

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 FEBRUARY 2024

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question from Pauline Dee

After reading my email which I was assured you would have sight of, is there any hope that you can recommend to the Council that Wem can be removed from Group 6 to Group 7 and so allow visitors to our small town to park free. In the 1990s Wem was perceived to be the 17th most deprived town in the West Midlands so I cannot understand why this has not be taken on board by the Shropshire Unitary Council - grants were received to improve the infrastructure in and around the town but the total scheme was not completed because of the withdrawal of further funding. I hope that you will be able to support my requests

Response from Councillor Dan Morris, Portfolio Holder for Highways

The classification of this car park is by means of an approved algorithm within the existing 2017 Parking Strategy. This scoring process is based on the size and facilities in the town. Wem is a town with retail, leisure and dining opportunities, which those on the lower band would have to a much lower extent, if at all. It is this score that is most influential. All other scores are more objective and are in most cases at the low end of possible scores.

The evaluation of Wem in 2017 gave scores of 22-25 for individual car parks and, at the most beneficial, re-evaluation as a complete town would not go below 16 compared with a range of 10-38 for Band 6. To illustrate the difference, Band 7 includes villages such as Clun, Craven Arms and Gobowen which are in no way comparable to Wem. Charging for parking on a Sunday as well as the general increase, will generate a contribution to maintaining and improving car parks. Numerous requirements have been identified countywide, prioritising those with the greatest need.

Question from Seb Slater, on behalf of Shrewsbury BID

What does Shropshire Council estimate will be the change in total number of annual car parking visitors as a result of its proposed tariff increases and has the economic impact to Shrewsbury town centre been assessed

Response from Councillor Dan Morris, Portfolio Holder for Highways

We estimated net change for each car park is as follows:-

Abbey Foregate	+4365
Bridge Street	-3518
Frankwell	-16122
Quarry	-625
St Austins	-3321
St Julians Friars	-7281
Raven Meadows	+5225
Total	-21277

It is at the upper quartile of the spectrum of assumption but 9,000 might transfer to the Park and Ride service and 13,000 may make alternative arrangements or be lost as car park users. To try and split this down any further would be guessing.

As part of the Shrewsbury Movement Strategy greater consideration is being given to how much more detailed and accurate information may be obtained on impact might be obtained from direct interviews of primarily car park users.

	Current Stay >3 hours	Forecast Stay >3 hours	Comment
Abbey Foregate	52%	50%	Primarily Commuter—to be expected
Bridge Street	7%	6%	Inside Loop – minimal loss
Frankwell	42%	39%	Primarily Commuter—to be expected
Quarry	2%	2%	Inside Loop – no change
St Austins	6%	5%	Inside Loop – minimal loss
St Julians Friars	22%	20%	Inside Loop – minimal loss
Raven Meadows	10%	10%	Inside Loop – no change
All Shrewsbury	24%	22%	