

CABINET 18 January 2023
MEMBER QUESTIONS

Question from:	Peter Broomhill	
Subject:	Wem Traffic Issues	
Portfolio Holder:	Richard Marshall	Approved

Wem Town Council has a Traffic Working Group working with SC to progress serious traffic issues around the town. The group has identified key projects including a one-way system.

Whilst initially it was hoped that an experimental traffic order would be the way to trial a one-way system, following statutory consultees responses it became evident that more research should be carried out into the potential impact that any one-way system may have. This will help ensure new problems are not created in the town as a result.

WTC is of the opinion that a Traffic Impact Assessment should be commissioned into:

- **The creation of a clockwise or anti clockwise one way system around the town.**
- **The reversal of the existing one-way priorities on two streets to enable access to the main car park.**
- **The management of traffic around Maunds Corner.**

The latest correspondence from SC was that they wanted WTC to pay 35K for the TIA; not money that WTC has!

Consequently WTC would like to formally request that SC funds WSP (UK) to undertake a TIA into the above proposals. Whilst there will be a cost to this WTC is of the view that TIA's are the responsibility of SC as our Highways Authority.

This TIA request will be a beneficial use of SC's budget; it helps revive the economy of the town and ensures that when a one-way system is in place all possible options and impacts have been considered/accounted for. **Will the portfolio holder support this request?**

To date, several Highways projects have been completed in Wem and with the assistance and hard work of the local members, the council have helped to provide a full suite of projects that can be utilised as an 'off the shelf' package in assisting applications for future funding bids for Wem.

The proposed scheme for a one-way system is currently not in the capital budget for the next year, so to spend funds on a traffic impact assessment would not at this moment be the best use of council monies, as when and if, the scheme was included in the forward capital budget, the TIA could potentially be out of date.

As the portfolio Holder, I am in principle in favour of the scheme but for the reasons above, at this moment in time I am unable to support the request to spend money on the TIA.

Question from:	Julia Buckley	
Subject:	Energy	
Portfolio Holder:	Dean Carroll	Draft with DC for approval

Can the Council's estate team please provide a list of the top 5 Council-owned or leased buildings/assets based on energy consumption/energy bills for each building, by quarter over the last 12 months?

What measures have been taken or are planned to reduce energy consumption in these buildings?

Have any of these high-energy use buildings been investigated, identified, or ruled out, so far for potential renewable energy creation projects?

The top 5 Shropshire Council buildings in terms of energy usage costs are:

#	Properties in Usage Order (Highest total first)	Projected Electricity Energy Usage Bill 22/23	Projected Gas Energy Usage Bill 22/23
1	Shirehall	£240,660	£144,322
2	Theatre Severn	£161,000	£42,559
3	Church Stretton Swimming Pool	£59,051	£12,197
4	Shrewsbury Castle Gates Library	£22,826	£22,970
5	Shrewsbury Museum	£31,914	£13,627

Within the last 10 years there was a 10 million pound major restoration and refurbishment project to create Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. This incorporated improvements including building fabric, and energy efficiency. There are particular significant challenges to improving the energy performance of historic buildings, including the Museum and Shrewsbury Castle Gates Library; both these buildings are listed, and in a conservation

area, as such are restricted in terms of any works that would unacceptably alter the character or appearance of the buildings. For instance, improvements to glazing and/or the building façade is much more challenging. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of initiatives currently being progressed, ranging from improved building management practices, to upgrading equipment.

Shropshire Council continues to apply for funding as and when it becomes available, and has benefitted from external monies to enhance sustainability and energy performance. Church Stretton Swimming Pool and Theatre Severn have had funding from Sustainable Energy in Public Buildings funded grant scheme, Round 2, one example is detailed in the following link:

https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/14997/shropshire_council_theatre_severn.pdf .

Shirehall hosts our largest building-mounted solar array, which has generated a significant amount of solar energy since its installation. We are currently exploring the feasibility of installing a battery to allow us to store surplus solar energy. Theatre Severn is also currently being considered in the context of either battery storage or a renewable energy project.

Question from:	Rosemary Dartnall	
Subject:	Poor Street Lighting in Shropshire	
Portfolio Holder:	Richard Marshall	Approved

Defective street lights in the triple division are numerous and longstanding. Lights remain out for weeks, even months, on end. Some streets have five or six lamps not working. Problems include faulty bulbs, replacement units needed or even dismembered columns, some of which have been dismantled for six months and more. In asking colleagues, it's clear this is not just a Shrewsbury issue but one that applies across Shropshire – perhaps the 2022-23 equivalent of the pothole plague, which seems now to be under control with good progress being made.

Officers have told me that the target for repair is five days, but that at present this may reach 15 days due to wider winter pressures. However, these time scales bear no resemblance to the reality, which is particularly felt by elderly residents in the dark mid-winter.

Could the portfolio-holder please clarify the problems causing such long delays and what mitigation plans are in place, including the following;

What percentage of Shropshire lights are not working currently?

7.25% of the Street lighting stock currently have jobs raised against them for either repair or replacement

What is the true waiting time for repair?

Street lighting have two Service Level Agreements (SLA's), a standard 5 day fault to investigate and repair if a first time fix is possible. A 28 day programmed works which covers column and lantern replacements. On average a 5 day fault is currently being attended in 10 to 15 days, 28 day programmed works within 42 days although where appropriate priority works will be attend within the SLA.

Are there supply issues with parts, as reported immediately following the lockdowns of 2020/21?

All SOX lamps (60% of our Street lighting stock) are no longer manufactured for environmental reasons, when faulty a new lantern will be required which places the job under a 28 day SLA.

Is this work part of the wider contract with Kier?

Yes, the Street lighting contract is part of the overall Kier Term Highways Maintenance Contract

Who is accountable for non-delivery of this service within the agreed timescale?

Andy Wilde SC and Ian Mclellan Kier

What mitigations apply in the case of poor service levels?

There is a Street lighting KPI's in place to monitor Service level performance which highlights issues. The figures are scrutinised during contract meetings between SC and the Contractor Kier to ensure compliance and if need be ways to address issues in performance.

When, and how, will repairs be made within the target of five working days?

We are still undertaking some works within the 5 working day, however to clarify this is to investigate and repair where possible. Some works are raised straight away as 28 days for new lanterns to be fitted, which actually saves the initial 5 working days for investigating. Kier have brought in additional sub-contractors resources Altitude and ETL. They have been engaged to address the current backlogs to improve the Street lighting service. In addition the delayed Salix LED lantern replacement programme will commence in February replacing all of the remaining antiquated lighting with new LED lanterns addressing the long term lantern failure issues.

Question from:	Kate Halliday	
Subject:	Street Cleaning	
Portfolio Holder:	Ian Nellins	Approved

This autumn residents and myself put in multiple requests to have the roads and pavements in Belle Vue swept following the autumn leaf fall. Unfortunately to my knowledge there were no roads or pavements swept before New Year despite repeated requests. The issue of leaf debris is of great concern for a number of reasons including:

- Coleham experiences flooding and the drains are becoming blocked as the leaves have not been swept up. This will increase the flooding risk.
- The unswept pavements become slippery and make walking difficult, especially for people with mobility issues. I have had contact from a number of residents who want to maintain their health by walking, but have been put off from doing so due to the slippery condition of the pavements.
- Residents are walking on the road rather than the pavements, as there is often less debris there, to avoid slipping which is a danger to themselves and others.

Could Cabinet confirm:

- How many divisions have had the roads/pavements swept of leaves before the New Year?
- Is it the council's intention not to sweep the streets and pavements in Belle Vue and other divisions until the New Year in the future?

- When can residents expect all the streets and pavements to be swept of leaves in Belle Vue?
- What is the completion date for sweeping the autumn leaf fall for the county?

With respect to street sweeping activity, every autumn priority is given to the clearance of leaves from affected streets. Sweepers were deployed to prioritise leaf fall sweeping works from week commencing Monday 24th October 2022 and is ongoing.

A sweeper will have attended to undertake leaf clearance work of affected streets as identified in each division, including streets in Belle Vue ward, on at least one occasion before the new year. It is not always possible for a sweeper to clean streets thoroughly on every visit, particularly so if they encounter obstructions such as constantly parked cars. Streets in Belle Vue ward where high levels of on-street parking have prevented full cleaning at the time of attendance will be re-visited.

Keeping streets clear of leaves during leaf fall season is a massive undertaking; a task made more difficult this year by climatic extremes which created a brief “false autumn” earlier in the season than normal. This has had the effect of extending the period within which we would usually expect leaf fall clearance work to be completed. With this in mind and subject to competing demands i.e. post flood clean up works etc. we would envisage completion in most affected areas by the end of January / early February.

Question from:	Edward Towers	
Subject:	Proposed Charges for Road Closures	
Portfolio Holder:	Richard Marshall	Approved

We have been made aware of a consultation being held regarding proposed charges for road closures that are going to be discussed at SC Cabinet on 18th January 2023.

The scope of this consultation is very broad as it encompasses events that do not raise revenue as well as those that do. Consequently, if this proposal was likely to be implemented in full it is likely to seriously affect any Remembrance Road Closures, Christmas Light Switch-on Road Closures, and other events such as for Parades for a Coronation and Olympic torch processions; all of which do not raise money. Events that are organised by Town Councils, charity and non-profit organisations (such as Town Carnivals) should be exempt. Road closing charges for these groups, if they could be found, would add to the severe impact being felt in our small towns and communities and, for some events, be a further barrier to happening at all.

Could the Portfolio holder:

Agree that this consultation should only relate to events organised by commercial organisations that do this for a range of business-related purposes?

Please refer to minutes for the response to this question.