

CABINET – 8 JULY 2026

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Carole Warner, Clerk to Welshampton and Lyneal Parish Council

The Parish Council has been made aware of a planning application submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council by Veolia in connection with its contract with Shropshire Council. Veolia's planning application is for a composting facility in Bronington.

The Parish Council's main concern is the volume of traffic generated to and from the site. The highways assessment states:

"If the Proposed Development is operational for 11 hours per day (07:00-18:00), then it could therefore generate up to 5 two-way HGV trips per hour, or 1 two-way HGV trip every 12 minutes, on average"

This will have a huge impact on the A495, the main route to the facility.

The village of Welshampton is directly on the A495 and the Parish Council has historically raised concerns with the lack of visible traffic restriction signage and the current poor level of highway surface maintenance. The increased volume of traffic will not just affect Welshampton but all towns and villages along the A495 and other connecting roads.

The Parish Council would like assurance from Shropshire Council's Cabinet that, should the application be approved, all relevant highway budgets will be reviewed and increased accordingly.

Response from Cllr David Vasmer

Veolia's application for an In-Vessel Composter at Fern Bank within the Wrexham Council area is supported by a Transport Statement. It outlined that whilst the site is likely to generate a number of vehicle movements, in comparison to the permitted use of the site, the proposed development would result in an overall reduction in vehicle movements. On this basis, whilst Shropshire Council will monitor the operation of the In-Vessel Composter, there are no proposals to seek any mitigation as a result of the development, or increase highway budgets locally.

However, if the Parish Council has any evidence that vehicle movements will increase or the type of vehicles change, please get in touch.

2. Olly Rose

It's over a year now since the petition regarding this proposal was considered by the overview and Scrutiny Committee. At that time they noted the years of frustration regarding the delay in providing such a facility when planning permission was granted back in 2008. We had waited 17 years now it is 18.

They resolved that the matter deserved urgent action and it was then reported twice to Cabinet on the 15th October and 19th November 2025.

It's been hard to work out exactly what SUC has done but I understand that this land was to be included in the transfer of land under shared services from SUC to OTC – however the recent report to OTC on the 10th June detailed ten such areas of land but did not include the land by the Oswestry leisure centre ideally suited for such a facility and previously discussed as the most viable position.

It is a pity the children can't ride bikes on officer's reports and Cabinet minutes...as you can see we have a lot of these. Can you please tell me when this land will be transferred so plans can progress to start work on construction of this long awaited and much needed facility.

Response from Cllr Roger Evans

Cabinet considered the 'Skateboard & BMX Pump Track Provision in Oswestry' report on 19 November 2025 and resolved to support the next stage of the project. Cabinet agreed that Oswestry Town Council (OTC) should undertake final consultation on the shortlisted site options and that, once a preferred site had been selected, arrangements could be progressed to lease the chosen site to OTC for the development of a pump track and/or skate park. Shropshire Council is committed to progressing this lease either alongside other potential transfers or in isolation dependant on the most expedient route.

Shropshire Council continues to work positively and collaboratively with OTC in considering the available options and remains committed to supporting the delivery of the project. However, the decision as to which site OTC wishes to progress remains a matter for the Town Council, and OTC has not yet taken a final decision to proceed with the lease of a preferred site. Until that decision has been made, Shropshire Council is unable to finalise the lease arrangements.

3. **Mike Streetly**

When the council voted to cancel the North West Relief Road on 26 February 2026 it was announced that there would be a separate report on the Oxon Link Road and that there would be a task and finish group to work out what lessons could be learned about how £38M of scarce council funds was spent with no meaningful benefit to the residents of Shropshire. Given how badly wrong the project went, it would seem to be urgent that lessons should be learned as soon as possible and that those involved should have an opportunity to explain how this happened while the events are still fresh in everyone's memory. It is now 4 months since the cancellation of the project but there appears to be no progress on these important matters. Could you please provide an update on these activities?

Response from Cllr David Vasmer

I can confirm that a review of the North West Relief Road forms part of the agreed work programme for the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Progress is being made on establishing the North West Relief Road Task and Finish Group. The draft Terms of Reference have been prepared and are currently being shared with relevant officers for consideration and input. Following this stage, the

Terms of Reference will be circulated to all Members and expressions of interest will be invited to establish the membership of the group.

While the Task and Finish Group will review and reflect on the project, its primary focus will be to consider the implications of the decision not to proceed with the North West Relief Road. In particular, it will examine the impact on the county's economy and highway infrastructure and explore how the challenges and opportunities arising from that decision can be effectively managed in the future.

The Council remains committed to ensuring that any lessons arising from the project are properly considered through the scrutiny process, and work is progressing to put the necessary arrangements in place to enable that review to be undertaken. Further updates will be provided as the Task and Finish Group is formally established, and its programme of work is agreed.

4. Andrew Sceats

A Council officer has commissioned a review by an independent assessor Chris Bunn, from the LGA, into the future of the Shirehall. He will be reviewing a number of documents before presenting his report to Cabinet prior to a special Cabinet meeting on 14 July. It will include being conducted within the Council's 'legal and financial obligations, including the Best Consideration requirement when disposing of land under s.123 of Local Government Act 1972' The report of the all- party Shirehall Strategic Review Rapid Task and Finish Group included witness evidence from the Council's Estates Manager for Acquisitions and Disposals - he 'clarified that Cornovii would be required to bid on the open market for the Shirehall alongside other potential buyers' (page 7). I have criticised the way that Council- owned land has been transferred to Cornovii, for their developments, without any sites being offered on the open market. I would like Mr Bunn to confirm that he has had access to all documents to see that Best Consideration has been achieved relating to past sites that Cornovii has utilised. It is not good enough for the reviewer to simply have the Council's word that this has been achieved. The Shirehall is such a high profile project that if its sale is required to be on the open market will this requirement now be applied to all Cornovii sites using Council land past/ present/future, and if not why not?

Response from Cllr Roger Evans

As a result of the council decision the Section 151 Officer commissioned Chris Buss to undertake an independent review, and all available information concerning the Shirehall was provided for him. The full report provided by Chris Buss has now been published.

A special meeting of the cabinet is to be held on July 14th . This has been called to specifically consider the Chris Buss report and also the one provided by officers, which has also now been published.

The Council Leader has stated this meeting will take place in public and the intention is for cabinet to make a decision concerning this site.

5. Kevin Pardy

I have received statistics via FOI act, for potholes repaired and roads resurfaced within the seventeen wards of Shrewsbury Town Council during the first full year of the Liberal administration.

The results are startling.

1107 potholes have been repaired, and three roads resurfaced

Of the 1107 potholes reported repaired, 775 of those potholes were sited in Liberal wards an astounding 70%.

Leaving just 30 percent shared between the remaining six wards.

The average number of repairs per Liberal ward was 70.45 compared to the remaining wards' average 55.3 potholes repaired.

During the year three roads were resurfaced, all in Liberal wards.

Having had suspicion that there was an imbalance in repairs, I visited three Liberal wards before the request for statistics. Potholes repaired were no larger than potholes in any other ward nor were they in any position more dangerous than in other wards. I did note there was a number of repairs immediately outside of a cabinet members' home.

Harlescott Grange received the joint highest number of repairs at 176 which tied with the deputy leaders' ward, Quarry and Coton Hill. Harlescott also had two out of three roads resurfaced.

As the statistics are so obviously imbalanced, I cannot believe that Highways have not been influenced, it is not coincidental.

Can the portfolio holder explain why there is such an imbalance in favour of repairs taking place in Liberal wards within Shrewsbury Town Council area?

Response from Cllr David Vasmer

It's disappointing that my fellow Shrewsbury Town Councillor is trying to score cheap party-political points and inspecting Liberal Democrat wards instead of concentrating on Highways issues in his own ward of Sundorne.

I often get emails from Councillors of all Parties wanting me to help them get some action on a Highway issue in their ward. No matter which political party they represent, I do my best to help. If Cllr Pardy wishes to approach me about potholes in his own ward, I would be very willing to lobby on his behalf, but as far as I'm aware he has not approached me so far.

Cllr Pardy's Freedom of Information response will have been influenced by the search criteria used in his FOI enquiry, but I am unable to comment since I have not seen the correspondence. However, it should be noted that if the FOI was focused purely on

potholes, it would exclude other highways work, thereby presenting an inaccurate view.

This may not be to Cllr Pardy's liking but since the elections last year the majority of wards in Shrewsbury are represented by Liberal Democrats. It is therefore not surprising to learn that more potholes have been repaired in Liberal Democrat wards!

Let me make it very plain to Cllr Pardy. I do not make any decisions on where potholes are repaired – I lobby on behalf of all Councillors but the decisions are taken by officers. Defects and their repair are identified on the basis of inspection policies approved by the Council, which also accord with industry standards and codes of practice, and are determined on the basis of road hierarchy, defect severity and risk. In simple terms on how many vehicles use a road and any potential safety risk. There is absolutely no political agenda to influence which defects are repaired first, or where they are repaired.

Moving on to resurfacing – these schemes are determined on asset data and road condition, the amount of defects present and generated enquiries (as described in the Council's Highways Asset Management Strategy which is publicly available on our website). It's a lot more complicated than suggested by Cllr Pardy's question.

The work on the Station Quarter for example disrupted plans last year and at the same time there was a huge volume of highly disruptive schemes taking place. Works undertaken by utilities influenced capital delivery decisions, with several large-scale schemes having taken place in 2025/26 affecting key arterial routes in Shrewsbury such as Longden Road/Roman Road, Mytton Oak Road, Welshpool Road, Whitchurch Road, and Robinson Way. Cllr Pardy may also be interested to know that a number of resurfacing schemes in Shrewsbury were held back last year by the work of utilities – it's never wise to resurface a road before a utility needs to dig it up! If Cllr Pardy wishes I can arrange a briefing with officers and they can explain how decision are made on the maintenance of our highway network.

6. John Palmer

It is likely that Andy Burnham and Angela Rayner will order Shropshire Council to get on and build more new much-needed social housing pronto, over and above any Cornovii Development Limited plans.

Is it an option to sell off Theatre Severn to private investors, to help kickstart this hugely welcomed era of social renewal? Seeing as the theatre was originally financed by Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council following the sell off of council housing in Shrewsbury?

Response from Cllr Alex Wagner

2025/26 was another highly successful year at Theatre Severn, generating over £7.6m income, attracting an attendance of 215,971 to a ticketed event and generating a surplus of over £800k. As a service that is generating significant income for the Council, there are no plans to sell this provision to private investors. You will note that the principles of our Medium-Term Financial Sustainability & Recovery Strategy are being presented to Cabinet today; these include reviewing the performance of traded services and commercial ventures. This review has been completed for Theatre Services. The Council is committed to ensuring the Theatre continues to offer a broad

and exciting cultural programme for our residents along with delivering income for the Council as part of our recovery.