

WITHINGTON COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – 4 MAR 2026

Haughmond Hill

The Highways Department will shortly be issuing a consultation with Withington and neighbouring parish councils about the possibility for the issue of a Traffic regulation Order for the application of double yellow lines in the vicinity of Haughmond Hill Forestry England site.

Shrewsbury Station Gyratory

There is no resolution to this predicament as yet, however I have seen a recent letter from Shropshire Fire and Rescue to the Council in the wake of the recent tragic fire. They state that they were able to respond to this incident quickly, due to it being later on at night, however this would have not been possible during the current daytime traffic conditions in the Gyratory, emphasising the necessity of a practical solution. We will continue to push for such a solution at Committee and in Council.

Uffington and Upton Magna Battery Energy Storage Site (BESS) Proposals

There is not much further news on either of these. Uffington PC are doing a great job of lobbying the Canal and Rivers Trust who own the access to the land with regards some of the poor assumes about feasibility and legality of site access both during construction and for Emergency Services. As for Upton Magna, their consultation period keeps getting extended, which may indicate that the new national policy on BESS connections may have given pause....

The Future of Shirehall

After a successful 'Task and Finish' investigation into future options for Shirehall, the report was discussed at Full Council last week. The risks and costs of demolition and redevelopment were highlighted and any decision will be deferred, pending future analysis of the site's potential and the viability of refurbishment, amongst many other factors. It is vital that the best value solution is arrived at methodically.

8.99% Council Tax Rise and Exceptional Financial Support

You by now be aware of the unprecedented 8.99% council tax rise announced at last week's Full Council, as well as the grant of Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £192.8 million over this and next financial years. The EFS is a loan and thus the repayments will be an extra burden on taxpayers in coming years on top of the 8.99% which will of course compound over subsequent tax rises. While there is broad cross-party agreement that this was very much the fault of the previous administration and some of my Council colleagues and I voiced concern that more was not being done to improve income through collection of arrears and cut costs through better fraud investigation and the possibility of suspending or deferring some Net Zero measures.

We identified at least £10 million in decarbonisation costs in the current financial year. That is over £90 on the average Council Tax bill or roughly half of the 8.99% increase. Other UK councils have done exactly this, yet when I raised the motion, the debate was quickly shut down.....

Battlefield Housing Development

This proposed 570 house development, along with the recently deferred application for 450 houses on Ellesmere Road is causing deep concern for County Councillors around North Shrewsbury. The traffic flows around this area and particularly the A49 are already heavily congested at rush our and this plan in particular will put hundreds more cars straight into the choke point between Battlefield and Sundorne roundabouts. I am working with my colleagues representing these areas to comprehend what mitigations, if any, can be made for the many traffic, road safety and 'active travel' issues that would result from such a development, particularly in light of last week's cancellation of the North West Relief Road.

Brendan Mallon

Councillor for Tern