



**Cabinet | June 10th
2026**

Item

Public

St. Andrews, Shifnal – Asset Decisions

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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Councillor Roger Evans		

1. Synopsis

This report asks Cabinet to approve the declaration of St Andrews, Shifnal as surplus to requirements and to authorise its disposal as a non-core asset. The building is in poor condition and, following consideration through the Community Asset Transfer process, retention is not considered viable. The proposed disposal would support the Council's financial and asset management objectives by reducing liabilities and enabling a capital receipt to be realised, subject to title, planning and market considerations.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report aligns with the Council's financial and asset management objectives by recommending disposal of a non-core asset where retention is not viable and where there is potential to realise a capital receipt. St Andrews Shifnal, Shifnal returned to Shropshire Council on 1 May 2025 following termination/surrender of the previous arrangements. The previous tenants held the lease since 1972. No repairs to the fabric of the building over the term of the lease, apart from new windows. Internally heating was installed several years ago, and a main hall floor was replaced.
- 2.2. The site was previously considered through a Community Asset Transfer route; however, Shifnal Town Council commissioned a condition survey which concluded the building was in a bad state of repair and based on costs, it would be better value for money to be

demolished and rebuilt. Following the Town and Parish Council Asset Transfer Board meeting, it was agreed the site should proceed to cabinet to consider disposal.

- 2.3. Property & Development have completed a property/title review and a desktop-level indicative valuation to inform options. The title review identified an area of unregistered land to the west of the building. Work is in hand to regularise that position, and no disposal will proceed until the Council is satisfied that title issues have been addressed sufficiently for sale purpose
- 2.4. The building's age, historic lack of fabric investment and poor condition indicate it is unlikely to meet modern standards for energy efficiency, thermal comfort and operational performance without significant refurbishment or demolition and rebuild. This supports the value-for-money rationale for disposal and reduces the risk of the Council retaining an asset with ongoing carbon and maintenance liabilities.
- 2.5. In the financial year 2026/27 the government has agreed to provide Shropshire Council with support to manage financial pressures via the Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) process. As part of this agreement the government expects Shropshire Council to implement robust plans to deliver improvements and service transformation required to return to financial stability and this includes generating additional income from accelerating the Council's asset disposal and identifying opportunities for capital generation. The capital receipts received from the disposal of identified surplus assets will contribute to the requirement to fund the EFS, whilst also continuing rationalisation of the estate. This will reduce both the future repairs and maintenance liability and further revenue and capital funding requirements. This asset is currently not identified within the capital receipt financing requirement to fund the current capital programme and will therefore generate a new capital receipt that can contribute to the EFS funding requirements.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. To declare St Andrews, Shifnal (in accordance with the red line plan detailed in Appendix 1) surplus to requirements and approve its disposal as a non-core asset.
- 3.2. To delegate authority to the Head of Property and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to take all necessary steps to progress disposal, including title resolution, determination of the appropriate disposal strategy and completion of the sale in accordance with the Council's constitutional and legal requirements.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. Title and land ownership risk: disposal could be delayed or compromised due to the unregistered land to the west of the building and the need to complete the adverse possession process, which may affect marketability, buyer confidence and achievable consideration. Mitigation: continue the title due diligence and progress the adverse possession application has been submitted; only proceed to market once the title position is sufficiently clear (or disclose clearly and structure heads of terms to reflect any residual title risk).

- 4.2. Planning and value realisation risk: the potential housing-led value/capital receipt from the wider site may not be achievable if planning constraints, abnormal costs (e.g. demolition), access, utilities, ecology or other site constraints reduce deliverability and bidder appetite, resulting in a lower receipt or aborted sale. Mitigation: undertake proportionate pre-market planning and technical screening (planning, access, utilities, ecology/trees, contamination, flooding where relevant); prepare a clear information pack for bidders; consider alternative lotting/disposal strategies to widen the market; take valuation advice and maintain an updated price expectation through the marketing period.
- 4.3. Stakeholder, consultation and reputational risk: disposal may attract objections from local stakeholders (including the Town Council/community groups) or create expectations about future community use, potentially leading to delay, challenge or adverse publicity. Mitigation: engage early with the Portfolio Holder and local member and maintain clear communications with key stakeholders on the rationale (non core asset, condition and value for money); set out decision-making and disposal constraints transparently.

4.4. Risk table

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Title risk: unregistered land and adverse possession issues could delay disposal or affect marketability.	Adverse possession applied for; only market once title is sufficiently clear or disclose and manage through contract conditions.
Planning and value realisation risk: development potential or expected receipt may not be achieved if planning, access, utilities, ecology, contamination or abnormal costs reduce deliverability and bidder appetite.	Complete proportionate pre-market technical checks; obtain up-to-date valuation advice; prepare a robust sales pack; consider alternative lotting/disposal route; set realistic reserve/acceptance parameters.
Stakeholder, consultation and reputational risk: objections from local stakeholders or expectations about community use could delay the disposal, prompt challenge or generate adverse publicity.	Follow Local Member Protocol; engage Portfolio Holder/local member early; record consultation and responses
Holding and asset condition risk: while the property remains unsold, vacancy, deterioration, vandalism or safety issues could increase costs, liabilities and delay disposal.	Maintain appropriate security and inspections; address immediate hazards; ensure insurance is in place; implement a holding strategy (boarding, signage, periodic condition checks) until disposal completes.

5. 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 to Cabinet on a monthly basis. Significant management action has been instigated at all levels of the Council reducing spend to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all reports to

Members provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers and/or Portfolio Holders review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. All non-essential spend will be stopped and all essential spend challenged. These actions may involve (this is not exhaustive):

- scaling down initiatives,
- changing the scope of activities,
- delaying implementation of agreed plans, or
- extending delivery timescales.

5.2. The recommendation to dispose of St Andrews, Shifnal is expected to support the Council's financial recovery by seeking to realise a capital receipt from a non-core asset and by reducing ongoing holding liabilities associated with a vacant, deteriorating building; actual spend against this property in 2025/26 was £5k, with a budgeted spend of 6k for 2026/27. Due to the value of the site being within a range that could exceed 500K, in accordance with the Council's constitution and scheme of delegation, it requires a Cabinet decision. Any receipt achieved would be a capital resource and will be applied in accordance with the Council's capital strategy and medium-term financial planning, including support for agreed capital investment priorities and/or to mitigate borrowing where applicable. There is no receipt projected for this site within the capital projections and therefore this would be an addition to the current targets. Transaction costs (e.g. valuation, legal and marketing/agent fees) and any reasonable pre-sale costs (including site security and maintaining safe condition pending disposal) will be met from existing approved budgets where available and/or netted off against the receipt, subject to the final disposal strategy and approvals. The timing and quantum of any receipt remains subject to completion of title matters (including the adverse possession position), planning and market conditions and could vary from initial indications; these uncertainties will be managed through proportionate pre-market due diligence, updated valuation advice, and an appropriate marketing strategy to demonstrate best consideration and maintain a clear audit trail.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. Energy and fuel consumption / modern standards: St Andrews is in poor condition and is unlikely to perform to modern energy efficiency standards. Retaining the building would be expected to require significant investment to improve fabric performance
- 6.2. Renewable energy / mitigation and adaptation: Should the site be redeveloped, there may be opportunities for a future scheme to incorporate low-carbon design and renewable technologies (for example heat pumps and solar PV) and to deliver improved climate resilience through sustainable drainage, shading/overheating control and biodiversity enhancements (subject to planning and viability). As part of the disposal process, the Council will provide available building/site information to bidders and encourage proposals that align with climate objectives, while recognising that the Council will not control the detailed design outcomes once disposed.

7. Background

- 7.1. St Andrews, Shifnal is a Council-owned former community building which returned to the Council on 1 May 2025 following the termination/surrender of previous arrangements. The previous tenants had held the lease since 1972 and, aside from limited works (including replacement windows and some internal improvements), the building's fabric has not benefited from comprehensive investment over that period.

- 7.2. Following the asset returning to the Council, the site was explored through a Community Asset Transfer route with Shifnal Town Council. As part of that work, Shifnal Town Council commissioned a condition survey which concluded that the building is in a poor state of repair and that, based on the likely costs of remedial works, demolition and rebuild would represent better value for money than attempting to retain and refurbish the existing structure. Working closely with Shifnal Town council, along the way has been key.
- 7.3. The findings were considered through the Town and Parish Council Asset Transfer Board, where it was agreed that the proposal should progress to Cabinet for a decision on disposal. In parallel, Property & Development have completed a property/title review and a desktop-level indicative valuation to inform options appraisal, identifying title complexity including an area of unregistered land to the west of the building for which adverse possession has been requested and will need to be resolved prior to disposal.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. The building is currently vacant and, given its condition, is being managed on a holding basis pending disposal. Appropriate site security and periodic inspections are being maintained to manage health and safety and liability risks until a sale completes.
- 8.2. The disposal is intended to consider the wider site potential (including the area of land to the west of the building) which has been identified as unregistered and is subject to the adverse possession process. Any future redevelopment value is subject to planning and other site constraints, and the Council will ensure that the sale is progressed with clear title information, appropriate marketing and governance to achieve best consideration.
- 8.3. The Local Member was contacted but did not provide any comments.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. St Andrews, Shifnal is a non-core asset which has returned to the Council and, based on the condition survey evidence, is in a poor state of repair and is not considered viable for retention without demolition and rebuild. In the context of the Council's financial position and wider asset management objectives, disposal represents the most appropriate value-for-money option, avoiding ongoing holding liabilities and providing the opportunity to realise a capital receipt (subject to planning and market conditions).
- 9.2. Subject to Cabinet approval, officers will progress the required due diligence and actions to enable a compliant disposal, including resolution of title matters (including the unregistered land/adverse possession position), appropriate stakeholder engagement, and selection of a disposal and marketing strategy that demonstrates best consideration and maintains a clear audit trail. Delegated authority will enable the Council to respond proportionately to technical and market findings and to progress the transaction efficiently while managing the identified risks.

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

None

Local Member: Cllr Ed Bird

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Red line plan of St Andrews, Shifnal