

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

COUNCIL 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

Question received from Mr Mike Streetly

Last month Shropshire Council explained that it only had written confirmation of a commitment of £54.4 M for the proposed NWRR from the Dept for Transport. The council has acknowledged that the contract for the road is expected to cost £110M or more on top of the £36.5M that is expected to be spent by the time the contractor starts work in April. This will have a very significant impact on the 'value for money' of the project.

We note that the new Government has launched a major review of all unfunded spending commitments and also a specific review of low value road schemes. This has resulted in the Highways Agency pausing work on a number of schemes. The new Transport Minister has also highlighted her spending priorities in terms of Active Travel and buses.

Given the massively increased costs of the proposed new road, the council's precarious financial position and the low probability of the new government providing any further money for the scheme will Shropshire Council now stop all spending on the project?

Question received from Mr Frank Oldaker

Opposers to the granting of planning permission for the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road made it clear last year that they would challenge the decision by seeking a judicial review.

Although it is now approaching a year since the planning committee vote no decision notice has been published and the absence of this has meant that no judicial review process can even be started.

How is the Council revising its programme for the project to allow for the time judicial review(s) will take and the possibility of the planning permission being quashed by The Court?

Question received from Emma Bullard

The veteran oak tree at Shelton Rough, known as the Darwin Oak, has been shortlisted for "Tree of the Year 2024" by the Woodland Trust
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-of-the-year/>

The Woodland Trust has shared details of this magnificent Shropshire tree with its 500,000 members, as well as the general public. As a result, this Shrewsbury tree

has been featured in publications including the Daily Mail, Time Out magazine, and The Scotsman, raising the profile of the town and the wider county.

Does the council agree that this is very welcome publicity for Shropshire's landscape and natural heritage? Will you encourage Shropshire residents and visitors to visit the Darwin Oak to admire it for themselves, and to vote for it to be the winning "Tree of the Year"?