

# February 2026

## OVERVIEW

January has been an extraordinarily busy (and long) month. Storm Goretti started the year off with a bang, the education and transport teams worked closely to ensure as little impact on children as possible during the expected closures. Over 1,000 additional potholes were registered via FixMyStreet.com following the storm.

Issues raised locally this month include speeding and traffic management, flooding, dog nuisance and grit bin provision. I will continue to update individual councils with parish specific items.

As part of Shropshire Council's improvement plan, there have been senior leadership changes within the finance function. James Walton will be leaving his roles as Executive Finance Director and Section 151 Officer at the end of January. Duncan Whitfield has been appointed as Interim Director of Finance Improvement to support financial recovery and strengthen financial governance arrangements. I have included a longer explanation on the council's finances at the end of this report.

(21/01/26) Cabinet meeting | [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 21st January, 2026, 10.30 am – Shropshire Council](#)

I am pleased to announce that I have been appointed chair of the SYA Board of Trustees following the resignation of the previous chair from the board. If you would like to find out more about the SYA or are interested in joining the charity trustee board, then please visit: [www.sya.org.uk](http://www.sya.org.uk). SYA supports many of the youth clubs and youth provision across our parishes.

### Summary of my meetings during January:

(05/01/26) Meeting with Highways engineers regarding speeding issues | Soudley

(07/01/26) Portfolio Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(07/01/26) Liberal Democrat Executive Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(12/01/26) SYA meeting | The New Lodge, Shrewsbury

(21/01/26) Portfolio Meeting | Microsoft Teams

(22/01/26) Schools Forum | Microsoft Teams

(25/01/26) Extraordinary SYA Trustee Meeting | Location not specified

## CASEWORK

Casework	Issue Raised / Portfolio	Actions
Ollerton Business Park, Childs Ercall	PLANNING: Various planning applications have been passed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Resident communication shared with planning portfolio holder.</li></ul>

	yet conditions not met (esp highways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (03/06/25) Emma Green (<i>Planning Enforcement Leader</i>) has replied directly to a resident concern outlining the stages for legal involvement.</li> <li>• I will continue to chase. <a href="mailto:planningenforcement@shropshire.gov.uk">planningenforcement@shropshire.gov.uk</a> can be used to report any breaches of planning.</li> <li>• (05/01/26) I am still chasing updates on this one.</li> <li>• (29/01/26) Emailed Emma Green for any updates.</li> </ul>
Speed Testing / Signage   Childs Ercall	PCC John Campion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (21/01/26) Email sent to PCC to confirm details and to check if financial assistance was still available.</li> <li>• (21/01/26) PCC confirmed this and said that his deputy would be in touch.</li> <li>• (29/01/26) No contact received.</li> </ul>
23/03138/FUL Mixed 28 Residential Dwellings   Childs Ercall	PLANNING: This has gone to 'recommendations/committee'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (09/06/25) I have contacted the case officer regarding the general position of this application having been made aware of community concerns.</li> <li>• (17/07/25) No communication received, concerns raised by the Lib Dem administration over the lack of response from officers.</li> <li>• (01/09/25) Email received from case officer to confirm the current position of this application (updates available on the planning portal).</li> <li>• (21/09/25) Request for this to be called-in to the Northern Planning Committee.</li> <li>• (29/01/26) No update.</li> </ul>
25/03608/FUL Chicken Egg Production   Caynton	PLANNING: This is still at 'recommendations/committee'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (29/01/26) This is likely to go to committee but I am waiting confirmation. I have spoken to the local action group.</li> </ul>
Flooding in Hopshort	Main Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaised with Severn Trent and Shropshire Highways over a number of months.</li> <li>• The issue is on private land and owner aware.</li> <li>• Severn Trent are likely to provide assistance.</li> </ul>
Artificial 'Lake' Cheswardine	Off Westcott Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with residents.</li> <li>• Severn Trent confirmed this is not caused by their asset.</li> <li>• Shropshire Council confirmed that this is private land.</li> <li>• (28/01/26) I have requested that SC Legal write to the landowner for a response.</li> </ul>
Dog & Waste Bins	Market Drayton Golf Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication received from the golf club.</li> <li>• SC Response: StreetScene (who are the only service that deals with public waste bins) will not supply or service a bin [here] and that the Outdoor Partnerships Service do not have any bins on the public rights of way network.</li> </ul>

## PARISH COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

Here are questions posed by parish councillors across the division and updates/answers at present.

Question	Answer / Outcomes
Traffic Mirror Asset in Soudley	I have raised this with officers but still waiting confirmation.

Grit Bins not filled as requested.	Internal enquiry raised.
How much do we pay for Fix My Street?	Still awaiting a response from the council but the administration have raised concerns with this service so it is on our radar for improvement.
How many grit Bins in Childs Ercall.	Internal enquiry raised.
How many enforcement officers are employed at Shropshire Council?	4

## SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL FINANCES | WHERE WE ARE AND WHY

Shropshire Council is facing ongoing and significant financial pressure due to long-term reductions in central government funding, rising demand for statutory services, and historic decisions that reduced financial resilience. While the Government has now confirmed a three-year funding settlement, this provides certainty rather than relief: Shropshire is projected to receive less funding over time, particularly compared to urban authorities, and a number of rural-specific grants have been removed.

At the same time, demand-led services – especially adult and children’s social care – continue to grow and now account for the vast majority of the Council’s revenue spending. Reserves have been substantially depleted in recent years, leaving limited flexibility to absorb shocks. As a result, the Council has had to apply for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS), which allows borrowing to meet day-to-day costs in the short term while longer-term recovery plans are put in place.

The in-year EFS (£71.4m) will be used to secure the current balance sheet as well as provide money for investment in staff & services that have been reduced over a number of years. For example, our legal and collection teams are considerably understaffed which in turn makes it impossible to chase money that is owed to the council.

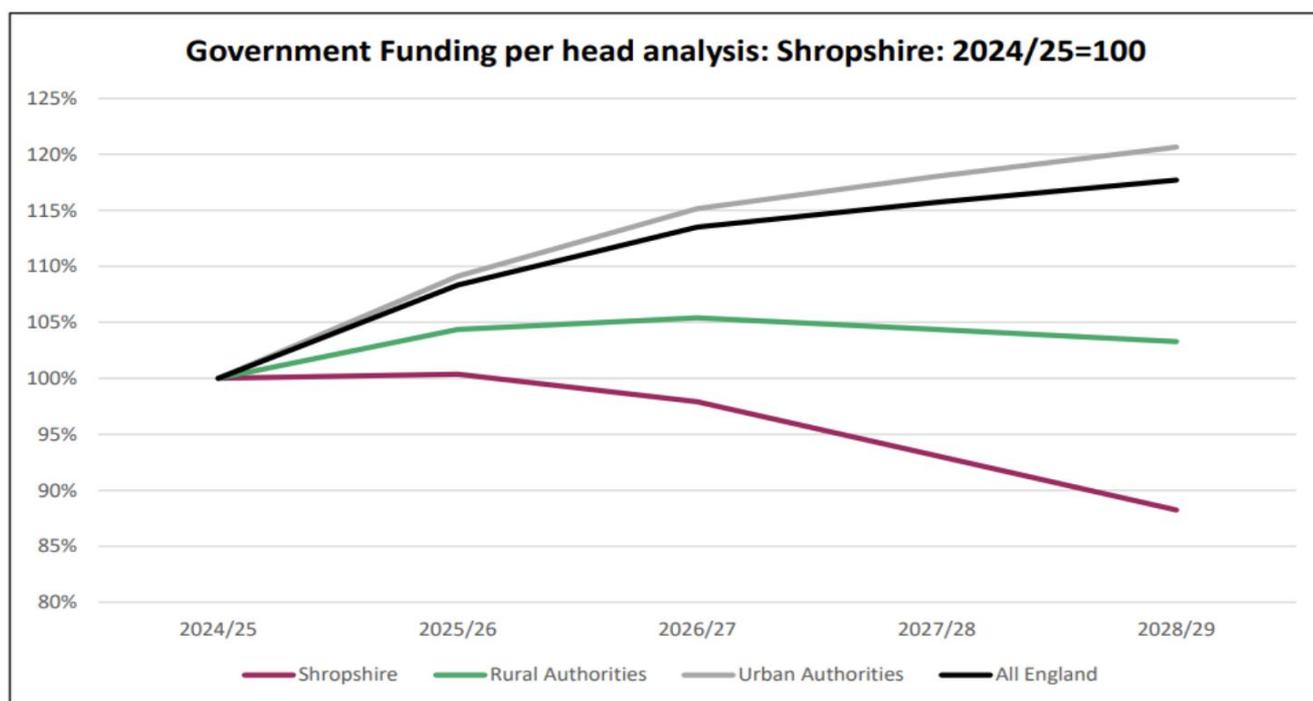
The current administration is focusing on stabilising the Council’s finances by setting realistic budgets, improving income collection, reviewing capital projects to reduce pressure on the revenue budget, and ensuring that limited resources are targeted where they are most effective. While the financial outlook remains challenging, clearer planning assumptions and tighter financial management are intended to put the Council on a more sustainable footing over time.

Unfortunately due to a funding gap in the upcoming year 2026/27, the administration has been forced to apply for additional EFS of £130m which will allow full council the ability to approve the overall budget. It is worth noting that last year about 25 Councils requested EFS. This year around 100 Councils are having to borrow emergency money.

### KEY FACTS:

- The Government has confirmed a three-year funding settlement for local authorities. Shropshire’s funding is projected to be around 12% lower in three years’ time compared to current levels.
- Funding changes favour urban authorities, with reductions to grants recognising the higher costs of delivering services in rural areas.
- Shropshire Council has submitted representations to Government regarding the three-year funding settlement; the outcome is currently unknown.
- Around 80% of the Council’s revenue budget is spent on adult and children’s social care.

- The Council has applied for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS):
  - £71.4m for the current financial year
  - £130m for 2026/27  
(EFS is borrowing, not a grant, and must be repaid with interest.)
- A further 10% of revenue spending relates to the Veolia waste contract, leaving limited flexibility elsewhere.
- Council reserves have reduced significantly and are below the level recommended by auditors (around £25m). Currently predicted to run out in year 2025/26 if EFS is not secured. This would trigger a section 114 notice
- Several income-critical services (Council Tax, Legal, Planning, Procurement) have been under-resourced, impacting income collection and value for money; addressing this is a key part of the recovery approach.
- A review of capital projects is underway to reduce pressure on the revenue budget:
  - A number of projects have been paused (not cancelled) pending further review.
  - Priority is being given to safety, income-generating schemes, cost-reduction projects, and those supported by external grants.
- The financial position is expected to remain difficult for several years, but clearer planning, tighter controls, and a focus on sustainability are intended to stabilise the Council and protect essential services.
- Government appear to prefer that councils only increased council tax by 4.99%. For Shropshire Council, this increase would generate circa £10.5m.
  - EFS £130m is inclusive of 4.99% tax base increase (see table below).



**Appendix 7 MTFP Summary**

	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>	<b>2030/31</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
Resources/ Income	774,741,515	796,803,285	805,022,347	822,778,769	841,550,485	1
Expenditure	903,927,619	930,342,200	964,840,350	1,003,975,710	1,036,733,944	2
<b>Remaining Gap/(Surplus) to be Funded</b>	<b>129,186,104</b>	<b>133,538,915</b>	<b>159,818,003</b>	<b>181,196,941</b>	<b>195,183,459</b>	

Notes

- 1 Inclusive of 4.99% Council tax increase plus taxbase growth
- 2 Inclusive of savings increasing from £5m in 26/27 to £45m by 2030/31. These must be ongoing in the base