

February report

1. We are currently working through the Council tax refund scheme enabling people in properties to get a rebate of £150 paid direct. To this end we are encouraging people to sign up for e billing for their bills both so we know who to contact and also to address our climate change agenda. There is good savings for the council both in carbon and costs in not posting out paper copies and for everyone who registers we will also commit to planting a tree.

Please contact Counciltax@Shropshire.gov.uk with you Council tax reference number to opt in.

2. I am pleased to advise we have been awarded £580,000 in funding from Government to support Domestic abuse victims and their children to access lifesaving support in safe accommodation should the need arrive.

3. Since last April we have repaired 21,000 potholes ,90% of which are permanent repairs, things are improving. I am awaiting next years capital programme to see if any of our roads are on the programme will update in due course.

4. Covid business grants totalling £667500 have been awarded to those effected under the Omicron virus. These are mainly hospitality and leisure business that have had restrictions imposed on numbers dealing direct with the public.

5. Anyone planning for celebrations for the platinum jubilee and wishes to close a road the link is <https://shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-network-management/application-forms-and-charges/> .Further advice and guidance will also be given .

We have successfully appointed a full team of Family Support Workers so that we can continue making headway into the Early Help provision for children, young people and their families. Detached Youth workers are in Shropshire Schools and out on the streets building working relationships with young people across the county.

We had some good news with the announcement of an additional grant to our schools of £5m. We look forward to working with the Schools Forum on this.

The 20mph speed limits outside schools is progressing on time; data has been gathered and now engagement starts with local members and schools.

7. 98.3% of properties in Shropshire now have access to superfast broadband and with Project Gigabit rolling out we hope to nudge this close to 100%

The work around the 'Fix My Street' app for reporting highways problems is going well and issues raised via the app now go straight onto the council's highways system.

The Council is also developing its own digital and smart strategies to examine how technology can deliver high quality council services at lower costs, thus creating better value for tax payers.

8. The Annual budget setting meeting of Full Council was on the 24th and the Budget was passed for the next financial year. Work will start shortly on the budget for 23/24 with currently no certainty on funding from government. If we receive what we have this year it will still leave us with a funding gap of circa £25 million, if we receive no grant as not confirmed this may rise to circa £60 million.

Gwilym Butler