

Loppington & Burlton PC

Shropshire Council Report: July 2025

I have prepared a written summary report of goings on relevant to the ward for you to read. Then in the meeting itself I am happy to take questions at the appropriate agenda item.

June was largely a month for members to get their feet under the table. Full Council has taken place, so everyone has been appointed to various roles and responsibilities; I have been appointed as the deputy cabinet member for social care.

Cabinet met for the first time in early June with a number of items on the agenda. Most notably: the financial outturn for 2024/25 and Telecare charging structure consultation.

The outturn is worse than previously reported, with £60m of savings now being needed. Two-thirds of which are savings that weren't delivered last year. The council's overall position was set in the budget, which was adopted last January. This is the envelope within which the new administration will have to operate this year:

- Savings required this year: £60m
- Reserves: £5m (audit says SC should have £15-20m)
- CIL money: £30m unspent
- Overspend of £34m largely due to Social Care spending despite significant savings in this area
- The last admin borrowed £26.9m in March to avoid bankruptcy and balance the budget. That will cost £1.3m in interest a year from the council's revenue.

The Cabinet will consider changes to **Telecare** to bring us more in line with other councils.

The new administration has been setting out its priorities and how they are addressing them.

- Fixing more potholes and improving the state of Shropshire's 3,200 miles of roads. As a result, a new pothole repair crew has been added to the repair team. This extra team is employed directly by Shropshire Council, not Keir.
- Improving customer service across the council, making it more responsive and easier to do business with
- Better and closer working with town and parish councils, who can help take on some services from Shropshire Council or may be better placed to find simple solutions to issues in their area. The Deputy Leader & Chairman have written to all parish clerks asking for their views on closer working and how we can work together to deliver for Shropshire. Hopefully, the cultural change will soon be more visible.
- If you use the park-and-ride in Shrewsbury, the frequency will increase to a bus every 12 minutes instead of 20 minutes.

- Catching more pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals who are missed by the system by leveraging the benefits system when people apply for other benefits – this will allow those on UC to receive free school meals as announced by the government recently
- Heather Kidd met with the DfT on 23 June to discuss a government off-ramp for the £215m NWRR project, like the one Norfolk CC obtained. At present it will cost the Council £39m to stop the project or £215m to complete it. Neither of which the council can afford or deliver for Shropshire. The transport minister Lilian Greenwood will meet with Heather Kidd to discuss this further at a future date.

Other news:

Vaccination drive – there is a county wide campaign to improve vaccination rates due to a fall in uptake recently and a concerning resurgence of measles cases. Childhood vaccinations, covid and flu cover are all crucial in individual and public health. The effectiveness of vaccination in an individual relies on a high percentage of the population being protected, as well as that individual being vaccinated, so it is important that everyone is encouraged to consider vaccinations.

Hospital delayed discharges – There has been a significant improvement in hospital delayed discharges since last year and there is a focus on making further improvements to this, taking pressure off hospital beds as well as allowing people recovery sooner in their home environment.

Freedom Fibre – You may have heard that Freedom Fibre are not going to fulfil their contract and have failed to raise the funding necessary. Helen Morgan MP is extremely disappointed by their performance and communication. It is believed that another more established organisation will take on the contract and complete the works but it is not yet confirmed.

Fostering – There is a long running recruitment drive for foster carers in Shropshire at the moment. If any residents would like further information or if you would like materials to display/put out in your newsletters etc, please let me know.

Upcoming road works –

Road Closure: Unnamed road Rough Hayes, Loppington

Start Date: 24th September 2025

End Date: 26th September 2025

Purpose: Road Closure - Boundary Box Install

Works Promoter: Severn Trent Water

Works Promoter Ref: LB9141201-000014024025-01

Enforcement pattern for Unnamed road Rough Hayes, Loppington:

All the time

Road Closure: Crosmere Road, Cockshutt

Start Date: 8th September 2025

End Date: 10th September 2025

Purpose: Road Closure - Underground cabling work.

Works Promoter: Openreach

Works Promoter Ref: BC008WFQVWF8YSB-01

Enforcement pattern for Crosmere Road, Cockshutt:

9.30 - 14.30hrs

Local casework:

I am in contact with Cllr David Vasmer (portfolio Holder for Highways & Environment) regarding ongoing flooding of a property at Brown Heath, related to a possible highways issue.

I would be grateful if anyone who requires help or advice could email sarah.marston@shropshire.gov.uk or telephone 07483111566

Cllr Sarah Marston

Shropshire Council: The Meres Division