

## Public Questions

### Cabinet – 17 January 2024

#### Mike Sargeant

How many complaints have been made by members of the public about the council's planning function in each of the last five years? How many of these have been upheld and how many are still outstanding, or have been ignored?

Why when an official complaint lodged with the council concerning the breaking of planning conditions, landscape and ecology plans accepted by the council that are not factually correct, the council signing off a lighting plan to protect Bats when stated in the lighting plan the company writing it were not informed of any wildlife on the development site, the breaking of planning conditions, all contained in written format. Why do the council choose to ignore these facts?

Why when it is their statutory duties under the NERC act of 2006 do they ignore their responsibilities towards the ecology and the biodiversity of a development site, that they are responsible to protect, also ignoring BS 5837:2012, BS 42020:2013 that are there to protect the ecology and again biodiversity of a development site.

What is Shropshire councils excuse?

#### Dr Jamie Russell

In an article published in the [Shropshire Star](#) on 28 November 2023, Councillor Dan Morris was quoted as saying: *"The Environment Agency has stated that any risk to the drinking water for the town would be minimal"*.

This is inaccurate. In actual fact the Environment Agency has repeatedly stated the opposite view in a series of letters in May, July and December 2023.

For instance, in the letter to the council dated 12 December 2023 the agency states: *"There is a significant risk of impact upon the water supply at this location, based on the route and design the applicant has chosen to pursue."* (emphasis added). At no point does the letter use the word "minimal".

I note that the Environment Agency recently said that it believes its views as a statutory government body have been misrepresented by the council.

In light of that, does Councillor Morris believe he misrepresented the agency's views in November when he said the EA has stated that any risk to the drinking water would be minimal?

If he believes his statement is accurate, please can he provide evidence of where and when the EA said this. If he did misrepresent their views, please can he apologise and correct the public record.

#### David Kilby

Do members agree it would be foolhardy to invest £28 Million for the provision of a pool whilst stating the Sports Village' is not financially viable' and is under used? Before investing £28 Million of public funds at the village, do SC need to determine the reasons for these failures to see if there has been a history of poor governance, management and maintenance at the Quarry and Sports Village?

- SC has compensated the operator for loss of revenue, while the Quarry Swimming facility has been closed.
- The outdoor sports pitches at Sundorne Village, are a poor standard.
- The cycle track is a safety concern.
- The outdoor tennis courts, play area and basketball area are in a poor state.

Reasons why user numbers are lower than one would expect for a flagship facility of this kind.

If poor governance, management and maintenance are affecting the efficiency of these two facilities, is it time for SC look at their own management of these facilities, including their choice of operators, and maintenance procedures?

SPFA believe SC should explore a dual use facility, with alternate partners, an alternate site and a different operating model, based at Meole Brace/ Priory School sites.

SPFA believe that whilst there is a proven need to replace the existing Quarry Pool, there is not a proven need to spend large amounts of money (approx. £10 million) on fitness facilities, nowhere in your plan is there any mention of existing providers, locations, prices etc.

### **Frank Oldaker**

"In an exchange of emails between the case officer and Severn Trent last December, about planning conditions to be attached to the planning permission for the NWRR, the case officer used the expression "time is of the essence". This expression implies there is a legal justification behind not taking whatever time is necessary to ensure that everything possible is done to ensure the safety of our water supplies. To make rushing to determination of the application more important is completely unacceptable.

So will the Cabinet please instruct the council officers dealing with this vital issue, of which there is no known equivalent precedent in the UK, to take as long as is required to formulate conditions that all parties agree do truly minimise the risk of contamination of the water sources."