

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
FULL COUNCIL  
DATE 16 MARCH 2026**

**Officer:** Helen Ball (Town Clerk)

**MILLION HOURS PROJECT**

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**Purpose of Report**

To inform Members that Shrewsbury Town Council has successfully secured £96,260 from the National Lottery's Million Hours Fund to deliver a targeted youth engagement programme in the Quarry & Coton Hill ward, aimed at addressing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and improving opportunities for young people.

The report outlines the objectives, delivery model and anticipated outcomes of the funded programme.

**Background**

The National Lottery Million Hours Fund is a national programme designed to expand youth provision in communities where additional activities and support for young people are required. The fund was only open to Local Authority Wards across the country where there was a reported spike in Youth ASB. Quarry & Coton Hill was one of only two wards in the County that were eligible to apply.

The programme focuses on:

- Increasing access to youth services
- Providing safe spaces and structured activities
- Reducing anti-social behaviour and community tensions
- Supporting young people's wellbeing and development

It should be noted that whilst this project is focussed on youth activity in the Quarry & Coton Hill Ward, young people identified come from across Shrewsbury and beyond recognising that the town centre is a congregation point.

The fund, launched in the summer 2025 was heavily subscribed and closed ahead of the previously published closing date.

Members will be aware that anti-social behaviour involving young people has been a recurring concern within parts of the Quarry and Coton Hill ward, particularly in and around the Quarry Park area and surrounding neighbourhoods and the Shopping Centre.

Local partners including:

- Shropshire Council
- West Mercia Police
- Team Shrewsbury Partnership
- Shrewsbury Business Improvement District
- Darwin Shopping Centre
- Local schools
- Community organisations

Partners have identified a need for more intensive youth engagement provision to positively engage young people who may be at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour and potentially criminal exploitation.

### **Funding Award**

Shrewsbury Town Council submitted a bid for £96,260 to deliver an intensive 26-week youth engagement programme within the town centre.

The funding will support:

- Enhancement to the Quarry & Town Centre Rangers who already have made significant inroads with youth engagement
- Detached youth workers
- Street-based engagement and activities with young people
- Structured youth activities utilising local partner and stakeholder facilities
- Targeted support for those most at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour
- Potential Work Experience Opportunities with local businesses
- Programmes of Awareness particularly around knife crime, criminal exploitation, county lines, drugs and young people's mental health

The programme will be delivered over a six-month period, providing consistent and sustained engagement with young people in the area.

### **Programme Delivery**

The programme will provide a combination of detached and centre-based youth work, ensuring that support reaches young people where they are already gathering.

Key elements of the programme will include:

#### **Detached Youth Work**

Youth workers will engage directly with young people in public spaces including:

- The Quarry Park
- Darwin Shopping Centre

- Hotspot Areas in the town centre where young people hang out
- Local estates in Coton Hill
- Areas identified through partner intelligence

This approach is designed to build relationships with young people who may not traditionally access youth services.

### **Structured Activities**

A range of positive activities will be provided including:

- Sports and recreational sessions
- Creative and social activities
- Group workshops focusing on wellbeing and life skills

### **Early Intervention Support**

Youth workers will provide targeted support for young people who may be:

- At risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour
- Experiencing social or emotional challenges
- Disengaged from education or community activities

Where appropriate, referrals will be made to relevant services.

### **Partnership Working**

The programme has been shared with a range of Partner Agencies who welcome involvement

Partners will include:

- Shropshire Council Public Health
- Shropshire Community Safety Partnership
- Shropshire Council Youth Services
- West Mercia Police
- Shrewsbury College
- Shrewsbury Business Improvement District
- The Hive
- British Ironworks (potential hosting of the Knife Angel)
- Shropshire Lord Lieutenancy, High Sheriff & Community Foundation

Partnership working will ensure that the programme complements existing services and that young people requiring additional support can be referred to appropriate agencies.

## Expected Outcomes

The programme aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increased positive engagement with young people in the Quarry & Coton Hill ward
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people
- Improved relationships between young people and the wider community
- Increased participation in youth activities and community programmes
- Improved wellbeing and resilience among participating young people

Performance will be monitored through engagement data, feedback from young people and partners, and local intelligence relating to anti-social behaviour. This will be fed back to the National Lottery.

## Financial Implications

The programme, whilst receiving the full award from the National Lottery Million Hours grant, requires a contribution of £25,000 from the Town Council which will be made up from Officer support as well as funding from the 2026/27 Youth budget.

## Risks

Potential risks include:

- Difficulty engaging the most vulnerable young people
- External factors affecting delivery (e.g. weather for detached work)
- Changes in local ASB patterns
- Ability to recruit Youth Workers
- Appetite of Partners to work together

These risks will be mitigated through flexible delivery methods and strong partnership working.

## Community Impact

The programme represents a significant investment in youth provision within the Quarry & Coton Hill ward and aligns with the Council's objectives to:

- Support young people
- Promote safer communities
- Strengthen community cohesion

The Local Member has been supportive of this project and is a co-signatory to the National Lottery Award. By providing positive activities and engagement, the programme aims to prevent issues from escalating and build stronger relationships between young people and their community.

**RECOMMENDATION****That:**

- (i) The Report be noted**
- (ii) Accepts the award of £96,260 from the National Lottery Million Hours Fund.**
- (iii) Support the delivery of the 26-week youth engagement programme within the Quarry & Coton Hill ward.**
- (iv) Looks forward to further reports on how this might be the catalyst to wider diversionary youth engagement**