

Meeting	FAR Meeting
Date	Thursday 20th February 2025
Time	2.00 – 4.00
Location	Teams



Core Members:	
Steve Robinson (SR)	Board Member and Chair
Tony Deakin (TD)	Board Member
Ros Jones (RJ)	Director of Corporate Services
Paul Hayward (PH)	Co-optee Board Member
James Wood (JW)	Operations Director
Denise Jones (DJ)	Head of Finance
Jo Grivell (JG)	Executive Assistant & Minute Taker
Jenny Daisley (JD)	Strategic Housing and Commissioning Manager (Shropshire Council)
Ruth Phillips (RP)	Head of Corporate Services
Kath Vose (KV)	Audit Team (Shropshire Council)
Narinder Sandher (NS)	Beever & Struthers
Nicholas Burton (NB)	Grant Thornton UK
James McLarnon (JM)	Grant Thornton UK
Lynn Fonseca (LF)	Tenant Board Member
Jane Trethewey (JT)	Shropshire Council
Apologies:	
Harpreet Rayet (HR)	Managing Director
Vince Hunt (VH)	Shropshire Council Board Member

Item No.		Who	When
<u>1.</u>	<u>Introduction and Apologies</u> SF welcomed attendees. Apologies received from Harpreet Rayet, and Vince Hunt.		
<u>2.</u>	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> No declarations of interest were raised.		
<u>3.</u>	<u>Minutes of Last Meeting & Matters Arising</u> The minutes from the last meeting were accepted as a true representation of the meeting on 27 November 2024. It was suggested that the action tracker be updated with any updates outside of the meeting and could be circulated with the minutes. It was not necessary to go through each action in this meeting. This approach was approved by committee members.		

<p><u>4</u></p>	<p><u>Health and Safety Update</u> Report presented by Ros Jones and Ruth Phillips.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been 6 incidents recorded and one near miss since last time. All of those have been investigated by Martin Kelly. • Martin Kelly has been in place since October. The report shows progress on the whole H&S framework. He has been making lots of changes in how we handle Health and Safety, including the H&S policy which has now been tailored to be more specific to STAR which makes it more usable compared to using the previous Council processes. • STAR has now parted ways with Shropshire Council (at their request). They reviewed the services that they could continue to provide, and they decided not to support third parties. That worked really well for STAR, with the introduction of Martin Kelly. • STAR will be looking to bolster MK, so he is not a single point of failure. <p><u>Discussion and Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PH said it would be useful to pull all the H&S items together as there were three different H&S report items on the agenda. • RJ stated the plan was to have policy approvals as a separate agenda item at all the committees but agreed that it did make sense to integrate them into the relevant topics going forward and would give this some thought. • The AOB item was a late addition following an emerging risk around compliance. That one relates to landlord health and safety whereas the other two items relate to health and safety business practices. • PH asked what has happened to the Staff forum related to H&S to understand how this is being rolled out to staff. • RP spoke about the H&S Champions. MK is identifying safety leads in all service areas in order to get the input from each service area. He is working with each of the service managers to identify the people and putting a training programme together for them and will work with them to roll out the H&S safety framework. • SR said the idea of having a network of Champions is great to help embed H&S in the business. It feels like H&S is now bespoke to STAR's needs now and not so generic. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>		
<p><u>5.</u></p>	<p><u>Procurement Exemptions & Pipeline Update</u> Report presented by Ruth Phillips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no procurement exemptions to note. • RP reviewed the latest pipeline tracker from GBS. There are quite a few active tenders at the moment and a few new ones coming up. James McGlone the Governance Manager is doing great work to put together a contract tracker which enables STAR to better forecast the tender position. <p><u>Discussion and Questions</u></p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TD asked about the vehicle leasing. He asked how long the leases are for. 2030 is coming up at the end of the lease, and wondered how the change over to electric vehicles would impact and if it affects vans too. Is it possible to see and plan ahead so not scrabbling around at the end of the contract and time it so we have vehicles in situ? • RP said she believes it is a 3-year contract with +2 add on option. There are some implications for vans in 2030. Will be staying with Enterprise under the new tender arrangement. It's been a good process to go through to restructure the relationship and it has achieved some efficiencies over the last contract. • Action 25: RJ said STAR has a meeting with GFleet in the next few weeks, they are a local company that provide green solutions, so will know a bit more from them about direction of travel and can feed that back. • SR asked about the savings forecasted that haven't quite worked. RP said these are the forecasted savings from Gary Stephens from GBS that haven't been quantified by the Finance Team. From his perspective he is looking at the price in 22-23, there is a gap to what we spent in the last financial year, so the savings may not be as high as he forecasted. There may not be exact numbers yet but are still making savings as part of the tendering process. • RJ stated that the Finance Team are putting in clear measures of savings generated. RJ stated that have not relied on the savings, so they are not structurally required at the moment to finance the budget. • JT queried the ID532 Shirehall Professional appointment. What is it for. RP confirmed it is the CDL piece of work that GBS are working with them on and therefore is not STAR activity. • Action 19: JT asked for it to be amended to accurately reflect what that is to be really clear that the HRA is not subsidising CDL activities. RP said she would feed that back to Gary for his future reports. <p>The content of the reports was noted.</p>	RJ	9 June 25
6	<p><u>Policies Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RP gave an overview of the three Procurement policies, the strategy, policy and procedures. It was clear that there has been inconsistency in procurement, so wanted to be clear and robust as to what STAR procedures are, and to give staff the tools to use. Have developed the financial rules and the strategy and then the process that underpins that so there is a process flow they can follow when procuring to ensure it was value for money, secure and robust. • The plan is to roll this out across the organisation to anyone that purchases and give them refresher training on the approval levels that people can sign off, and evidence gathering so if audited there is a consistent approach. <p><u>Discussion and Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR asked if there is clarity about the accountability. RP said it is now very clear what level you have to be at to approve what 	RP/GS	4 June 2025

	<p>value. Have been clear that if it is a contract, it is the total value of the contract to ensure we are getting value for money. If supplier is dealing with anyone in the organisation it is the exact same process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TD highlighted that all of the policies are quite technical, and the committee could miss some things, so should be looking for external assurance. He asked for the procurement policy, did our procurement consultants review them, standing orders financial regulations, has there been any legal review and H&S been reviewed by H&S consultants. • RP stated that Gary Stephens from GBS has reviewed all the procurement documents. He is happy with it and has compared it to other housing associations he is working with. • Wenlock has reviewed the H&S policy. It was originally their document, and MK has tailored to STAR and then referred it back to them for sign off. • DJ stated that with regards to a legal check there has not been one, but the previous financial rules document was a Shropshire Council led one. The document is an amalgamation of other ALMOS and other government documents. It is the first draft and if it needs further oversight that can be arranged. • Action 20 – Financial Rules Policy to be reviewed by external body. • PH flagged the Top 20 areas of spend was left blank in the paper. RP clarified that we do not have that information, but it was included with the intent to make it visible in due course. It will go in before it is rolled out to the organisation. • PH asked how we evidence Social Value. RP said this is still being developed with GBS looking at how other organisations do it. STAR is advertising it with some of the projects we have done and the social impact of those projects but have been very clear with our providers we want to deliver projects that are meeting the needs of the community. STAR will design projects to meet a community need off the back of the contribution coming from social value. STAR is giving the contractors the opportunity to bring ideas if there is a specific theme of project they would like to deliver and they would like to see their social value money used on. • SR said it would be good to hear about some of the projects in the future, RP said they bring updates to future committees. • DJ briefed on the Governance Orders and Financial rules policy. As already stated, have redrafted the financial rules as the previous iteration was Shropshire Council led. Have looked through the governance structure, quorate meetings, types of meetings in terms of subcommittee meetings, and the actual financial rules have been simplified. It was quite hard to determine authorisation levels and who was responsible for what previously. There are simplified tables which clearly state what limits people have. • PH said he has a few specific questions but will send them direct to Denise and copy Ros for follow up. • Action 26: SR asked if everyone was happy to approve the policies subject to the above action, which was agreed. SR said the key thing is the roll out of them and would expect to get updates as to how it is going at the next meeting. 	RJ	4 June 2025
		RJ	9 June 2025

	The content of the policies were noted.		
7.	<p><u>Finance & Performance Update Report Q3/P9</u> Report presented by Denise Jones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 3 Outturn report. The report sets out where we are in relation to performance YTD. As at Q3 STAR is seeing £95K surplus, primarily capitalisation of staff into the HRA, as we are now making sure we recharge labour charges and activities that are capital lead. • Major surprises are around keeping a control over contractor materials spend which has seen a huge increase in costs over the last couple of years in terms of inflation pressures. • HRA outturn (Purple pack) monitoring is ongoing. There is a big focus to make sure forecasting is tighter especially around major repairs. We have done a lot of work to ensure that the contract managers are vocal if they feel that invoices need to be recognised. STAR is in a decent position in regard to the HRA overall. • The spend within major repairs is the main driver for a deviation from the original prediction. • RJ advised that as at P9 it was at £95K in surplus but have just seen P10 and it has slipped into a slight overspend. The reason for that overspend is known and are putting in measures in place to manage it. <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TD asked about the cashflow and overdraft facility. Every housing association would have those arrangements in place, and it is essential that STAR has too. RJ said she has discussed with the Deputy Section 151 Officer and with the bank. The bank has umbrellaed accounts and all the Councils different accounts sit underneath that. STAR and Cornovii are within the umbrella but don't have a shared overdraft. If the bank were to extend an overdraft to STAR it would need an intercompany guarantee. That's not impossible to arrange. It is something that RJ is speaking with Ben Jay about. But Ben has also put forward the option that STAR might be able to utilise the Councils own balances in a different way and within their control. It is an ongoing conversation. • TD asked about the reduction in the major repairs programme. It is down to activity rather than capitalisation. • DJ stated the main pressure seems to be around the Windows programme. We are moving more from STAR, into the major repairs so the reduction includes that. • With the regards to the major repairs, it is all led by contracts and there were some issues around setting up some contracts at the beginning, mainly around windows which were slow to get off the ground. Recently are looking to get a major roofing programme off the ground and around £0.5m will be spent by the end of March. • JW gave more detail on the forecasted underspend. About £1.5m was put aside for batteries and additional measures within the 		

	<p>Wave 2.2 programme, however it was decided that they were not a value for money investment. They are a genuine saving. The other genuine saving is the business has decided to move away from the proactive rewiring of properties and it is going to be done in void or when we fail an ERCR test. For the assurance of the committee, where we have got any component underspend it has not been recycled into other areas. The budget will be used to address the component in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 21: TD asked if STAR is planning to schedule the upgrade of SOR rates. DJ said the version being used is from 2019. Historically would not have done them annually but would have applied an inflationary uplift. TD asked that STAR ensure using the latest version of SOR rates. • TD also highlighted the repairs KPIs are behind target, have they been adversely affected by the DLO review. JW said there are a few items behind schedule, and that is to do with the restructuring. The next report will show we have moved that into a much better position, and the changes have made an impact. • PH asked for clarity on the service charge increases. It was clarified that anything that could be recognised have been included in 2025/26 budget assumptions. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>	RJ	4 June 2025
<u>8.</u>	<p><u>HRA Business Plan and Budgets 2025/26 Update</u></p> <p>The report was taken as read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RJ said everyone has already seen the business plan a few times. There were a couple of small amendments made before it was sent for final Council approval. There was nothing material that has changed though. • TD highlighted the Savill report in particular the zero-carbon expenditure, and he can see that it has been taken out of the back end of the plan now. On rent convergence throughout the housing sector, it has been a common practice to uplift the rents when a tenant leaves, and it is brought up to the target rent. TD asked where STAR was in terms of that as a policy. RJ confirmed that is now in place. At relet, STAR relets at target rent. • TD said he thought the scenario planning was good, but he has seen other ones from housing associations so will share some ideas with RJ. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>		
<u>9</u>	<p><u>STAR Budget Approval 2025/26</u></p> <p>The report was taken as read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a small pressure on the budget of £56K, and do have some service development bids, so are requesting some of the reserves be used for transformation expenditure which is £387K this year. • The management fee is increasing CPI +1 on the rents and the additional amount for the increase is national insurance which has been requested and subsequently granted on a one-off basis. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The paper also covers future sustainability. STAR assumes that will not have the NI support going forwards and so have inflated the budget for the next 3 years and can see that it is not sustainable. The report considers ways to get to a sustainable position. The vast majority of costs at STAR are the people so are looking at a full review of terms and conditions, pension offerings and are requesting an allowance from reserves to allow restructure of the business. <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 22: TD said the Sustain contract is in there for 25/26. He asked what is the position if that contract ends in relation to redundancy costs? DJ said she does not think it has been decided yet. Tom Forty was having those conversations but no resolution was made. It was agreed that need to resurrect the discussions as it is a risk. SR asked about the list of savings and what work was being done on it. DJ stated it was very early days. When the budget was put together the pressure was recognised immediately. Over the past 6 weeks those conversations have started to take place. The list noted in the paper is initial ideas which could be taken forward. RJ stated that Gemma Griffiths will lead on this and will be putting some rigour around how we express savings, to understand them and how they relate to reality of the financial position. She has been very clear with team leaders which savings they own. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>	RJ/JW	4 June 2025
<u>10</u>	<p><u>Strategic Risk Register Update</u> The report was taken as read. RJ reviewed the risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The addition of a new risk number 14 is in readiness for Awaabs Law coming in at October. It is listed on the register as general readiness for non-compliance of emerging legislation. It is low risk, but STAR needs to understand our position. There is an emerging compliance risk to be covered under AOB. <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TD stated members had discussed the Strategy day and that we probably need a further strategy day following the Council elections. TD wondered if the risk workshop should be part of the all-day meeting after the elections. <p>Decisions: It was agreed to convene the risk workshop after the elections and when able to plan ahead.</p> <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>		
<u>11</u>	<p><u>Audit Status Report</u> Report presented by RJ and taken as read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular report on the internal audit programme. James McGlone, new Governance and Risk Manager is just starting to track this. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received the IT Risk Management and Corporate Governance reports from Shropshire Council and those are good or reasonable and one is coming to a close on Financial management. Beever and Struthers have also carried out some audits. Voids and Lettings will be shared with you. Beever and Struthers are meeting attendees today to provide a more detailed update. <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TD highlighted the business continuity plan where the work is still to be completed. Will it include recover from a cyber security attack? RP advised STAR is doing a full review of the business continuity and DR plan. JM is taking the lead on that and taking some advice from other ALMOS on how they deal with it. TD asked about the Internal audit plan for next year. He could not see any key control audits. RJ stated that are in discussion with Shropshire Council about the overall level of assurance in the routine audits and how they are approached next year. RJ agreed there needed to be some included. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>		
<u>12</u>	<p><u>Internal Audit Programme Update - Shropshire Council</u> Report presented by Kath Vose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of the internal audit plan was provided. Continue to deliver the agreed audit plan and are on track to deliver the required audits by end of March 2025. Since the report was issued there are now two other audit reports issued in draft; risk management, which received a reasonable overall opinion and corporate governance which was limited last year but is reasonable this year which shows strengthening control. Financial management is issued in draft and recommendations are work in progress and should be through in the next few weeks. Field work for payroll is to be completed at the beginning of March to allow for two completed payrolls to have been run. There have been a few delays because of lack of information provided within reasonable timescales which is due to changes in key staff. <p>Discussion and Questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TD raised that the HRA business plan audit that was given limited assurance. Since then, have had the Savills report which looked at the business plan and compared it with plans in the sector. They have given it a green light. TD asked where we are at, given Savills gave the green light. RJ said a lot of the recommendations that came out of the Shropshire Council audit of that plan were because a lot of the processes were not embedded and hadn't been approved. If we revisited it now a lot of the recommendations would be closed. KV added that there were two elements within the HRA, when looked at in June 2024 the process wasn't embedded, there was also some elements of the rent setting process not in place and 		

	<p>some recommendations came out and the overall opinion was it was a limited result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They did take the Savill report into consideration and did increase the grading. However, have to report on what they found at that moment in time. The timing of when Shropshire Council and Savills did their work, is why there is a difference. When the follow up audit is done and can see the evidence is when the assurance can be increased. • Action 23: TD asked that this be raised at the Board that previous concerns have been addressed and there has since been external assurance from Savills that looks at business plans across the sector, and they have given a good judgement. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>	RJ	17 March 2025
<u>13</u>	<p><u>Internal Audit Programme Update – Beever and Struthers</u></p> <p>Narinder Sandher gave the following overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have completed a few audits and are waiting on responses on the complaints audit. There is nothing of concern from a control point of view. • Right To Buy audit is ongoing and it is just being quality reviewed. • The other audits are scheduled and will be reported by the June committee. • The future programme is based on STAR's risks, and what is seen elsewhere across the sector that might be good for the Board to have assurance of. B&S created a long list and came up with a final list after discussion with Harpreet Rayet and the team. This can be reviewed at the next committee meeting. • The internal audit charter is part of the plan and normally you would approve the charter. This charter has been updated to reflect the global auditing standards. It is a commitment from STAR and the committee that will allow B&S to do the work independently and objectively. RJ <p>Discussion and questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TD said his only concern with audits in general was to have the key control audits to test the controls are being applied and whether we need some extra days for those included. • Do need the internal audit charter and the approach does need to be discussed at the FAR Committee, because part of it is whether internal audit is done internally or whether we use external firms. The STAR team need to advise on that. • Action 24: It was agreed to have a separate meeting outside of the FAR to ensure that STAR is compliant with the charter. 	RJ	4 June 2025
<u>14</u>	<p><u>External Audit Plan for 2024/25 – Grant Thornton</u></p> <p>James McLarnon and Nicholas Burton gave the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently doing the planning work for the 2025 audit plan. By the next meeting will have started the audit field work and will give members an update at the June meeting. • There are presumed significant risks on revenue that can be rebutted. They have rebutted the revenue significant risk; it 		

	<p>doesn't mean that no work is done but it is not considered so complex a risk. Will still look at the management fee for the main part of the income, recharges and sample testing expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management override of controls can't be rebutted so test using data analytics using software Inflow, to identify the high-risk transactions. • Pension liability is another significant risk. Last year there was a net asset at the end. It is made up of liability and the asset. Liability is an estimate so have a specialist valuation team helping with that. Because Grant Thornton audits the Pension Fund, have to wait until they have finished their audit and ask for their findings on the assets and that is why we can't sign off this audit in June or July. Signing last year was very late, in December but hope to have it earlier in September or October this year. • IT is piggybacked on the Council's main audit work on the Councils IT system, on business world Unit 4. It doesn't make sense to duplicate their work. • Last year Open Housing was covered and this year the new Payroll system People First is included. Payroll isn't treated as high-risk area but will still get an understanding of that system. • The planning is under way and the main work will be done in May and June. • NB brought up the Related parties in the appendices, as the regulator has been coming down on audit firms to make sure the related parties work is done properly. What hasn't been done is the consideration of close family members. The Board and key management personnel's close family members and children are also related parties so if there are transactions between them and STAR, for example they own a building company that contracts with STAR that building company would be treated as a related party. • STAR needs to have a list of all their related party names and provide to GT, so they can test on that. <p>Discussion and Questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TD queried the timescales. He understands that are tied into the audit of the pension fund but does not understand why STARs will not be complete until October or later. JM clarified that since the pandemic the local government audit market has exploded. There is a piece of legislation to allow auditors to do back stop audits that go back a number of years. Some authorities haven't had their accounts signed off for years. They are now saying we need to get audit back on an even keel and for any audits that are not finished they are back stopped, and their accounts are qualified, and everyone can move forward. This will get back to a place when can sign off some of the accounts by September. • There was some discussion about why the pension information cannot be supplied earlier. TD stated that if they have to provide the pension audit information to other bodies that STAR should have it at the same time. JM confirmed that Shropshire Council auditors only provide to other local authorities and auditor. • TD said there used to be some seminars for example the introduction of new standards and asked if GT still run those and do the STAR team get access to them. JM said there are some that 		
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	<p>are housing association focussed but STAR is not technically a registered landlord.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GT offered that if the STAR team become aware of any training, they need to contact them. RJ said that as part of the tender contract GT will provide supplementary training so will look at doing that. <p>The committee endorsed the external audit plan.</p>		
<u>15</u>	<p><u>Forward Plan Review</u></p> <p>There was nothing to report.</p>		
<u>16</u>	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>JW gave an update on the landlord health and safety compliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historically it had sat with Assistant Director Leela Cottey, who is out of the business for an extended period of time. Identified that there were some short comings in the management function that reported into LC. The compliance manager left the business last week and have appointed an interim Head of Compliance and Sustainability manager. In the last week have done a deep dive into the functions and processes and there are issues around reporting and clear line of sight around some of the certification. What led to the concern was that STAR had dipped below 100% on a gas safety compliance. There is now only one gas safety certificate that is overdue but have had 5 no access attempts and it is rebooked for this week. The tenant has been advised that if don't get access this week the metre will be capped. The legal requirement for electrical safety is 10 years, and STAR's is 5 years as that is best practice, every certificate is in date of the 10 years. There is an action plan in place and by the end of the financial year it will be back to acceptable place with electrical. STAR only has one lift, and STAR's stock does not have shared water tanks, so Legionella is not a concern. On Fire and Asbestos there has been similar issues with poor management and oversight and there is an action plan to put that right. <p>Discussion and Questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SR asked if there is the need for more staff or if it is culture that needs to be addressed. What is the timescale for resolving it. JW said that Compliance needs to be 100%. You can make an error in the business, and it is not a critical threat, but compliance is. Culturally STAR is resetting the expectations of personnel in that department that only 100% will do. Have listened to the team members and have purchased a piece of software C365, which is used in the sector. The key difference is it will make is it automates the receipt of certificates and stops the manual upload and opportunity for human error. It has been signed off by SMT and will be introduced shortly. Compliance roles are quite difficult to recruit for. Looking to either train or upskill the people in the team. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now feel on top of gas and will be in a better position with electrical by the end of March. • Fire risks are high medium or low; there are zero high risk actions overdue and have about 50 medium risk actions overdue. All of those actions are quite intrusive work. It is not unusual for them to not be complete by the due date and the important thing is to be able to show due diligence and governance around the decisions around doing the work on action plan to address. • SR asked how the committee would be kept up to date. JW stated it is his number one priority and would be quite happy to submit an interim report in 3-4 weeks' time. It was agreed that an up-to-date report would be provided for the Board meeting on 17 March, and that would be sufficient. It is already listed as an agenda item. • RJ said there is a programme of work being done by the performance team to get underneath all the data sets that feed the performance KPIs. Compliance is currently being looked at. • TD endorsed the C365 software. TD asked how we deal with single point of failure. JW said C365 will monitor centrally, and multiple people will have access to it, and will get away from people keeping information in their inbox or their heads. There is a pool of people who can help and assist in the business, and they have experience to support. <p>The content of the report was noted.</p>		
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Action Tracker:

Below is a snapshot of the new FAR action tracker. It will be updated and provided as part of the meeting papers. Any closed items are filtered out once minutes are signed off but are still available on the main action tracker if required.

Action #	Date of FAR Committee Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Status	Action Owner	Action Due By	Updates
1	5-Sep-24	Matters Arising	Discussions with the Council about temporary accommodation strategy.	Ongoing	RF	Feb-25	Update 27/11- Conversations are continuing with regards to what the service will look like in the future, but nothing has been agreed yet.
4	5-Sep-24	H&S IP 4.2.7	Asbestos: we commissioned an external independent organisation. The report noted our plans that had not been implemented, would have put us in a far stronger position to not have the incidents occurring if we had implemented them. We have shared the full asbestos management plan that we're proposing to implement, and they will provide feedback, comments and coaching to the staff over the next couple of weeks. To be completed by the end of September, when we hope to go live with the plan, and it will be available to all our operatives in the same time scale. Enhanced asbestos awareness training, with UK TA, to deliver that on our behalf, after which we can get the 40 operatives through quickly, so it does not upset the operations.	Ongoing	TF	Feb-25	Update 27/11 Mark Kavanagh is speaking with ION who will be delivering the training

6	5-Sep-24	H&S IP Q6	SR suggested discussion at board level of an understanding of everyone's place to make sure it is going as it should be. HR agreed an action for a workshop to go into the everyone's diaries in the next two weeks to ensure time is taken for this to go ahead.	Ongoing	KD	Jan-25	
7	5-Sep-24	Finance Q7	HR said that in the report there is work going on to get to a balanced budget position. A further update will be issued to the Board and the council on the budget position and potential areas of efficiencies to deliver a balanced budget. There will be a focus on recharges, temporary accommodation, procurement of contracts and staffing levels.	Closed	HR	Feb-25	Update 27/11 Covered in Budget Update. The budget is still to be finalised. Update 20/2 – Covered in the budget review agenda item.
13	27-Nov	Finance and Performance	TF advised that further information would be provided at the next Customers Services Subcommittee meeting on call abandonment and there is a report being produced for December's Board meeting on damp and mould.	Closed	RJ	Apr-25	Update 20/2 Reports being taken through other committees.
14	27-Nov	Finance and Performance	HR to speak to the Council leader and flag the concerns regarding business plan not being reviewed by Council until February.	Closed	HR	Dec-24	Update 20/2 Business Plan has been approved by Council.
15	27-Nov	Finance and Performance	TD asked to have some training to understand how the loans would operate; how long are loans for and what is the choice of tenure of loans.	Ongoing	RJ	Mar-25	SC Treasury team to attend board overview. Update 20/2 Discussed to be included as part of the STAR Away Day but team still considering best approach to provide this oversight.

18	27-Nov	Audit Status	HR said he would write formally with the objections to the audit findings related to the HRA business plan.	Closed	HR	Dec-24	Update 20/2 This has been discussed several times with the Audit team at Shropshire Council. It was also covered in the discussions under the internal audit agenda item.
19	20-Feb-25	Procurement	JT queried the ID532 Shirehall Professional appointment. What is it for. RP confirmed it is the CDL piece of work that GBS are working with them on. Action: JT asked for it to be amended to accurately reflect what that is to be really clear that the HRA is not subsidising CDL activities. RP said she would feed that back to Gary for his future reports.	New	RP	Jun-25	
20	20-Feb-25	Policies	DJ stated that with regards to a legal check there has not been one, but the previous financial rules document was a Shropshire Council led one. The document is an amalgamation of other ALMOS and other government documents. It is the first draft and if it needs further oversight that can be arranged. Action Financial Rules Policy to be reviewed by external body.	New	RJ	Jun-25	
21	20-Feb-25	Finance and Performance	TD asked if STAR is planning to schedule the upgrade of SOR rates. DJ said the version being used is from 2019. Historically would not have done them annually but would have applied an inflationary uplift. TD asked that STAR ensure using the latest version of SOR rates.	New	RJ	Jun-25	
22	20-Feb-25	STAR Budget	TD said the Sustain contract is in there for 25/26. He asked what is the position if that contract ends in	New	RJ/JW	Jun-25	

			relation to redundancy costs? DJ said she does not think it has been decided yet. Tom Forty was having those conversations but no resolution was made. It was agreed that need to resurrect the discussions as it is a risk.				
23	20-Feb-25	Internal Audit	TD raised that the HRA business plan audit that was given limited assurance. Since then, have had the Savills report which looked at the business plan and compared it with plans in the sector. They have given it a green light. The timing of when Shropshire Council and Savills did their work, is why there is a difference. When the follow up audit is done and can see the evidence is when the assurance can be increased. TD asked that this be raised at the Board that previous concerns have been addressed and there has since been external assurance from Savills that looks at business plans across the sector, and they have given a good judgement.	New	RJ/JW	Mar-25	
24	20-Feb-25	Internal Audit Beever and Struthers	Do need the internal audit charter and the approach does need to be discussed at the FAR Committee, because part of it is whether internal audit is done internally or whether we use external firms. The STAR team need to advise on that. Action: It was agreed to have a separate meeting	New	RJ	Jun-25	

			outside of the FAR to ensure that STAR is compliant with the charter.				
25	26-Feb-25	Procurement	RJ said STAR has a meeting with GFleet in the next few weeks, they are a local company that provide green solutions, so will know a bit more from them about direction of travel and can feed that back.	New	RJ	09-Jun-25	
26	26-Feb-25	Policies Update	SR asked if everyone was happy to approve the policies subject to the above action, which was agreed. SR said the key thing is the roll out of them and would expect to get updates as to how it is going at the next meeting.	New	RJ	09-Jun-25	