



Committee and Date

Economy and Environment
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

INSERT NEXT MEETING DATE

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2026

In the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ

6.00 - 7.50 pm

Responsible Officer: Sarah Townsend Committee Officer

Email: sarah.townsend@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257721

Present

Councillors Ed Potter (Chair), Sam Walmsley (Vice-Chair), Craig Emery, Adam Fejfer, Gary Groves, Alan Holford, Brendan Mallon, Chris Naylor, Wendy Owen and Sharon Ritchie-Simmons

Other Members in Attendance:

Councillor Roger Evans – Portfolio Holder for Finance (remotely)

Councillor Ruth Houghton – Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Public Health (remotely)

Councillor Dawn Husemann – Group Leader (remotely)

Councillor Alan Mosley – Station Gyrotory Task and Finish Group Member

Councillor David Vasmer – Portfolio Holder for Highways & Waste (remotely)

Councillor Rob Wilson – Portfolio Holder for Transport & Regeneration

Officers in Attendance:

Claire Braddock – Overview and Scrutiny Officer

Kassandra Polyzoides – Service Director Place Shaping (remotely)

Tim Pritchard – Shrewsbury Programme Manager

Andy Wilde – Service Director Infrastructure

4 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Donna Edmunds.

5 Disclosable Interests

There were no interests declared.

6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 12th March 2026 and 14th May 2026 be approved as a correct record.

7 Public Question Time

No public questions had been received.

8 Member Question Time

A member question had been received from Councillor Sam Walmsley regarding highway maintenance and waste collection. Councillor Walmsley read out his question and the response to the question was provided by the Chairman. There was no supplementary question. A full copy of the question and response provided is available from the web page for the meeting.

9 Review of Highways Maintenance Strategy and Highways Inspection Policy

The committee received a verbal update from the Service Director Infrastructure regarding the review of Highways Maintenance Strategy and Highways Inspection Policy. It was explained that the existing Asset Management Strategy had been in place for some time and now needed to be reviewed in order to align with the Council's new Corporate Plan, the emerging Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and revised Department for Transport (DfT) funding criteria requirements.

The committee was informed that the Department for Transport had recently issued new guidance to all councils on asset investment and had changed its funding criteria for highways authorities, with a greater proportion of future highways funding now linked to incentive-based requirements. It was therefore important that the Council had a robust and evidence-based Asset Management Strategy and Inspection Policy which could demonstrate appropriate review, political support and alignment with Department for Transport priorities.

In responding to a question regarding whether capital investments could be explored to help reduce revenue maintenance costs, the Service Director Infrastructure explained that the Department for Transport was placing increased emphasis on preventative maintenance interventions and on councils evidencing that an appropriate proportion of their budgets was being directed towards such work. This would therefore be addressed in the strategy.

It was noted that the committee would consider the proposed draft strategy at an additional meeting, likely to be held in September, prior to it being considered by

Cabinet. Members were encouraged to engage directly with the Service Director Infrastructure for further information or input prior to the additional meeting.

10 **Station Gyratory - Six Month Follow Up of Actions Against Task and Finish Group Recommendations**

The committee considered the six month follow up report on actions arising from the recommendations previously made by the Station Gyratory Task and Finish Group, with these recommendations having been accepted by Cabinet at their 3rd December 2025 meeting.

The Service Director Infrastructure advised that a safety audit had been completed and that work was ongoing to review and implement its recommendations. A verbal briefing note had been prepared to be considered as part of the next agenda item which included recommendations proposed to be taken to Cabinet. However, further technical dialogue and work would be required before any options could be progressed.

Reference was made to Recommendation 3, which highlighted the wider impact of the station gyratory scheme on surrounding neighbouring areas, including increased use of narrow residential streets such as Castlefields, which had become 'rat-runs' and concerns regarding heavy goods vehicle movements on Ellesmere Road. It was questioned why the officer response did not appear to address these concerns or propose mitigation measures. It was also questioned whether traffic movement data comparing conditions before and after implementation of the scheme, together with future projections, had been collected. In response, the Service Director Infrastructure advised that the impact on surrounding areas formed part of a wider piece of work and that further guidance from the committee would be helpful in determining the scope and specific areas to be examined. The member responded that two specific areas had already been identified and that the need for traffic movement data had already also been raised and expressed concern that no clear action appeared to have been undertaken on the specific issues previously identified.

A member commented that traffic data was available from the Telraam system and suggested that officers should be able to undertake further analysis and present the data in a longer term or alternative format if required.

A question was asked regarding whether the footpath in the vicinity of the scheme would be formally designated as joint shared use for cyclists and pedestrians. In response, it was stated that this would depend on the recommendations agreed and adopted by Cabinet. Members heard that the current cycle network in the area lacked adequate connectivity and that future consideration would need to focus on creating safe, accessible and attractive cycling routes as part of wider transport planning for Shrewsbury, if active travel was to be encouraged.

A question was asked regarding the legality and liability of emergency services using the cycle lane and whether, in the event of a collision involving a cyclist, the Council or emergency services could be liable. A further question was also asked about whether emergency vehicles were required to drive over the floating bus stop

infrastructure when responding to incidents. In response, the Chairman indicated that many of these matters would be addressed under the next agenda item.

11 Station Gyratory Task and Finish Group Verbal Update

The committee received a verbal briefing note from Councillor Ed Potter, Chair of the Station Gyratory Task and Finish Group, providing an update on the work undertaken since the Group's report to Cabinet on 3rd December 2025. They were advised that the Task and Finish Group had reviewed the operation, safety and effectiveness of the Station Gyratory scheme following its implementation and that this had included the interim formal Stage 3 Road Safety Audit and the associated designer response, as well as emerging evidence on traffic usage. Whilst the majority of identified issues were considered to be minor defects, such as signage and layout refinements, which could be addressed largely through contractor led adjustments, key operational concerns remained regarding traffic flow and highway operation, the impact of traffic using alternative residential routes, the cycleway and the floating bus stop. The Task and Finish Group were therefore recommending that, subject to the approval of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, six recommendations be submitted to Cabinet for their consideration, including further exploration of reverting to two lanes of traffic with parallel exploration of changing the cycleway to shared use (bus/taxi/cycle) to ensure a robust comparison.

Members asked whether the effectiveness of the proposed options had been evaluated, particularly in relation to traffic flow, emergency service access and the operation of the bus stop. Councillor Potter explained that the Task and Finish Group had not undertaken a detailed evaluation and therefore wished both options to be modelled and compared before any decision was made. It was considered important that evidence relating to safety, congestion, traffic flow and access arrangements be gathered so that Cabinet could make an informed decision based on robust analysis rather than anecdotal observations.

A question was raised regarding the potential risk of grant clawback should changes be made to the scheme. In response, Members were informed that this had been specifically included as one of the recommendations and that officers were actively engaging with the funder. Based on current discussions, the risk of clawback was considered low, although no definitive position had yet been confirmed.

Concerns were raised regarding the quality of the construction work, including reports of drainage grates being covered during resurfacing works, standing water and other workmanship issues and it was questioned whether quality assurance processes had adequately identified such defects. In response, it was noted that concerns relating to quality assurance had previously been raised with the Task and Finish Group. The Service Director Infrastructure advised that he would investigate the issues further and that records of snagging and any issues linked to the quality of the workmanship should be available. It was also noted that this would be followed up at a future Task and Finish Group meeting with the committee highlighting the need for robust oversight in future contracts.

Regarding the cycleway, the committee discussed whether sufficient evidence existed to have justified its inclusion within the scheme and asked whether pre-scheme cycling levels and current usage data demonstrated demand. Reference was made to available Telraam data, which indicated no significant increase in cycling activity and a reduction in pedestrian numbers compared with previous counts. The limitations in the available data were acknowledged but it was considered that the evidence reflected concerns raised by residents and road users regarding the effectiveness of the cycleway.

Further discussion focused on the wider design of the scheme, including concerns regarding heavy goods vehicles on Ellesmere Road, incomplete cycling connectivity and traffic signal operation. Balancing the needs of cyclists, motorists, public transport users and residents was raised and it was suggested that broader strategic consideration was needed regarding cycling provision within Shrewsbury, with it linked to wider transport and movement strategies for the town.

Clarification was sought regarding emergency vehicle access and whether the scheme had delivered improvements for emergency services. In responding, Councillor Potter emphasised the importance of meaningful consultation with both the emergency services and the wider business community within the area from the outset and stated that this would be essential when assessing any future options. The Portfolio Holder commented that weekly meetings had been taking place between the Chief Fire Officer and himself regarding emergency vehicle access and that emergency services currently utilised dynamic risk assessments when travelling through the town centre.

Concerns were also raised regarding the floating bus stop and its accessibility, particularly for visually impaired users and reference was made to British Standard BS 8300-1:2018 which provides guidance on designing an accessible and inclusive external built environment. The Service Director Infrastructure commented that accessibility concerns had been identified through the safety audit process and confirmed that he would ask technical officers to clarify regarding whether this specific British Standard had been considered. However, ultimately, the Task and Finish Group had concluded that retaining the floating bus stop in either its current form or an adapted form was not an appropriate option to recommend.

The Portfolio Holder thanked both the Committee and the Task and Finish Group and commented on issues such as public transport reliability, air quality monitoring, the movement strategy, emergency services access, grant funding and the impact of the scheme on public confidence in future transport projects. In response to a question on air quality, it was noted that data was being collected, but that additional time was required before meaningful conclusions could be drawn.

In bringing the agenda item to a close, the Chairman proposed that the Task and Finish Group's verbal briefing note and six recommendations, which included further exploration of the two preferred options, be submitted to Cabinet for their consideration.

RESOLVED:

The Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the verbal briefing note from the Station Gyratory Task and Finish Group which included six recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be taken to the 8th July 2026 Cabinet meeting for their consideration. These recommendations were as follows:

- Continuing delivery of the Road Safety Audit recommendations via the contractor, which are currently progressing.
- Exploration of configuration changes to the bus stop and cycleway, with the exploration of alternative designs to address safety and usability concerns.
- The Task and Finish Group has specifically recommended:
 - Further exploration of Option 3 of the LUF2 Station Gyratory – Project Conclusion Options document which is ‘Revert to 2 lanes of traffic’.
 - With Parallel exploration of Option 2 of the LUF2 Station Gyratory – Project Conclusion Options document which is ‘Change Cycleway to shared use (bus/taxi/cycle)’ to ensure a robust comparison.
- Clarification of the grant conditions and any potential clawback risk through officer engagement with the funder.
- Members have highlighted the need for a stronger evidence base to support decision-making, including:
 - Teleraam data capture, traffic modelling and signal timing analysis
 - Cycle usage data and validation of existing counts.
- The Task and Finish Group will:
 - Continue to operate as a collective advisory group, contributing to the development of recommendations.

12 Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

The committee reviewed their work programme and noted that it was progressing at pace. Expressions of interest had been received for the Highways Contract Task and Finish Group, with further information due to be circulated shortly.

Regarding Pyrolysis, it was noted that both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman had received an initial briefing from the pyrolysis team. Councillors Mallon and Ritchie Simmons were asked to submit potential lines of inquiry and key questions to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer in order that the most appropriate scrutiny approach could be determined, either through a Task and Finish Group or consideration by the whole Committee, depending on the scope of the issues identified.

It was noted that a site visit and all member briefing in relation to the Riverside project was currently being arranged, with the 15th July having been identified as the likely date.

Regarding the Licensing Task and Finish Group, it was reported that terms of reference had been drafted and were due to be discussed with the newly appointed Service Director Legal and Governance before wider circulation.

Regarding the North West Relief Road, it was proposed that a half day session be held to consider the implications of its cancellation. This would include consideration of the impact on traffic movement, congestion, the A5, Oxon Link Road, the financial situation as well as the implications around the Local Plan, planning, development and infrastructure. A question was asked regarding whether the session would also provide an opportunity for external groups who had concerns about how the project had been handled to make their points and consider whether lessons could be learnt for the future.

It was noted that a report on library services was expected in the autumn and that flooding, as a statutory responsibility of the Committee, would likely be considered in November. Waste would also be considered at a future point.

The Inclusive Growth Strategy was expected to be considered at the committee's January 2027 meeting, ahead of its consideration by Cabinet in April. The Service Director Place Shaping explained that the strategy would support economic development, skills, employment and wider wellbeing objectives, while taking account of emerging devolution proposals and spatial development strategy work.

It was noted that traveller sites which had been raised during the committee's recent work programming session would be referred to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as the more appropriate committee to consider this matter. The matter of school streets had also been raised and this would be further looked into.

Members indicated that they were content with both the proposed work programme and approach for progressing the identified areas of work.

13 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 (3) of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

14 Highways - Six Month Follow Up of Actions Against Task and Finish Group Recommendations

The committee considered the exempt six month update regarding the progress of the recommendations made by the Highways Task and Finish Group.

15 Date/Time of Next Meeting of the Committee

It was noted that the next meeting of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to be held on Thursday, 12th November 2026 commencing at 6.00 p.m.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: