

Bishop's Castle, Chirbury and Worthen and Clun Local Joint Committee Community Action Officers Report October 2012

Community Infrastructure Levy priorities

Shropshire Council will shortly be writing to all town and parish councils asking them to review their priorities for any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding which is generated in their area.

Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge made on developers of open market housing and is used to improve local infrastructure such as roads, drainage, community buildings and play areas. It's important that town and parish councils highlight what their local needs are so that any CIL funding is spent correctly.

Between now and January town and parish councils are being asked to think about their priorities, and where possible consult with the local community to identify a list of priorities for 2013/14 in their area. These priorities will then be signed off by the local Shropshire Councillor in January and form part of the place plan for that area.

Parish and town Councils can opt to spend their CIL funding in 2013/14, or "bank" the money for a larger long term project such as a village hall redevelopment.

We are also asking parishes that won't have housing development – because they have opted to remain as open countryside – to tell us their priorities. The place plan will also be used to help secure external funding, and to show partner organisations like utilities companies, the Highways Agency and Environment Agency what local priorities exist. This will help them to plan their work programmes around the needs of local communities.

I am happy to attend meetings to help town and parish councils respond to talk about the CIL and infrastructure needs they have. Please contact me if you need more details.

Parish Plan funding

Funding is now available through Shropshire Council to help communities develop or refresh their parish plans.

Parish plans are a good way for communities to come together to review what is good and bad about living in their community, and to identify actions to maintain and improve the parish. The plans are becoming increasingly important since the Localism Act was introduced in 2011, as local councils are being asked to consult with their community and make sure funding is spent on the correct priorities. In Shropshire around 65% of parishes have a plan, and they are a good way of reviewing the priorities which feed into the Community Infrastructure Levy funding.

Shropshire Council has made funding available to help parishes start or review a plan. £100 is available to “kick start” a new plan, with a public meeting or event to get interest in starting a plan. This funding can also be used to help review a plan annually through a public meeting.

Once a group has been established a grant of up to £1,500 is available to help develop a plan. This can be spent on items such as questionnaires, analysis of data or employing a consultant to undertake a piece of work that is needed to help the plan develop. There are also a number of organisations in Shropshire that can help you develop your plan.

Please contact me if you would like more details about parish plan funding

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