

JANUARY REPORT

1. We have delivered a balanced budget for 22/23 which is out for consultation. To do this we have to utilise all our reserves and make further savings of £20million. The Government again have only given us one of grants of £40million for the following year with no guarantee of funding thereafter. If we do not get funding for 23/24 we are looking at a structural deficit of £60 million year. The core of the issue is we are going to be spending circa 85% of our disposable budget on Social care with only 15% to fund everything else. We are having regular meetings with our MPs who are fully aware of our situation and are lobbying Ministers for fairer funding for rural areas and the need for having a three year budget to enable us to plan.

2. Our housing delivery figures have been released which are looked at from October to October and from 20/21 in spite of Covid we delivered 1750 new Band D equivalent (for Council tax) properties in Shropshire which shows how strong the Shropshire economy is performing and the need for housing. I am pleased that in that figure 289 homes were those bought back into use from empty premises.

3. In respect of empty premises I want to advertise the Councils policy on Council tax which puts a double or treble premium on the tax for homes that are empty over a period of time depending on how long they are empty. This helps bring properties back to the market as either rentals or sale. However anyone who is buying an empty property that is inhabitable needs to be aware that the council tax premium is payable until the property is lived in.

4. Over the past few weeks I and Cabinet members have been undertaking a Carbon Literacy Training. I found the course very interesting and food for thought on how simple changes can make a huge difference. This leads nicely into our emerging Local transport Plan which is being developed which looks at all the ways we move around. This will include walking, cycling, public transport, Demand led transport, car sharing, Car charging points. How can we make it easier to move around on foot or cycle or access to transport of renewable form or shared transport. This will be come a core strategy within our Shropshire plan linked to everything else the Council does.

5. The new Shropshire plan can be seen at <https://indd.adobe.com/view/5a325dfa-b951-452d-9df1-06faa8e9c98c> This is a new corporate plan for the Council which I have led on, please have a look ,it is out for conversation and is very different and interactive. It will be a living document and shows our needs and ambitions. This is our golden thread and mother document under which falls The financial strategy to deliver it, then the individual policies and strategies for each individual area.

6. The third Wheelie bin has been approved at Full council and I am pleased to report that the role out will start in South Shropshire from May this year. To register your interest for one please you the following link <https://shropshire.gov.uk/requestmixedrecyclingbin> The wheelie bin will replace your recycling boxes the bag for paper etc will remain.

7. As Promised a further £58 million of Capital funds have been agreed for the roads over the next 4 years. This is not revenue spend but funds to bring the roads back up to standard and make improvements.

8. At cabinet last week we agreed a policy for pets as prizes on Council owned land basically banning any Pets as Prizes on any council owned land.

Should you like any information on any points or would like to contact me please do so on Gwilym.Butler@Shropshire.gov.uk, Gwilym Butler on facebook, or 07801099015

Kind regards

Gwilym Butler