

CABINET – 9 SEPTEMBER 2026

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Maralyn Hepworth

MEOLE BRACE PARK AND RIDE

Closure of this service in October will affect many people over a large area of Shropshire. Will the council reconsider this and keep the service open?

The Park and Ride services were originally put in to stop people going into Shrewsbury in cars and help with climate change. This is still the case.

I am disabled and use it to access Shrewsbury to shop, as do many others. It is frequent and we can get on and off around town. There always seems to be a number of people using it. Some of these, like me, will be socially isolated. A recent trip saw at least 20 passengers.

For a few years it hasn't been signposted so is difficult to find, and I have spoken to people who live nearer Oxon who use it as the Oxon car park can be full with Hospital staff and patient's cars.

2. Tony Burton

As Cabinet is, I hope, aware, very many users of the Meole Brace Park & Ride service are shocked and bewildered by the decision to suspend it. The suspension will cause significant disruption to the lives of the several thousand who use it each week and will adversely affect other drivers and residents locally, who will suffer increased pollution and congestion – not least in the town centre itself.

People are at a loss to understand the basis for this decision, so please could Cabinet provide a breakdown of the weekly costs of providing the Meole Brace Park and Ride Service, under the headings of bus service provision, site maintenance, signage, promotion and other costs, both before and after the frequency was increased from 20 minute to 12 minute. Could Cabinet also indicate whether the increase in the receipts arising from the increase in frequency was taken into account when deciding the frequency at which the Park and Ride service should operate after 31 October, and if so, what that percentage increase was?

3. Mike Streetly

S106 and CiL receipts

The council demands S106 and CiL commitments from developers to offset the negative impacts of their projects on local communities by funding important improvements to local facilities. Could you please provide a statement of the current S106 and CiL funds held by the council and timescales for the council's plans for spending these funds to deliver these improvements for local people?

4. Chris Deaves

The government has announced its intention to transfer some Income Tax revenue to combined and mayoral authorities; some commentators suggest that 2.5% is a likely figure. Were Shropshire Council such an authority this would mean income of about £40M p.a. In light of local government changes suggested in the 'English Devolution' White Paper (HMCLG, Dec 2024), what steps is the Council taking to access this income stream?

5. Rod Himsley

1. Cabinet Approval SC/2024/0847 - Precisely what was approved by Cabinet on 15 October 2024 concerning the Whitchurch Library and Civic Centre?
2. Administration of the Cabinet decision - What formal actions, approvals and decisions were subsequently undertaken to administer and implement that Cabinet decision?
3. Financial provision - What capital or other approved financial provision was established following the Cabinet decision, and how has that provision subsequently appeared in the Council's financial and capital-programme records?
4. Current governance route - What formal governance, project and approval route is currently authorised for the Civic Centre, including responsibility for progressing any new proposal?
5. Community and long-term value - How will the Council ensure that the Civic Centre's established role as a centrally located community asset is properly considered alongside financial, property and alternative-use considerations? I am particularly concerned that the current position should not be prejudiced by historic inactivity, incomplete financial baselines, or informal discussions which have not yet been reconciled with the formal governance and financial position. My objective is not simply to preserve a building for its own sake. The Civic Centre occupies an important position within Whitchurch and has a longstanding community role. I believe the people of Whitchurch deserve a transparent, evidence-based and financially credible assessment of its future.

6. John Palmer

There's a national and local emergency: there's not enough housing that younger people can afford to buy or rent. So how does it feel to Cabinet that you're just about to write off around £4m put towards your housing company?

7. Paul Wiseman (late question accepted by Chair)

The Government-commissioned CIPFA External Assurance Review identifies Whitchurch Civic Centre's RAAC works as one of the capital schemes paused during the Council's financial rationalisation and then immediately considers the Council's financial exposure to Cornovii Developments Ltd. CIPFA also found that there was "no documented prioritisation framework" setting out the explicit criteria used when individual capital scheme decisions were made. Cabinet is now being asked at the same meeting to approve the structured closure of Cornovii, with an estimated minimum loss to the Council of around £4 million, and the disposal of Whitchurch Civic Centre, for which approximately £4 million is said to be required to return the building to sustainable use. Can Cabinet confirm whether the financial future of Cornovii and Whitchurch Civic Centre has been considered together, directly or indirectly, as part of the Council's Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy; what financial trade-offs between the two were considered; and whether any asset sales, capital receipts, loan recoveries, write-offs or other accounting consequences arising from either decision can affect the financing or affordability of the other?