

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley and Langley Parish Council
Shropshire Councillor Report Sept 2025

Apologies this reaches you late, August has turned out busier than expected.

Shropshire Council News
August/Sept developments

Current Shropshire Council Financial Situation

As you may have heard, the latest finance reports covering the out-turn from the last financial year, and the initial period since the current Administration took responsibility on May 22nd, have prompted concern and action in response including the declaration of a 'financial emergency' by the new Cabinet Member Finance, Cllr Roger Evans.

The inherited budget, agreed before the May elections, is now indicating a projected overspend of £35m by next April, due to unforeseen costs and the lack of sufficient reserves to meet these. Unless this is addressed through spending cuts - and of course income raising if possible - the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) has to declare a Section 114 notice which would mean government-appointed commissioners would take charge and force the balancing of the books.

The CFO believes the Council can find its way through this difficult situation and so has not declared a '114' already. A new internal Board is being set up to focus on identifying and implementing cuts in non-essential expenditure.

Nature Recovery Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

The draft Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published and entered the public consultation phase with a focus on two key resources:

- A strategy document outlining county-wide priorities for nature recovery.
 - An interactive map showing where nature is thriving and where targeted action could deliver the greatest benefits for wildlife, water, soil and climate resilience.
- Residents, landowners, community groups, environmental organisations and businesses are encouraged to explore the proposals and contribute their local insight. Visit the map and draft strategy: www.shropshire.gov.uk/lhrs (Already on AB's 9.9 Agenda)

Priorities for Transformation & Improvement Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews the effectiveness and delivery of the Council's Improvement and Transformation programmes, overall Council Performance (including financial, quality and activity), and the discharge of its corporate and strategic services and governance arrangements including: Finance, ICT, HR, OD, Legal and Member Services. This committee has drawn up its first priorities. Task & finish groups will be recruited to examine:

- The Shropshire Partnership proposal (exploring funding of Town and Parish Councils to help address local priorities), aiming to get recommendations to Cabinet by November
 - Review of Shropshire Council's Scrutiny and Committee structures
 - The process for distributing CIL
 - Review of the current Shropshire Council budget & Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- (The Committee's work may now be dictated by financial control needs but other suggestions welcome.)

Shrewsbury Sports Village Plans

A planning application to transform Shrewsbury Sports Village in Sundorne has been submitted. These plans, which were given the go-ahead by the previous administration last September (2024), have been shaped following a public to include a range of new fitness & pool facilities. Plans for the Sports Village also include making it an all-electric operation. This will mean that if approved, the centre's existing gas boilers will be decommissioned to make a step change in the Council's journey to being net-zero.

Plans are available to view in the reception area of the Sports Village or on the Council's website here. The planning application reference is 25/02658/FUL.

Elsewhere in Burnell Division

My activity in August across the Division, this has included:

Church Preen, Kenley, Hughley Parish

The Parish Council and local residents are concerned about very bad potholing locally. They are keen – in response to the Council's new Partnership agenda, as above - to offer a volunteer team to work with the Council on 'street scene' needs, eg sign cleaning, hedge trimming, drain checking, as well as minor potholes. I've been working with them on a proposal and Cllr David Vasmer (Highways) has been to visit.

Church Pulverbatch, Wrentnall

I've had to comment on – and then complain about – a planning issue locally. I'm also still pressing for 'no artics' signs for part of Wrentnall village, where lorries are damaging garden walls while trying to turn, though no funds identified yet.

Condover, Dorrington, Stapleton, Ryton

In Condover I've been liaising with Gonsal Quarry about their trucks passing through the village and past the school – and they have now said the quarry is scheduled to close at the end of the year.

In Ryton I've been working with Parish Councillors and residents very concerned that the Council has approved the application for a slurry lagoon nearer to homes than normally permitted, and despite possible threats to groundwater and the Comley Brook/Cound. It has been agreed to submit a Complaint letter from Condover Parish Council.

In Stapleton I've been enjoying the improved road surfaces.

Leebotwood and Longnor

Following the visit I arranged with the A49 Route Manager, the Parish Council has decided to set up a Speedwatch scheme to monitor speeds through Leebotwood, well known often to be excessive. This will help make the case for speed limit

changes and a new pedestrian crossing. In Longnor we are discussing how to get road improvements through the village.

ASB issue

I've also been liaising with a local family suffering ongoing anti-social behaviour issues from a neighbouring household. I've been helping them get assistance from Council officers and the MP.

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley and Langley issues

I'm not aware of any major new issues in the Parish Council area. So my activity in August has been as guided by the last PC meeting, this has included:

Checking on Ruckley road surface/potholes towards Causewaywood – I visited and we have had some useful patching, tho not very high standard sadly. Ideally resurfacing on this stretch is needed of course, and I've put in a request.

Ruckley drainage – I haven't been able to get Highways to commit to regular checking of drains. However, a local resident told me flooding was now less problematic, because a local farm (just north of the Causewaywood road) which had caused significant run-off had changed its planting. I'm hoping this may help the situation.

Solar panels in Conservation Area – I think Anna has now had a reply on this, but I did also ask the Cabinet Member for Planning for his guidance, he said: 'Residential solar panels are in general considered Permitted Development. However tighter controls apply in Conservation Areas, particularly on public-facing positions. This doesn't mean they're not allowed but the resident must seek permission.'

Roof line on Castle Barns – I have enquired about enforcement but not had a reply. Apparently this is par for the course at the moment. I will chase.

Golding/Bridleway Addition – as the MP has tried and received exactly the same response as Anna, I understand there's little I can do to expedite things and have been stood down.

I'm also happy to do a local tour at some point identifying highways repairs/maintenance priorities if useful.