



Council Meeting
Wednesday 18 January 2023

Public and Councillor Questions
and Responses



Derby City Council

COUNCIL – 18 January 2023
PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

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A	Nick Northover	Cllr Barker	Mickleover ward committee
B	Amanda Gouy de Muyncke	Cllr Webb	Staffing crisis in the care sector
C	Clare Wood	Cllr Hassall	Car Free Sundays
D	Ruth Coates	Cllr Hassall	Rethink programme
E	Pauline Inwood	Cllr Hassall	Support for climate change activism
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G	Lucy Giuliano	Cllr Barker	Council questions process
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M	Cllr Martin Cllr Lind	Cllr Webb	NHS crisis
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T	Cllr Carr	Cllr Pearce	Use of Glyphosate
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V	Cllr Care	Cllr Pearce	Hazardous waste
W	Cllr Naitta	Cllr Smale	Pre-payment letters
X	Cllr Graves	Cllr Webb	Varley Street
Y	Cllr Shanker	Cllr Smale	Sinfin waste treatment plant
Z	Cllr Peatfield	Cllr Hassall	High Street motion
AA	Cllr Dhindsa	Cllr Eyre	Budget impact – Neighbourhood impact
BB	Cllr Hezelgrave	Cllr Poulter	Socio-Economic duty
CC	Cllr Care	Cllr Hassall	Highways seating

DD	Cllr Shanker Cllr Care	Cllr Smale	Guildhall Theatre
EE	Cllr Care	Cllr Smale	IT Climate impact

Public Questions

a) Question from Nick Northwood to Cllr Barker

A question was raised at the November Full Council Meeting regarding the lack of published information and ability to scrutinise the decisions of the Mickleover Ward Committee.

I was told by Cllr Barker that the Ward Committee make the decisions on how to engage with the residents and publish the information which I understand is a legal requirement of the Council. Could the Cabinet please explain why after asking the Councillors directly for this information since that meeting, as it is not published and there are no Public Meetings contrary to Cllr Barker's advice.

I am now directed by Cllr Pattison to submit an FOI request for this information. Why reduce clarity and make accountability and scrutiny impossible with what should be available and transparent information surely Cllr Pattison should be able to provide myself with a breakdown as requested?

The governance arrangements for Neighbourhood Boards and Ward Committees are being considered as part of the ongoing Constitutional Review.

We are aware that requirements relating to the publication of agendas and minutes for neighbourhood meetings have been inconsistently applied. In the interests of openness and transparency, officers are working to collate information for all wards for publication on the Democracy Portal in due course.

As Councillor Pattison is neither a Cabinet Member nor a Committee Chair, he has no right of reply in this forum, and I am unable to speak on his behalf. Mr Northover should approach him directly as to why he has been encouraged to follow the Freedom of Information process.

b) Question from Amanda Gouy de Muyncke to Cllr Webb

In light of the staffing crisis in the care worker sector and the sacking of many of these key workers (circa 40,000) due to not being vaccinated against covid - what can the council do to support the reinstatement of these workers if the said worker wishes to be reinstated? And what compensation can be offered to all of these sacked workers who were unfairly dismissed?

The obligation to be vaccinated was also put upon the NHS staff, however, at the eleventh hour this obligation was pulled, and NHS staff were no longer required to be vaccinated. No one lost their job as a result of not being vaccinated against Covid. The NHS staff kept their jobs. This was not the case for care workers. Yet both work in what could be considered environments with vulnerable people. How does the council intend to deal with that to ensure the discrimination that took place is rectified?

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2021 legislation, implemented with effect from 11 November 2021, meant that it was unlawful for anyone who worked in or needed to be deployed in a Care Quality Commission registered care home (which provides accommodation and nursing or personal care) in England to enter. Individuals were required by law to have a complete course of an authorised Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination unless they were exempt.

The Council, along with any other council providing in-house CQC registered residential care, had to take seriously the statutory obligations required by the legislation.

In preparation for the legislative requirements placed on the Council, during the summer and early autumn of 2021 the Council worked with managers and colleagues who worked in or might be deployed in our CQC registered care homes to outline the statutory requirements, and the obligations placed on the Council. A comprehensive communication and engagement process was carried out, together with the development of a policy and guidance to ensure that the Council was legally compliant and that colleagues were aware of the implications of the legislation.

The government subsequently revoked the regulations, and with effect from 15 March 2022 vaccination or exemption as a requirement to work in a care home was no longer a legal requirement.

When the change in the law was announced, the Council contacted any colleagues who had left the Council by reason of dismissal due to the statutory requirement not being met. This contact was to check if the ex-colleagues were interested in returning to work in their former role.

The Council is confident it has discharged the responsibilities that it was legally required to do so by the legislation brought into effect in November 2021. We have also ensured that we have contacted any ex-colleagues who were dismissed by reason of the statutory requirement placed on the Council at the time.

c) Question from Clare Wood to Cllr Hassall

Is the Council going to consider introducing car-free Sundays, as recommended by the International Energy Agency to reduce global demand for oil and create a more sustainable future?

The Council has no plans to introduce car free Sundays. Many citizens rely on legitimate vehicular access for personal or economic reasons. I am also not convinced that current highway law would allow a Council to implement such restrictions and of course, enforcement would be practically impossible.

d) Question from Ruth Coates to Cllr Hassall

Last week on Radio 4 they had an excellent series of programmes on the theme of tackling climate change. They were called “Rethink” and were presented by Amol Rajan.

Each programme had a slightly different take on the theme, for example, personal responsibility, media influence, technology, government responsibility and each had a different panel of experts.

These experts put forward a wide range of solutions, many of which would be very easy to implement, and importantly in these days of financial restraints, more economical than the status quo.

Did you hear the programmes and if not, would you consider finding them and listening on catch up?

A verbal response will be given.

e) Question from Pauline Inwood to Cllr Hassall

This Council declared a climate emergency nearly four years ago and since then the emergency has become increasingly apparent worldwide. Many groups, including Derby Climate Coalition, and individuals, are finding ways to raise the awareness of the general public and politicians at all levels about the absolute seriousness of the situation for all our futures, both about climate change and the ecological emergency.

They are urging that necessary actions be taken to limit the extent of the devastation which is on track to happen in the next few decades, according to scientific consensus, and now becoming obvious for us all to see.

What support of any kind will the Council provide to environmental activists and groups in Derby who are committed to doing all they can to urge corporations and politicians to do what is necessary to change the course of climate change and ecological collapse?

The Council acknowledges and appreciates the work of local groups in raising the profile of this agenda and will work in partnership to support suitable campaigns and projects when they arise.

f) Question from Keith Scott-Savage to Cllr Hassall

Will the Cabinet Member give an assurance that a report on the future of the Guildhall Theatre will go to the Council Cabinet by March this year?

As part of the current MTFP process a review is required of funding for all capital projects across the Council. This will enable the prioritisation of budgets and the plans of the Guildhall will be part of that process.

The timing of any future report to Cabinet will be determined by the outcome of the funding review, however the Guildhall is a valuable asset and as an historic grade 2 listed building, we very much see it being part of the future city centre vision.

g) Question from Lucy Giuliano to Cllr Barker

I've asked a few questions at these meetings. As your answers are only published at 5pm on the day of the meeting it gives us very little opportunity to prepare our supplementary questions, especially given that we are instructed to arrive by 5.50pm for a 6pm start at which point our questions are addressed.

As members of the public, we are required to give you over a week to respond to our questions. May I please therefore ask the following - when do you answer our questions and why are your answers only made available to us an hour before the meeting?

The Local Government Act 1972 requires that the business of a Council meeting is specified on the agenda and that copies of the agenda and connected reports are made available five clear days beforehand. The deadline for the submission of public questions reflects the statutory requirement.

The procedures relating to questions by the public are contained within the Council Constitution. It is for the Full Council (and not the Council Cabinet) to agree arrangements that strike a balance between principles of openness, transparency, accountability, efficiency, and best-value for taxpayers.

We receive a very high volume of public questions, many of which require detailed responses to be prepared by Cabinet Members working with Council Officers. I don't believe that it would be an efficient use of the Council's resources to bring forward the publication time.

h) Question from Helen Hitchcock to Cllr Pearce

What is being done to ensure the physical safety and perception of security for users of the parks and sports facilities? In general, things like better lighting, and specifically, spaces like the sports court at Stockbrook Park, where there is a single point of entry and exit. Well-lit spaces with more than one way to escape, if necessary, should be the standard to reassure the more vulnerable.

External funding opportunities are explored by the Council to improve lighting for parks and sports facilities which may help people to feel safer.

A recent positive example is grant funding received from Derbyshire Environmental Trust for additional solar powered lights at Osmaston Park BMX track.

In addition, the Council is working with partners including the Football Foundation to develop proposals to increase physical activity and improve sports facilities in parks across the city. This includes looking at opportunities to develop or redevelop small-sided sports courts as part of the Football Foundations PlayZone programme.

Work is currently taking place to assess sites for potential development working with communities across the city. This will help to understand the current places and spaces more, barriers to accessing these, and how these could be transformed to make them more inclusive and appeal to a wider audience.

i) Question from Ruth Coates to Cllr Hassall

I am becoming increasingly frustrated by the amount of plastic waste that we as a nation create.

In 2011 the government introduced the plastic bag charge which admittedly had the desired effect of reducing the amount of plastic bags used , yet nearly 12 years later I am still seeing people with shopping trolleys full of plastic bags, and I am always offered a bag when I shop locally sometimes free sometimes for a charge.

There is also the issue of all the unnecessary plastic packaging, some of which isn't recyclable. Even that which can be recycled, much of it isn't for various reasons, contamination in the bins, people just not bothering to make the effort, certain plastics not being included in the kerbside collections etc. Surely the time has come to just ban all this unnecessary plastic.

Would the council consider working towards banning the use of plastic bags and packaging in all local businesses?

Although this is something that Derby City Council would have limited influence over alone, UK wide changes are afoot to address the concerns raised.

Relatively new, wide-ranging environmental legislation, The Environment Act 2021, has been introduced with the intention of protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations. With specific regard to waste, this legislation will allow the UK to move towards a more circular economy, providing the structure to tackle the concerns identified in this question and set enforceable targets for improvement.

The key waste related changes include:

- Extended producer responsibility to make producers pay for 100% of the cost of disposal of their products, starting with plastic packaging. Producer fees will be variable to incentivise improvements to the recyclability of packaging which is a key goal.
- A Deposit Return Scheme for single use drinks containers, incentivising people to recycle more, as well as greater consistency in kerbside recycling collections in England, making household recycling easier and broadening the materials collected to include in the future, plastic films here in Derby.

- Banning certain single use products.

j) Question from Pauline Inwood to Cllr Hassall

The number one issue putting women off cycling is how unsafe they feel on the roads. No doubt this is also true for many men and is no doubt the reason many parents do not encourage their children to cycle to school.

The Department of Transport is providing funding to Councils for training in improve the design of active travel schemes, including school safety zones. However, congestion on city centre and residential roads, along with speed, poor parking, and road rage incidents, will still be an obstacle to active travel, and create unpleasant and unsafe urban situations for all, including motorists.

Does the Council accept that the proposed improvements will achieve little if motorised traffic continues to provide unsafe roads for walkers and cyclists, and that we should make the reduction of traffic and its speed a priority?

The points you make are general and I accept that we must not be complacent about road safety, but I do believe that Derby roads are safe. I do understand, however, that people can have very different perceptions. Our roads, footways and cycle lanes could always be better. It's well known nationally that all local highway authority maintenance budgets are insufficient.

I hope that you would acknowledge that restriction is a blunt tool, particularly when we know that there are many factors that determine the type of trips people make and how they make them. Speed restrictions are regularly reviewed in the city, as in most local authority areas, to ensure they are appropriate and can be supported by Police enforcement.

As you will be aware, the Council is making around £10m of improvements to support active travel infrastructure as part of the Government's Transforming Cities Programme. In addition, I am very pleased to confirm that the Government has very recently announced indicative funding to Derby which will help with potential development of active travel schemes.

As a city we should also celebrate the work of Cycle Derby. This small team continues to deliver cycle training in schools and across communities since it started over 15 years ago. Many of the programmes they initiated have been copied by other local authorities and training organisations.

Finally, I would highlight the innovative work being done in Derby to implement 'School Safe Havens'. This has received national attention because as you say, traffic and parking is an issue for nearly every school in the country and is incredibly difficult to tackle. The Safe Haven scheme has been developed using Future Transport Zone funding and these schemes aim to radically change the environment around schools. They challenge behaviour associated with the 'school run', introduce 20mph zones, controlling access with enforcement to create an enhanced safe area.

k) Question from Lucy Giuliano to Cllr Hassall

On 21 January, it will be the third anniversary of the tragic death of Josephine Gilbert. She was a keen cyclist who competed at local, national, and international level. She was killed by a lorry driver while cycling on Ashbourne Road in 2020. She died at the scene of the collision at just 25 years old. May I please ask how many pedal cyclists have been killed or injured since 21 January 2020 on Derby City roads?

Before giving you the cold data, I would ask that we remember that road safety statistics represent personal tragedy for real people and their families and friends, just as in the example you have shared. The most up to date information I have is from 21 January 2020 to the end of August 2022, because there is a reporting time lag. In this period there have been two fatalities on cyclists on Derby roads and 28 incidents resulting in serious injuries, due to:

- Four cycle only due to loss of control
- 10 cyclists colliding with stationary vehicles
- 20 as a result of vehicles passing closely to cyclists

Member Questions

l) Question from Cllr Graves to Cllr Pearce

There is a new policy within the council to charge residents for replacement bins.

Please explain how the council can charge for the emptying of the bins through the council tax precept but not have a responsibility to provide the householder with an appropriate receptacle?

I have a resident that has moved into their house, but the bin was not present. The council have advised the resident needs to pay £25 for a bin.

If the resident does not pay the money, should they suspend council tax payments until one is provided?

It seems a closed shop as the bin has to conform to the council standard bin and therefore the council has a monopoly on selling the bins. That is what the council is doing, selling bins so that residents have the privilege of being charged by the council to empty it.

In any other form of 'business' this would appear on Rogue Traders.

I really don't think this policy has been thought through.

The council provides each household with a set of wheelie bins free of charge. We encourage all residents to take care of the bins they are provided with by taking simple steps to avoid loss or theft.

Despite this, we were receiving over 1000 bin delivery type requests per month. This is something the council cannot financially sustain, so to reduce this burden, where black bins have been lost or stolen, damaged, or where we provide additional black bin capacity to a household, a fee of £25 for administration and delivery is charged. The income generated is offsetting costs, providing savings for the Council and ultimately, the taxpayer.

For health and safety, we only collect waste from bins provided by the Council because we know these meet the required standards and this is common practice. However even if this wasn't the case and customers were to shop around, they would find that a replacement bin costs much more than the fee charged by the Council.

While the cost of the collection and disposal of household waste is included within Council Tax, this does not specifically include the provision of the bins themselves. Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows the council to specify the most appropriate container to be used and determine how they be provided. Accordingly, while we provide first bins free of charge, replacement black bins are now chargeable.

m) Questions from Cllrs Martin (i) and Lind (ii) to Cllr Webb

- i) The Derbyshire health and care system declared a critical incident over 13 days from New Year's Eve and remains unable to cope. Given that many people in Derby are not receiving the help they need and are becoming fearful, what role has the Council played in responding to this current crisis?**

The Council has been involved in all the relevant additional escalation and assurance meetings with the NHS and we were particularly focusing our efforts on making sure hospital discharges could continue during this time for individuals who needed access to social care support. In addition, the Council engaged with the communications leads in the NHS to ensure messages about the critical incident from all public bodies were aligned.

- ii) Royal Derby Hospital recently declared another critical incident, what additional measures have and are the Council putting in place to help alleviate pressure on the hospital and what is the Tory led council doing to lobby the government to demand additional support for our health and social care services?**

The Council's main role has been to support the NHS with facilitating hospital discharges, but also to assist individuals at risk in the community where an admission could be avoided (such as using assistive technology or providing access to care provision at home).

The administration has used all avenues to lobby the government for additional funding for adult social care. This includes raising with the city MPs and writing directly to the Secretary of State. As Cabinet Member, I have also invited Helen Whatley, Minister for Care, to come to Derby so we can talk about the things we are doing locally, as well as the challenges the health and social care system face every day.

n) Question from Cllr Repton to Cllr Eyre

Where are the Council with regard their Strategy Review for Libraries?

The Localities Team, working with Community Action Derby, worked on a review of Community Managed Libraries and together have produced a document called “Community Managed Libraries Review”

As part of the MTFP process, the Council has gained an understanding of the implications of the current financial position and has factored that into the MTFP proposals that have been put forward for Community Managed Libraries.

These proposals were at an Executive Scrutiny Board on 16 January 2023, which you chaired, and are also out to public consultation in the MTFP budget proposals until 26 January 2023.

Community organisations are being encouraged to express interest in wanting to deliver services within the community library buildings that have clear benefits for their communities. The deadline for expressions of interest is 3 February 2023.

After this deadline, further discussions will take place.

o) Question from Cllr Whitby to Cllr Williams

Which aspect of Ashgate Nursery's business model, does the council believe is responsible for its deficit?

As background information, Ashgate Nursery School is federated with Central Nursery School.

Ashgate Nursery School's forecast end of year financial overspend (31 March 2023) is expected to be £134,580. Central Nursery School's forecast end of year financial overspend (31 March 2023) is expected to be £311,835.

This is a combined overspend across both nurseries of £446,415.

The main factors that have led to Ashgate Nursery School's financial deficit are falling numbers of children on roll and a reduction in additional childcare income due to COVID-19, which is not returning to pre COVID-19 levels.

As more parents now routinely work from home, this has reduced the number of parents purchasing additional childcare sessions. Income from these sessions helped to support the nursery's running costs and the loss of this income, combined with lower numbers of children on roll, has, unfortunately, led to significant financial difficulties.

p) Question from Cllr Shanker to Cllr Poulter

Derby put together a strong and robust bid to be the headquarters of Great British Railways. We both know that our bid was the best. What have you done in recent weeks and months to push for a decision whilst the Government has been dithering and delaying on this?

The Council has continued in recent months, to communicate with the various Secretaries of State for Transport and Ministers of State for Transport, to ensure that the case for Derby as the preferred location for the GBR HQ is clear. We have done this directly through written correspondence and also via our three constituency MPs, who have lobbied strongly on the city's behalf throughout. We have also engaged directly with the GBR transition team, whose analysis will be critical to any recommendation made to DfT. It is hoped that an announcement on the creation of GBR and the location of the HQ will be made soon.

As we have pointed out on numerous occasions, a timely announcement around the preferred HQ location will create the opportunity for the selected host location to start to develop a relationship with the GBR transition team, and to build some firm foundations for the organisation's future development and growth.

q) Question from Cllr Peatfield to Cllr Hassall

What is the remaining balance of the £3m climate pot and what is the spend breakdown?

I can confirm that balance remaining is £2.5 million, and there are several substantial projects in the pipeline which officers need to work through the detail.

r) Question from Cllr Dhindsa to Cllr Pearce

You have indicated budget cuts to Streetpride services and staffing. Which areas of service delivery will this effect?

The Council has had to make difficult decisions in order to meet a balanced budget and this includes identifying where potential savings can be made.

Within Streetpride all services have looked at where savings and efficiencies can be made with proposals put forward to reduce street cleansing, grounds maintenance and inspection frequencies.

In addition to this some contracts have been renegotiated within waste disposal to realise further savings.

The public consultation for the Council's budget proposals is open until 26 January and we'd urge everyone to have their say.

s) Question from Cllr Hezelgrave to Cllr Hassall

When will the Council be recommissioning and reprogramming the traffic lights and crossings on the Kingsway roundabout?

As Cllr Hassall explained at the November Council meeting, a project is in the design stage which will modify the traffic lights, roundabout and provide pedestrian crossings over the A5111. This will form part of the Highways and Transport capital programme in 2023/24.

t) Question from Cllr Carr to Cllr Pearce

The Council has in the recent past reduced its use of Glyphosate. What are its current proposals to continue to reduce its use on our streets and open spaces?

The products we choose are carefully selected to be as safe, effective, and cost friendly as possible, whilst also monitoring the potency of their active ingredients, such as glyphosate, to remain low and effective. We have introduced some new products that have a much lower glyphosate content, than conventional herbicides, helping to reduce their concentration.

Reducing glyphosate use by 25% this year on our city's streets, highways, kerbsides, and wall sides this year.

We routinely explore new technologies to further reduce our use of herbicides, most recently including flame and hot foam techniques, although they are costly, inefficient, and largely ineffective.

We benchmark ourselves against similar authorities to ensure best practice and in 2021, 24 authorities responded to the APSE network query of "Does your local authority currently use herbicides containing glyphosate?". All the respondents replied stating they used herbicides containing glyphosate.

The Council endeavours to deliver an effective weed control programme within the city and will continue to keep its use of approved herbicides to as low as reasonably practicable whilst trialling new weed control technologies as they come to market.

u) Question from Cllr Testro to Cllr Pearce

Three years after originally being told that it would be done, I am delighted that work will begin on Canterbury Street on the 19th January 2023. Are there any plans in the next two financial years for St Andrews View to receive overdue attention?

A verbal response will be given.

v) Question from Cllr Care to Cllr Pearce

Persistent Organic Pollutant (POP) regulation is moving forward with soft furnishings now being considered as hazardous waste. How is this affecting the operation of Raynesway and what messaging is being given to the public about this?

HWMartins Waste Ltd, the site operators at Raynesway HWRC have confirmed their compliance with POPs requirements.

HWRC customers will not see any difference to how such waste is managed at the HWRC as existing practices are compliant. Therefore, there will be no proactive communication on the subject, but as with other enquiries, site staff will be able to advise customers should they ask, or signpost them to the council if necessary.

Soft furnishings which are not waste will continue to be separated for reuse. Waste soft furnishings will continue to be collected and treated in the same manner as it has been in recent years. It will be bulked with other residual household waste and sent for incineration at compliant locations. During the incineration process the POPs will be destroyed.

w) Question from Cllr Naitta to Cllr Smale

Residents have been in touch with me regarding pre-payment meters they are struggling with their bills. On average it's costing them £12.00 per day on low usage; in harsher weather it can go up to £20.00 per day.

Whilst the energy companies are making huge profits the poorest in society are suffering. What is this Tory led administration doing to support these residents?

As part of the Household Support Fund 3 (HSF3), we are using the Warm Space network across the city to distribute 4,000 energy awards, with a total value of £200,000, to help residents with the cost of gas and electricity.

The 52 organisations signed up to providing warm spaces, will provide a hot drink, a meal, as well as helping residents access financial support.

We understand the challenges our residents are facing with cost-of-living increases, and in particular how this is creating fuel poverty and in some cases fuel exclusion in our more vulnerable communities.

We will be writing to central Government to explain the situation in Derby and ask for urgent action to be taken to address the underlying issue.

x) Question from Cllr Graves to Cllr Webb

On the 8 December 2020 I asked the Derby Homes Chief Executive if the Derby News story about 28-30 Varley Street was true.

These are homes that could house two more families at a time when we are extremely short of housing stock.

These houses were leased to NACRO on a peppercorn rent to provide valuable support to people in the city. This family project ended over a year ago is now used for NACRO's national maintenance co-ordination team, completely unrelated to the original purpose.

The uncontested story states that *"It is inappropriate, and possibly illegal, for the Council (through Derby Homes) to provide properties free of charge to a national charity where the usage is not providing a benefit to the City."*

Is this still the situation?

I can confirm that the premises at 28-30 Varley St are currently leased to NACRO, an organisation that has and continues to provide valuable support to people in the city.

NACRO have stated that they do not require the properties on Varley St. Officers are in the process of agreeing a date for them to vacate these premises, which we anticipate will be in the next couple of weeks. These negotiations are also dealing with any outstanding dilapidations resulting from NACRO's use of the houses.

Once vacated the houses will be refurbished and be incorporated into the Council Housing Stock.

y) Question from Cllr Shanker to Cllr Smale

Back in November 2021, you approved a report on the Incinerator to look at options, indicating at the time the work would take a few months. Over a year and more later with Millions more spent what reassurances can you give Sinfen & Osmaston residents that you will never try and recommission this plant?

Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council are developing a business case that compares two options. The options are:

- To rectify and use the facility and,
- To close the facility and dispose of the councils' waste using a third party.

Once this work is complete Cabinet will reconvene to review and decide how to proceed.

z) Question from Cllr Peatfield to Cllr Hassall

What progress has been made on Labour's High Street motion that was passed one year ago?

A new City Centre Programme Management Board has now been established, chaired by the City Council, and bringing together a number of key partners and agencies with the common focus of the regeneration of the city centre.

Participant's organisations include Homes England, Environment Agency, Arts Council England, Historic England, Marketing Derby, D2N2 LEP, Severn Trent, London & Continental Railways, University of Derby, and East Midlands Development Company.

This Board now oversees:

- Delivery against the new emerging City Centre Ambition
- Prioritisation of future projects/interventions
- Alignment of the city centre programme with priorities of key partners and local/regional strategies

In addition, the new Derby City Lab has been established, located on St James Street, led by Marketing Derby, and supported by the City Council, the University of Derby, Lathams and Clowes Developments.

The City Lab is based on the concept of Urban Rooms in cities such as London, Amsterdam, and Shanghai. The Lab houses Marketing Derby's Investor Showcase and hosts a rolling programme of dynamic exhibitions focused on ideas to regenerate Derby. Its purpose is to help local communities better understand the evolution of the city and to engage them in shaping its future.

aa) Question from Cllr Dhindsa to Cllr Eyre

How will your proposed budget cuts impact on Neighbourhoods' Teams and their work?

Although the current economic situation means we are having to make unprecedented savings in our budget, our ambition for Derby remains the same.

One of the themes in our Council Plan is for a resilient Derby, with neighbourhood teams coming under this theme. The Council has been improving how we work in localities as part of the Better Together theme in the Council Plan; Neighbourhoods teams are key to this way of working with strong connections and community relationships.

Better Together seeks to review and bring together key teams and partners to work with communities to build resilience and deliver services in a place-based way.

Neighbourhood teams are proposed to merge with other teams to create multi skilled locality teams and will continue to work across the city with residents and community groups.

bb) Question from Cllr Hezelgrave to Cllr Poulter

Can you summarise the impact of the incorporation of the Socio-Economic Duty into Council practice?

The Council report template now requires officers to detail the socio-economic implications of the decisions that are being recommended to elected members. Guidance has been published on the Council's intranet to support report authors to consider a wide range of socio-economic issues when preparing reports.

Colleagues from the Policy and Democratic Services teams have undertaken further research to ensure the Duty can be implemented in a meaningful way. To date, meetings have been held with the Equality Trust, as well as with counterparts at other local authorities who have successfully adopted the Duty. Consideration has been made, to include the Duty in our current Equality Impact Assessments or have a separate method for assessing socio-economic impact. Further legal advice is needed to understand the implications, as previous advice did not support this addition.

It is important to emphasise that wholesale adoption of the Socio-Economic Duty across all areas of the Council's business will take time and resources. However, we are continuing to identify opportunities to use our insight and wider collaboration with partners to inform our understanding of socio-economic need in the city, as well as our interventions, for example, recent work on the Cost-of-Living strategy.

cc) Question from Cllr Care to Cllr Hassall

For some people having somewhere to stop when walking enables more exercise to be taken and reduces car journeys. Does the Council yet have a policy to enable more seats on highways land to include both maintenance and sponsorship of seats?

The most sensible approach to new public seating in the highway, is that it is brought forward within Neighbourhood funding priorities or as part of specific capital schemes. Obviously, any on-going maintenance must be considered where it creates revenue pressures for the Council.

dd) Question from Cllrs Shanker and Care to Cllr Smale

- (i) What progress has been made by this administration on re-opening the Guildhall if any?**
- (ii) What is the current situation with repairs to the Guildhall and when is this likely to be reopened?**

As a listed building, we have a duty of care to preserve the building for future use.

Local repairs have taken place where required and an extensive programme of repairs would be undertaken to enable the building to reopen to the public. This would be alongside considerations around future capital investment.

ee) Question from Cllr Care to Cllr Smale

How are we altering the way that we manage and use our websites to reduce the carbon footprint of our IT operations, particularly given the emphasis to increase access to Council services online?

The Council employs low carbon footprint data centres, including efficient cooling using rainwater runoff, hot aisle technology, PV local energy capture, 100% renewable energy use, moving from diesel backup power generation to hydrogen, and formally committed to be climate neutral by 2030.

Large infrastructure is commissioned that maximises power usage efficiency and has a clear commitment and journey towards net zero.

The Council has moved its laptop and desktop IT Service provision to “Net Zero” certified devices.

Redundant devices are now re-tasked for use to provide digital access devices for inclusion rather than being traditional recycling.

The Council has deployed Mobile and Agile technology so that all areas of the Council can work from anywhere, traveling only when absolutely necessary.