JANUARY 2021 BRIEFING REPORT from Gwilym Butler

1.The Council has recently passed the new Housing Strategy which takes into account local need and demand for type and tenure of housing requirements driven by locality. Part of this is the call for people to register if they are interested in Self builds whether affordable or open market. Very often the access to land is limited and therefore by having a register of interest planners will understand demand and then may have the opportunity when negotiating with developers and applications the opportunity to bring sites to market. If you wish to register please do so via Shropshire Council web site searching Self build register via the search engine on the site.

2.Many councils have asked me about the availability of hardware such as kissing gates for footpaths in their wards .There still is availability at the depot at Nils Pontesbury and they can be contacted on 01743 791984 or email Richard.Knight@shropshire.gov.uk who manages the team .

3.The Governments draft proposals issued in the summer regarding to planning and housing numbers has been over turned. Currently the formula requires Shropshire to deliver 1177 houses on average per year under the new proposals the requirement would have been 2129 houses per annum. The government has now decided that they will shift the demand back to the largest 20 cities where services and infrastructure are more likely in place.

4.The budget is out for proposal with a SC increase of 1.99% and an extra 2% for Adult Social Care in total 3.99% This will be debated at full council on the 25th February.

5.We are experiencing a rapid increase of children coming into care with figures in excess of 400 currently being cared for by the county. We are introducing a new scheme called Stepping Stones where we can intervene in these families early to try and avoid the children coming into care. We are also developing our own range of accommodation with 24 hr live in carers to drive down the cost and these may well be across county dependent on where the need is required. I would urge anybody who would consider fostering a child and giving them a home please investigate it on the council website or by phoning 08007838798.

6.At the time of writing this report there is no news on the local elections moving and I can advise that Purdah starts on the 15th March

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7. Vaccinations are taking place and we are in a very strong PCN network centred around Bridgnorth. To date we are leading Shropshire in the number of vaccinations delivered and are not included in the press releases regarding poor vaccinations in South Shropshire which is the West of the county where the health authority is having problems identifying premises for mass vaccinations and it will probably be rolled out via GPS but is changing daily. Please even when you have been vaccinated continue to heed all national guidance regarding Hands Space and Face as you can still be a carrier and infectious to those not vaccinated.

8. Any businesses forced to close under the lockdown please ensure you have applied for help and grant funding provided by Central Government and administered by SC. Details on the councils web site.

25 January 2021