

Pontesbury Parish Council
Strategic Plan 2026 – 2029

With an area of some 3,868 hectares and a population of over 3,281[1] Pontesbury Parish is one of the largest parishes in Shropshire. The Parish centres around the main 'hub' settlement of the village of Pontesbury linked with a number of smaller satellite settlements of Cruckton/Cruckmeole, Asterley, Habberley, Plealey and Pontesford and other hamlets between[2]. The large and scenically attractive parish of Pontesbury enjoys an excellent location. It lies within a mile of the A5 Shrewsbury bypass and much of the southern part lies within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Bisecting the parish the busy A488 links the main settlement of Pontesbury with Shrewsbury town centre, seven miles north. With nearly one quarter of the population aged over 65, this is significantly higher than the county or national averages.

Pontesbury village is the commercial and social hub of the parish, containing over half of the parish's population. Estimated population 1897 in 2016. For its size it has an excellent range of services used by villagers and outlying settlements. The village offers primary and secondary schools, 3 pubs, a post office, shops, chemist, GP surgery and dentist, a community hub & library, pre-school nursery and eating places.

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[1] Taken from 2021 Census

[2] Arscott, Edge, Farley, Hinton, Lea Cross, Malehurst, Nox and Westcott

For electoral purposes, the parish is divided into four wards and has a total of fifteen councillors. The electorate in 2023 was 2640. The parish council owns The Pavilion community building which houses the library and is a base for the local neighbourhood policing team. Other facilities the parish council is responsible for are The Pavilion, a play area & BMX track, a village green, public toilets, 120 streetlights, many trees, hedges and numerous bus shelters and street furniture. The Parish council employs a full-time Parish Clerk and part-time Deputy Clerk, Finance Officer and Building Assistant/Cleaner for The Pavilion.

The parish council has a number of sub-committees and working groups who are responsible for or advise on various aspects of the council's work;

- Finance & General Purposes
- Personnel & HR
- Planning
- Pavilion
- Climate Emergency Action Group
- Newsletter
- Emergency Planning



Introduction

Mission Statement for the parish council:

To protect and improve the quality of life for all Pontesbury parish residents

Purpose of this Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan is a strategy that provides a framework for the council to work within and to aid consistency and co-ordination of service delivery. This Strategic Plan will evolve through community engagement and will assist in the decision-making process. It will also provide stakeholders with a better understanding of parish council activities and responsibilities.

As a 'live' document this Strategic Plan will be monitored and updated regularly to demonstrate progress against key priorities.

Community Involvement in the Strategic Plan process

To ensure that this Strategic Plan adequately represents the best interests of the parish, members of the local community are invited to participate in its development. This will help to keep its aims and objectives up to date. There will be an annual consultation and update process launched each year at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Monitoring the Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan will be considered by members at parish council meetings on a regular basis, at least annually, so that progress can be monitored. It will be updated when actions are complete and where progress is impeded the council will consider what actions are necessary and whether further work is required.

This Strategic Plan is a 'living' document. Any updates will be given via the website, Pavilion website/facebook page, the village newsletter and the parish council annual report.

The Strategy does not include general ongoing responsibilities for facilities and legal responsibilities such as annual audit, maintenance of streetlights etc. – just developmental work planned

Theme 1
Parish Council Governance

OBJECTIVE 1.	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	Resources required
1.1To improve communication between the parish council and residents and businesses to ensure that council activities reflect community need/desires	Develop a communications Strategy to ensure greater community involvement in strategic plan for the community with particular emphasis on communicating with under 30s and including the settlements across the whole parish	Strategy to be completed by December 2026	No	Clerk time Possible volunteer time Local community consultation time
	1.Continue to review and improve website – working group set up in 2025 to amalgamate PC, Pavilion and Neighbourhood Plan websites 2.Ensure new website is WCAG 2.2 level AA compliant	1.Ongoing 2.Ongoing	1.£700 EMR and £800 in Pavilion EMR, budget £500 in 2026-27	Councillor and Clerk time
	1.Continue to publish a parish newsletter 2.Produce an Annual Report for the parish council each year	Ongoing	Adequate amount budgeted each year for both	1. Clerk time 2.Clerk/Chair time
	1.Review content of notice boards. 2. New community noticeboard in Lea Cross,	1.Ongoing 2.purchased just awaiting decision to site		Clerk time
	1.Build reach of Pavilion Facebook page 2.Social media policy to be produced	1.Ongoing 2.by December 2026		1.Deputy Clerk/Building Assistant time 2.Pav committee/Deputy Clerk
1.2To improve effectiveness of the parish council	1. Induction plan for any new councillors 2.Succession planning for key roles	1. Available for new councillors 2. Ongoing	Cost of training if necessary (see below)	Clerk and Personnel Committee time
	Improve links and lines of communication and consultation between all the different settlements within the parish, continue to hold meetings in village halls across the parish.	Ongoing	No	Staff and Councillors and local residents

	Review training needs of all councillors and parish council staff. Training policy reviewed biennially	Annually	£1000 allocated in training budget each year	
	Work towards and maintain Local Council Awards Scheme standards.	Spring 2027	£150 in 2026-27 budget for foundation award	Clerk and councillor time
	Continue to carry out staff appraisals	Annually	Cost of training if necessary	Personnel Committee and staff time
	Investments policy to be drawn up	By August 2026	No	Staff and Councillor time
	1. Full insurance review for council portfolio of assets and activities	1. annual	No	Staff and F&GP Committee time
	Annual budget and 3-year forecast in place with reference to the approved Strategic Plan	By April 2026		Staff and F&GP Committee time
	4 yearly Election Cycle 1. Raise profile of council in 12 months prior to election 2. Allocate funds annually to cover election fees	1. Ongoing (May 2029) 2. Annually if required	Adequate budget/EMR in place	

Theme 2 - Leisure and Community Services

OBJECTIVE 2.	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	Resources required

2.1 To ensure the Pavilion realises its potential as a value for money community resource.	1.Continue to promote the Pavilion locally and throughout the wider Rea Valley communities 2. Work through the Pavilion Committee to roll out the Comms & Marketing Strategy to ensure that activities are inclusive, accessible and reflect the needs of the wider community 3. Continuous updating of Pavilion Facebook page as directed in Communications and Marketing strategy 4. Evaluation – biennial evaluation period for one week as a snap-shot take to look at improving systems and hiring experience	1.Ongoing 2. Ongoing 3. Ongoing 4. Biennial	4. budget required	1.Pav committee and staff time devising programme of activities 2. Pav committee and staff time and possible Pavilion volunteer involvement 3. Building Assistant 4.Deputy/Building assistant time
2.2 Ensure long term sustainability of Pavilion	**1.Ensure Pavilion income increases** - work through Pavilion Committee to attract hirers for building **2.Continue to work in partnership with Shropshire Library Service review of lease hire arrangement in 2028** 3. **West Mercia Police** – continue to work with PCC team regarding strategic lease matters & with Safer Neighbourhood Team locally on building matters – review of lease in Autumn 2031	1. Ongoing 2. Ongoing – review 2028 3. Ongoing – review 2029	1. Target of £4000 income for 2026-7 room hire 2. Shropshire Council Library Service income in 2025-28 is £5000 (Estates budget) per annum 3. West Mercia Police – 2026-2031 = £4,000 + proportional contribution to service charge	Pavilion Committee and staff time
2.3 To ensure maintenance development of communal green/flower beds/ trees/hedges are adequate for maximum enjoyment.	1.Assess maintenance and development required for green open spaces owned/managed by parish council – relet contract Spring 2026 See also biodiversity plans below	1.completed	1.Budget for Hall Bank provided by Shropshire Homes and invested	1.Staff and Councillors
	1.Continue with biennial Tree survey and associated recommendations for tree work 2. Tree and hedge survey throughout parish to ensure that any valuable hedge/tree not currently covered by a TPO is registered 3. policy to be drawn up for Ash die-back and replacement trees	1.Tree survey in Summer 2027, 2.Ongoing 3. August 2026	1. amount in budget annually towards inspections and any recommended work . 3. will require budget in 2027-28	Councillor and public time

2.4 To develop Trading Post land as a community resource	1. To explore feasibility of the provision of community parking on Trading Post land 2. To explore potential for provision of E.V. charging points for public use	1. Timescale to be considered by Facilities working group 2. Following completion of 1.	1. Not known 2. Not known	1. Councillor and staff time (Facilities Working Group)? 2. Councillor and staff time

2.5 To support, foster and celebrate community cohesion and resilience	1. Partnership work with Good Neighbours Scheme on community support activities 2. support, initiate and develop other community groups and activities to aid and support further community cohesion and resilience 3. Develop an annual Open Day at The Pavilion for all hiring groups to take part to showcase their organisation	1. Ongoing 2. Ongoing 3. Spring 2027	£250	Councillor and staff time Deputy Clerk / Clerk time – publicity & refreshments
	Annual programme of activities to promote local community groups in Pavilion building through events at The Pavilion	1.Ongoing		Councillor and Clerk time Building Assistant produces monthly activity list & emails to community

Theme 3 Parish Appearance, Environment, Planning, Public Services

OBJECTIVE 3.	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	RESOURCES REQUIRED
To provide community allotments	1.Explore possible location for community allotments 2. Community garden built – irrigation system and water storage to be extended	1.Future possibility 2. Ongoing	2.Ongoing budgetary revenue demands	Clerk and Councillor working party
Ensure bus shelters and benches are maintained for safe use	1. Review of bus shelters and benches and plan put in place for any refurbishment/replacement necessary. (Asbestos survey completed – no work required)	1. ongoing	Budget will be needed for future years or CIL Neighbourhood Fund?	Facilities Working group of staff and, councillors
To ensure local emergency solutions are in place that support county and national emergency plans.	1.Work with Shropshire Council and emergency services to raise awareness of how the local community can respond in emergencies. 2.Draw up Emergency Plan for parish	1.Ongoing 2. ongoing	No	Deputy Clerk & Councillor time and in partnership with Minsterley Parish Council
	Support and work with Rea Valley First Aid Responders on an ongoing programme of first aid courses.		No - use of village/community halls for training	Clerk time working with Rea Valley First Aid Responders
Work with Shropshire Council to devolve Streetscene services	Facilities Working Group and Personnel Committee explore options for devolved services and impact on staff			

Theme 4 Highways, Transport and Access

OBJECTIVE 4.	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	RESOURCES REQUIRED
4.1To seek solutions to speeding traffic and pedestrian safety concerns.	PPC working group continue to work with Hanwood and Minsterley Parish Councils and Shropshire Council on traffic calming solutions and ANPR camera project Safer Speed Shropshire	Ongoing	Possibly some CIL Local Fund monies for strategic approach matched with percentage from CIL Neighbourhood Fund Consider implications if MPC withdraws from partnership	Working group time in partnership with police and Shropshire Council Highways team Ongoing contribution for administration of partnership
	Hall Bank Junction Improvements	1.Pavement widening completed 2.Still to do Main Road junction	1.£40,000 CIL Neighbourhood Fund earmarked	
	Bus and coach park at Mary Webb	?	£10,000 CIL Neighbourhood Fund allocation agreed	
	Pedestrian crossings – explore options		CIL Neighbourhood or Local?	
	Road signage in Cruckton and Malehurst bank – welcoming careful drivers			
	Traffic calming measures in other areas – Cruckton, Pound Lane, Lea Cross, Malehurst Bank etc		£4000 CIL Neighbourhood allocated for Cruckton area	
	Develop Old Railway Line between Pontesbury and Hanwood			

Theme 5 Climate Emergency

OBJECTIVE 5.	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED	RESOURCES REQUIRED
5.1To fulfil resolution of reaching zero carbon levels for the parish council by 2030	Work with Climate Emergency Action group to draw up an Action plan to reach zero carbon with yearly targets for each year until 2030	Summer 2026	Annual budget set at £1000 for such projects	Clerk, Councillor and CEAG time along with wider community
	Carbon Audit for parish council activities	Summer 2026	Annual budget set at £1000 for such projects	Clerk, Councillor and CEAG time along with wider community
	Roll out action plan and various projects over years to 2030	Ongoing	Annual budget set at £1000 for such projects	Clerk, Councillor and CEAG time along with wider community
5.2 Nature Recovery	Continue to work with Rea-act for Nature (Minsterley, Pontesbury and Hanwood parishes) on joint projects.	Wildflower project 26-27	Apply for funding and parish budget	Rea-act for nature group of councillors and clerk
	Continue to review and update annually the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and annual action plan for Pontesbury linked to Shropshire Nature Recovery Strategy	ongoing	no	Clerk time
	Develop Hall Bank, School Green, Jubilee gardens, and Village Green to increase biodiversity in these areas under parish council control. Flagships that inspire local community to take action on land that they own	ongoing	Annual budget set at £1000 for such projects	Clerk, Councillor and volunteer time

Draft Adopted:	9 December 2020
Minute no:	89.20
Reviewed	12 October 2026
Next review date:	October 2027 for budget setting 2028-29