

PUBLIC QUESTIONS COUNCIL 7 JULY 2022

1 Question from Bob Saunders

Why are pedestrians only allowed a few seconds to cross at traffic lights at the Welsh Bridge and crossing Smithfield Road by the Station in Shrewsbury? In many other parts of the country Councils have re-timed traffic lights to allow reasonable time for pedestrians providing a more equitable balance between those who wish to walk and those who drive. Re-timing traffic lights would be a simple, low-cost way to encourage more active travel as well as making it safer for pedestrians.

2 Question from Tina Teearu

It is now 3 years since this Council acknowledged the imperative need to cut down on carbon emissions in Shropshire by declaring a Climate Emergency. Working with Zero Carbon Shropshire you made a good start, but 3 years on, I am concerned that the Council has not entirely understood the gravity of the situation that we as humanity, find ourselves in. The recent IPCC report (which is based on many years of scientific research) makes it absolutely clear that humans are causing the Climate Emergency by burning fossil fuels to provide energy. We are seeing the early effects of this global temperature rise right here in Shropshire with the more frequent incidence of flooding. If we do not keep the rise below 1.5 degrees of pre-industrial levels we lose any hope of retaining a liveable planet for future generations. Please think about that for a moment. Shropshire must do much more to decarbonise, and do it much more quickly than it is currently doing. "Business as Usual" is no longer an option. We must adopt a more sustainable way of life immediately.

My question is: Can the Council not see that there is a simple solution to instantly save 135 years' worth of carbon costs and millions of pounds of tax payers' money? Cancel the NWRR. Why are you not embracing this opportunity?

3 Question from Pamela Pink

Will you please explain what is happening to the Shropshire bus services. Elderly and disabled people dependent on the bus services across the county are finding that services are severely cut, much to their dismay. How are people to get to work on time? The Prime minister promised £31 billion pounds to improve services, particularly to help people in country areas. Why is this not happening? Why is the council neglecting its duty to the poor and needy. An elderly blind person in Oswestry today was in

tears because she had to wait an hour for a bus to Shrewsbury, not knowing that services had been cut. This is not good enough.

4 Question from Stephen Mulloy

The Committee on Standards in Public Life is carrying out a review examining the role of leadership in embedding the Seven Principles of Public Life in public sector organisations.

The Seven Principles of Public Life are: Honesty, Objectivity, Openness, Selflessness, Integrity, Accountability and Leadership.

They want to hear how ethical standards are upheld within organisation and welcome examples of good practice from across the public sector. The deadline for submissions is 17:00 on Friday 29 July 2022 using the attached case study template.

Can I ask if the leader of Shropshire Council will be responding to this review, and if so, will she share her example(s) or experience of good practice in ethical standards with this meeting of Shropshire Full Council?

5 Question from Darren Childs

I have learned that the crisis in ambulance response times is the 'tip of the iceberg', a symptom of a wider crisis in 'flow' across A&E, our acute hospitals in Shrewsbury and Telford, and in social care.

SaTH typically has in the region of 120 patients a day who are fit for discharge but cannot leave hospital. This contributes very substantially to a lack of availability of hospital beds, to the A&Es becoming full, and to ambulances off the road because they are queuing up outside A&Es at RSH and PRH.

Will Shropshire Council meet ICS leaders again to explore the possibility of joint funding and/or management of a cohort of staff who could be used flexibly to provide routine healthcare and social care to patients being discharged from hospital, filling the gaps until longer-term arrangements can be put in place?

Can discussion take place on direct employment of staff from a variety of companies across the care sectors to ensure pay and conditions that will support retention? There would of course be a cost – but considerably less than the health and social care system incurs now through failing to achieve timely discharge of patients from hospital.

If cost is an issue – and I suspect it will be will the Council approach Shropshire's four MPs, and seek their support, as a matter of urgency, in

approaching the Department of Health and Social Care and appropriate Ministers in an attempt to secure additional funding and also provide the public with updates?

6 Question from Kris Welch

Following an FOI request, I have been told that Shropshire Council is legally responsible for the Shropshire County Pension Fund as its Administering Authority.

Does Shropshire Council acknowledge that it has legal responsibility for the Shropshire County Pension Fund?

Is Shropshire Council concerned that the fund's continued investment in fossil fuel companies could open it up to a future legal challenge from Shropshire residents or fund members who are concerned about the fund's failure to divest from companies whose businesses are incompatible with the Paris Agreement and therefore is Shropshire Council planning to take any steps to protect itself from any potential legal action along these lines?