

Unitary Councillor's July 2026 Report

Dear Councillors

I have unfortunately had to miss a few parish council meetings this month as I have been busy haymaking whilst the sun shines.

Stottesdon

Congratulations to Freda for completing 40 years as Parish clerk. I am very grateful for all the chasing up you do to enable me to take issues forward to various officers for your parish. I have spoken to Andy Keyland regarding the leak, he is going to send out a gang to investigate and if it is Severn Trent, he will charge it back to them.

Kinlet

I have received a reply to my enquiry regarding the street lighting and forwarded it on to Janette. Hopefully, this is self-explanatory. I brought up the Meaton Lane potholes again with Andy Keyland as a local resident has taken the trouble to write to me and complain. Andy is going to arrange to come out and take a look and hopefully get them filled.

Neen Savage

I spoke to Andy Keyland about the works at the Ford crossing. He said he has it in hand and Evans will be carrying out the works. An order has been raised for the drainage and fencing. I reminded him again about Goesland, and also Baveney Lane potholes.

Hopton Wafers

I have chased up with Stuart Anderson local MP to highlight the traffic light problems and bring forward the works. Have spoken to Andy Keyland and he has said the bridge works are planned for September. I also mentioned the overhanging hedge just past the traffic lights, as it makes it difficult for two lorries to pass.

Wheathill

I am very happy to report that the large pothole on the Catherton Common to Cleeton St Mary has been filled. It appears to be a good job. A few minor issues have been brought up by a local resident, which hopefully will be sorted as Andy Keyland has been made aware. Also, whilst they were coming out to do that repair, I requested that the potholes from Hopton bank down to the cattle grid be filled at the same time which have been completed.

Farlow

Thank you for inviting me to your AGM. It was a very pleasant and informative evening.

Aston Botterell

Welcome to Lucy, Chair of Aston Botterell. It was a pleasure meeting you and Anne for a drive around your local lanes to see the appalling state of the roads. I have spoken to Andy Keyland, Highways manager and he is arranging to come out and take a look and hopefully I will be meeting him onsite as well.

Shropshire County Council

Tanya the new Chief Executive of the Council is offering a Walk the Wards. I have taken up her offer, and I am in the process of organising a route and venue where local businesses and parish councillors will be able to meet and take up the opportunity to have your say. The date will be 9th October.

Local plan. Please find attached information that has been very kindly put together to give a clear guide for parish and town councillors, in order to help engage successfully with the Local Plan process. It explains how the new local plan decides where housing goes, why the county-wide figure has risen, and how it is in the methodology, rather than specific sites, that can be influenced before the consultation closes on 15th July. It includes a plain English summary, a simple five-step method any parish can apply to its own village.

I had a meeting with Andy Wilde regarding the current condition of Shropshire's highway network and the pressures facing the highways service, the scale of pothole and drainage issues following a difficult winter, and the need for improved communication with elected members and residents. I can share a few details.

In the first four months the service received the same volume of complaints as it normally receives in a full year.

Surface dressing and planned maintenance provide far better value than reactive pothole repairs. Surface dressing was described as costing approximately £7 per square metre compared with pothole repairs at approximately £100 per square metre.

Around £33 million per year was identified as the level of investment needed to maintain the network at an acceptable condition. The current funding position allows steady-state maintenance but not meaningful improvement. Too much of the budget is currently consumed by statutory pothole repairs, limiting the ability to invest in preventative programmes.

The previous Kier contract was discussed. Pothole work has now largely been removed from Kier and transferred to Multivo, with Mortimer also referenced in relation to more focused reactive maintenance delivery.

Drainage services have been brought back in-house, with dedicated teams and equipment. This has helped reduce the number of unresolved flood sites requiring external investigation.

Previous restructuring reduced local technician capacity significantly. The service is now seeking to rebuild capability, including assistant managers, more technicians, a traffic engineering manager, and a permanent full-time head of highways.

Fix My Street was recognised as useful for simpler reports but less effective for complex, multi-issue, or recurring problems. It was acknowledged that digital systems alone will not resolve communication and case management problems.

Members at the meeting raised repeated concerns about lack of updates, difficulty identifying the correct officer contact, inconsistent communication between areas, and limited visibility of planned works or completed works.

A follow up meeting with Andy Wilde is planned to update on progress and outstanding matters.

I attach some information regarding local plan for your perusal.

Kindest regards

David