

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley and Langley **Annual Report to Annual Parish Meeting 19 May 2026**

Local work

I've been delighted to get to know the 5 parishes served by this parish council, one of my 5 parish councils across the Burnell division which stretches from Hughley to Castle Pulverbatch. I've attended almost all the parish meetings over the past year and offered to help where I can.

The key ongoing issue has of course been potholes, sadly, and I've been pushing for action. One problem is that there are only two technicians covering the central Shropshire area, with one post vacant – its up to them to specify works and chase contractors. Another is that the ongoing overall contract with Keir is not delivering as it should (some of you may have heard about recent failure to empty litter bins, that's entirely down to Keir), that continues to March 2027 and is currently under review. The third is that the Council traditionally just hasn't been allocating enough money to its 3200 miles of road, but our new Cabinet Member David Vasmer has won a Highways budget increase from £40m in 2025/26 to £75m in 2026/27, partly funded through extra funding we have won from central government.

However I'm glad to say we have made a bit of progress recently, with some of the major potholes from Pitchford to Acton Burnell filled, and I'm told, some work to clear drains and culverts on the lower end of Frodesley Lane. I'll continue to fight for more work locally, particularly on the failed utility trench below Frodesley village, and I hope my 'promotion' in the Council will give me more clout. With the rally coming through in the autumn, I'm hoping we might use that to press for repairs to a couple of very bad patches near Causewaywood and up to Chatwall (not your parish I know!).

Key meetings and discussions over the past year include:

- Dr Michael Truss principal of Concord College and Cabinet Member Planning
- Chris Knowles and Cabinet Member Flooding re drainage problems on Frodesley Lane and by Longnor crossroads
- Wheels of Old Ltd in Frodesley re pothole problems locally and inability to offer test drives to customers
- Graham and Kath Davies regarding local community issues
- James Nason about Pitchford Hall and future plans
- Ruckley residents about ongoing flood issues

I remain of course happy to be invited to events and to meet with residents about issues of concern.

Council news

I know it's requested this report focus on local issues, but if I may a couple of Council points:

1. Top staff changes

In order to move the Council forward, and find a way through the very difficult financial position, the new administration has said goodbye to Chief Executive, Chief Legal Officer, Chief Finance Officer. All these posts are now filled, and I particularly welcome Duncan Whitfield as the new Finance Lead, who I'll be working with in my new role as Chair of Finance Scrutiny

2. Cabinet changes

To better reflect our concerns about local community, we've just created a new Cabinet post 'Communities and Environment'. This will cover Libraries, Youth Services, Water Flooding and... Town and Parish Councils. I've already asked Cllr Sarah Marston, the new Cabinet Member, to visit us here. (I was grateful for John Long's giving evidence to one of our recent Scrutiny meetings recently, and I've also just suggested we start inviting parishes in to present to our Full Council.)

3. Finances

Meanwhile as is well known the Council's financial position remains very difficult, and our top priority has to be to get the Council's finances back on a firm footing.

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