



Oswestry Rural Parish Council

Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022

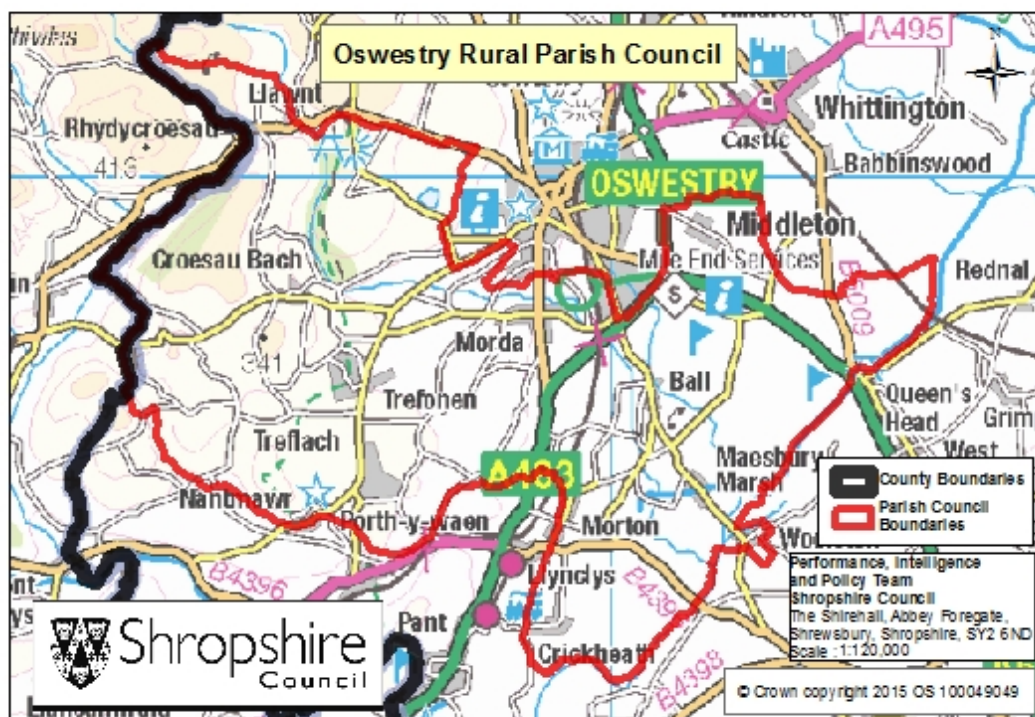
With an area of some 6,102 hectares and a population of over 4,500 Oswestry Rural is the largest parish in Shropshire. The parish extends some 15km across the south of Oswestry from the Welsh border at Rhydygroesau in the west to Rednal in the east.

Most parishes in Shropshire have one main village or town surrounded by a rural hinterland, but Oswestry Rural does not. Instead it has four main populated areas. These are at Rhydygroesau, Trefonen, Morda and Maesbury Marsh with some twelve satellite settlements¹. For electoral purposes, the parish is divided into five wards and has a total of fifteen councillors.

This Strategic Plan builds on and replaces the Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018 which is a compilation of:

- the actions identified from responses to the Parish Survey 2014;
- outstanding actions from the Parish Plan 2006; and
- the on-going requirements for maintenance of the infrastructure and assets within the parish.

This Strategic Plan was adopted by the parish council on 24 April 2018 and is designed to assist the council to make key decisions and help achieve its objective to improve the quality of life for the local community it serves.



¹ Aston, Aston Square, Ball, Gwern y Brenin, Coed y Go, Maesbury, Middleton, Morton, Newbridge, Queens Head, Woolston, Wootton

Introduction

Purpose of this Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan is a statement of the parish council's vision for the parish. It outlines the council's **objectives**, the **actions** by which it will achieve them, the **timescale** and the **budget** required. It sets out what the council wants to achieve, either directly or by its influence on the relevant delivery body, such as Shropshire Council or West Mercia Police.

The goal of this Strategic Plan is to provide residents of the parish with a clear understanding of what the council aims to achieve and how it will be delivered. It highlights what will be the focus for the council over three years and will act as an aid for planned activities and to set future budgets.

Reason for 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.

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.

This Strategic Plan will continue to be the council's main source of communicating its actions. If you are not satisfied with our progress, please let us know and we will seek to improve. We will welcome your comments especially if they lead to improvements.

This Strategic Plan will be regularly reviewed to show progress and ensure it is up to date.

Theme 1
Parish Council Governance

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To improve communication between the parish council and residents and businesses.	Continue to review and improve website.	Ongoing	Possible
	Continue to publish a parish newsletter and Annual Report <i>The most recent Annual Report (2018/2019) has been posted on the website.</i> <i>Quantity and frequency to be agreed.</i>	Ongoing	Yes <i>£400 included in 2020/2021 budget</i>
	Review locations and size of notice boards. <i>Size and locations agreed and approved 25 June 2019. Order for new notice boards approved 24 September 2019.</i>	2020	Yes <i>£10,125 allocated</i>
	Review use of social media.	Ongoing	Budget for Facebook and Twitter not required
	Establish and maintain links with local press.	Ongoing	No
	Summary of meeting decisions / initiatives to be published on website. <i>Minutes from council meetings are published on website + other pertinent information</i>	Ongoing	No
	Consider Councillor Surgeries.	<i>To be agreed.</i>	Cost of room hire <i>Additional funds included in the 2020/2021 budget</i>
To improve effectiveness of the parish council	Carry out research to determine whether a Community Governance Review is required.	<i>To be agreed.</i>	Possible
	Review training needs of councillors and the clerk.	Annually	Yes <i>£500 for clerk and £400 for councillors allocated in 2020/2021 budget</i>
	Work towards and maintain Local Council Awards Scheme standards.	Ongoing	£150 for Quality Standard £250 for Quality Gold Standard <i>£180 included in 2019/2020 budget</i>
	Carry out performance review of the council and the Clerk.	Annually	Cost of training if necessary.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
	The council's performance is reviewed and monitored through its Action Plan and Strategic Plan. The Clerk's Performance Review is undertaken by the Personnel Committee and was last carried out by the Personnel Committee in March 2019.		£500 for clerk and £400 for councillors allocated in 2020/2021 budget.
To increase influence/coordination in matters that impact on the parish.	Invite representatives from outside bodies and members of the public to address the parish council on key matters of interest. Local community groups and the Police & Crime Commissioner attended parish council meetings in May 2019, the Canal & River Trust attended a parish council meeting in June 2019, and Shropshire Councillor Joyce Barrow and a member of the local policing team attend most parish council meetings. All parish council meetings include a public session where members of the public may address the council.	Ongoing	No
To ensure the parish council delivers value for money	Carry out regular review of expenditure against budget.	Monthly	No

Theme 2

Leisure and Community

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To support and work with village hall committees regarding the maintenance and development of facilities for the benefit of stakeholders.	Assist Morda Village Hall Committee to apply for grants/Community Infrastructure Levy to upgrade the building and its facilities.	Ongoing	£2,000 included in 2019/2020 budget
	Ensure parish council representatives on the management committee feedback and identify where parish council assistance might be required. Cllr. Robert Milton is the parish council's representative on the management committee. (Cllr. Shirley Jones represents the parish council on the Rhydycroesau Village Hall Management Committee and Cllr. Pam Broomby represents the parish council on the Trefonen and Sychtyn Village Hall management committee.)	Ongoing	Possible
To ensure maintenance arrangements of communal green/play areas/football pitches are adequate for maximum enjoyment.	Ensure that areas maintained by the parish council comply with agreed maintenance contracts. The maintenance contract has recently been reviewed and approved in December 2019. Tenders are currently being sought for a new maintenance contract.	Annually	No
	Monitor work carried out by Shropshire Council.	Ongoing	No

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
	Members of the public report environmental issues to the clerk who reports them to Shropshire Council for action.		
To investigate need for new facilities to promote social interaction, sport and leisure.	Consult with the community to identify any evidence of demand and interest and pursue if supported.	Ongoing	Possible
To support existing community groups and work with existing communities and new housing developments to integrate into the same community.	Work with Shropshire Council, community groups and other bodies to promote activities.	Ongoing	No
	Recognise the work carried out by groups and individuals on a voluntary basis through the Tony Cheetham Community Award Scheme. This scheme is promoted on the parish council's website, in its newsletters, Twitter and on notice boards.	Annually	Yes
To increase impact of the parish council's Tony Cheetham Community Grant Award Scheme.	Continue to fund the Scheme.	Annually	Yes
	Ensure adequate promotion of the Scheme. This scheme is promoted on the parish council's website, in its newsletters, Twitter and on notice boards.	Annually	£50 included in 2021/2022 budget
	Review impact of grants awarded.	Annually	No
	Review grant policy.	Biannually	No

Theme 3

Parish Appearance, Environment, Public Services and Safety

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To keep roads and lanes clean for the enjoyment of members of the public.	Report dog fouling to the dog warden.	Ongoing	No
	Encourage members of the public to report littering and fly-tipping.	Ongoing	No
	Work with the community to carry out litter picks.	Ongoing	No
To understand, celebrate and protect the local landscape and participate in its future management, especially Offa's Dyke, Wat's Dyke and Oswestry Racecourse.	Work with partners/stakeholders to preserve and promote the local heritage through management plans.	Medium term	Possible
	Work with partners to preserve the landscape and wildlife through additional planting of native trees/shrubs.	Medium term	No
	Identify significant trees in the settlements, recommend appropriate maintenance programmes and assess whether tree Preservation Orders should be requested.	Medium term	No
	Work with partners to assess whether Treflach Quarry should be developed as a wildlife site taking road safety and access into consideration.	Medium term	No
	Work with land and property owners to encourage regular maintenance of hedgerows, verges, trees, stone walls,	Medium term	No

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
	fences and waterways to keep them in good order.		
	Record wildlife activity and diversity to preserve natural habitats.	Medium term	No
	Pursue links with regional, national and international bodies which are concerned with the natural environment and heritage.	Ongoing	No
To preserve settlements' rural identity.	Review the landscape at the entrance to settlements.	Short term	No
To improve Trefarclawdd Cemetery	Produce a comprehensive maintenance plan. A Cemetery Management and Administration Review was carried out 21 October 2015 and the parish council has policies in place for the management of the cemetery.	12 months	no
To reduce crime so that members of the community feel better protected against crime.	Work with the police and other services to raise awareness of crime reduction initiatives/schemes.	Ongoing	No
	Share local intelligence concerning crime and safety with the police.	ongoing	No
	Promote police contact information via the parish council's website, notice boards and newsletters.	Ongoing	No
To ensure local emergency solutions are in place that support county and national emergency plans.	Work with Shropshire Council and emergency services to raise awareness of how the local community can respond in emergencies.	Ongoing	No
	Support and work with local Artificial External Defibrillators (AED) groups to maintain these services.	Ongoing	Possible £400 included in earmarked reserves

Theme 4

Highways, Transport and Access

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To address highway concerns and seek solutions	Work with responsible agencies to understand planned maintenance work on highways.	Ongoing	No
	Seek improvements to junction and road layouts where necessary especially road junctions/access/egress along the A5.	Ongoing	No
	Ensure adequate winter maintenance of grit bins.	Ongoing	No
	Report highway maintenance complaints to Shropshire Council.	Ongoing	No

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
	Disseminate clear information about who to contact concerning highway/road issues.	Ongoing	No
To seek solutions to speeding traffic.	Report specific incidents to the police/Shropshire Council.	Ongoing	No
	Pass on community concerns to Shropshire Council.	Ongoing	No
	Support the establishment of community speed watch groups. An application has been submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for grant funding to provide Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) in Trefonen.	Ongoing	Possible
	Consider the use of CIL monies to fund improvements e.g. traffic calming, especially at Weston Road, Morda and Treflach.	Ongoing	Yes
To consider the need for weight/width restrictions to prevent erosion of roads and verges.	Investigate the need for restrictions on narrow lanes.	Ongoing	No
To review road signage.	Consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of road signs.	Ongoing	No
To prevent rural isolation through the provision of adequate public transport.	Promote existing community transport schemes on the parish council's website, social media and newsletters.	Ongoing	No
	Investigate available options for transport schemes.	Ongoing	No
	Strive to ensure adequate access to public transport for the rural community.	Ongoing	No
To maintain access to the countryside.	Create Parish Path Partnership Groups and support existing groups.	Ongoing	Possible
	Ensure adequate access is maintained to the countryside.	Ongoing	No

Theme 5

Economy and Tourism

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To improve coordination between the parish council and businesses within the parish	Improve liaison with local businesses.	Ongoing	No
	Encourage and facilitate coordinated initiatives.	Ongoing	No
	Work with all public access building owners, businesses and committees to seek the provision of additional public services.	Ongoing	No
To support economic development.	Work with partners and businesses in the development of a local strategy.	Ongoing	No
To sustain tourism through the promotion of local facilities,	Work with local businesses and interested groups to promote the visitor experience/offer.	Ongoing	No

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
services, activities and landmarks.	Create a series of visitor itineraries relating to local landscapes, villages and surrounding countryside.	Ongoing	No
	Promote the visitor experience on the parish council's website.	Ongoing	No
To consider options for proactively targeting specific new businesses which meet the needs of local residents and support the economic sustainability of the parish.	Work with Shropshire Council, Oswestry Town Council, businesses and other partners to consider options.	Ongoing	No

Theme 6

Housing and Health

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	BUDGET REQUIRED
To continue to comment on all key strategic planning documents and consultations that affect the parish ensuring the parish council's knowledge and understanding of the local context is considered in the decision-making process.	Work with partners to ensure that policy/consultation documents are apprehensible.	Ongoing	No
	Ensure parishioners are fully informed about all consultation so that their views are included in policy development.	Ongoing	No
To encourage local residents to participate in strategic planning that affects the parish.	Publicise consultation through all of the parish council's communication channels.	Ongoing	No
To review how the parish council considers and responds to planning applications.	Review training needs of councillors.	Ongoing	No
	Ensure responses are well considered and formulated in line with material considerations.	Ongoing	No
To support the retention of quality health and social care services.	Work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure health and social care services meet the needs and expectations of those who require them.	Ongoing	No

Budget Implications

OBJECTIVE	2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE
	BUDGET					
Theme 1						
Continue to review and improve website						£250.00
Continue to publish parish newsletter and Annual Report		*£3,500		*£4,000		£500.00 (£65 per 100)
Review locations and size of notice boards				£3,000		£7,125 (£1,125 per unit)
Consider councillor surgeries						Cost ² of room hire An additional £50 included in budget
Review training needs of councillors and clerk		*£475		*£550		£900
Work towards and maintain Local Council Awards Scheme standards				£150		The Quality Award (£150 included in earmarked reserves)
Carry out performance review of the council and the clerk						Cost of training as necessary
Attend relevant conferences and meetings		*included within training budget		*included within training budget		*included within training budget
Produce and action maintenance plan						To be assessed
Theme TOTAL		£3,975		£7,700		£8,825

² Rhydygroesau Village Hall - £40 per session, Morda Village Hall - £30 or £20 for small room, Trefonen Village Hall - £30 per session

OBJECTIVE	2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE
	BUDGET					
Theme 2						
Consult with the community to identify any evidence of demand for new recreational facilities and to pursue if supported						To be assessed
Recognise the work carried out by groups and individuals on a voluntary basis through the Tony Cheetham Community Service Award	£100		£125	£650		£50
Continue to fund the community grant scheme to assist with community development		£2,000		£2,000		£3,650
Assist Morda Village Hall Committee to apply for grants/CIL to upgrade the building and its facilities				£2,000		£2,000 earmarked reserves
Theme TOTAL	£100	£2,000	£125	£4,650	£150	£3,700
Theme 3						
Support and work with Artificial External Defibrillators (AED) groups to maintain these services				£400		£400 earmarked reserves
Theme TOTAL				£400		0
Theme 5						
Work with local businesses and interested groups to promote the visitor experience/offer						To be assessed
Create a series of visitor itineraries relating to local landscapes, villages and surrounding countryside						To be assessed
Theme TOTAL						0

OBJECTIVE	2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	REVENUE
	BUDGET					
Theme 6						
Review training needs of councillors		*included within training budget		*included within training budget		£900
Theme TOTAL						£900

<i>Last reviewed:</i>	<i>26 March 2019</i>
<i>Reviewed by:</i>	<i>Sharon Clayton - Clerk January 2020</i>
<i>Approved:</i>	<i>28 January 2020</i>
<i>Minute no:</i>	<i>596/20</i>