Shropshire Councillor Report – June 2026

The Local Plan

The Council are at the very start of the process to prepare a new Local Plan for Shropshire. Planning has seen some significant changes at the national level in the past few years. The remit and scope of a Local Plan is driven to a large degree by the expectations and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by MHCLG. The NPPF has recently been subject to a national consultation proposing some notable changes to its content and layout. It is expected the final version of the NPPF will be published by the Government in summer 2026. The draft NPPF requires the preparation of a Local Plan in 30 months, following the completion of at least a 4 month 'scoping' period at the start of the process. The purpose of the scoping document is to seek stakeholder views at the outset of the plan making process. This includes, but is not limited to, local residents, parish and town councils, infrastructure providers, statutory agencies, local businesses, developers and agents. The 'Scoping Consultation' document does not identify the spatial strategy, rather it identifies what we believe are the key considerations to develop this as part of the next stage of plan making. Shropshire Council are therefore seeking views on whether it has identified the correct issues, and if there are any other issues the Council should be considering.

As part of the consultation a series of drop-in sessions are being held across the county, offering people a chance to speak to planning policy officers and find out more. The drop-in sessions are:

- Albrighton Library: 16 June, 10am to 12noon
- Bishop's Castle Library: 18 June, 10am to 12noon
- Broseley Library: 16 June, 2pm to 4pm
- Highley Library: 26 June, 10am to 12 noon
- Ludlow Library: 2 June, 1pm to 3pm
- Market Drayton Festival Drayton Centre: 10 June, 9.30-4pm
- Oswestry Library: 4 June, 10am to 12noon
- Shifnal Library; 12 June, 10am to 12noon
- Shrewsbury Guildhall: 17 June, 2pm to 4pm
- Whitchurch Library: 2 June, 2pm to 4pm

The new Local Plan will look ahead to 2046 and will also incorporate the Minerals and Waste Plan, ensuring a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to growth, infrastructure and the environment.

The scoping consultation – which runs to 15 July – is an early stage of engagement and does not propose development sites or set out preferred options.

Full details of the consultation, including how to take part and view supporting documents, are available on the Shropshire Council website.

Finance and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Shropshire Council's new Finance and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee will hold its first meeting on Monday 8 June 2026, with members set to consider financial aspects of a number of important items relating to the council's improvement, financial sustainability and delivery of priorities.

The committee is one of a number of changes made to the council's scrutiny arrangements at the start of this month (May 2026) to strengthen delivery, deepen cross-party working and put more oversight and focus on financial sustainability and transformation, including regular oversight of the council's Improvement Plan and pre-decision review.

The Committee will consider a number of reports, including the Financial Outturn 2025/26, a key milestone in the council's journey towards financial sustainability. It will also review a lessons learned report that will help shape the council's future approach to transformation. In addition, members will receive an update on the council's Improvement Plan, consider a proposed performance framework linked to the new Corporate Plan, and review proposals being put forward to Cabinet on in-house provider services.

Financial Outturn Report 2025/26

Shropshire Councils Financial Outturn Report for 2025/26, has been published ahead of it being discussed by the Finance and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 June.

The report looks at how much the council spent over the year compared to its budget set in February 2025 by the previous administration.

It shows the council spent £49.4 million more than planned in its main (General Fund) budget. This was mainly due to rising demand and costs in adult and children's social care, along with savings that proved difficult to deliver.

These pressures led to the council declaring a financial emergency in September 2025. Despite action to control spending and an Improvement Plan in place, the gap was too large to close during the year.

To balance its finances, the council had to use its remaining reserves and apply to the government for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS). This is a form of borrowing used by councils facing serious financial challenges.

For 2025/26, the council needed just under £62 million of this support – less than first expected, but still a significant amount.

The report also shows some early signs of progress. Spending became more stable towards the end of the year, and financial monitoring has improved. New processes are now in place to strengthen how budgets are managed.

However, the council is clear there is still a long way to go. EFS is not a long-term solution, and difficult decisions will be needed to make the council financially sustainable.

Local casework update

Work is still ongoing in Shawbury with the anti-social behaviour case. I am pleased to announce that I have been appointed as Chair for The United Charities of Shawbury and I attended our first meeting on Monday.