

**Committee and Date****Cabinet 6 May 2026
Council 14 May 2026**

Item

Public

Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 2026- 2030

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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Heather Kidd - Leader		

1.0 Synopsis

This report seeks approval of the Corporate Plan for 2026-2030 by Cabinet and Council. The Plan replaces the Shropshire Plan and sets out a proposed vision and priority ambitions that will provide the context for the Council's business and budget planning. It will help guide and determine what we focus on to deliver, enable, and influence better outcomes for Shropshire and its residents, while becoming financially sustainable.

The Plan provides a strategic framework rather than a detailed delivery plan. While it sets out our ambitions and overall direction, the scale of our commitments and the pace of delivery must remain realistic and affordable. This will require a clear focus on prioritisation within available resources and may, in some cases, involve changes to service standards or service levels.

2.0 Executive Summary

2.1 The Corporate Plan 2026-2030 sets the Council's direction for the next four years, within a longer-term view of Shropshire's future. It is intended to provide a basis and context for prioritisation, decision-making, policy development and resource allocation, ensuring activity is aligned to the outcomes the Council is most focussed on delivering, enabling through others, and influencing through partnership. This focus is particularly important given the Council's financial position.

2.2 The Plan's priority ambitions have been informed and shaped by a range of evidence and engagement, including the New Direction report (Council 25/09/25) local data and insight, resident feedback (including budget consultation), engagement with staff, councillors, and partners, and consideration of national/regional policy developments, local priorities, statutory duties and responsibilities, the Improvement Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

2.3 The six priority ambitions are:

1. A Council that is financially sustainable, with clear priorities and purpose, and a workforce supported to excel
2. Communities that are connected by well-maintained roads, accessible transport and infrastructure
3. People live in safe, inclusive places with homes that meet their needs
4. Everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and to thrive at every stage of life
5. An environment that harnesses our natural assets, and supports wellbeing
6. A thriving economy that benefits everyone

The first priority ambition is at the centre of everything we do and underpins the other five.

- 2.4 For each ambition the Plan explains why it is a priority for Shropshire and summarises the key things the Council will focus on delivering, enabling or influencing, including the strategies, plans, programmes and partners that we work with and through to deliver against the ambitions.
- 2.5 The Plan recognises the priority of financial sustainability. While it is important to have overall ambitions as a context for Council activity, the scale and pace of delivery against them must remain realistic and affordable. Service standards, levels of provision and the pace of delivery need to be aligned to available resources, recognising this may require difficult choices, reduced service levels in some areas, and prioritisation to ensure financial sustainability.
- 2.6 It will also require us to think about the role and purpose of the Council in delivering outcomes, and a need to consider where it is more economical, efficient and effective to achieve outcomes by working differently with partners, partnerships, and communities themselves. This will involve a greater emphasis on enabling and influencing and exploring and maximising the opportunities of working in partnership with town and parish councils, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) organisations, communities and through our statutory and non-statutory partnerships.
- 2.6 The Plan is a strategic framework, not a detailed delivery plan. Delivery will be determined and driven through strategies, service plans and programmes. Given ongoing demand pressures (particularly on adult and children's social care services), changing national policy priorities, and the ongoing focus on financial sustainability, we will use business and budget planning each year to determine commitments and activity, ensuring they remain aligned to limited resources available.
- 2.7 An annual review of the Plan and our commitments against it will help enable us to do that, and to respond to any changes and developments that require amendments to priorities. It will also support earlier conversations with partners on alternative delivery approaches ahead of autumn budget setting. The key commitments for 2026/27 will be presented to Cabinet as part of the performance framework that will be used to report progress, delivery and impact.
- 2.8 The framework will also include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are reported quarterly to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It is anticipated KPIs will include measures that have been used to demonstrate performance against the Shropshire Plan, and metrics from the *Local Outcomes Framework*. That Framework, formally published in February 2026, sets out the

key outcomes that central and local government want to achieve together for people and places, focusing on results that matter most to residents. The framework will be presented to the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8th June 2026 and Cabinet for approval on 10th June 2026.

- 2.9 The Corporate Plan sits alongside the Improvement Plan and Financial Strategy, to provide a strategic basis for everything we do. Together the suite of plans set out the priority ambitions we need to focus on, summarise how we need to improve as an organisation to contribute to them in the most effective, economical and efficient way as a ‘Best Value’ authority, and how we need to become financially sustainable and reduce reliance on Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from Government. The suite of plans sits top of the council’s ‘golden thread’, aligning organisational priorities through to service planning and individual staff Performance Development Reviews.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- 3.1 Consider and recommend the draft Corporate Plan 2026-30 to Council for approval
- 3.2 Note the underlying need for financial recovery and sustainability, the need to align delivery commitments to the Council’s financial position, and the potential impact on service standards
- 3.3 Note that a performance framework will be developed (and presented to Cabinet on 10th June 2026) providing a basis for reporting progress, delivery and impact against the priority outcomes – including:
- (i) a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including the relevant Local Outcome Framework measures
 - (ii) a set of key delivery commitments against each of the priority ambitions
 - (iii) an annual review report, summarising delivery over the previous 12 months, and refreshing the commitments for the next 12 months (to ensure alignment with our financial position and sustainability)

Council is asked to:

- 3.4 Consider and approve the Corporate Plan 2026-2030
- 3.5 Note the underlying need for financial recovery and sustainability, the need to align delivery commitments to the Council’s financial position, and the potential impact on service standards

Report

4.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal.

4.1 Risk table

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Failure to approve the Corporate Plan – weakening the strategic basis and context for our business and budget planning	The priority ambitions are based on what data and insight, engagement, and statutory responsibilities suggest are the things that are most important for the Council to focus on. The Improvement Plan and Financial Plan also provide a context and basis for our business planning, prioritisation, policy development and decision making.
Failure to keep the council aligned to the delivery of the Corporate Plan ambitions	Develop and roll-out the business and budget planning approach to take place each summer, enabling a cross-cutting thematic view of how the priority ambitions will be delivered. Service Plans to be developed at directorate and service level as appropriate. SMART outcomes and plans established and in place
The Plan does not reflect changing circumstances e.g. financial sustainability and changing national context	Undertake horizon scanning during the plan development to identify known policy developments and seek confirmation from subject matter experts. Annual budget and business planning provides the opportunity to systematically update plans to take account of policy developments and financial sustainability.

4.2 It is a legal requirement, laid upon us as a public sector body through the Equality Act 2010, for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. Carrying out impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010. We need to be in a position to be able to demonstrate to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) that we have made every effort to carry out our equality impact screenings, and that we have done so at every stage where it would be appropriate to do so. In Shropshire, the tool that we use to do this work is referred to as an **Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)**. The ESHIA for the Corporate Plan 2026-2030 is attached at appendix 2 of this report.

4.3 The Equality Act 2010 describes nine Protected Characteristics groupings or characteristics that people may share, e.g. Age, Disability, Race. Local authorities such as us and other public sector organisations are obliged to have ‘due regard’ to the needs of people in these groupings in our decision-making processes. In this stocktake ESHIA record, initial assessment of the Corporate Plan in its draft form is that there is potential for a Neutral to Low Positive impact across all nine groupings, as well as for the additional groupings of people that we think about in Shropshire, of Social Inclusion, Carers, and Young People Leaving Care.

- 4.4 The Council also considers those in the grouping of veterans and serving members of the armed force and their families, in a separate grouping, in order to visibly demonstrate that ‘due regard’ is being given to people in this grouping, as per the requirements of the Armed Forces Act 2021. Our additional categories help us to seek to ensure that we consider the needs of the following: rural households in our large and sparsely populated rural county; households on low incomes; households in fuel poverty; and those we may consider to be vulnerable. This includes refugee families, people living in fuel poverty, people fleeing domestic violence, and those who are rough sleepers or at risk of homelessness for what may be a variety of circumstances.
- 4.4 At this stage, the anticipated likely positive impacts include mitigation and prevention of poor health outcomes, better paid jobs and carbon reduction. Priorities include efforts to address inequalities; to identify and support vulnerable children, young people, adults and families; to ensure that there is a range of affordable and appropriate and specialised accommodation; and to achieve shared priorities with partners around transport; digital and mobile connectivity; employment, skills and the economy; and the environment.
- 4.5 As a strategic document for the Council, the priority ambitions in the Corporate Plan encompass both health and wellbeing across all groupings, with a policy intention to contribute positively to the wider determinants of health. There is a clarity of focus on:
- Tackling health inequalities
 - Promoting well-being, including the role of the environment for physical and mental health
 - Embedding prevention with partners
 - Enabling communities to be safe
 - Partnership working to tackle domestic abuse
 - Supporting people as they move through life events

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Shropshire Council continues to manage unprecedented financial demands and a financial emergency was declared by Cabinet on 10 September 2025. The overall financial position of the Council is set out in the monitoring position presented regularly reported to Cabinet.
- 5.2 Significant management action has been instigated at all levels of the Council to reduce and remove any non-essential spending to help ensure the Council's financial sustainability. While there are no financial implications arising directly from this report and the draft Corporate Plan, it is noted that financial sustainability represents the core of the Corporate Plan.
- 5.3 Services must be aligned to the limited resources the Council has available whilst ensuring we deliver our statutory duties at the minimum statutory level. It is recognised that this involves some difficult decisions that need to be taken and communication with our stakeholders, including our residents, that is adequate and proportionate.

- 5.4 Having an agreed Corporate Plan will provide context and basis to inform the development of the financial strategy and budget setting and relationships with all third parties, including contractors, the voluntary sector and residents, embracing change and transformation as necessary.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan is a key strategy of the Council, setting out the priorities that will guide what the Council commits to deliver, enable and influence. In doing so, as well as informing what staff do, the plan also shapes what Members will be focusing on e.g. through their work on overview and scrutiny committees.
- 6.2 Having an agreed plan in place, alongside the Financial Plan and Improvement Plan, will provide the focus for the business plans and budget planning and setting by the Council – helping to ensure our commitments are grounded in the reality of our financial position. It will also support discussions and decision making with partners locally, including the development of a Partnership Plan, as well as position the Council for discussions regionally and nationally.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

[New Directions for Shropshire](#) – Council 25 September 2025

[Improvement Plan](#) – Council 11 December 2025

[Medium-term Financial Plan 2026/27- 2030/31](#) – Council 26 February 2026

Local Member: *All*

Appendices [Please list the titles of Appendices]

Appendix 1: Draft Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 2026-2030

Appendix 2: ESHIA Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 2026-2030