

COUNCIL 12 MAY 2022

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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1 Peter Phillips

LANDLINES SWITCH OFF

WHAT steps has the Council taken to identify such residents, as required by the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (CSDPA ?)

THE ACT states that councils have a duty to assess the needs of disabled people for help with the cost of a phone and any necessary special equipment the event of a phone becoming unavailable.

Traditional copper land lines are all to be switched off within 3 years.

Thereafter, 'Digital Voice ' will be operating – we will only be able to access a phone via our broadband. All phones will have to be plugged into mains electric (copper one have their own power source.) Routers, of course, require electricity. In the event of a power cut, you will have to use a mobile—if you have a signal! until it requires re-charging.

Unanswered queries include :

People without Broadband—how will they be 'switched on?'

What about pay phones?

What steps have been taken to identify people who are digitally excluded?

At some stage, developers /residents will have to be told they cannot have a copper connexion. Who decides? When? how is the decision to be implemented?

What is the position of small suppliers, eg, SWS?

How are contacts with the emergency services to be guaranteed?

What consultation has there been?

BT says it will provide backup battery packs for vulnerable people against power cuts...how will they be re-charged?

Have plans been made to improve mobile phone coverage?

Have needs of off-grid premises been assessed?

2 Christine Glover

The flooding of one's home is a terrible, terrible experience. The emotional and mental anguish is beyond words. As someone who suffers flooding of my home, I am massively concerned about any building on areas of land prone to flooding. These developments can have a catastrophic effect on those of us who already suffer, particularly those of us upstream of Shrewsbury. It's important to understand the impact of new developments and not just on flood plains. It's my belief that our

flooding issues are caused, not by the weather and nature alone, but by a combination of things, including the actions of human beings creating an artificial environment. With each new building development, 'millions of gallons of rainwater that would normally seep into the earth gradually, are cascading down gutters into drains and into rivers which means they'll become raging, vindictive monsters.' In addition to this, there is displacement of water caused by building new access roads. If this trend of new building developments continues, soon there will be nowhere for the extra water to go. If the problem of flooding is to be resolved, it's important to look at the roots of the problem and not just the symptoms. It's not enough to erect flood defences, because that just creates a problem elsewhere. **My question to Council: Considering the flooding earlier this year and its consequences, would now be a good time to abandon the proposed Riverside Development plan, along with the disposal of Shirehall, the two being connected?**

3 Mike Streetly

I note the recent 30% cut in the council's Capital budget with the council's finance director saying "Due to pressures in the revenue budget, it is not possible to continue with schemes that would add a significant further financial pressure through additional borrowing costs". However, the proposed NWRR is still retained and will consume nearly a fifth of the capital budget over the next four years.

I note that there is £52M for the NWRR in the capital budget for FY 22/23/24. Could you please provide the capital spend to date (including any spend from the revenue budget) and the total estimated spend on capital and revenue budgets to completion?

The revised price for the new swimming pools in Shrewsbury has doubled compared to the initial budget and the council has put the scheme on hold as a result. Given the ongoing spend on the NWRR of thousands of pounds every week and the very high rates of inflation in the construction industry combined with the fact that any over run to the cost of the NWRR will be unaffordable given the financial situation outlined above, will the council immediately put the NWRR on hold pending a review of costs?

4 Slawomir Fefjer

Has Shropshire Council submitted a bid to Active Travel Fund tranche 3 and is it going to submit a bid to Active Travel Fund tranche 4?

5 Save Our Shirehall

1. Does the Council recognise how much Shropshire's Council Tax payers will object to their Council spending a quoted £37 million on a new 'civic-hub' when £3 - 5 million on our Shirehall would afford legacy maintenance, energy improvements and cosmetic refreshment ? 2. As 'blended' office/home working unfolds, how can a Riverside 'civic-hub', with flood risk, accommodate the commuting and work-related travel and parking for some 800 Shropshire Council and tenant employees, compared to the County-wide accessibility and space available at the Shirehall? 3. What carbon impact audit and assessment will be made of a) the demolition of our Shirehall, b) its site re-development and c) a 'civic-hub' new build replacement?