

CABINET – 14 JULY 2026

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Jonathan Owen

What is the Council's estimate of annual cost savings achievable if its operations were consolidated into the Shirehall?

Response:

My apologies. This information is not available. The previous administration decided, with little notice, to move out of the Shirehall in the Autumn of 2024. With the work carried out to minimise the buildings running costs it is not possible, without a spending a substantial sum to move back in. We of course do not have any capital to enable this to work to be carried out, nor, due to a previous redundancy programme the staff to work out an answer to your question, The Council's approach is now one of hub-and-spoke, locality-based working, with services delivered closer to communities, the Guildhall serving as the primary civic base, and Family Hubs established across the county. Against that model, Shirehall is surplus to requirements, and the question of consolidation savings therefore does not arise.

2. David Kilby, Shropshire Playing Fields Association

Would members state clearly what the intended future is for the Shropshire Unison (NALGO) Sports Club at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury and associated Car-Park and whether the whole sports area is currently protected from future development, by way of a covenant or Fields in Trust deed of dedication.

In answering this question could members be clear as to what is included within the sites boundary line, for example social club, cricket pitch, tennis courts, bowling green and car-park and be clear on future access points to the grounds?

Response:

The area declared surplus to requirements by Full Council in February 2022, within a marked boundary, is the main Shirehall site as set out in section 4.5 of the Cabinet report. The Unison Sports Club, sports pitches, bowling green, overspill car park and Lord Hill's Column fall outside that area and do not form part of this disposal, and no decision on their future is taken through this report.

The precise red-line boundary for disposal will be confirmed through title and boundary due diligence and set out in the marketing prospectus in the autumn. That exercise concerns only the extent of the land within the area already declared surplus; it will not bring those excluded areas into the disposal.

3. Phillip Scoggins

The Shirehall is the major monument to post-war modernism in the county, and Shrewsbury Civic Society believes it should be retained and reused in its entirety. However, we and many others, including in our experience most of those who otherwise disparage the building, see the Council Chamber as particularly noteworthy; a quirky structure of great character that enlivens the streetscape and acts as a symbol of local democracy. If Shropshire Council were to make the disastrous decision to allow the Shirehall to be demolished, what safeguards would the Council put in place to secure the retention of the Council Chamber for the public use and enjoyment of this much-admired feature of the town and to allow it to enhance any future development on the Shirehall site?

Response:

Cabinet is not being asked to approve demolition. The recommendation is to move in principle to marketing, with the prospectus/options returning to Cabinet in the autumn. Proposals from interested parties may include full or partial retention, refurbishment or redevelopment.

4. John Crowe

If SC decides to sell the Shirehall and its site; a) will SC accept the valuation as determined by a Red Book valuation and b) what is the minimum sale value that SC will accept?

Response:

The value of the site will depend on assumptions about planning, abnormal costs, building condition and market demand at the time of disposal. For that reason, the Council will not set out a fixed minimum sale value at this stage. Any potential disposal will need to comply with the Council's statutory duty to secure best consideration reasonably obtainable under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, supported by appropriate valuation and legal advice.