



Derby City Council

**Council Meeting
Wednesday 18 December 2013**

**Public and Member Questions
and Responses**

COUNCIL – 18 DECEMBER 2013
PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
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Public Questions

A	Keith Burchell	Councillor Banwait	Recent Changes to Waste Collection
B	Simon Bacon	Councillor Russell	Emails to Councillors
C	Dorothy Skrytek	Councillor Russell	Question Tampering
D	Paul Chadwick	Councillor Bayliss	Council House Trees and Planters
E	Simon Bacon	Councillor Banwait	Sinfin Waste Treatment Plant
F	Dorothy Skrytek	Councillor Banwait	Renewable Obligation Certificates
G	Paul Chadwick	Councillor Bayliss	Quotes for Council House Trees and Planters

Councillor Questions

H	Councillor Webb	Councillor Tittley	Public Health Budget
I	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Banwait	Brown Bin Collection Service
J	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Banwait	Unwanted Brown Bins
K	Councillor Holmes	Councillor Rawson	Children and Young People Budget Proposals
L	Councillor Holmes	Councillor Banwait	Adverse Winter Weather Preparations
M	Councillor Holmes	Councillor Banwait	Sculptures at Derby's Speakers' Corner

a. Question from Keith Burchell to Councillor Banwait

Despite several requests from Derby Climate Change members to Derby City Council asking them to provide figures indicating the changes to greenhouse gas emissions that replacement of small blue and brown bins and blue paper sacks by the large blue bins will cause, no reply has been received. How did the council take the emissions issue into account when making the recent changes to waste collection?

The change from small blue bins, blue sacks for papers and orange bags for cardboard to a single larger bin makes the service easier for residents of Derby to use and has resulted in an increase in materials recycled, saves the tax payer money and reduces the number of vehicles required to collect the recycled material therefore greatly reducing the emissions from collection vehicles. Whilst there was no detailed life-cycle and emissions analysis undertaken of the materials collected, we do not anticipate any significant change as a result of the new co-mingled collection.

The introduction of a charged for garden waste collection service will also reduce the number of vehicles required to provide this service, the miles travelled, fuel consumed and therefore emissions as a result of collection. There will be no measurable difference in the emissions produced by the materials themselves whether they are composted at home, composted after being collected in a brown bin or if they collected in a black bin and go to landfill. We do however encourage residents to compost their garden waste to produce compost that will improve the soil and to reduce the amount of material going to landfill.

b. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Russell

Please set out to me the process and time frames that councillors and cabinet members have to follow when responding to members of the public via email.

All Councillors have a derby.gov.uk e-mail address, which is published and promoted through the website. They are likely therefore to receive many e-mails from the widest possible number of sources.

Councillors have options as to how to deal with e-mails:

- they can manage their own e-mail account
- they can use support provided by a small Members' Services support team
- they can use a combination of the two

Cabinet members are likely to receive more e-mails, as they have portfolio responsibilities, as well as their ward work. To compensate they have an enhanced level of support, through the Members' Services function, with shared PA support.

During the induction process, when councillors are first elected, they are made aware of the available support and of the importance given by the council to customer care and prompt response times. They are encouraged to respond to e-mails and telephone messages within 48 hours, to reassure the correspondent or caller that their issue has been received and is being dealt with.

Because many of the questions councillors are asked are complex and will need officer input into a response, it may often be the case that the reply within 48 hours will only be a holding response with follow up timescales, or notice that the issue has been delegated to someone else for response.

Councillors are not monitored on response times and in most cases officers will be unaware of incoming e-mail traffic to a councillors [.derby.gov.uk](mailto:derby.gov.uk) mailbox. The confidential content of many of the e-mails would make it inappropriate for there to be open access to the mailbox.

If a councillor is on holiday or ill the response times will inevitably lengthen, but in that circumstance an 'out of office' message should be used to assure the correspondent that the e-mail has been received.

c. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Russell

Our previous questions were tampered with; will this sort of measly action occur with the question of city council acknowledging that dioxin, also produced from incineration, causes birth defects and disabled children?

I was very concerned about your statement, about previous questions being 'tampered with', so asked officers in Constitutional Services, who compile the Public Questions document, to investigate what you might mean.

We do indeed owe you an apology, but I can also reassure you that it was human error, not a 'measly action'.

The question you submitted for the 18 September meeting was forwarded to Councillor Banwait exactly as you had sent it and the response was submitted on the basis of your unaltered question.

The error occurred only when we collated and published the Q&A document for use at the Council meeting.

That document was created by copying and pasting the new Q&As into the template document used for previous meetings.

In doing that, part of one of the questions from the previous meeting was not deleted and it corrupted your question on 18 September, by giving it an additional unrelated paragraph. I repeat that this problem arose only at the last minute and in no way affected the answer. I apologise for the frustration it has caused and reassure you that a new safeguard has been introduced to prevent a repeat.

Given that you now have an explanation for the error, I address the second part of your question, which is not about dioxins or incineration, rather about question tampering, with a simple 'no' – public questions to Cabinet Members will not be tampered with.

d. Question from Paul Chadwick to Councillor Bayliss

Who was given the job of sourcing and ordering the trees and planters that were destined for the Council House pavement?

The trees and planters were designed and sourced by the Derby City Council landscape architects team. BAM, the main contractor for the construction work at the Council House, was then instructed to purchase the trees and planters and to position them in the external public realm area at the front of the Council house. Following their removal from the Council House, two of the planters have been re-used at the bottom of Green Lane on a city centre public realm project and the other four will be used as part of the landscaping scheme at the new multi-use sports arena at Pride Park.

e. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Banwait

If the controversial Sinfin incineration plant was operational now, how much would Derby City Council be paying per tonne for its waste to be burnt?

The proposed waste processing plant in Sinfin is not due to be operational until 2017 and so the question is hypothetical. Detailed financial and other models are in preparation for moving to financial close in the new-year and this will include information on the cost of providing the service and anticipated income resulting from the generation of electricity from the plant.

f. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Banwait

Is the Council aware that they will not make any money from incineration and will instead waste £25 million; please outline the details of the Renewable Obligation Certificates which you have been led to believe you will obtain?

The Council and our partners are currently reviewing the financial and other models required to move to financial close on this project and that includes a consideration of both the Renewable Obligations Certificate (ROCs) and Contracts for Difference (CFDs) that is expected to replace it. Further guidance is expected to be available on the Contracts for Difference in the new year and will form part of the report to be considered by the Council's Cabinet in due course.

g. Question from Paul Chadwick to Councillor Bayliss

How many quotes were obtained, what were they, and what was the name of the supplier(s)?

BAM Construction, the main contractor on the project, procured the trees and planters as part of the landscape package of work which in turn was part of the main contract for the refurbishment and extension of the Council House. They procured the trees from a company called 'Street Life'. The total cost of the six planters was £39,000 and the total cost of the six trees was £7,500. We have and will be re-using the planters in other schemes across the City.

h. Question from Councillor Webb to Councillor Tittley

In which financial year did the budget for Public Health transfer to the City Council, was the budget ring fenced/protected and if so how long was it ring fenced/protected for?

The Public Health budget transferred to the City Council during the 2013/14 financial year. The budget was ring-fenced and it is ring-fenced for the financial year 2014/15 and 2015/16. However, the amount for 2015/16 is currently unknown.

i. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Banwait

Would the Cabinet Member please detail the number of households, both ward-by-ward and the city as a whole, that have purchased a permit to join the Council's Brown Bin Collection service?

As at Tuesday 11/12/2013, 3174 households have signed up to the brown bin collection service.

The system is not set-up to extract ward data, however, to give you an indication of where in the city our current customers are, we've been able to produce the following percentages from the available data.

Area	% of customers by area
Allenton	1
Allestree	16
Alvaston	8
Breadsall	0
Chaddesdon	12
Chellaston	4
Darley Abbey	3
Derby (not specific)	15
Littleover	8
Mackworth	2
Mickleover	13
Normanton	1
Oakwood	5
Shelton Lock	2
Sinfin	1
Spondon	7
Sunnyhill	1

j. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Banwait

In relation to the collection of unwanted bins from households across the City, what is the average return rate per-ward of Brown Bins?

We have not yet completed our collection project for unwanted brown bins, we will complete early in the New Year and will then be in a position to finalise these figures. However, so far the average citywide rate for returned brown bins is running at 30%. This ranges from 14% to 64% across the city.

k. Question from Councillor Holmes to Councillor Rawson

Would the Cabinet Member explain the meaning of 'no recourse to public funds' in relation to the 2014/15 budget proposals, page 39?

Some migrants to the UK have 'no recourse to public funds' this means that they are not legally eligible to claim any UK state benefits or access certain publically funded services for example public sector housing tenancies. This is connected to their immigration status as advised by the immigration authorities and is not locally determined.

Children's Services do however have an overriding duty under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to make provision to Children in Need who might otherwise be at risk of harm or be at risk of being received into Local Authority Care this includes provision of practical support including in extremis emergency financial assistance.

I. Question from Councillor Holmes to Councillor Banwait

Would the Cabinet Member offer an update as to how prepared the Council is to deal with adverse winter weather across Derby?

I am pleased to confirm that the Council is well prepared to deal with adverse winter weather across Derby.

- We have a fleet of six gritting vehicles ready to carry out treatment on six principal gritting routes. We also have a spare to cover breakdowns. Ploughs are ready to be fitted to the gritters if necessary.
- All our gritting fleet is fitted with GPS navigation which allows our Duty Officers to know exactly when and which routes have been treated.
- We have 12 drivers on 24/7 standby from 1st October until 30th April.
- In severe snow or ice, staff from grounds maintenance and street cleansing are drafted in to help with salt spreading and snow clearance.
- We have two pick up mounted spreaders and one trailer mounted spreader that are used for the city centre shopping areas, district shopping areas and Pride Park.
- Forecasts are monitored and checked at least twice a day by the winter duty officer who is also on standby 24/7 to react to any changes in the forecast; this is aided by our new weather station which provides real time information - ground temperature etc. (the Met Office also use data from the station to produce more accurate forecasts for the city).
- We spread salt to prevent ice from forming on approximately 171 miles (275 kilometres) of the network when frost, ice or snow is forecast.
- Salting is normally completed in between two and four hours (depending on the spread rate) and timed subject to the weather forecast.
- At the start of the season the salt barn was full (3,800 tonnes). The gritters spread about 2000 tonnes of salt onto the highway network in an average winter.
- We have 191 grit bins across the city – these have all recently been topped up.

m. Question from Councillor Holmes to Councillor Banwait

Can the Cabinet Member explain the decision to spend £18k on sculptures put up at Derby's Speakers' Corner and confirm when he signed off the commissioning and installation of the artwork with officers?

It was always intended to create an innovative artwork as part of Derby Speaker's Corner. Public art is one way to help deliver Derby's ambitions, through the Derby Plan and wanting people to have an inspiring place to live. The artworks further celebrate Derby's place in democracy and its role in protecting and enhancing the welfare rights of the citizens of Derby.

The funds were provided through the City Council's Regeneration Capital Programme. In developing the piece the public artist worked with local people who ultimately became the physical art work. Through QR codes this physical piece becomes a video of that person and they then share a memory to the viewer.

The artworks were agreed and signed off through myself and officers from Regeneration and Neighbourhoods prior to installation and launched as part of the Feste celebrations in September.

To date we know that over 2,000 individual hits have been made on the artwork proving them to be a success.