

**CABINET 19/01/22**  
**Member Questions**

<b>Question from:</b>	Rob Wilson
<b>Subject:</b>	Highway Code
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Ian Nellins
<p>Changes to the Highway Code come into effect on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2022 to protect the most vulnerable. Research has suggested that as many as 2 in 3 drivers are unaware of the changes which include giving pedestrians right of way at sideroads. Can I ask that Shropshire Council publicises these changes to the public using its social media platforms and any other means at its disposal?</p> <p><b>We will engage with colleagues in the Shropshire Council Communications Team on how to effectively communicate the changes to the Highway Code and will investigate how we can direct customers to the information from our main highways web page.</b></p>	

<b>Question from:</b>	Rob Wilson
<b>Subject:</b>	Transport Decarbonisation Plan
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Dean Carroll
<p>The Transport Decarbonisation Plan published in July of last year sets out how the UK transport network will move to net zero by 2050. In terms of road transport, whilst some of this can be achieved by a shift to electric and hydrogen vehicles, there will still need to be a reduction of traffic levels. The traffic modelling for the North West Road is based on the assumption of 25% traffic growth by 2038. Will this discrepancy be taken account of in the Full Business Case? And when can we expect the Full Business Case?</p> <p><b>The traffic modelling approach undertaken by the North West Relief Road (NWRR) to date (at Outline Business Case and Full Planning Application), and the assumptions and trends upon which this is based, are prescribed fully by the DfT. A project is required to work within these set criteria in order to meet the DfTs own oversight and approvals process to gain funding. Local observations and traffic counts are used to establish baseline years, but modelled and forecast future outputs and the formulas used to determine these are not able to be locally defined.</b></p> <p><b>Work on the preparation of the Full Business case for the NWRR is underway at present, and will continue to reflect the requirements of the DfTs national modelling framework for traffic growth. Should this be changed by DfT in order to reflect changing national targets and priorities, the NWRR will of course then reflect this also. The Full Business case is expected to be completed for Member review, prior to its submission to DfT, by Winter 2022, thus the "process" of</b></p>	

**working through the DFT is required, however the anticipated outcome is that completion of NWRR would enable traffic reduction and therefore additional capacity to support public transport, active travel and public realm measures in Shrewsbury town centre and support the intended movement strategy and general direction for travel for the town and wider areas.**

<b>Question from:</b>	Ruth Houghton
<b>Subject:</b>	Budget Consultation
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Gwilym Butler

The budget consultation questionnaire is available on the Shropshire Council web site and is a formal 6 week public consultation on budget proposals, which if implemented, will impact on individuals and communities across Shropshire. Until very recently the survey questions included acronyms and text that was very Council specific and not easily understood by members of the public. I am grateful to the Chief Executive for ensuring that changes have been made to correct this.

However this Consultation questionnaire is still difficult to complete. For example, how does a member of the Public respond to the savings identified against the Review of Library Provision when the library strategy is only being reported upon at this Cabinet Meeting? or alternatively against the Review of Leisure Services? Where can the public access the Leisure services review in order to form an opinion? Are there publicly available links to these?

Having considered this, will the Portfolio Holder confirm how this Consultation complies with the Gunning principles adopted by the Local Government Association?

**Thank you for your feedback regarding the public consultation on budget proposals. We are attempting to make the issues accessible and not overly complex and detailed and have relied on feedback from previous years' consultation.**

**The examples you cite in relation to Libraries and Leisure Services are both part of existing strategies. For example, the £191,930 library saving mentioned in the consultation is part of the five year savings plan that was put in place in 2018/19 which comes to an end in 2022/23. If implemented, the saving would fall across the entire Library Service and would be considered as part of the ongoing Library Transformation Programme. A more detailed explanation of the examples highlighted in the question along with publicly available links are attached to the written version of this answer.**

**I am happy to take on board this and other feedback for future consideration.**

**Detailed explanation:**

**£191,930 library saving mentioned in the consultation is part of the five year savings plan that was put in place in 2018/19 which comes to an end in 2022/23. If implemented, the saving would fall across the entire Library Service and would be considered as part of the ongoing Library Transformation Programme.**

**Savings through this programme may include some or all of the following:**

- **A review of locations, with potential savings through building consolidation.**
- **Hosting of Shropshire Local services, with further work to consider community and financial benefits.**
- **A review of opening hours.**
- **Potential combining of mobile library services offers for greater efficiency.**
- **A reduction of front desk transactions from the installation of self-service machines for borrowers.**
- **Redesigning of staff roles to enable new ways of working.**

**The saving may also be met by income generation opportunities, including:**

- **Collaboration with other Services to generate efficiencies.**
- **Exploring opportunities to maximise revenue from unused space in buildings.**

**The £50,000 from the implementation of changes under the Library Transformation Project is planned for and will be covered by re-organisation of staffing - this will not impact on the front line delivery of Library services.**

**The £50,000 Leisure Services saving has already been identified through the closure of Whitchurch Pool, following the identification of serious repair issues there.**

**There are no formal review plans published on which to consult at this stage however, the current Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy for Shropshire 2018 to 2023 is available on the internet [here](#). The Leisure Facilities Strategy was recently reviewed and the report will go to Cabinet in 2022. The new strategy also focuses on partnership working alongside shared services and investment based on community priorities. While I am comfortable that the Gunning Principles are generally being met, it will ensure that our services provide value for money to the local community taxpayers by reducing subsidy across the leisure facilities portfolio through the development of a mixed economy of provision and activity.**

<b>Question from:</b>	David Vasmer
<b>Subject:</b>	Acton Scott Historic Working Farm
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cecilia Motley

What is the Council's plan regarding the re-opening of Acton Scott Historic Working Farm?

**Acton Scott Historic Working Farm is closed, as always, until Easter. Currently we are working with the Acton Scott Estate to help identify alternative operating models. Community and stakeholder engagement will begin on 24<sup>th</sup> January with a view to understanding:**

- **the views of different stakeholders about this issue**
- **options for viable alternative uses of Acton Scott Historic Working Farm**
- **options for alternative organisations who are interested in operating the site**
- **visitors' perceptions of the Farm and the services it offers. These perceptions will inform the future operation of the site.**

**The farm has traded with a substantial deficit for some years, and with the current financial challenges, Shropshire Council is no longer in a position to sustain this.**

**A report summarising the findings from this engagement will be shared with the Acton Scott Estate and recommendations regarding the Councils involvement are planned to be presented to Cabinet for a final decision in April 2022.**