

CABINET – 11 MARCH 2026

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1. Cllr Chris Lemon

Question:

In March 2023 Council resolved 'To commit to ensuring that the county town of Shrewsbury retains a proper Bus Station by requiring that the masterplan brief for the Riverside redevelopment includes the requirement for an attractive bus station with excellent links to rail and town centre, making best use of the current location'.

In December 2024 Shropshire Council adopted the Shrewsbury Movement and Public Space Strategy. Fourteen 'next steps' were identified in relation to bus operations, several of which were key to determining the location and size of the future Bus Station and Bus Layover.

Please will the Portfolio Holder a) confirm that the locus for the new Bus Station will be on the existing bus station site, and b) provide Members with an update on progress on the fourteen 'next steps' for bus operations in Shrewsbury.

2. Cllr Andy Boddington

Question

An out of control HGV ran into Ludlow Youth Centre on 28 April 2025. Since then, there has been no progress on bringing the building back into use.

- 1) When is expected that repairs on the youth centre and family hub will begin and when is it expected to reopen?
- 2) What has caused the delay?
- 3) How much extra is it costing Shropshire Council to host activities once at the youth centre in alternative facilities such as Helena Lane?

3. Cllr Tom Dainty

Question:

For over thirty years, Market Drayton has aspired to develop the Greenfields site, a vital project given the persistent shortage of sports facilities in the town. This lack has left local sports clubs in a fragile state, reliant on the tireless commitment of volunteers to keep offering opportunities for residents to participate in sport and physical activity. With rising care costs for Shropshire Council, it is increasingly

important to prioritise preventative measures—such as promoting healthy, active lifestyles—to help mitigate future demands on health and social care services.

The Greenfields development must demonstrate its viability to external funding partners. Investors require clear evidence of robust local support and the ability of the project to deliver tangible benefits to the community before they will consider financial investment. Without such assurances, the project risks losing out on the external funding necessary for its success, potentially undermining the long-term advantages it promises for Market Drayton.

I urge the Shropshire Council Cabinet to provide unequivocal backing for the Greenfields development, in whatever manner the Active Market Drayton working group deems best. Can the Cabinet show firm interest and a clear understanding of the significance of this project for the town, particularly regarding enhanced health, wellbeing, and opportunities for residents? Your support is essential not only to unlock external funding, but also to secure the future sustainability and success of these much-needed facilities. Please clarify your commitment so Market Drayton can finally achieve this longstanding goal and ensure a healthier future for its community.

4. Cllr Harry Hancock-Davies

Question:

The report acknowledges that reduced council capacity has resulted in Internal Audit only being able to provide 'limited assurance' over some control environments and that weakened controls increase the risk of fraud occurring and remaining undetected. It also cites the NAFN 2025 benchmark showing an average of just over four counter-fraud FTE per council, yet Shropshire currently has none and is only proposing a minimum viable team of three posts costing around £150,000 — potentially not until the 2027/28 budget.

Given that this is a large unitary authority with a multi-hundred-million-pound budget and significant procurement and social care expenditure, can the Portfolio Holder explain how the Council has satisfied itself that its current arrangements meet CIPFA's Code of Practice for managing the risk of fraud and corruption — and what quantified fraud loss assessment has been undertaken to justify delaying the establishment of a dedicated counter-fraud capability until at least 2027/28?

5. Cllr George Hollyhead

Question:

Given that the newly-approved Shropshire Hills National Landscape Plan embeds an ideological programme of behaviour-change, net-zero compliance and 'nature-connection' expectations — including calls for residents to reduce car use, alter daily behaviours, and reshape farming practices — how will Cabinet justify imposing these ideological aims on deeply rural communities where cars are essential, farms already face extreme pressures, and local priorities such as affordable housing, economic growth and infrastructure are being sidelined? What practical safeguards will Cabinet put in place to ensure that local people are not subjected to policy-driven social engineering, and that core rural needs are prioritised over ideological agendas developed far from the realities of the Shropshire Hills?