

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

FROM DR JAMIE PHILLIPS

Dear Councillors. I recently made a FOI request to the council asking for a full break down of the money spent to date on the North West Relief Road. From the response from Mr Steve Smith on 18 August, I understand that the council will have spent £20.4m on preparatory work on the project between 2014/15 and the end of 2022. In the breakdown of the figures received in the FOI response the highest single expense was on 'Professional Services Costs' at a total cost of £12.1m over the period. Please could the cabinet provide a breakdown of what this figure encompasses exactly. The term 'Professional Services Costs' is rather vague.

From Cllr Chris Lemon

Shropshire Council has recently completed two "zero-carbon" new-build school buildings, at Meole Brace School and Harlescott Junior School, and has rightly celebrated this achievement in the media. Of course, the local community in Radbrook welcomes these initiatives as a sign that Shropshire Council is starting to give the climate emergency the attention it needs. However, we would like to know why are these high standards not being put in place for the proposed new primary and SEND schools in the Bowbrook Meadows development? These schools are only aiming for "very good" building standards (as opposed to the "excellent" achieved by the other two projects.) The current assessment puts them at a 55% BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method) score, the minimum to achieve "very good", suggesting there is a risk the completed buildings may fall below that. They appear to have no targets for low carbon energy use and are not putting in renewable energy systems. Why is Radbrook not benefiting from the experience at Meole and Harlescott? This is both disappointing and shortsighted. With the steep rise in energy prices, new buildings should have renewable energy systems and low carbon design to help with future costs; as well as contributing to zero carbon for Shropshire by 2030. Please explain why this project is being designed to lower standards than at other schools. Will the plans be revised in view of the need to achieve zero carbon standards?