

## CABINET – 6 MAY 2026

### RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

#### 1. William Briggs

I am submitting this question as an entrepreneur based in the hydrogen storage and distribution sector and am looking to serve Shropshire's agricultural and logistics sectors.

Formal Question: "In light of Shropshire Council's commitment to the Hydrogen Valley Consortium and the regional goal of achieving 10GW of low-carbon hydrogen production by 2030, what specific planning and regulatory support mechanisms are being/have been established to fast-track small-scale, 'shovel-ready' hydrogen distribution hubs within Shrewsbury? Furthermore, how is the Council ensuring that 'first-movers' in this space are integrated into the Strategic Infrastructure Forum to ensure local energy resilience matches the pace of the national transition?"

#### RESPONSE:

Shropshire Council signed up as a member of the Hydrogen Valley Consortium in late 2023. This commitment was made to enable engagement at a strategic level with regional partners and to keep open the option of participation in future hydrogen-related initiatives where these align with Shropshire's net zero and economic objectives.

However, since joining the Consortium, Shropshire's financial pressures have reduced our capacity to engage, and the key officers who were leading this work have subsequently left the Council. At present the Council does not possess the resources to actively pursue this work, however the Council's retains a watching brief as a virtue of its membership.

In terms of the Strategic Infrastructure Forum, the Council is currently reviewing this in light of new statutory requirements for strategic planning. This involves the preparation of Spatial Development Strategies which will set out a 20 year and beyond vision and strategic growth plan for the region. We are currently awaiting the secondary legislation for this new requirement but are in the early stages of considering how the future development of a strategic plan for the region will be progressed, including the re-establishment of a strategic forum for infrastructure providers and delivery partners.

As this work progresses, we will be considering both those with responsibility for key items of infrastructure such as energy whilst also reviewing examples of good practice from 'early movers'. This will ensure the SDS is both ambitious in setting the investment opportunities for the region and appropriate in addressing future challenges, including infrastructure requirements and delivery.