



SERVING LOCAL COUNCILS IN SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN
Affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils

North Shropshire Area Committee

Minutes of the North Shropshire Area Committee 7.00 pm on 23rd June 2025 in Wem Town Council Meeting Room.

Present:

Committee Members

Andy Woodthorpe
Patricia Budgen
Andrew Thompson
Paul Goulbourne (Vice Chair)
Lin Sherman
Gary Groves
Ann Wickett
Sylvia Hammond
Claire Crackett
Lynn Bearman
Tony Hodge
Kathryn Holland
Huw Edwards (Chair)
Liz Vernon
Barbera Cotterall
Rachel Gascoigne
Claire Weedall

Baschurch PC
Baschurch PC
Cheswardine PC
Ellesmere TC
Hodnet PC
Market Drayton TC
Moreton Say PC
Myddle, Broughton & Harmer Hill PC
Stanton PC
Stoke on Tern PC
Sutton on Tern PC
Welshampton & Lyneal PC
Wem Rural PC
Wem Rural PC
Wem TC
Wem TC
Whixall PC

Also Present

Marc Bayliss
PS Liam Heathcote
CI Lou Wall
Ray Wickson
Chris Mellings
Amanda Roberts

West Mercia Deputy PCC
West Mercia Police Local SNT rep
West Mercia Police
Chairman, SALC
SALC Chief Officer
NS Area Committee Secretary

Apologies Received

David Walker
Gail Long
Laura Tarburton
Frank Beech
Peta Smith
Julie Catterall
William Allen

Grinshill PC
Grinshill PC
Hadnall PC
Hordley PC
Moreton Say PC
Prees PC
Whitchurch TC

Speaker

1. Policing In North Shropshire – Marc Bayliss (Deputy PCC)

1. Crime Trends

- Crime has consistently decreased over the past two years.
- Continued emphasis on addressing impactful crime and ensuring the public voice is heard in policing priorities.

2. Leadership Update

- Richard Cooper has been appointed as the new Chief Constable.
- The Chief Constable operates independently of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- The PCC's role is to support and challenge the Chief Constable.

3. Local Policing Structure

- 30 Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) officers operate across North Shropshire.
- Every main town is covered by an SNT, each with dedicated Police Community Officers (PCOs).
- Police Sergeants (PSs) coordinate the response to incidents by placing the right officers in the right locations at the right time.

4. West Mercia Police – Overview

- The force currently has 2,532 officers.
- It covers 3,000 square miles with a population of approximately 1.2 million.

5. 'Safer Communities Plan' – PCC Strategic Ambitions

- Cutting crime
- Increased visibility of policing in communities
- Supporting victims and witnesses
- Maximising resources to deliver value for money

6. Collaborative & Efficient Policing

- Greater emphasis on partnership working within the criminal justice system.
- Financial constraints acknowledged; a focus on creating efficiencies without compromising public safety.

7. Community Engagement

- There is a determination to double engagement with town and parish councils to enhance local collaboration and accountability.

In response to questions from the Committee

1. Speed Limits

Set by Shropshire Council; police provide data and input during consultation.

2. Street Furniture Damaged in RTCs

Injury collisions are recorded; damage costs can be claimed from the driver's insurance.

3. Crime Reporting Perceptions

- 999 response is 92% within 10 seconds;
- 101 (non-emergency) is 40% within 20 seconds.

Response is prioritised by threat, harm, and risk. High THR results in an immediate dispatch, other categories are responded to as soon as possible, but are responded to.

4. PCSO Shift Changes

Financial move saving £330k; no reduction in working hours as shifts now start earlier. The logic is that PCSOs should be visible and in the winter, after 8pm, they are not. PCSOs will still be able to attend PC meetings, but will need to leave before 8pm. The desire of the PCC is that there will still be engagement with Parish Councils on a regular basis. Another 32 PCs are to be employed across West Mercia.

5. Police Precept

West Mercia has one of the lowest in the UK. Budget is 50% precept-funded; more funding needed to maintain service levels.

6. Rural Areas

Urban areas prioritised due to higher threat/harm/risk, but rural needs are recognised. Specialist rural officers are in place:

- Rural and Business Crime Officer
- Rural Crime Officers
- Wildlife Crime Officers

7. Criteria for Measuring Vehicle Speeds

No fixed criteria; concerns trigger data checks and possible action. Parish Councils should contact local SNTs which now have access to Trucam.

8. Reducing Speeds on Rural Lanes with High Traffic Use

Police support, but changes are led by Shropshire Council through engineering or speed limits.

9. Police Attendance at RTCs on minor roads

Police attend only if injuries or offence allegations are reported.

Committee Business

1. **Election of Chair**

Resolved: Huw Edwards is elected as Chair.

2. **Apologies**

As listed above.

3. **Election of Vice Chair**

Resolved: Paul Goulbourne is elected as Chair.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2025 were approved.

5. **Future Meetings**

The following dates were agreed:

15th September 2025 (Wem Town Council Meeting Room)

12th January 2026 (Zoom)

9th March 2026 (Wem Town Council Meeting Room)

8th June 2026, Annual Meeting (Wem Town Council Meeting Room)

6. SALC Reports -

a. Chris Mellings, SALC Chief Officer

- Report Circulated in advance and sent out with minutes.
- It was noted that the Nature Recovery Conference will now be held on 3rd October.
- CM mentioned that SALC's area committees are being reviewed, including their structure and purpose. Committees will be consulted once clear proposals are ready.

b. Ray Wickson (SALC County Chair)

Ray's report covered the following:

- West Midlands CALCs met and agreed to lobby Government direct in relation to funding for Neighbourhood Development Plans. (NB Financial support is still available for plans already in the system.
- Met with Shropshire Councillors Heather Kidd (Leader) and Alex Wagner (Deputy Leader) who aim to engage more with town and parish councils.
- 25th July Shropshire Together Conference
- Concerns have been raised about the Shropshire Council online declaration of interests and the approach taken to election expense forms.

7. Finance and Banking

The secretary provided a verbal update:

- Balance: £1995.80

8. Matters Raised by Parish Councils

None raised in advance.

Baschurch PC raised issues concerning a TRO which has been ongoing for 18 months without resolution.

Baschurch asked if ringfenced CIL funding has a time limit. The NALC briefing note will be shared with the minutes.

9. Suggestions for Future Speakers/Topics

Helen Morgan – to be invited to the September meeting

Shropshire Council – New Approach to Partnership with T&PC's – September Care Leavers Presentation

Shropshire Council Streetworks Team

10. Date of next meeting

15th September 2025 at 7pm, Wem Town Council Meeting Room

The meeting closed at 20.45

Supplementary Information: to be sent with the minutes of this meeting:

1. SALC Chief Officer's report to NSAC
2. Neighbourhood Plans Members' Briefing
3. Letter from Cabinet Member to T&PCs
4. PS Liam Heathcote contact information
5. Call for Information June 2025
6. Scrutiny Chair's Letter to T&PCs
7. Neighbourhood Fund Requirements
8. Total NF CIL collected 2012-2024 by Parish
9. NF Annual Monitoring Form
10. NALC Briefing: CIL