

CABINET
12 FEBRUARY 2025
RESPONSE TO MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Joyce Barrow

It has been sometime since work began on the Innovation Park, Oswestry.

Can you update me please, as to whether the council intend to develop the site, or whether the council are seeking a developer to take this forward?

I know there was interest from businesses wishing to locate to the Innovation Park, is this still the case? Are there any timescales in place for businesses to be on site? Do we have any idea, how many jobs might be created?

Work on the Oswestry Innovation Park is progressing with infrastructure works, including the construction of site roads and incoming utilities, being undertaken. The objective of developing the Innovation Park is to enable serviced employment land plots to become available.

Interest from businesses wishing to locate or purchase a plot on the Innovation Park continues to be received and logged. Shropshire Council has appointed Halls to market the plots but will also consider any offers from developers interested in purchasing the entire site for development.

In terms of timescales, the current infrastructure contract will be completed in summer 2025, with ongoing utilities works to be finished later in the year. The development of the units will then be led by developers acquiring and seeking planning permission for sites within their own timescales.

An economic assessment conducted as part of the original outline planning application forecasted that over 1000 jobs could be created as a result of the overall site development, based on the assumed mix of end uses included within the outline planning application.

Alex Wagner

As part of the planning process for the Leighton Park estate, completed in 2019, Shropshire Council obtained funds for a crossing from by Shelton Cricket Club to Oxon Primary School. This well-used footpath has terrible visibility over to the school, is often overgrown or flooded, and has speeding cars go past who are often unaware there is a crossing there.

After a six year saga which contained regular promises of action – and indeed start dates for works – a now-departed senior officer cancelled the scheme with zero consultation, with either the public or myself as the local member.

Pupils at Oxon Primary deserve a safe route to school, and that crossing requires physical safety improvements, whether a full crossing or not is possible. School streets, as cited as an alternative, do not solve the specific safety problem.

Where is our money? Where is our crossing? And why does Shropshire Council seem so pathologically unable to deliver this simple, privately funded improvement the road safety of Shrewsbury schoolchildren?

The proposed works along Racecourse Lane formed part of a planning obligation attached to planning permission 14/02402/FUL which required the Developer of the former Shelton Hospital to provide a pedestrian access and associated raised table crossing on Racecourse Lane. Works commenced onsite to create the pedestrian access, however, works to install the proposed raised table crossing were subsequently put on hold due to strong objections received from neighbouring properties and concerns regarding the health and safety of workers onsite, resulting in the developer incurring abortive costs and being instructed not to proceed with the works.

Regrettably as an authority we do not hold a Section 106 financial contribution to contribute to funding these works, but in acknowledgement of the concerns raised Shropshire Council proceeded with a project to introduce a crossing point. Unfortunately, through the design period we undertook utility searches and found a medium pressure gas main and a high voltage cable is under where we need to put the crossing as such there would be significant cost associated with moving them as there are no options to amend the design to work around it due to its location. The decision was taken to not progress the works but look into making Racecourse Lane a School Street. It is acknowledged that this is not the solution local stakeholders are looking for, but Shropshire Councils Sustainable Travel team are committed to working with Oxon Primary School to monitor the situation and support where possible.

Tracey Huffer

Please can Councillor Dan Morris Portfolio Holder for Highways confirm when the resurfacing of Gravel Hill Road will take place. This particular road is undoubtedly in the worst condition of any road in Ludlow, and received possibly the most complaints by residents. For the last 7 years I have been promised it was in a works programme for repair, only at the last moment to be told it was being moved into the following financial year. Therefore as promised last year can it be confirmed that Gravel Hill is in the work programme for this financial year.

Road resurfacing is prioritised countywide in line with our Asset Management Plan and our available budgets. We are in the process of reviewing the priorities for maintenance across the county using the most recent condition data. This particular area has deteriorated in recent years and is now becoming one of our higher priority sites. The scheme is currently in the 2025/26 resurfacing programme.

Roger Evans

I note the Financial Strategy was published late on Thursday evening
Also that notices have recently been distributed to householders/residents concerning payments to have their Garden Waste bins emptied.
The notice states

“You have until 31 March 2025 to subscribe to our garden waste service. After that you won’t be able to sign up until 1 September 2025 for the following year’s subscription.”

When was this decision made, who made it and why.

The reason for this approach is as follows. Shropshire Council pays its contractor Veolia to provide a waste collection service to 138,000 properties. However, whilst we have a target of 70% participation in the green waste collection service, or circa 96,500 properties, existing subscriptions currently stand at just over 67,000.

We therefore placed a cutoff date to encourage as many residents to subscribe as possible, so that we are clear on the scale of the service Veolia has to provide. The risk would otherwise be that Veolia could be running half-empty collection trucks for which Shropshire residents were paying.

The intention of the Council’s green waste service is to provide it to only those who want it and for it to be self-financing. This can only be achieved when the service reaches a maximum subscription or capacity, which has been set at 31st March. After this time, the collection rounds will be restructured to maximise their efficiency and any savings shared with the Council. This will inevitably reduce the opportunity for further residents to join the scheme until the next subscription window. However, the alternative would be to pay Veolia to run vehicles half empty to assure capacity for potential additional subscribers to fill the vehicle and cover the costs. The Council’s finances do not permit us to fund such a speculative arrangement.

How will residents moving into new homes between 31st March 2025 and 1st September 2025 be able to get their Green Bin emptied.

Additional registrations can be processed after 31 March on a case by case basis. New residents to the area can still apply, but they will still need to pay the full cost of £56. They could wait until the next subscription window opens. However, they can still take their garden waste to any of the Household Recycling Centres for free, or compost it at home.

This will of course also affect anyone moving into a Shropshire Home whose previous owner did not subscribe for this garden waste service.

Is this not a vindictive action taken by the council against those who decided not to renew or pay to have their green bin emptied until the new growing season starts.

No, this is a practical decision made to ensure maximum efficiency, cost control and value for money for Shropshire Council and Council Tax payers. However, as stated such applications can be considered on a case by case basis.