

Members expressed their gratitude to the team for their improvements in safeguarding, school readiness, and ensuring that children in Shropshire go to their first-choice school.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet determined the proposed admission arrangements 2026 - 2027 for Shropshire's community and voluntary controlled schools as set out in Appendix A to this report and further approved the publication of those arrangements in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 and to the notification of this to parties specified in the Code.

266 Shropshire Council consultation response to the Planning Reform Working Paper: Planning Committees..

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services introduced the item, highlighting the pragmatic response to the government's consultation on planning reform. The response was developed with cross-party agreement and members noted the significant impact of the paper on parish and town councils, especially for Shire counties like Shropshire, which have unique community needs.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet considered and approved submission of the response to the Government's consultation on the proposals contained within the Planning Reform Working Paper: Modernising Planning Committees, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
2. That authority be given to the Assistant Director – Growth and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, to agree any additional changes to the Council's response to the consultation ahead of its submission to the Government.

267 Shropshire Schools Funding Formula 2025-26

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Education presented the report which sought Cabinet approval for the proposed Shropshire Schools Funding Formula 2025-26. Members noted that the proposal had been discussed and agreed by the Schools Forum.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet accepted the recommendation of Shropshire Schools Forum (as outlined in Appendix A and B) on the funding formula for Shropshire schools for the financial year 2025-26 for maintained schools, and the academic year 2025-26 for academies.

268 Shropshire Local Plan and NPPF Position Statement

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services presented the report which provided an update to Cabinet on the implications of the updated National Planning Policy Framework and recommended an approach regarding the current Local Plan Review for the purposes of the examination and decision making on planning applications.

He highlighted the significant impact of the new national standard methodology on Shropshire's housing need and the immediate impact on the Council's ability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

Concern was raised regarding the delays in the local plan process and the need for sufficient resources to address the inspectors' concerns within the six-month deadline was expressed.

A representation from Malcolm Andrew, Chair of the Trefonen Rural Protection Group, was received emphasising the need for an up-to-date local plan and adequate resources for the planning policy team.

The planning team were thanked for their work.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the implications of the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular regarding the increased local housing need in Shropshire as a result of the associated updated national standard methodology; the implications for managing development in the Green Belt; and the transitional arrangements for plan making.
2. Noted that as a result of the new local housing need figure calculated as required by the updated NPPF, Shropshire cannot currently demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.
3. Agreed that following receipt of the Local Plan Inspector's letter (ID47), and having considered the options outlined in Section 7 of this report, that the letter detailed in Appendix 1 is sent to the Inspectors as a response, and that subject to the agreement of the Inspectors the assessment processes referenced in this response are progressed in accordance with the stated Project Plan.
4. Agreed the new Local Development Scheme (LDS) included as Appendix 2. 5. Agrees that the evidence base supporting the draft Local Plan (2016-2038) is a material consideration in decision making on relevant planning applications, to support the implementation of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This will include planning applications for new development on sites proposed to be allocated in the submitted version of the Local Plan (2016- 2038)

269 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 5 March 2025 at 2pm.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: