



Committee and Date
Shifnal and Sheriffhales
Local Joint Committee

5 October 2010

Item

4

Public

**NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SHIFNAL AND SHERIFFHALES LOCAL
JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 13 JULY 2010 AT
SHIFNAL VILLAGE HALL, ASTON STREET, SHIFNAL.**

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Committee Members Present:

Shropshire Council

Gordon Tonkinson
Stuart West

Shifnal Town Council

Jane Blackstock
Eileen Briscoe

Sheriffhales Parish Council

Janet Jones
Rebecca Johnson

There were approximately 25 members of the public present at the meeting.

1. Chairman's Introductions

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Jane Blackstock to the meeting who had replaced Les Jones as one of Shifnal Town Council's representatives.

ACTION

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 None received

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 None were declared.

4. Notes of last meeting

4.1 The notes of the meeting held on 4 May 2010 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. Shropshire Council's Budget Consultation

5.1 Gwilym Butler, Shropshire Council, Cabinet member and portfolio holder for Community Working outlined the revenue budget 2011/12 and future years. A copy of the presentation together with the key messages was handed out at the meeting. Gwilym Butler and Laura Rowley, Director of Resources from Shropshire Council answered questions on the issues raised.

5.2 Gwilym Butler said that the Council had already been asked to save £9.7m from this years budget and that cuts of 5% were expected for each of the next 3 years. In total he said the Council would be looking to reduce its budget by £47m over that period. In order to do this he said that the Council had imposed a freeze on the recruitment of people to non-essential posts. Although this would save a substantial sum, it would not be enough. He said that some services would be scaled back or cut. He said that they would be looking at what are statutory services and what are discretionary services to see where savings could be made. He added that if some services were to continue that the local Town or Parish Council might be asked to consider running it.

5.3 The Cabinet member also said that there would be further consultation with Local Joint Committees at the October meeting regarding the 2011/12 budget.

5.4 A resident picked up on the comment about Town and Parish Council's providing the necessary financial support to enable services to continue and asked whether Town and Parish Councils would be able to increase the level of Council Tax. In response, Laura Rowley said that further guidance would be sought and that the voluntary sector should be involved.

5.5 In answer to a question, regarding VAT, Laura Rowley said that the Council was able to recover all VAT so any increase in VAT would not affect the Council's budget.

- 5.6 Another resident said that they had received from their child's school a full copy of the recent OFSTED inspection report sent to them through the post. They expressed their concern that this had been sent to them through the post because cost. They were also concerned about the cost of providing copies for parents and would have preferred that parents had to request a copy if they wanted one. In reply, it was commented that this was an example of where the Council needed to become smarter and allow people to access services in different ways.
- 5.7 The Director of Resources said that the Council had entered into a contact with a company which would reduce the costs of postage. The company would be carrying out a review of postal usage and would help provide a cheaper service.
- 5.8 As part of his presentation, Gwilym Butler used the example of reductions in service in the library service, said that this was only an example. Comments were made that the library service should not be cut in particular to the evening service. In reply, Gwilym Butler said that it could be the library service that is cut or it could be that the provision of public toilets is cut.
- 5.9 A question was asked about miscellaneous costs. The Director of Resources said that the Council's budget did not include any items of miscellaneous expenditure and that all expenditure was itemised. She asked that the questioner leave his contact details so that he could be provided with a copy of the council's budget book.
- 5.10 Another resident asked whether the Council would be looking at its management structure to see if any tiers of management could be removed and savings. Gwilym Butler said that it was important that the Council's management structure is right so that it is not too top heavy.
- 5.11 One resident asked what the percentage savings were of the Council's total annual budget. The Director of Resources said that it was not a simple answer. She said that the Council receives funds from Government that are for specific services such as education and housing benefits. These areas of expenditure cannot be cut. The Director also added that pay for local government employees would be frozen and that no increase would be paid for 3 successive years.
- 5.12 In reply to a question, the Director of Resources said that where it can, the Council will be increasing its charges for 2011/12 by the retail price index plus 2%. The Director of Community Services added that the Council did not want to introduce charges that were not cost effective to introduce.

ACTION

- 5.13 A member of the committee reminded the meeting that Shifnal Town Council pays Shropshire Council a sum of £47,000 a year to ensure that the off-street car parks are free to use. He asked whether people would be prepared to pay more for car parking so that leisure services could be retained. Gwilym Butler added that this was an opportunity for Town and Parish Council's and Local Joint Committees to take responsibility and work together on providing services.

6. Comments, Questions and Suggestions from the meeting held on 4 May 2010

- 6.1 With regard to the suggestion that the Shifnal page from the Bridgnorth Journal be moved to the Telford Journal, Sam Taylor from the Telford Journal said that they were happy to promote Shifnal in the Telford Journal. She said that the Telford Journal sold 2700 copies per week in Shifnal compared to 200 for the Bridgnorth Journal. She said that this change would have to be sanctioned by the owners but that she hoped that this would change over the next 2 months.
- 6.2 The responses received to the comments, questions and issues raised at the meeting on 4 May 2010, were noted

7. Local Policing Update

- 7.1 PC Nick Allbutt said that the Shifnal Carnival and Fair held recently ran very well without any problems on any of the evenings. He reported on the number of crimes reported and said that crime in the area was declining.
- 7.2 A resident said that syringes had been found on the Five Ways traffic island when work was being carried out by volunteers and asked that this be checked out. PC Allbutt said that drug misuse in the Town was not a big issue. Another resident said that needles had also been found in Wheatfield. PC Allbutt said that none had been shown to him.
- 7.3 Another resident said that the Police Station was not open for long enough. PC Allbutt said that to reduce costs, the Police Station was only open for a few hours each week.
- 7.4 Another resident said that on Sunday morning cars were parked in Victoria Road close to the Five Ways traffic island and in his view were parked in such a way as to cause an obstruction. PC Allbutt said that he had not been made aware of this before but that he would have a look at this issue now it had been raised.

PC Allbutt**PC Allbutt****PC Allbutt**

8.0	Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service	ACTION
8.1	Neil Grove from Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service reported on the incidents that had occurred in May and June. He said that the number of fires had reduced. He also said that testing of electric blankets was being carried out at Telford Central Fire Station.	
8.2	A resident asked whether the testing of electric blankets could be mobile as most of the testing would be for elderly people. Neil Grove said that he would report this to the Community Fire Safety people.	NG
8.4	A number of people expressed their concern at the use of Chinese Lanterns and in particular the dangers they posed because they carried a flame which could ignite a crop. There was also concern that once the lanterns fell to the ground that they could cause injury to cattle.	
8.5	Neil Grove said that there was no guidance on the use of Chinese lanterns but that he would look into it. The Chairman (also Chairman of the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service) said that he was due to meet with the Fire Minister in the next few days and that he would take this up with him.	SW
8.6	Concern was also expressed about a farm which was being used to store tyres. The worry was that there were thousands of tyres and that although the owner had been asked to remove them they were still being stored. Neil Grove said that the owner of the site had until 1 September to reduce the number stored to 1000. Others present were concerned that the owner would not comply with this requirement.	NG
8.7	In reply to a question about the Fire Services budget, Neil Grove said that there would be some tough times ahead but he said that the Fire service would never compromise the level of service provided and will not reduce standards.	
9.0	Budget 2010/11 Decision Report	
9.1	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the budget allocations as set out in the report be confirmed as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Say Yes – Youth Worker – refused because the LJC cannot pay towards ongoing staff costs. b. Shifnal Christmas Lights – Grant awarded £1,000 c. Shifnal and Sheriffhales Live at Home Lunch Club – Grant awarded - £1,500. d. Ladybird Tots and Toddlers – Grant awarded £226.45. 	KR

- e. Sheriffhales PCC – Grant awarded £1,000.

10. Opportunities for Older People in Shifnal

- 10.1 Stephen Chandler, Assistant Director Adult Social Care, Shropshire Council opened up a series of brief presentations from providers of care for adults and vulnerable people across Shropshire. Daphne Simmons gave a brief introduction to the role that the Community Council of Shropshire provided in this service. Gina Cooper from Shifnal Live at Home Scheme also gave an insight into the work of the Scheme such as taking people to a doctors or hospital appointment. John Simcox from Anchor Staying Put Shropshire Handyperson Service said that they provided a not for profit service to enable small jobs around the house to be carried out. Delyth Humphries from Shropshire Fire and Rescue also provided information about fire safety. Lylette Wiggan Tenant Service Manager (Bridgnorth), Shropshire Council spoke briefly about the services they provide for elderly people such as sheltered accommodation.
- 10.2 A question was asked regarding the lack of care homes in the Shifnal area. It was reported that Shropshire Council although it may not own or run any such homes in the area it was obliged to purchase suitable care from private companies if that was required.
- 10.3 The Chairman thanked all the speakers for there attendance at the meeting.

11. Rural Highways Condition in Southern Shropshire

- 11.1 The report was noted.

12. Public Question Time/Future Agenda Items

- 12.1 A resident asked why it was that Shifnal had not been included as a market town for funding purposes. It was explained that this was not the case and Shifnal is included in the Market Towns programme. **VB**
- 12.2 A resident said asked whether Shropshire Council would be providing further funding for transportation and said there was a lack of a cohesive bus service. The Lead Officer said that this would be clarified. It was suggested that perhaps someone from Arriva be invited to a future meeting. **VB**
- 12.3 Items that were proposed for consideration at future meetings were car parks, enhancement scheme, speed limits and to invite the Chief Fire officer to attend to talk about the Fire Service's budget.

ACTION

13. Confirmation of Date of next meeting and Deadline for Grant Applications

13.1 It was noted that:

All LJC

1. The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 5 October 2010 at Shifnal Village Hall, Aston Street, Shifnal
2. The deadline for grant applications will be Monday 6 September 2010

Signed.....
Chairman

Date: 5 October 2010