

## Simon Harris - Councillor's Report March2022

Bids for New funding to alleviate fuel poverty: Shropshire has higher than average levels of fuel poverty, latest figures suggest 16,826 individual households, which equals over 12.3% of all Shropshire households, suffer. The West Midlands average is 11.4%. Using an average figure across Shropshire disguises the fact that some areas of Shropshire have over 20% of households in fuel poverty. These high levels of fuel poverty are due to a combination of low income, high-cost heating fuels due to many Shropshire properties being off the gas network.

The funding sought is under the 1. Green Homes Grants Local Authority Delivery and 2. Sustainable Warmth bids. These are specifically aimed at increasing energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions based on a "Whole House" approach. It is intended that funding will be used to install multiple measures starting with those to the fabric of the building before moving on to low carbon heating measures. To qualify recipients will need to be classed as "vulnerable". This is defined as being in receipt of certain means tested benefits or having a combined income of £30,000 or less before housing costs.

Balloon Releases: On 24Feb22 I submitted the following motion to Full Council. That:

- All Sky Lantern and Balloon releases are to be banned from all Shropshire Council property.
- Shropshire Council will request the Government to classify all such releases as littering, and thus they should be made illegal.
- Shropshire Council will run a media campaign to discourage all such releases within the County.

There was cross party support and the Motion was passed unanimously. Hopefully this will go a small way to reduce the litter in our countryside and improve the outlook for livestock and wildlife.

I would be grateful if local Councils in the Cleobury Division would also consider banning sky lantern and balloon releases on the land that they own – and I trust you will not mind me giving the reasons why (from the Marine Conservation Society):

- Over the past 5 years, on average 3 balloons per 100m have been found during the Great British Beach Clean.
- Balloons marketed as 'biodegradable' can last up to four years ie as litter
- Animals, including livestock, can be injured through ingestion, entanglement and entrapment.
- Marine turtles are particularly vulnerable. The digestive tract of a juvenile green turtle, washed up dead near Blackpool in 2001, was completely blocked by marine litter including a large fragment of blue latex balloon
- Animals get tangled up in balloon ribbons and string, restricting their movement and the ability to eat.

Let me know if I can assist.

Going Digital: Shropshire Council has a policy to reduce paper print outs at all meetings and going forward use only digital data. The average annual cost of paper print outs has been estimated at nearly £7k (postage £3k) with a CO2 footprint of 1,500kg; in the 6months Jul21-Jan22 the cost has been reduced, with postage now just over £100 and a CO2 footprint of only 67kg. Following the

Council help for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Street Parties: I hope the information below will be helpful:

- Dave Mansfield, Events & Contingency Officer, Highways and Streetworks is the best contact, and he processes all applications for street parties
- Forms requesting road closures can be found on Shropshire Council's website with the link below:  
<https://shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-network-management/application-forms-and-charges/>
- Forms can be filled in online and will go to Dave Mansfield's department. He checks the forms and is available to talk applicants through their individual cases
- Once the application is logged a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is issued
- This is all free of charge and Dave is also happy to advise on practicalities such as signage, community road stewarding, etc.
- I understand that an alcohol licence is not required unless alcohol is sold
- 29 applications for street parties have been received as at end Feb22

Simon Harris

Cllr Cleobury Mortimer Division March2022