



Date: Wednesday, 8 July 2026
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ
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CABINET

4 Responses to Public Questions (Pages 1 - 6)

To receive any questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 2 July 2026.

5 Responses to Member Questions (Pages 7 - 12)

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 2 July 2026.

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CABINET – 8 JULY 2026

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Carole Warner, Clerk to Welshampton and Lyneal Parish Council

The Parish Council has been made aware of a planning application submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council by Veolia in connection with its contract with Shropshire Council. Veolia's planning application is for a composting facility in Bronington.

The Parish Council's main concern is the volume of traffic generated to and from the site. The highways assessment states:

"If the Proposed Development is operational for 11 hours per day (07:00-18:00), then it could therefore generate up to 5 two-way HGV trips per hour, or 1 two-way HGV trip every 12 minutes, on average"

This will have a huge impact on the A495, the main route to the facility.

The village of Welshampton is directly on the A495 and the Parish Council has historically raised concerns with the lack of visible traffic restriction signage and the current poor level of highway surface maintenance. The increased volume of traffic will not just affect Welshampton but all towns and villages along the A495 and other connecting roads.

The Parish Council would like assurance from Shropshire Council's Cabinet that, should the application be approved, all relevant highway budgets will be reviewed and increased accordingly.

Response from Cllr David Vasmer

Veolia's application for an In-Vessel Composter at Fern Bank within the Wrexham Council area is supported by a Transport Statement. It outlined that whilst the site is likely to generate a number of vehicle movements, in comparison to the permitted use of the site, the proposed development would result in an overall reduction in vehicle movements. On this basis, whilst Shropshire Council will monitor the operation of the In-Vessel Composter, there are no proposals to seek any mitigation as a result of the development, or increase highway budgets locally.

However, if the Parish Council has any evidence that vehicle movements will increase or the type of vehicles change, please get in touch.

2. Olly Rose

It's over a year now since the petition regarding this proposal was considered by the overview and Scrutiny Committee. At that time they noted the years of frustration regarding the delay in providing such a facility when planning permission was granted back in 2008. We had waited 17 years now it is 18.

They resolved that the matter deserved urgent action and it was then reported twice to Cabinet on the 15th October and 19th November 2025.

It's been hard to work out exactly what SUC has done but I understand that this land was to be included in the transfer of land under shared services from SUC to OTC – however the recent report to OTC on the 10th June detailed ten such areas of land but did not include the land by the Oswestry leisure centre ideally suited for such a facility and previously discussed as the most viable position.

It is a pity the children can't ride bikes on officer's reports and Cabinet minutes...as you can see we have a lot of these. Can you please tell me when this land will be transferred so plans can progress to start work on construction of this long awaited and much needed facility.

Response from Cllr Roger Evans

Cabinet considered the 'Skateboard & BMX Pump Track Provision in Oswestry' report on 19 November 2025 and resolved to support the next stage of the project. Cabinet agreed that Oswestry Town Council (OTC) should undertake final consultation on the shortlisted site options and that, once a preferred site had been selected, arrangements could be progressed to lease the chosen site to OTC for the development of a pump track and/or skate park. Shropshire Council is committed to progressing this lease either alongside other potential transfers or in isolation dependant on the most expedient route.

Shropshire Council continues to work positively and collaboratively with OTC in considering the available options and remains committed to supporting the delivery of the project. However, the decision as to which site OTC wishes to progress remains a matter for the Town Council, and OTC has not yet taken a final decision to proceed with the lease of a preferred site. Until that decision has been made, Shropshire Council is unable to finalise the lease arrangements.

3. **Mike Streetly**

When the council voted to cancel the North West Relief Road on 26 February 2026 it was announced that there would be a separate report on the Oxon Link Road and that there would be a task and finish group to work out what lessons could be learned about how £38M of scarce council funds was spent with no meaningful benefit to the residents of Shropshire. Given how badly wrong the project went, it would seem to be urgent that lessons should be learned as soon as possible and that those involved should have an opportunity to explain how this happened while the events are still fresh in everyone's memory. It is now 4 months since the cancellation of the project but there appears to be no progress on these important matters. Could you please provide an update on these activities?

Response from Cllr David Vasmer

I can confirm that a review of the North West Relief Road forms part of the agreed work programme for the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Progress is being made on establishing the North West Relief Road Task and Finish Group. The draft Terms of Reference have been prepared and are currently being shared with relevant officers for consideration and input. Following this stage, the

Terms of Reference will be circulated to all Members and expressions of interest will be invited to establish the membership of the group.

While the Task and Finish Group will review and reflect on the project, its primary focus will be to consider the implications of the decision not to proceed with the North West Relief Road. In particular, it will examine the impact on the county's economy and highway infrastructure and explore how the challenges and opportunities arising from that decision can be effectively managed in the future.

The Council remains committed to ensuring that any lessons arising from the project are properly considered through the scrutiny process, and work is progressing to put the necessary arrangements in place to enable that review to be undertaken. Further updates will be provided as the Task and Finish Group is formally established, and its programme of work is agreed.

4. Andrew Sceats

A Council officer has commissioned a review by an independent assessor Chris Bunn, from the LGA, into the future of the Shirehall. He will be reviewing a number of documents before presenting his report to Cabinet prior to a special Cabinet meeting on 14 July. It will include being conducted within the Council's 'legal and financial obligations, including the Best Consideration requirement when disposing of land under s.123 of Local Government Act 1972' The report of the all- party Shirehall Strategic Review Rapid Task and Finish Group included witness evidence from the Council's Estates Manager for Acquisitions and Disposals - he 'clarified that Cornovii would be required to bid on the open market for the Shirehall alongside other potential buyers' (page 7). I have criticised the way that Council- owned land has been transferred to Cornovii, for their developments, without any sites being offered on the open market. I would like Mr Bunn to confirm that he has had access to all documents to see that Best Consideration has been achieved relating to past sites that Cornovii has utilised. It is not good enough for the reviewer to simply have the Council's word that this has been achieved. The Shirehall is such a high profile project that if its sale is required to be on the open market will this requirement now be applied to all Cornovii sites using Council land past/ present/future, and if not why not?

Response from Cllr Roger Evans

As a result of the council decision the Section 151 Officer commissioned Chris Buss to undertake an independent review, and all available information concerning the Shirehall was provided for him. The full report provided by Chris Buss has now been published.

A special meeting of the cabinet is to be held on July 14th . This has been called to specifically consider the Chris Buss report and also the one provided by officers, which has also now been published.

The Council Leader has stated this meeting will take place in public and the intention is for cabinet to make a decision concerning this site.

5. Kevin Pardy

I have received statistics via FOI act, for potholes repaired and roads resurfaced within the seventeen wards of Shrewsbury Town Council during the first full year of the Liberal administration.

The results are startling.

1107 potholes have been repaired, and three roads resurfaced

Of the 1107 potholes reported repaired, 775 of those potholes were sited in Liberal wards an astounding 70%.

Leaving just 30 percent shared between the remaining six wards.

The average number of repairs per Liberal ward was 70.45 compared to the remaining wards' average 55.3 potholes repaired.

During the year three roads were resurfaced, all in Liberal wards.

Having had suspicion that there was an imbalance in repairs, I visited three Liberal wards before the request for statistics. Potholes repaired were no larger than potholes in any other ward nor were they in any position more dangerous than in other wards. I did note there was a number of repairs immediately outside of a cabinet members' home.

Harlescott Grange received the joint highest number of repairs at 176 which tied with the deputy leaders' ward, Quarry and Coton Hill. Harlescott also had two out of three roads resurfaced.

As the statistics are so obviously imbalanced, I cannot believe that Highways have not been influenced, it is not coincidental.

Can the portfolio holder explain why there is such an imbalance in favour of repairs taking place in Liberal wards within Shrewsbury Town Council area?

Response from Cllr David Vasmer

It's disappointing that my fellow Shrewsbury Town Councillor is trying to score cheap party-political points and inspecting Liberal Democrat wards instead of concentrating on Highways issues in his own ward of Sundorne.

I often get emails from Councillors of all Parties wanting me to help them get some action on a Highway issue in their ward. No matter which political party they represent, I do my best to help. If Cllr Pardy wishes to approach me about potholes in his own ward, I would be very willing to lobby on his behalf, but as far as I'm aware he has not approached me so far.

Cllr Pardy's Freedom of Information response will have been influenced by the search criteria used in his FOI enquiry, but I am unable to comment since I have not seen the correspondence. However, it should be noted that if the FOI was focused purely on

potholes, it would exclude other highways work, thereby presenting an inaccurate view.

This may not be to Cllr Pardy's liking but since the elections last year the majority of wards in Shrewsbury are represented by Liberal Democrats. It is therefore not surprising to learn that more potholes have been repaired in Liberal Democrat wards!

Let me make it very plain to Cllr Pardy. I do not make any decisions on where potholes are repaired – I lobby on behalf of all Councillors but the decisions are taken by officers. Defects and their repair are identified on the basis of inspection policies approved by the Council, which also accord with industry standards and codes of practice, and are determined on the basis of road hierarchy, defect severity and risk. In simple terms on how many vehicles use a road and any potential safety risk. There is absolutely no political agenda to influence which defects are repaired first, or where they are repaired.

Moving on to resurfacing – these schemes are determined on asset data and road condition, the amount of defects present and generated enquiries (as described in the Council's Highways Asset Management Strategy which is publicly available on our website). It's a lot more complicated than suggested by Cllr Pardy's question.

The work on the Station Quarter for example disrupted plans last year and at the same time there was a huge volume of highly disruptive schemes taking place. Works undertaken by utilities influenced capital delivery decisions, with several large-scale schemes having taken place in 2025/26 affecting key arterial routes in Shrewsbury such as Longden Road/Roman Road, Mytton Oak Road, Welshpool Road, Whitchurch Road, and Robinson Way. Cllr Pardy may also be interested to know that a number of resurfacing schemes in Shrewsbury were held back last year by the work of utilities – it's never wise to resurface a road before a utility needs to dig it up! If Cllr Pardy wishes I can arrange a briefing with officers and they can explain how decision are made on the maintenance of our highway network.

6. John Palmer

It is likely that Andy Burnham and Angela Rayner will order Shropshire Council to get on and build more new much-needed social housing pronto, over and above any Cornovii Development Limited plans.

Is it an option to sell off Theatre Severn to private investors, to help kickstart this hugely welcomed era of social renewal? Seeing as the theatre was originally financed by Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council following the sell off of council housing in Shrewsbury?

Response from Cllr Alex Wagner

2025/26 was another highly successful year at Theatre Severn, generating over £7.6m income, attracting an attendance of 215,971 to a ticketed event and generating a surplus of over £800k. As a service that is generating significant income for the Council, there are no plans to sell this provision to private investors. You will note that the principles of our Medium-Term Financial Sustainability & Recovery Strategy are being presented to Cabinet today; these include reviewing the performance of traded services and commercial ventures. This review has been completed for Theatre Services. The Council is committed to ensuring the Theatre continues to offer a broad

and exciting cultural programme for our residents along with delivering income for the Council as part of our recovery.

CABINET – 8 JULY 2026

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1. Councillor Rosie Radford

In light of the increased national focus on exploitation of vulnerable adults—including practices such as ‘cuckooing’ highlighted in the Crime and Policing Act 2026 and in the context of the additional challenges of rurality in Shropshire, can the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for community safety outline how the Council is working in partnership with policing, housing providers and community organisations to identify risks earlier to ensure that vulnerable residents are able to remain safe and independent in their own homes?

Response Cllr Ruth Houghton

Adult Exploitation is a priority for the Safeguarding Adult Board, and an Adult Exploitation Pathway and assessment tool has been developed to further support all practitioners across Shropshire in identifying and working with vulnerable adults who are at risk of or being exploited. The work is overseen by the multiagency Tackling Exploitation Group is co-ordinated by the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Business Unit which also supports the co-ordination of all Community Safety Partnership (CSP) activity as well, therefore it ensures that the CSP is fully informed of this activity and cited on any issues that might require their support.

The CSP also has a 4P (Prepare, Prevent, Protect, Pursue) Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Plan which identifies the current level of activity that is being undertaken for the 10 primary SOC types (drug trafficking, modern slavery and human trafficking, fraud and economic crime, money laundering, cybercrime, organised immigration crime, child sexual abuse and exploitation, illegal firearms trafficking, bribery, corruption and sanctions evasion and organised acquisitive crime) and highlights any areas of concern and actions that need to be taken by partners. Activity within this plan include police working with housing colleagues to protect and safeguard victims in their own homes, or in extreme circumstances, finding alternative suitable accommodation and using relevant partnership powers, ancillary, and civil orders to protect the vulnerable, such as using closure notices to restrict access to residential and commercial property.

At the last Community Safety Partnership meeting Shropshire's Serious and Organised Crime Profile was presented. Due to the sensitivity of this information, it cannot be shared publicly however it allows multi-agency partners to explore the action that can be taken to identify and support victims. Nationally the highest proportion of referrals to the National Referral Mechanism in 2025 related to males reporting labour exploitation (43%) or criminal exploitation (23%). Referrals flagged as “county lines” cases by decision makers in 2025 accounted for 9% of all referrals and the majority of these were for male children at the point of referral.

The Government will produce statutory guidance on the offence of Cuckooing that was introduced in the Crime and Policing Act 2026, and this will include what police, and other partners can do to support victims of Cuckooing. The CSP and wider partnerships (Adult Safeguarding Board and Children's Safeguarding Partnership) are aware of the legislation change may add further measures if required, to ensure their plans outlined above, to reflect any changes to guidance.

2. Colin Taylor

My ward of Bridgnorth South and Alveley is regularly being used as a fly tip area. In particular, the area of Six Ashes, Wotton and the BOATS off Wotton Ford and Hollow ash lane are having to be visited by our fly tip clearing up teams on a weekly basis.

What are council doing to deter this anti-social activity by means of putting in cameras at known "hot spots". Inspecting of the tipped material to find evidence of who tipped the rubbish.

What are the deterrents being put in place and when will they commence?

How much is the antisocial behaviour costing council to visit, clear up and dispose of the detritus in actual finance terms.

Does council log long term environmental damage caused by the tipping of rubbish that may have contained Asbestos or other noxious substances that can have long term effects on health and the local environment?

Response from David Vasmer

I share the concerns raised regarding the persistent fly tipping issues in Bridgnorth South and Alveley, particularly at Six Ashes, Wotton, and the BOATs off Wotton Ford and Hollow Ash Lane, where clearance teams are attending regularly.

These locations demonstrate exactly why Shropshire Council's Fly Tipping Strategy is focused on three key themes, enforcement, prevention, and partnership working.

Every reported fly tip is assessed by Council officers. They examine tipped materials, witness information, vehicle details, and other intelligence to identify those responsible. Where investigations identify sufficient evidence to meet the evidential threshold, the Council will pursue appropriate enforcement action, including formal warnings, fixed penalties, or prosecution where justified.

It is the responsibility of anyone arranging waste disposal to ensure that whoever they employ has the correct licences. If someone's waste can be identified on a fly tip, they can be issued with a £600 Fixed Penalty Notice. For individuals who fly tip their own rubbish, Fixed Penalty Notices are now being issued by Shropshire Council for £1000 or £500 depending on circumstances.

The Strategy also supports the targeting of resources at known hotspot locations. This includes reviewing locations with recurring incidents and considering measures such as surveillance, signage, intelligence-led enforcement and working with local communities and landowners. While it would not be appropriate to discuss operational details in public, I can assure you that persistent hotspot locations are regularly reviewed as part of our ongoing response.

Deterring fly tipping requires more than one measure. Our approach combines enforcement action against offenders, public awareness of legal waste disposal responsibilities, engagement with residents and parish councils, and the use of intelligence to focus resources where they can have the greatest impact. The objective is not simply to clear fly tips but to reduce future incidents and change behaviour.

Fly tipping imposes a significant cost on the Council through investigation, clearance, transport, disposal, and administration which is in excess of £140,000 per annum. Every incident diverts resources away from other frontline services. The Council monitors these costs and uses the information to help target preventative and enforcement activity where it is most needed.

Any fly tip suspected of containing hazardous materials, including asbestos or other potentially harmful substances, is managed in accordance with established procedures. Specialist assessment and removal are arranged where necessary, and the Council works with relevant agencies to ensure risks to public health and the environment are appropriately addressed.

In conclusion, the issues highlighted at Six Ashes, Wotton Ford and Hollow Ash Lane are recognised, and our Fly Tipping Strategy provides the framework through which we seek to tackle them by identifying hotspot locations, gathering evidence, pursuing offenders where the evidential threshold is met, and working proactively with communities to prevent repeat incidents and protect Shropshire's environment.

3. Rosemary Dartnall

Residents in the south-east of Shrewsbury and the villages have complained about the planned closure of Meole Brace Park and Ride. The complaints come from people who choose to use P&R for varied reasons including convenience, cost, mobility issues, avoidance of town centre congestion and concern for the environment. Many have said they will probably have to drive into town if Meole Brace closes.

Falling user numbers is the stated reason for closure, so please quantify the reduced passenger numbers and the time period in which it occurred.

Substantial construction adjacent to the site has changed the access from the retail park to a newly constructed junction with no signage at all. I suggest the inconsistency of P&R signage on some approach roads, at the previous access and the complete absence of any signs at all at the new junction and entrance must be a contributory factor.

Park & Ride is an important part of how Shropshire Council might begin to reduce traffic within Shrewsbury – the service in all parts of Shrewsbury should be maximised rather than reduced. It is a significant service with potential to bring much of the Shrewsbury Movement Strategy into being.

On behalf of residents and P&R users, current and future, I ask that you suspend the closure of the Meole Brace site, add appropriate signage on all approach roads and at the entrance to allow a six months or longer trial period with a wider programme of social media posts to increase passenger numbers.

Response from Cllr Rob Wilson

Thank you for the question, Rosemary.

I don't disagree with the sentiment of the question, park and ride facilities are an important part of our transport mix, and the decision to suspend the Meole service from November is not one that we, or our officers, wanted to make. However, it was the only rational choice to make, though I accept others may disagree.

The one issue that you have not posed in the question is funding, and this is the overriding problem. This year Shropshire Council has retendered 21 different bus services across the county, approximately one third of the county network. At present this costs approximately £3m, to keep every service like for like would have cost an additional £550,000; on top of this whilst Shropshire Council's base budget contribution has been protected, the revenue funding available from the Government has reduced by £200,000; additionally the vital 64 bus from Market Drayton to Shrewsbury was at risk, and the council will be picking up the full cost from the Autumn. All in all that leaves the council with a funding gap of approximately £1.25m.

Passenger data shows that Meole Brace carries significantly fewer passengers than the other two Park & Ride sites, accounting for just over a quarter of total use across the three locations. This has resulted in a higher subsidy per passenger compared to Oxon and Harlescott.

So we have had to make choices. We have chosen, in line with the council's Bus Service Improvement Plan, to protect the most essential services in the county, where there is no other option. This includes keeping Market Drayton, Ellesmere and Broseley connected to our county town. I am sure that Cllr Dartnall is not suggesting that we choose to cut these important communities off from work, education, healthcare, friends and family?

I am also proud that we will be connecting Wem and Ellesmere again, there has not been a direct regular bus connection between Wem and Ellesmere for decades, and this project restores that link.

Whilst I recognise that using another park and ride site may be inconvenient, there will still be two options in Shrewsbury at Oxon and at Harlescott, the additional journey time to reach them is not significant, and the service at both will be better than in the past, buses every 12 minutes at peak times, buses running from 6 in the morning until 10 in the evening, newer vehicles, new shelters and real time information. This is about having to take a step back in order to take two forwards.

Due to the funding available we are being asked to do more with less, and I believe that is what we are doing for the people of Shropshire

4. Andy Boddington

In an announcement that it would "work closely with local councillors and town and parish councils throughout the process" of retendering bus contracts. Why was this not done?

Response from Cllr Rob Wilson

Thank you for the question, Councillor Boddington.

I would respectfully disagree with the suggestion that local councillors and town and parish councils were not engaged as part of this process.

The 2026 local bus retendering programme covered 21 separate bus services across Shropshire, representing approximately one third of the Council's supported bus

network. Throughout the review, officers considered passenger feedback, correspondence, service performance information and representations received from Members and local councils over a number of years.

As part of the review process, a range of service options, frequencies and operating arrangements were developed and tested through the tendering exercise. As the scale of the financial challenge became clearer, it became apparent that the Council would not be able to retain every service unchanged and that decisions would need to be taken about how best to protect essential connectivity across the county within the funding available.

Once the outcome of the tendering process and the potential options were understood, officers and Cabinet Members met with the relevant local Members and town and parish councils in the affected areas, including Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Market Drayton, Wem, Ellesmere, Broseley and Much Wenlock, to provide detailed briefings on the proposals and to explain the rationale behind them.

In relation to Ludlow specifically, officers undertook a substantial review of the town bus network during 2025, working closely with local Members to develop revised timetables and service patterns. Those revised timetables formed the basis of the 2026 retendering exercise. At the time, it was made clear that if the 2025 review proceeded, the Council would not be in a position to undertake a further detailed timetable review in 2026 due to the resources required to procure and implement the new contracts. That position was understood and supported locally.

The engagement undertaken therefore reflected both the scale of the programme and the need to balance difficult funding decisions across the county, whilst ensuring affected communities and elected representatives were fully informed of the outcomes.

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