

CABINET – 5 AUGUST 2026

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. John Palmer

In a welcomed revolutionary era of financial transparency and real-time monitoring, what's the total amount of money paid by Shropshire Council in fines or financial penalties, since 1 April 2025, for non-compliance with statutory legislation?

And can you itemise each instance please?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Finance

I have asked officers to do a full sweep of fines or financial penalties payable by the Council in 2025/26.

Our records show 2 potential instances in May 2026 :

Copyright Infringement	-	£200
Copyright Infringement	-	£400

While such infringements are not unusual, I am grateful that the numbers are few. I will be asking for more detail on how they came about and on how we will avoid them in future.

Due to numbers of staff employed in some areas and holidays this may not be the complete answer that is wanted. Openness and transparency is taken seriously by both this administration and officers. What is asked for in the question is noted and I will circulate any further instances that are identified.

2. John Crowe

What are the options for the telecoms equipment currently based on the roof at Shirehall, re-location of which has apparently been an ongoing problem? Are they be part of any sale? Are they to be relocated first? On whose budget does this re-location fall?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Finance

The telecommunications equipment located on the roof of Shirehall is protected under the Electronic Communications Code (ECC). As a result, any redevelopment or demolition of the site would require the existing arrangements to be addressed, with relocation to an alternative site being the most likely option. The Council has been exploring relocation options with operators and their

agents; however, no agreed solution has yet been identified and the matter remains an ongoing project activity. The equipment itself would not form part of any redevelopment proposal. No final programme has been agreed requiring relocation to take place before a sale, and no decision has been made regarding responsibility for future relocation costs.

3. Jane Gallagher

At the Cabinet meeting held on 14 July covering the future of the Shirehall it was stated that the running costs of the Shirehall are over £,1500 per day. Can the Cabinet member please provide a detailed breakdown of these costs and specify exactly what this is spent on so that Shropshire council taxpayers can be clear about ongoing costs and possible economies?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Finance

The current forecast costs for Shirehall in 2026/27 as at Quarter 1 are as follows

	£
Energy	200,000
Water	25,000
NNDR	358,145
Cleaning and Domestic Supplies	500
Repairs and Maintenance of Buildings	22,500
Grounds Maintenance	58,130
Communications and Computing	21,463
Insurance	17,640
Income	-25,000
TOTAL	678,378

This will be reported to Cabinet in September as part of the Quarter 1 budget monitor.

Following on from Cabinet decision in July to dispose of the Shirehall site, work is now concluding on the closure of the building which includes the removal of records and IT facilities. This work is due to complete by October and will enable these forecasts to be reduced, especially those for energy, NNDR, maintenance and communications and computing. The position continues to be monitored and will be reviewed by officers each month and will be reported again to Cabinet as part of the Quarter 2 monitoring report.

Subject to the success of the removal of records and the closure of the IT facilities, this forecast will reduce significantly and we will keep the matter under close review. Officers reported an estimated spend of between £500k and £600k

for this financial year as part of the Shirehall debate last month. This will reduce further in 2027/28 as the full year effects of the removals take effect. Equally, the building will need to be kept safe and secure until the point of disposal.

4. Jonathan Owen

What is the timescale for the Red Book valuation to be completed and will it be made available for inspection together with the assumptions behind it e.g. the extent of the site, any leases or other interests held by others over same, assumptions as to what planning consents may be granted and their timing and any constraints on its title e.g. restrictive covenants or wayleaves in favour of third parties?

Response from Portfolio Holder for Finance

The Council has now received the Red Book valuation.

The valuation was commissioned as part of the Council's internal consideration of the site and the Council does not intend to make the valuation report, or the assumptions and supporting information upon which it is based, available for inspection. The report contains commercially sensitive information and any request for disclosure would be considered in accordance with the Council's legal obligations.

MEMBER QUESTIONS

Cllr Viv Parry

1. Does the Council intend to include the cutting of bushes, trees and hedges as well as grass in Kier's programme of grounds maintenance especially in play areas
2. How will the Council oversee this to make sure this work is done.

Response from Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste

1. The Council's Street Scene Service is responsible for the maintenance of Shropshire Council's play areas and employs qualified Play Area Inspectors to undertake routine inspections. Grass cutting is delivered by the Council's term service provider, Kier, in accordance with the agreed maintenance programme. Hedge cutting is generally undertaken during the autumn period and outside the bird nesting season, in line with Countryside Conservation guidance and legal requirements. Play areas are covered by Shropshire Council, Town Councils and Parish Councils. Tree inspections are carried out by the Council's Tree Team,

with any urgent health and safety works identified, prioritised, actioned and recorded accordingly. Trees and shrubs are not routinely pruned or cut back unless there is a demonstrable health and safety requirement.

2. The Council's Play Area Inspectors are trained and accredited through RoSPA and undertake regular inspections of all of Shropshire Council's play areas. Where health and safety defects or maintenance issues (including grounds maintenance issues) are identified, works are raised promptly to ensure that play equipment and facilities remain safe and that the sites are maintained to the expected standards.