part-time signals at some key interchanges in the borough. Scrutiny was asked to carry out an independent review of the issues and options and to make a recommendation to Cabinet. We examined in detail the options for managing traffic flow at junctions and roundabouts, the actions being taken to address issues, how other options had been considered and how the Council was planning the network to cope with the projected increase in road users.</p>	<p>Recommendations to Cabinet</p> <p>We gave independent, cross-party scrutiny of the issues and options and supported the Council’s approach to traffic management at key interchanges.</p> <p>We recommended that in the interests of the safety of all road users, existing traffic lights should not be removed or switched to part time operation in contravention of national guidelines and best practice.</p> <p>We recommended that more should be done to make the public aware of the public safety issues and to raise</p>

		awareness of the work that Council was doing to keep traffic flowing. Following our recommendations no proposals have come forward from Cabinet to change existing traffic signalling.
Customer services	TO BE COMPLETED	
Business support	TO BE COMPLETED	
Finance & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee Cllrs. Shirley Reynolds, Stephen Bentley, Stephen Burrell, Nigel Dugmore, Rae Evans, Rob Sloan, Charles Smith, David Wright Co-optees: Cindy Mason-Morris, Roy Williams		No. of meetings 5
Issue	What we did	What difference we made
Service & Financial Planning 2016/17-2017/18 (budget proposals)	<p>The Service & Financial Planning strategy for the first time proposed to make savings from front line services. For this reason we focused our attention on individual savings proposals which would affect service users or the wider public.</p> <p>We questioned 5 Cabinet members and 9 senior managers and received a number of written reports.</p> <p>Key areas examined were the adult care budget and the introduction of the 2% Council Tax adult care precept; the proposals affecting library services; changes to the school transport policy; savings from public health; transport to Age UK day centres; the process for consulting with partners on the future of library and other services affected by the budget; the budget consultation process. We also considered how proposals to reduce staff would impact on the delivery of services for the</p>	<p>Recommendations to Cabinet We submitted a full response to Cabinet. Specifically, we recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-location of libraries with other partners/services to help sustain services • Reconsideration of proposals to reduce the book fund and to end the mobile library • Specific efficiencies in public health • Reconsideration of savings from transport to Age UK day centres • Locality-based consultation with partners and local people to help sustain services affected by the cuts, including use of the Town Park. <p>As a result of our recommendations, savings proposals for transport to Age UK day centres and the closure of the Town Park Visitor Centre over the winter were reconsidered and went on to be agreed by Full Council.</p>

	public.	Specific suggestions for efficiencies and savings in public health will be taken up by the Cabinet member and Assistant Director for further consideration.
Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee Cllrs. Andy Burford (Chair), Mark Boylan, Veronica Fletcher, Clive Mollett, Tim Nelson, Jane Pinter, Robert Sloan, Chris Turley Co-optees: Jean Gulliver, Rajash Mehta, Barry Parnaby, Dag Saunders		No. of meetings 3
Issue	What we did	What difference we made
Adult Care Budget and Saving	We have monitored the adult care budget and the delivery of savings through the new ways of working. We supported the implementation of the brokerage service which we were informed will increase independence and reduce costs.	Holding to Account The Cabinet Member and Senior managers have been held to account for the delivery of the savings target. It was agreed that the Committee will continue to scrutinise this delivery of the adult care savings.
NHS Continuing Healthcare	We have monitored the implementation of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Report in 2013.	Holding to Account The Committee received assurance that joint working between the local authority and CCG has improved and that an independent review of 49 cases would be carried out. The Committee will receive a report on the outcome of this review.
NHS consultation on the future of Castle Lodge	The Committee scrutinised the proposals to close the mental health facility at Castle Lodge and the Committee's response to the consultation was considered by the CCG Board.	Statutory Consultation Having considered all the issues the Committee agreed to support the recommendation made by the South Staffordshire and Shropshire Health Care NHS Foundation Trust to permanently close Castle Lodge and the disposal of this facility subject to a number of recommendations. These recommendations were subsequently incorporated into the Commissioning Review of Mental Health Services.
Commissioning Review of Mental Health Services	We have monitored the planning and implementation of the joint Mental Health Commission Review of Mental Health Services by the Local Authority and CCG at 2 Committee meetings.	Holding to Account Commissioners have been held to account for the planning of these services.

Town Centre GP services and of NHS Walk in Centres in Telford and Wrekin	We scrutinised the proposals to close the Town Centre Walk in Centre and transfer the capacity to the Walk in Centre located at the Princess Royal Hospital and also to close the GP practice provided by IMH Malling in the Town Centre.	Consultation on NHS Services We received assurance that the transfer of the Walk in Centre to the PRH site would reduce pressure on the A&E services and that the GP service in the Town Centre would no longer be viable. On this basis the Committee supported the proposals on the understanding that further consultation would be carried out on the future provision of the NHS Walk in Service in Telford and Wrekin
Non-emergency Patient Transport Service	We scrutinised the CCG's proposals to change the criteria for non-emergency patient transport services.	Consultation on NHS Services We supported the proposals as there were in line with NHS guidance and made recommendations to ensure that information about the new criteria was available on the CCG and Local authority website.
Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin		No. of meetings 4
NHS Future Fit Programme	We have questioned NHS executives about the planning for the Future Fit Programme.	NHS Executives have accounted to the planning of this programme. We have made recommendations regarding the need to communicate the reason for the programme to the public and ensure that the proposals are clinically led. We were informed that the Community Fit programme and the planning for the rural urgent care centres would take place outside the Future Fit Programme.
Maintaining safe, effective and dignified A&E services	We were informed of the hospital trust's plans to consult on the provision of this service, the actions need to continue the provision of this service across both hospital sites until the conclusion of the Future Fit programme and the identification of the 'tipping point' which would indicate that the service is no longer sustainable on both sites	We were assured that A&E services are currently safe recognised the need for the Trust to build this into the business continuity planning.
NHS Deficit Reduction Plan	We have been informed of the plans for local NHS organisations to manage the deficit in the local health	The committee has been informed of the process across Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire for the STP. The

and Strategic Transformation Plan (STP)	economy and develop a 6 year plan to deliver sustainable health services and improve the quality of care.	NHS organisations were questions regarding the involvement of both local authorities and non NHS providers in this process. The Committee will continue to scrutinise the development and delivery of this plan.
Hospital Discharge	We have scrutinised the working across the NHS and Adult Care services to improve the discharge process from hospital.	We recommended that organisations should agree a common understanding of the terminology relating to hospital discharge and that organisations should continue to monitor the quality of hospital discharge and feedback from patients and carers.
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	We scrutinised the proposals to develop an Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 0-25 year olds and the proposed consultation on this work.	We supported the development of an emotional health and wellbeing service for 0-25 year olds and the improved access to this service that was proposed. It was agreed that following the consultation any substantial changes to the service would be brought back to the
NHS Out of Hours and 111 services	We scrutinised the proposals for the future provision of the 111 service for Telford and Wrekin and how this would work with the existing out of hours service and the longer term commissioning arrangements.	The Committee supported the commissioning arrangements for the regional 111 service and the extension of the existing out of hours for Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire.
Scrutiny Management Board Cllrs. Shirley Reynolds (Chair), Stephen Bentley, Andy Burford, Nathan England, Veronica Fletcher, Jayne Greenaway, Kevin Guy, Jacqui Seymour		No. of meetings 4
Holding the Executive to Account	During 2015/16 we questioned in public: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of the Council • Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Housing, Public Health & Protection • Cabinet member for Business, Neighbourhood & Customer Services • Cabinet member for Children, Young People & Families • Cabinet member for Employment & Skills • Cabinet member for Leisure Services & Culture 	Executive held to account The sessions were also used to enabled members of the scrutiny committees to ask questions about issues not included in the work programme

How to get involved

You can get involved by:

- Making a suggestion for scrutiny
- Coming to a Scrutiny Committee meeting to hear the debate
- Putting forward your views as part of a scrutiny review
- Becoming a co-optee on one of our Scrutiny Committees

For more information about how to get involved go to www.telford.gov.uk/scrutiny or contact the scrutiny team at scrutiny@telford.gov.uk or call 01952 383215.

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