

WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL REPORT – MARCH 2021

THE RIVERSIDE VISIONING

By the time of this meeting a report will have been considered by Cabinet with reference to the vision for the one of Shrewsbury's prime development sites where we will be asked to agree that the plans go out to the public for consultation.

The Strategic Development Framework (SDF) sets out a framework for future development of a four-hectare site on the Smithfield Riverside.

The SDF document integrates the future development of the Riverside with work to redevelop the Pride Hill Centre, and considers the significant potential to create a cultural destination in this part of the town, unlock and improve open space, create a key green space, and better connect the area with other parts of Shrewsbury.

It proposes providing a high-quality public realm along the wider riverside walk and creating green links that provide enhanced access to The Quarry.

It suggests the creation of new parks, squares and a new Riverside bridge.

The Riverside site is a key component of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Investable Masterplan. Its development has been made possible by Shropshire Council's purchase of the Shrewsbury shopping centres in 2018.

It's an exciting project and I am happy to talk further about what is within the plan.

CENSUS SUPPORT

The 2021 Census is due to be completed on the 21st March. Shropshire Libraries are working in partnership with the Good Things Foundation to deliver local support for people needing help filling in the Census 2021 form in Shropshire.

Census 2021 support is available on the phone or by video call through Microsoft Teams from **Mondays to Fridays between 9am and 5pm** and on **Saturdays between 10am and 1pm**.

To access this support, people will need to fill in [this Census 2021 support form](#).

Alternatively, people can email censussupport@shropshire.gov.uk or contact Shropshire Libraries Support Centres directly on: Shrewsbury Library – **01743 255308**

LITTER PICKING

If, like me, you have been appalled by the amount of litter on our verges then there is some good news. Litter is being picked alongside several Shrewsbury roads during March 2021 in a month-long effort to clear waste and rubbish from many of the county's major roads.

Work will be carried out by Shropshire Council and its service provider Kier, starting on Monday 8 March and ending on 31 March. Some will be carried out during the day, and some will be done overnight.

It's being undertaken due to the substantial amount of litter alongside these important stretches of road.

Work will be taking place as follows, with additional work also set to be announced.

- 8 March for four nights – A5112/A5 (Dobbies Island) to A458/A5 Welshpool Road
- 9 March for two days – A49/A5 to A49/A53
- 15 March for four nights – A5/A49 (Preston Island) to A5112/A5 (Dobbies Island)
- 16 March for two days – A458/A5 Welshpool Road to Felton Butler roundabout A5
- 22 March for four nights – A5/B4394 to A49/A5 (Preston Island)
- 23 March for two days – A49 roadside litter pick from Ludlow to Church Stretton, from Sheet Road/Lower Galdeford

- 30 March for two days – B4386 from Yockleton/Ford Heath junction, to junction with A5, and A5 from Edgebold to Woodcote.

Where work is taking place on dual carriageways, lane closures or diversion may be needed.

There will also be work undertaken on B Roads and I am awaiting further details. I am aware that we do have community litter picks (we shouldn't need them but.....) I am working with the Street Scene teams to look at more regular collections.

PARISH COUNCIL, SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL AND POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS

It has now been confirmed that the elections planned for Thursday 6th May will go ahead. It has also been confirmed that canvassing (door knocking) can take place from 8th March. There are some other alterations to the rules but for Parish Council elections there are no changes. i.e. you will still require 2 residents to propose and second your nomination form.

NORTH WEST RELIEF ROAD PLANNING APPLICATION

The planning application for the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road (NWRR) has now been submitted and is available to view and comment upon on the Council's Planning Portal.

If approved, the NWRR will provide a new, single carriageway road linking the northern and western parts of Shrewsbury, with new bridges over the River Severn and its flood plain and the Shrewsbury-Chester railway line.

The NWRR would connect the A5 at Welshpool Road roundabout west of Shrewsbury to the Ellesmere Road roundabout to the town's north.

The planning application does not include a water management scheme as part of the bridge over the River Severn and is for the road only.

The application states that the NWRR will:

- Cut journey times by up to 14 minutes for drivers travelling through or across Shrewsbury.
- Compared with the current southern A5 route around the outskirts of Shrewsbury, the NWRR would provide a direct, high speed link across the north of the town.
- The road would also reduce traffic in Shrewsbury town centre, helping to improve air quality and to encourage more people to walk or cycle, and further support the town's wider regeneration.
- Reduce traffic at peak-time bottlenecks on the A5 such as Dobbie's Island and on the B4397, a well-known 'rabbit run' route that affects communities including Baschurch, Bomere Heath, Montford, Ruyton-XI-Towns and Walford Heath.
- Boost the county's businesses and economy through reduced journey times and improved road links.
- Create a new circular walk by joining walking routes together; and create an additional 7km of public rights of way, giving more access to green space.

There are over 600 documents to view on the planning portal, I am told there will be a quick guide to "what is included where" available shortly.

The cost of constructing the NWRR is estimated to be £87.1m. In March 2019 the Department for Transport awarded £54m towards the construction of the road, and the Marches LEP have awarded £4.2m (for the section formerly known as the Oxon Link Road); and the council will provide the balance of the cost through developer and other contributions.

AGRICULTURE PARTNERSHIP

A group set up to work with the agricultural community to improve safety on Shropshire's roads is making good progress in its work to improve education, guidance and training for all partners and agencies.

The working group consists of Shropshire Council, the National Farmers Union, West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

It was set up last year to assist in reducing the concerns and complaints received by the council from residents and business about agricultural vehicles on the county's roads. But, its aim is to provide support and guidance to those working in the agricultural sector and to ensure all agencies can work collectively to increase the skills and knowledge of staff to support the sector and address the concerns raised by residents.

The working group will be providing joint training for council and police staff on practical matters such as the size and weight of agricultural vehicles on rural roads, mud on the road, and other general safety matters.

The NFU, Shropshire Council, West Mercia Police and the PCC will be developing guidance and campaigns and deliver briefings to raise awareness for the agricultural community but also for the wider general public, plus joint guidance on issues such as use of contractors.

The NFU will be organising events and briefings for farmers and those involved in wider agricultural activities, and West Mercia Police and Shropshire Council's highways staff will be there to learn and provide an insight from a highways point of view on issues that residents raise with the council.

Whilst I am not expecting an overnight change to the problems, we experience at least all the relevant authorities are involved and taking part. The more sharing of knowledge the better.

LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

There is a report going before Cabinet on Thursday 11th March to agree an update to the Council's Local Development Scheme, i.e. the timetable for preparation of the Local Plan Review. The proposed change to the programme is a direct result of the extension to the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) consultation into the Local Plan, which took account of the additional 'lockdown' restrictions which came into force on 5th January 2021. The proposed timetable can be found below.

Local Plan stage	Current LDS timeframe	Proposed LDS timeframe
Cabinet to consider pre-submission version of Local Plan for six week consultation (regulation 19 stage)	December 2020	December 2020
Consultation on pre-submission Local Plan, subject to Cabinet approval (regulation 19 stage)	December 2020 – early February 2021	December 2020 – late February 2021
Full Council to consider the submission of Local Plan to Secretary of State (regulation 22 stage)	March 2021	July 2021
Submission of Local Plan to Secretary of State, subject to Council approval (regulation 22 stage)	April 2021	July 2021
Independent examination by Planning Inspectorate (regulation 24 stage)	April 2021 – March 2022	July 2021 – May 2022*
Expected inspector's report	March 2022	May 2022*
Full Council to agree adoption of the plan	May 2022	July 2022*

*Estimated timeframe. Precise timeframe subject to Planning Inspectorate (PINS)

LOCAL MATTERS

Highways

As you will be aware the frustration with the state of our roads has reached a critical point. I know we are no different to many of the other councils across England, but we can't go on like this. So, you may have noticed in the press that the Conservative Group have announced a promise of a £40m investment pot over four years in our roads, pavements and walkways, I'm hoping I can include Rights of Way in this too. We will also continue to lobby national government for increased funding.

The Rea Poultry Application

The application is no longer on the planning register.

COVID – UPDATE

The latest Road Map out of Lockdown has now been released. I have included the rules in picture form as it is easier to understand but please be mindful that Steps 1 to 4 will only go ahead if the tests are met.

The image displays four panels from the UK Government's COVID-19 Roadmap 2021, detailing the rules for each step of the exit strategy from lockdown. Each panel includes the date, the start condition, and specific rules for Business/Activities, Social Contact, Larger Events, and Travel.

Step	Date	Start Condition	Business / Activities	Social Contact	Larger Events	Travel
STEP 1	29 MARCH	NO EARLIER THAN 12 APRIL At least 5 weeks after Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised outdoor sport (children and adults) Outdoor sport and leisure facilities All outdoor children's activities Outdoor parent & child groups (up to 15 people, excluding under 5s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule of 6 or two households outdoors Household only indoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise travel No domestic or international holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays (household only) No international holidays
STEP 2	NO EARLIER THAN 17 MAY At least 5 weeks after Step 2	NO EARLIER THAN 21 JUNE At least 5 weeks after Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All retail Personal care Libraries and community centres Most outdoor attractions Indoor leisure inc. gyms (individual or household use only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-contained accommodation All children's activities Outdoor hospitality Indoor parent and child groups (up to 15 people, excluding under 5s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funerals (30 people) Weddings, wakes, receptions (15 people) Event pilots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays (subject to review) International travel (subject to review)
STEP 3	NO EARLIER THAN 17 MAY At least 5 weeks after Step 2	NO EARLIER THAN 21 JUNE At least 5 weeks after Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor hospitality Indoor entertainment and attractions Organised indoor sport (adult) Remaining accommodation Remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum 30 people outdoors Indoors: Up to 6 people or a larger group from 2 households only (subject to review) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most significant life events (30 people) Indoor events 1,000 people or 50% capacity (whichever is lower) Outdoor events 4,000 people or 50% capacity (whichever is lower) Large seated outdoor venues 10,000 people or 25% capacity (whichever is lower) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays International travel (subject to review)
STEP 4	NO EARLIER THAN 17 MAY At least 5 weeks after Step 2	NO EARLIER THAN 21 JUNE At least 5 weeks after Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining businesses, including nightclubs (subject to review) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legal limit (subject to review) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legal limit on life events (subject to review) Larger events (subject to review) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays (subject to review) International travel (subject to review)

THE FOUR TESTS

 **TEST 1**
The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.

 **TEST 2**
Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.

 **TEST 3**
Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.

 **TEST 4**
Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

In the meantime, stay safe,

Lezley Picton

Shropshire Councillor for the Tern Division,