

CABINET – 10 JUNE 2026

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1. Councillor Chris Lemon

Shropshire is a predominantly rural county with a commensurately low population density, yet it is also a county where many residents rely on public transport. Unfortunately, Shropshire also has one of the poorest bus networks in the country, and in recent years has struggled badly to attract the funding made available by central government to improve such services. Part of the reason for that is that previous administrations have never prioritised public transport and did the bare minimum to support it, something no doubt that central government noticed and took into account when allocating funds, leading to the kind of death spiral that means Shrewsbury must be the only county town in the country with no public transport in the evenings or on Sundays and Bank Holidays. That being the case, the Shropshire Transport Strategy could be an important step in the right direction, showing those holding the purse strings in central government that the county is now serious about improving public transport and most especially bus service. Council was expecting that report to be published by now after the Cabinet member for Transport and Economic Growth (as he then was) said it, "should be made publicly available during next month" in answer to a question for Cabinet on March the 11th. When will the Strategy be published and what is the reason for the delay?

2. Councillor Rosemary Dartnall

There has for many years been an issue with speeding traffic on the outer section of London Road, from the college to Emstrey Roundabout, which currently has a 40 mph limit. This was always of particular concern for residents leaving home by car from the old smallholdings. When planning permission was sought for the development of 135 new homes here, an extension of the 30 mph speed limit was requested, from the college, past the new homes and up to the junction with the Weir Hill access road. This was, and remains, perfectly reasonable given the increased number of homes with access directly onto this busy arterial road. The development has installed cabling to enable streetlights where the new homes have entrances onto London Road: lighting will add road safety for residents walking, cycling or driving from home. The streetlights have never been installed. The speed limit has not been changed. Why?

There are regular reports of near misses here – the most recent involving a motorcycle and a car at the Weir Hill junction. As part of the LCWIP plan, a toucan crossing is also required, either at this junction or farther along close to the cricket club. How else will residents of all ages in existing and new homes manage to leave home safely and cross London Road without some infrastructure to make doing so safe?

Please can the portfolio holder confirm that these simple and necessary road safety amendments are carried out urgently, before a fatality occurs?

3. Councillor Dawn Husemann

Despite waiting for months for a meeting to discuss next steps relating to Shirehall we have been unable to obtain specific information relating to the Shirehall review that we require. So in this public and recorded forum we ask:

- What is the start date of the review?
- What methodology will be used to complete the review?
- When will the report be made available to members?
- When will Mr Buss meet with the task and finish group?
- Exactly how will Mr Buss explore the viability of the JV route, we require detail of the methodology, clarity of the results and a clear explanation of the thought process and justification of how conclusions are reached.
- Please also explain how a definitive conclusion can be reached when we do not know the real world net value of the site and this figure will not be known until the red book valuation is done which will be after a decision is reached?
- If the real world net value achievable by the council is less than predicted by the soft market testing will this council halt any sale or will it accept significant losses on the sale of this wholly owned strategic asset?

4. Councillor Susan Coleman

For the sake of transparency will the Leader please clarify the following:

- Is Guildhall fit for purpose such that it can meet all the council's accommodations needs in the medium to long term, would this be with or without significant investment?
- If it's not fit for purpose in the medium to long term what specifically does the council intend to do to meet the council's future accommodation needs?
- If the council pursues its aim to destroy Shirehall which is a wholly owned asset with no borrowings currently against it, which could be repurposed, will the Leader please confirm that they will not borrow any money to build new accommodation and we will remain at Guildhall indefinitely.
- If Guildhall is not fit for purpose and new accommodation is planned in the medium to long term please explain to Shropshire residents how it is acceptable to destroy a prestigious and valuable asset that is free from borrowings to borrow more money to build a new but vastly inferior solution to our accommodation needs.

5. Councillor Peter Husemann

Before the last election, a sum of £4.5 million was allocated within the CIL Local budget specifically for improvements to Bridgnorth High Street. As you know, this charming town is in desperate need of these funds. Its appearance is becoming increasingly tired and scruffy, which has led to growing frustration among my residents. We have made repeated requests for clarification on the status of this CIL local funding from the relevant officers, but unfortunately, we have still not received a reply.

Bridgnorth both needs and deserves this much needed financial support. I am now seeking a clear answer on whether the Liberal Democrats intend to withdraw this funding

from Bridgnorth or not. While it's understood that the original project will need to be rescoped to suit current and future requirements, particularly in light of the significant proposed developments around Bridgnorth, it's crucial that we begin what is likely to be a lengthy process to reinvigorate our much-loved town.

Please provide myself and all the residents of Bridgnorth and our surrounding villages with the clarity our community deserves

6. Councillor Thomas Clayton

There are a range of RAG and other colour ratings used across these reports and other committee agendas which are not clearly defined, so can you set out what criteria are actually being applied when deciding whether something is green, amber, red or otherwise, how that is applied consistently across different service areas, and whether there is a single standard approach used across the council or if individual departments are applying their own judgement, as we have seen in previous agendas, like the F&I agenda, where a variance in excess of 3000% in HR was still rated as amber rather than red, so can you please explain how those sorts of outcomes arise, explain why similar levels of variance have been judged differently, and given members have only around 72 hours to review the agenda before submitting questions, can you confirm how the approach is clear, consistent and robust enough for members to have confidence in the ratings being presented?

Questions raised as part of Agenda Item 20 – Hills Ford Rally

1. Question from Councillor Chris Naylor

I'm very concerned to see the Hills Fords Stages Rally listed for decision. Personally I'm neutral, though it was cancelled in Herefordshire after many officer questions remained unanswered. Two of my parishes welcome the Rally and have my support.

But my very rural Pulverbatch residents and their Parish Council have repeatedly expressed strong opposition to 'closed road sections' there – where public and residents are excluded, no speed limits apply – in dozens of considered objections, and Parish Council motions, consistently for many months.

It's of course my job as councillor for Burnell to advise my residents, and I was repeatedly told, from the highest level in the Council down, that a particular Highways officer would decide.

The Parish Council and I therefore expressed opposition to him in February, and I was emailed by this officer's superior (24/2 9.38am) to confirm that objections had been received and – I quote - 'he won't approve any road closures in their parish'.

We ensured those dozens of resident objections – including farms straddling the proposed closed route, holiday lets, nature recovery champions – were forwarded to the officer, his superior and the Leader.

So:

- Have those objections reached him?
- Have relevant concerns raised by Herefordshire been considered?

- Has 'due diligence' been done on Cheltenham Motor Club, shown as 'dormant' at Companies House – and vital insurance cover?
- Would he like to be a young Pulverbatch family or elderly couple, trapped at home all day while 150 cars pass his front door at high speed?