

We have regularly provided the Town and Parishes with written reports usually placed on their web sites and other communications. Rather than repeat what has been said during the year there is a couple of areas to update on but then we wish to share with you the future of where Shropshire Council is going and how it will transform to reduce spending by £51 million over the next twelve months.

Before we introduce the Shropshire Plan we will just comment on a couple of key areas.

Highways are improving from where they were two years ago, there will always be constant maintenance. However the unclassified lanes are becoming a major issue and how we finance the repair and restructure of the thousands of kilometres of lanes not built for the current style or volume of traffic compounded with drainage issues from fields is becoming an ever increasing burden. We will be lobbying Government for further road funding for rural areas.

In previous years and before the Pandemic we were just on the cusp of getting Fairer funding for Rural areas which would have maintained our financial future. Since the pandemic it has become apparent that the Government is not minded to give fairer funding to the Rural areas due to fiscal restraints. The Council soon realised as this was no longer on the table that it would have to take matters into its own hands and become more sustainable away from government. Unlike the NHS we are not allowed to go over budget or over drawn and have to bring a balanced budget year on year otherwise the Government bring in Commissioners to run the Council. This nationally is becoming a challenge to all Local Authorities.

We have been engaged with The Local Government Association LGA to look over our proposals and plans to put the council on a firm financial footing for the future and change the way we do things once and for all and then hopefully if we become more self sufficient we will no longer be constantly having to change year on year which we have done for the past 10 plus years. The LGA have confirmed the Council is financially very well run and fully compliant but recognises the challenge of our spend reduction.

We therefore now present The Shropshire Plan

The Shropshire Plan will help us to achieve the £51 million spending reductions we must find by 2024 – while transforming services so that more people live their best lives.

Why we need the Shropshire Plan.

We need the Shropshire Plan because if we don't change – and quickly – we will fail in our responsibilities to our residents. If we get it right, we will become a council that transforms itself to transform the lives of the people we serve: we will balance our budget; we will be ready for the future; and most of all, we will be able to help more people live their best lives.

Right now, virtually every local authority in the country is under immense pressure to balance budgets whilst continuing to provide the services that are demanded by law, and expected by residents. It is a very, very difficult challenge, and requires councils to take tough and in many cases unpopular decisions. The simple fact is that councils face a moment of crisis: the fallout from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic; the cost-of-living crisis; Russia's illegal war in Ukraine; inflation that has been running at a forty-year high. All of these issues – combined with all the business-as-usual pressures of rising demand for many of our services – are putting a huge strain on council services nationally; for us in Shropshire, that means finding ways to reduce our spending by £51 million.

What is the Shropshire Plan?

Every organisation needs to have a plan or it will fail. This is as true of councils as it is of businesses. The Shropshire Plan is, quite simply, to think, act and work differently to make the difference we all want to make. The Shropshire Plan unites all of us around a shared purpose: to help the people of Shropshire live their best lives. We will do this by aligning our services and our ambitions to achieve the Four Healthies: Healthy Organisation; Healthy Economy; Healthy Environment; and Healthy People.

The aim of the Shropshire Plan: Shropshire living the best life.

As you know, Shropshire Council is a complex organisation of over 3,000 people. We care for vulnerable children and adults. We fill potholes and build roads. We help local businesses thrive. We make local democracy happen. We empty bins and protect our shared environment for future generations. And much, much more besides. But underlying everything we do is one shared purpose: to empower everyone in Shropshire to live their very best lives. This is what we do, and why we all joined the council. We came here to make a positive difference to people's lives. Our purpose is encapsulated in a single phrase: **Shropshire living the best life.**

What does Shropshire living the best life really mean? Independence and dignity.

Our aim is empower everyone in Shropshire to live their best lives. But what does that really mean? We believe that everyone, no matter their situation, deserves every chance to live fulfilling and healthy lives. The Shropshire Plan encourages us all to think how our services help people to live as independently as possible, and reducing dependency on council services. The Shropshire Plan encourages services that are **good for our residents, and good for the council.**

What do we mean by services that are good for our residents and good for the council?

Naturally, we all want to help our residents live independent, dignified and fulfilled lives. But why is that good for the council as well? By encouraging and working towards independence, we reduce dependency on council services, which are increasingly expensive – we must find new ways of working that value and respect our residents, and which offer excellent quality and excellent value, too. This means reducing our spending – but improving outcomes for our residents.

What is at stake if we don't cut costs? The very future of the council.

The simple fact is that we need to find efficiencies. If we don't we will fail to help our residents, particularly the most vulnerable members of our communities. If we fail to successfully balance our budget, auditors appointed by central government WILL find the £51 million we need to save – but without sensitivity to the issues and people of Shropshire.

The good news: it is possible to reduce spending and transform lives for the better.

Right now and for several years, our teams have been helping people live their best lives, while reducing dependency on council services. These include the lead TOMs (Target Operating Models) projects, such as Stepping Stones, the Residential Care project, 2 Carers in a Car, Getting Leadership Right, and others.

What are the Four Healthies? Our mission to achieve our vision of Shropshire living the best life.

The Four Healthies: Healthy People; Healthy Economy; Healthy Organisation; and Healthy Environment. On the Shropshire council website you will find more information on 'how' we will achieve our vision of Shropshire living the best life, by delivering services that are good for our residents, and good for the council we need to be.

The Shropshire Plan empowers us all to think, act and work differently to make the difference we all want to make.

The Shropshire Plan is less about targets on spreadsheets than the attitudes we all bring to work. It's about changing the way we work: challenging ourselves; avoiding the 'we've always done it this way' mentality; breaking down barriers and working collaboratively; and taking pride in what we do.

The Shropshire Plan in brief

- We all want to help the 343,000 people of Shropshire live their best lives.
- That means delivering services that empower independence, rather than dependency.
- We'll do this by transforming our services, so that they are good for our residents, and good for the council we need to be.
- Which means we need to think, act and work differently
- So that we achieve the Four Healthies:
 - Healthy People
 - Healthy Economy
 - Healthy Environment
 - Healthy Organisation

Cllr Gwilym Butler Gwilym.Butler@shropshire.gov.uk 07801099015

Cllr Simon Harris Simon.Harris@Shropshire.gov.uk 07833094145



Stottesdon C. of E. Primary School

The Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust



April 2023

Annual Parish Meeting Report

Stottesdon CofE Primary continues to be a thriving school (101 pupils + 18 pupils attending Nursery - some year groups are full others have a few places). Below are some highlights of our work and priorities:

- Recovery from the Pandemic continues with staffing stabilising and the priority of supporting children to recover academically, socially and emotionally at the forefront of our work. Support and interventions are widespread and having good impact.
- Outcomes for pupils in 2022 (not published but used internally) continued the strong pattern the school has a reputation for.
- As a school, we continue to run four classes and a Nursery (Nursery; Reception; Y1/2 (infants); Y3/4 (lower juniors); Y5/6 (upper juniors)) and the school continues to tighten the quality of its curriculum offer in all subjects. The school benefits from specialised teaching in RE, Music, French and many aspects of PE.
- As a CofE school, we have strong links with the church and look forward to its re-opening. The funding is supporting the school in participating in a historical art project during the summer of 2023
- Following the pandemic, we have now brought back the breadth of opportunities and experiences e.g. range of music lessons; sports participation; gardening club; choir; wide ranging enrichment and educational visits; bikeability; crucial crew (life skills and emergency services); seasonal and religious celebrations; holiday and wrap around clubs swimming and a residential for our older pupils.
- The school benefits from being part of the Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust (for which Katie Jones is now the Executive Headteacher - based 2 days a week across the Trust). Distributed leadership is a strength of the school and Caroline McKay is Assistant Headteacher. The Trust has launched back into Trust development priorities such as: renewing its vision and values; sharing good practice; serving community needs and ensuring pupils are ready for their next stage of education. In addition, the Trust has many operational benefits for governance, finance and facilities management. For example the capital monies secured for replacement windows and doors which have now been completed.
- As the summer term begins, we have slightly amended the timings of the school day (doors now open at 8.40am in the morning and children expected to be in at 8.45am) in order to be in line with the government expectation of a 32.5 hour week. Wrap around and Nursery timings have been amended to support parents with childcare and Nursery provision that align with the school day. As a rural school our wrap around care and holiday club is an important asset to the community with little or no other provision locally. Charges are kept to the minimum to cover costs.

Stottesdon C. of E. Primary School, Cleobury Mortimer, Nr. Kidderminster, Worcs. DY14 8UE

Tel: 01746 718617 Email: admin@stottesdon-school.co.uk Website: www.stottesdon-school.co.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs. K. Jones Chair Of Governors: Ms R. Datlen

**Chorley Village Hall Chair's annual report for the Parish Council AGM
17/04/2023**

Our regular local bookings include our popular weekly exercise classes for Yoga (Wednesday mornings) and Pilates (Friday mornings). The Local WI continue to meet every alternate 3rd Wednesday of the month. Our growing Film Club continues to run every 2nd Thursday evening of the month.

We have been running monthly (on the 1st Wednesday afternoons) coffee and chat with activities including short mat bowling, bingo, talks, board games and darts.

The Parish Council meets on the 4th Monday of the month.

Our well attended social events continue throughout the year raising funds for local charities and the Village Hall, with an enjoyable wine tasting evening in September , An Allo Allo evening in November showing film clips from past theatrical delights staged at the hall. A December Malt night, A February talk with wonderful photos from a local Gardner on Building a Chelsea garden. Coming up: A local bluebell walk to Kinlet Church 14th in May , A gin tasting evening in June(date tbc), A Bake off in September(date tbc).

Private bookings for parties and children's parties continue throughout the year.

We're always looking for new ideas for new groups that could be run by volunteers in the hall, such as Craft and Chat afternoons, regular coffee mornings/ bring your own Board games/ Bridge club/ lunch club, healthy walks or any other ideas.

FOSPS are holding a Baby & Children tabletop sale on Sat 29th April 10-2pm raising funds for FOSPS(Friends of Stottesdon Primary School)

Chorley Village Hall is always looking at ideas and ways of supporting new events in the hall and we can offer the free use of the village hall & its fully equipped kitchen to trial new activities and classes. For anyone with ideas for a new class, we can offer the use of the hall to the class organiser to run a session to assess local interest. We're encouraging residents to come up with ideas and to pass on our details to potential event/class organiser or pass on their details to the committee to make initial contact.

The committee would be more than happy to provide the hall, help local residents to promote an idea and set up the first session, providing the hall and tea making facilities

For more information check out the Chorley Village Hall Facebook Page via: www.facebook.com/chorleyvillagehall/ or contact Joe on : Joe@phoenix-cottage.co.uk or 07808 162891 or Claire on claire@woulfe.org.uk or 01746 718022

Claire Bradley Chairperson Chorley Village Hall 17/04/2023

Stottesdon and Sidbury Churches: Annual Report for Parish Council: 17th April 2023

Churches are generally free of restrictions now as far as the pandemic is concerned, although we are still maintaining hygiene precautions at communion services. Otherwise, things are pretty much back to normal in the general use of the churches.

My duties as Rural Dean with multiple vacancies have meant that we have been able to welcome other clergy into the churches to celebrate Sunday services, including Ven. Fiona Gibson, the archdeacon of Ludlow. These vacancies are beginning to fill up now.

The predominant factor over the last six months or so has been the refurbishment project at St Mary's, Stottesdon. With the aid of over a quarter of a million pounds in grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, major works have been carried out – and continue to be carried out. The project has been extended, with further funding being obtained from other sources so that extra work can be done whilst the builders are in possession and make a complete job of the restoration.

This work has meant the church has been in restricted use over the Christmas period and into the New Year – only the north Wrickton aisle being in a fit state to use; and in mid-January the difficult decision was made to close the church completely for the time being and let the builders get on with the work.

At the moment, the churchyard looks like a building site; but then, that is exactly what it is! There is drainage work being carried out to take stormwater away effectively, repairs and replacements to stonework and the roof is now almost completely renewed. Inside, there has been work on the inside of the roof; complete replacement of the wooden floor at the west end, which was suffering from dry rot; new built-in kitchen units are being put in the kitchen area; and the electrician will be in at some stage to install new lighting and heating.

We had hoped to be able to get back in for Easter, but that has not been possible. The builders must do their work, and when the church is ready, there will be a grand reopening! Great credit must go to Chris Tibbits, ably supported by Clare and by Maylin Ware, on getting this project off the ground and seeing it run through smoothly.

Holy Trinity, Sidbury, has been one of the support churches while this process has been going on. Stottesdon services have gone on pilgrimage around the other churches in the group. The experiment with the new timing for Sidbury services has therefore been a bit hit-and-miss over the last few months, but we will continue it for the time being and see how it runs.

One of the downsides of this work has been that the school has not been able to get into church for its leavers' service at the end of the summer term, but church and school remain in close contact through regular assemblies.

Mark Daborn, Rector

April 2023