

Gwilym Butler

Monthly Report June 2021

1. The new council is settling in and it is a challenge in my new role with everyone working remotely to meet new officers and get my feet under the table so to speak but it is getting there. This will be Councils preferred way of working for the future to tackle the climate agenda and reduce centralised costs. Moving forward I see the staff having flexibility to have a mixture from homebased working and office based when required. We like Parish and Town Councils have to now do our public meetings in public which include Full Council, Cabinet, Planning and Scrutiny. Finding a venue that will hold 80 people while still socially distancing is a challenge with Theatre Seven being used but not the best for live meetings. The LGA (Local Government Association) along with Councils are lobbying Government to change the statute to allow virtual or hybrid public meetings.

2. My new role Portfolio holder for Resources, is a new role where the Council has now merged Finance, Human Resources ,Legal and Performance all into one team and that is what I now have oversight of moving forward .

3. We now have over 500 children in care putting immense issues on budgets. This is partly caused by external delays out of our hands. We have 40 cases back logged with the courts for the placement of children and this mirrors the issues and bumpy road effect we may well experience as we come out of the pandemic as everything catches up.

4. There has been a sharp increase in Domestic abuse during lockdown. This has specifically been seen around parents and children. This also includes an increase in children abusing their parents. This is on the agenda for the mental health issues of our youth post pandemic and what support we need to put in place.

5. We are experiencing a few cases of landowners in our area abusing their land and burying builders and commercial waste. This has been brought to the attention of the Environment Agency and Enforcement officers at Shire Hall with the appropriate action being taken.

6. We as a Council rely on Business Rates for £40 million of income half of the rates received. It is on our radar that post pandemic we may have many business properties becoming vacant as we have seen in retail and the subsequent impact that will have on our income and future budget pressures is being monitored constantly.

7. If you have enquiries regarding Highways issues pot holes etc please now send them to Nuria.Smith@Shropshire.gov.uk who is now a dedicated officer for Town and Parish councils highway issues.

8. Fix my street App is now the preferred option for reporting highways issues. Councillors and Clerks should download the App and report issues as you go saving time money and administration.