

COUNCIL – 13 JULY 2011
PUBLIC AND COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

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Public Questions

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B	Dorothy Skrytek	Councillor Holmes	Clarification of phrase
C	Valerie Beech	Councillor Skelton *	Normanton Medical Centre
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Councillor Questions

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* In the absence of the portfolio holder, these questions were answered by Councillor Hickson, Leader of the Council.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

a. Question from Colin Underhill to Councillor Holmes

Derby has existing AQMA's; Derby has the associated monitoring points in place along the old Inner Ring Road route.

Predicted figures were included in the "Connecting Derby" statement of case.

I assume that there is a plan in place to site new monitoring points along the new Inner Ring Road and allied points. Would Derby City Council please advise the Citizens of Derby as to where we are in the pollution monitoring/detection process?

Monitoring locations have been and continue to be assessed in line with government regulation and local policy regarding the protection of health.

Amendments are due imminently to reflect the changes presented by the implementation and completion of Connecting Derby.

It is important that we continue to capture accurate data regarding the levels of pollution and so additional monitoring may be necessary.

We will also amend, remove or add to the existing Air Quality Management Areas accordingly.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

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b. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Holmes

Can you tell us what you understand “Deaths brought forward” to actually mean?

The term ‘Deaths Brought Forward’ (DBF) is commonly applied when looking at statistical evaluations of air quality effects at a population level. It represents a reduction in life expectancy to a fraction of a population which is already in very poor health.

Such evaluations are typically applied at the strategic level to quantify the cumulative potential health outcome on populations measured in the 100,000s and subject to changes of exposure in orders of the magnitude of 10 micrograms per cubic metre.

Therefore in summary; DBF evaluates the potential impact of 10 micrograms in weight of a particular substance for every metre cubed volume of air. That impact is presented as a potential reduction in life expectancy specifically to those within a population whose health is already very poor.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

c. Question from Valerie Beech to Councillor Skelton

Does the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health support the closure of Normanton Medical Centre and, if not, what action will she take to keep the surgery open?

As the Leader of the Council I want to ensure the people of Derby have good access to health and social care services, and it goes without saying that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health shares that aspiration.

The decision to close the Normanton Medical Centre has been quite rightly scrutinised at a recent Adults, Health & Housing Scrutiny Commission on the 20th of June 2011.

NHS Derby City (PCT) has made considerable investment in primary care recently. There is now greater flexibility and capacity within GP practices across all areas of Derby City.

My understanding is that NHS Derby City has made an evidence based case for the closure, which has been accepted by the Commission. The fixed term contract with the provider was due to end on 31 March 2012. The PCT has provided reassurances that all of the people registered with the medical practice at the Normanton Medical Centre can be accommodated at other local GP surgeries.

The PCT team will be working closely with the outgoing medical contractor to ensure a smooth transition to new arrangements. Patients are receiving individual correspondence and any who require assistance with this process are being directed to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

Given these facts, I believe due process has been observed and a difficult but correct decision has been

taken by the PCT supported by the Scrutiny Commission,
the appropriate body to challenge such decisions.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

d. Question from Andy Findlay to Councillor Carr

To allow more members of the public the opportunity to attend Full Council meetings I would ask the Council to change the timing of meetings during the winter period.

Because of reduced bus services in the evening, and many people don't want to be out on dark, cold nights, can I suggest that these meetings are held on Saturday mornings?

Thank you, Andy, for this question.

You've come to the right place to have it answered, as it is Full Council where our annual schedule of meetings is agreed and it is Full Council where any changes would need to be made.

First of all, I don't rule out your proposal. Far from it, you raise some very valid points and this is certainly something worthy of further exploration. It's an idea that every member in this Chamber will have a view on and, as such, it's something that we need to take away and give some serious consideration to.

That is not to say it would be without challenges. In the short-term, at least, we are not masters of our own destiny in terms of location as we are reliant on the availability of this room here in the Assembly Rooms. Of course, in the longer term that will cease to be an issue, as we are on target to move back to the Council House by October next year.

There is also the issue of the officer support required for this meeting. That is not to say arrangements could not be made to hold Council Meetings on a Saturday (or daytime during the week). But clearly, there are advantages at the moment to having officers available to make preparations throughout the day on a Wednesday and we'd need to look seriously at the logistics if we were to go with your idea.

But I agree it's something we do need to look at. For that reason, I've asked officers to prepare a report for a future meeting of the Members' Steering Group so this idea can be fully discussed. That meeting is attended by councillors from across the political spectrum so provides an excellent forum for proposals like this to be aired and discussed.

Thank you again for the suggestion, and we'll get back to you to let you know where it takes us.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

e. Question from Tony Dunn to Councillor Jones

Could you please explain the logic behind the decision by Derby City Council to not only close the cafe at the Queens Leisure Centre, making staff redundant and denying users of that centre the chance of a drink or snack after exercising, but then immediately announcing its intentions to open another café less than three hundred meters away within the closed Silk Mill museum?

The Café at Queens Leisure Centre has been replaced with a new vending operation that will allow customers to enjoy both drinks and snacks after exercising. It is unfortunate that we have had to make people redundant, however by reverting to an enhanced vending operation that offers a broad range of snacks and drinks we have been able to offer the same level of service at a reduced cost and subsidy.

The concept of opening a cafe at the Silk Mill is an ambition, and is part of an attempt to re-open the ground floor of the facility as soon as possible, and in response to a clear desire to make the best possible use of the building. We recognise the potential of Cathedral Green and that this would be enhanced by a catering offer at the Silk Mill; however this will only be taken forward on the basis of a sound and robust business plan.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

f. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Poulter

News reaches us that Vital Earth, the provider of biodegradable waste treatment via in vessel composting at Ashbourne, is proposing to stop taking cardboard and paper at its plant potentially impacting on the ability of Derby residents to recycle. What action is the city council taking to make sure that waste materials such as cardboard and paper items will continue to be recycled diverting them from landfill or forms of incineration?

National Standards for peat free compost have changed and as a result cardboard and paper will no longer be acceptable in the waste stream for the brown bins later this year. Waste Management has been working with our partner Vital Earth, to ensure that in future materials that go into the brown bin will meet the new standards.

Waste Management are in ongoing discussions with it's partners, that process recyclable materials and compost, as to the best option to ensure the diversion of cardboard from landfill in maximised.

A project team has been set up and part of their work involves an operational analysis of both how cardboard will be collected in the future and how Waste Management ensures that the collection process is straightforward and easily understood by all Derby's Residents.

The Council will also be considering how it communicates with residents to ensure the transition takes place as smoothly as possible.

It is anticipated that Council Cabinet will approve any proposals by early September 2011, with a start date of late November / early December for the new card collection scheme.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

g. Question from Penny De Abreu to Councillor Poulter

The recent installation of lighting in the Strutt's Park Conservation area is causing major disruption to people's lives including sleep disturbance due to the disproportionately tall columns and brightness of the lamps which has resulted in our homes being flood lit and the night perpetually bright. How and when is the Council going to correct this major lighting blunder?

The lighting installed in Strutt's park is providing the same levels of lighting as required in all the residential areas within Derby. The lamps used within the streets are exactly the same as the lamps used on standard PFI streets in non-heritage areas and the only difference is the casing and shape of the lantern. The purpose of the street lighting is to provide a specific defined level of light that is measurable. In cases where residents have complained about light levels, measurements have been taken at night to confirm that the levels are within acceptable limits to meet the current lighting standards.

The new lighting is brighter in most cases than the older lighting that has been removed due to more stringent standards and there are occasions when residents feel the lighting is too bright. Where possible adjustments are made to the optic settings to reduce light or louvres are

fitted to reduce back light onto properties but ultimately the light levels and column heights are set to meet the requirements of UK and European standards.

The service provider (Balfour Beatty) will always investigate and attempt to resolve complaints regarding lighting but experience has shown that the reaction to new lighting is a subjective measure and as such it will not always be possible to resolve every complaint to the residents satisfaction.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

h. Question from Colin Underhill to Councillor Jones

The Darley Park Terrace has a signing advising that it is “temporarily fenced off”. Please could you give us an idea as to where we are in the “investigate” and “remedial work” taking place and how long is temporary?

The paving on the terrace has collapsed in a number of places making it unsafe for public use. Initial investigation indicated that there were a large number of voids under the terrace and that remedial work was required to make the terrace safe.

The council has approved funding to enable work to carry out the required work. Some further investigations has been carried out in the last 2 weeks to try and gather more information on the extent of the voids and to identify what options are available for filling the voids.

As the site is of archaeological interest and is adjacent to a listed building discussions are ongoing with the Conservation team on identifying the best solution that will not impact on any archaeological interest.

Due to the need to secure the various approvals for the work, prepare specifications and seek tenders the start on site has been delayed, however the work is a high priority.

The earliest we could undertake the work is over the summer period, however due to the scale of the work this would mean that the café area immediately adjacent to the site would not be available for use. Discussions with the Friends of Darley Open Spaces have indicated that they would prefer the works to start in the Autumn thereby maintaining the café amenity through the summer holidays when the park attracts high numbers of visitors.

The preferred option for the work is to commence on site during the second week of September 2011 which is immediately after the Darley Park Concert. The terrace is not used as part of the concert, and therefore this combined with the comments from the Friends of Darley Open Spaces and the café owner, suggest that the most acceptable timing for the works is September to November 2011. The works are expected to take approximately six weeks and I can confirm that listed building consent is not required.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

i. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Poulter

The following reveal how Derby City Council is failing in sustainable waste treatment; -

1/removal of recycling banks from outside supermarkets, forcing people who have no recycling bins to throw waste into the blackbin,

The Council is committed to increasing the recycling of household waste. We provide a comprehensive three bin system to 96% of properties in the City and already achieve 48% recycling rate, making us one of the best performing Cities in the country. The successful collection of recycling from most people's homes makes it unnecessary for us to provide recycling banks across the city. We have saved Council tax payers £100,000 per year by withdrawing this service. We will now concentrate on bringing the remaining 7,000 properties onto the kerbside scheme over the coming months.

2/ Removing a brown and blue bin collection at the beginning of June, thus ensuring that recycling totals will be reduced, making it seem as though the people of Derby are not recycling

The refuse collection service will reduce our impact on the environment as the refuse vehicles will drive less miles, using less fuel and fewer vehicles on the new rounds. We will also save the Council tax payer a further £500,000 per year by making collection services more efficient. The

review that we made did involve changes to the service but this will result in little reduction to the total tonnage of recycling collected this year.

3/Adding a blackbin collection at the same time so at the end of the quarter it looks like Derby people are throwing more in the blackbin and not recycling

To ensure that we continued to provide a good service to local people and to minimise damage to the environment from fly tipping we provided a limited number of additional collections so that no household had to wait more than two weeks for a black bin collection. This was just a short term arrangement and was withdrawn after the first 2 weeks of the change over.

4/signing an unsustainable and polluting contract with the incinerator developer RRS/Shanks, which calls on the City and county council to procure 13,000 tonnes of blackbin waste monthly - of a certain organic and calorific waste plus moisture content

The City has achieved a 48% recycling rate and want to increase this to 55%, however, the authority has a duty to dispose of waste which cannot be recycled. The contract with RRS will provide a long term solution that avoids landfill.

5/together with the county council using £50 million pension fund money to pay for a 172,000 tonnes of CO2 emitting high carbon incinerator -

The City Council is funding its contribution of the £50 Million capital for the project from prudential borrowing not from any pension fund.

6/ teaching children that Deaths Brought Forward and incineration are somehow 'sustainable'

This is untrue.

Exactly how is the City Council trying to reduce the production of waste, reuse of waste resources and recycling of waste resources, in line with the EU Waste Framework Directive and Waste Prevention Programme?

The Council is currently embarking on a review of its current waste strategy, which will embrace the requirements and guidance given by Government in its recent Waste Policy Review published in June of this year.

This will involve addressing the issues of waste collection, waste minimisation, ongoing education and campaigning, working in partnership with local people, as well as how we might wish to process the recycle and compostable material collected.

The waste prevention programme identified in the review of waste policy is primarily targeted at businesses to reduce waste although part of the guidance indicates that

local authorities should explore how householders could be rewarded for effectively preventing or reusing waste. The Council will assess the practicalities of this as part of its own waste strategy review.

The EU Waste Framework Directive has been adopted by the United Kingdom under the Waste Regulations (England and Wales) 2011. These regulations will be addressed by the Council in the development of its waste strategy.

The Council is also aware that in line with the guidance from the waste policy review, Derby's future waste strategy should be based not only on tonnages of material diverted away from landfill, but also that it should take note of reducing the environmental impact of greenhouse gases such as carbon and methane.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

j. Question from Tony Dunn to Councillor Jones

As somebody who last week slipped on the bare tile floor in the Queens Leisure Centre changing rooms could you please explain if the removed plastic matting is to be replaced or reinstated as whoever was responsible for their removal failed to realise the danger of the combination of water, bare tiles and spilt talcum powder?

The Centre has a slip, trips and falls Risk Assessment in place which covers the changing rooms and this is reviewed on an on going basis. If the customer completed an accident report form then this will be used to review the risk assessment.

Although many swimming pools do not use matting in the changing areas the Council received funding from the Government's free swimming initiative and this was used to purchase the matting. The mats were introduced two years ago and are only provided in certain areas of the Gala Pool changing rooms at Queens Leisure Centre.

The changing rooms are routinely checked throughout the day by staff; Operations Managers, Customers Service Team Leaders / Assistants and Lifeguards, supported by a team of cleaners on duty throughout key times of the day.

As Queens LC is predominantly a wet side facility the changing room tiles in all the changing rooms will be slightly wet. Due to the mats starting to tear in certain areas they have been removed to prevent the possibility of customers cutting their feet, and we are currently looking at the costs for replacing the matting.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

K. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Poulter

Landfill tax is a powerful method of driving landfill diversion which also brings revenue to the government. As landfill falls so will tax incomes hitting the government hard and suggestions now circulate that incineration may in future be taxed in relation to its link to carbon emissions. Does the council recognise the threat of such new taxes in future years and what if anything has it done to factor this into the current residual waste contract?

Currently, Derby City Council pays £56 for each tonne of “active” waste it landfills and government intends to maintain the landfill tax increases towards a floor of £80 per tonne in 2014/15. Derby City Council’s waste strategy along with that of Derbyshire County Council is to maximise recycling and composting so that not only the burden on council tax payers is reduced, but also to make our contribution to National recycling and composting targets. At present in terms of recycling and composting of household waste, we are amongst the best performing City Councils in England, achieving nearly 48% household waste recycling, composting and reuse rate during 2010/11

In April 2010, the previous Government decided to drop plans to increase the rate of Landfill Tax paid on bottom

ash from incinerators, as it feared that it would alter the economic model for developing technology.

Also, there was no specific reference to an “incinerator tax” in the current Government’s recent review of waste policy which was published in June. Indeed the review declared that “Government will ensure that waste management legislation does not have unintended consequences on the development of the energy recovery industry.”

The review also indicated that the Government will also provide the necessary framework to ensure the correct blend of incentives is in place to support the development of recovery infrastructure.

In keeping with the recent Government review on waste policy and going forward, Derby City Council will develop its waste strategy to target those waste streams with high carbon impacts as well as report and measure waste in carbon terms.

Therefore, given the Government’s current suite of fiscal measures for the specific diversion of waste away from landfill, and its commitment to encourage the development of energy recovery for that waste which cannot be recycled or composted, the Council cannot speculate on

any unknown, unquantified and unlikely taxes at this stage.

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2011

L. Question from Penny De Abreu to Councillor Poulter

How is it that a multi million pound contract for replacing lights in Derby has been so evidently mis-managed particularly in conservation areas, not properly costed and residents not consulted even though a leaflet was expensively produced but never delivered?

The Street Lighting PFI is a major investment in the City. The programme has already replaced most of our old, unattractive and inefficient lighting with modern streetlights that consume less electricity and enable local people and visitors to enjoy well-lit streets where they live, work and socialise.

The replacement project has been well managed and is months ahead of schedule and on budget. By the time darker evenings come along this autumn we will have transformed every area of the city into a lighter and safer place.

In addition to replacing the old lights with new and better ones, the Council has invested an extra £100,000 to provide attractive heritage style lighting in the key conservation areas of the City. This is a significant investment at a time when the Council has made major savings in other services.

Local groups were widely consulted and Balfour Beatty has delivered schemes based on the views expressed, the lighting requirements of the area and the funding available. Balfour Beatty produced a leaflet, in house at modest cost, for each area where heritage lighting is being provided; unfortunately the distribution of this leaflet was patchy in some areas.

The enthusiasm for the heritage lighting has meant that we have not been able to provide it in all the places that people requested. The requirements to achieve specific lighting levels on busy roads and other areas have also determined some of the choices made.

The Street lighting PFI is delivering greatly improved lighting that is cheaper to run and is months ahead of schedule to complete the installation phase. The contract is for 25 years, guaranteeing a brighter street scene for many years to come.

m. Councillor Repton to Councillor Poulter

Why is Derby City Council spending money on heritage lighting in non-conservation areas of Darley, while at the same time failing to supply such lighting to conservation areas?

The PFI contract will install "standard" specification columns and lanterns (i.e. non-heritage) in all areas except under the following situations:

1. Apparatus on a list of streets shown in Schedule 4 Appendix 13 that have defined equipment
2. Apparatus that is already of a special nature found within listed boundaries for district centres as outlined in Schedule 4 Appendix 27
3. Apparatus that is already of a special nature found within the defined boundary for the city centre as shown in Schedule 4 Appendix 27
4. Apparatus that is already of a special nature found within listed boundaries for the 15 conservation areas as defined in Schedule 4 Appendix 15 (parts 1-15)

The heritage boundaries have been followed carefully when designing the new street lighting for the conservation schemes and only apparatus inside those boundaries have been replaced with heritage equipment.

During the design of the heritage areas it was realised that no heritage equipment was specified for most of the streets within Strutt's Park other than West Bank Avenue. It was decided that a 'less' expensive solution would be installed on West Bank Avenue so that the saving would help to pay for additional lanterns to be installed in other streets within the Strutt's Park area.

n. **Councillor Naitta to Councillor Williams**

Now that all the scare mongering has finished and all the children centres are to stay open and provide the excellent services that they do, the residents are looking forward to the opening of the Oaklands Avenue Surestart Centre, something that the ward councillors have been campaigning for.

Could you please let us know when the centre will open so the residents of Blagreaves Ward can benefit from children services?

Response:

Oaklands Avenue is a satellite of the main Austin Sunnyhill children's centre. As a satellite it has continued to offer services to the community throughout the reconfiguration process.

Services are currently offered on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday these include messy and creative play and Baby Clinics. Services will be increased in September once some interim staffing shortages, linked to maternity leave have been resolved.

So to sum up. Oaklands Avenue is open and Children's services are already being delivered.

o. Councillor Naitta to Councillor Holmes

Many residents are concerned about the proposed City Park in Blagreaves Ward which is part of the Derby Plan. Their concerns are now the council plans to not pursue this as a park and instead stand by and watch it sold off for housing.

Can you give a commitment that this is still earmarked as a park as part of the Derby Plan?

The land in this area is identified in the Local Plan as potential park land.

The work underway on producing the Core Strategy for land use will allow consultation on the proposed use and, as such, both the community and councillors will be able to submit their views on what the land should be used for as part of that process.

I can therefore confirm that in the current local plan the land is earmarked for a park.

P. Councillor Naitta to Councillor Poulter

Good Evening Cllr Poulter,

Having had several calls from residents about the potholes on Stenson Road (200 one resident tells me) and the uneven road surface leaving pools of water that splash people as they are about to get into there cars going and coming from there houses.

Could you give me an indication if this work can be carried out before winter?

Stenson Road has been identified as one of the roads where we will be spending some of the Department for Transport grant.

The grant was allocated to cover the excess damage caused by the adverse weather of last winter.

Works will involve large scale patching as opposed to just filling individual potholes.

The work is programmed to take place in August, however, there may be a slight delay as we have to work closely with Network Rail on the section of Stenson Road that crosses the railway line. This should not cause a major delay and we fully expect to have this work completed before winter.

q. Councillor Naitta to Councillor Poulter

Good Evening Cllr Poulter,

Talking to businesses in the Blagreaves Ward I have been doing case work around parking long-term outside Stenson Road post office, Blagreaves Lane shops. One thing that has become clear to me is the lack of knowledge about the ownership of these pieces of parking space.

Can the cabinet member responsible look into this and create a policy that would benefit the council in identifying these pockets of land?

The Council maintains accurate records of land which it owns and of areas of public highway. I understand that it is not always clear to those who use these areas whether they are privately owned or whether they form part of the public highway. There is usually some form of definition between public highway and private land but this can often be as subtle as a change in surfacing or a kerb.

Unfortunately I don't believe there are any easy or cost effective solutions which would make it easier for people to know, when parking, the status of a particular piece of land.

I can advise that the area of parking adjacent to Stenson Road post office forms part of the public highway while the parking adjacent to shops on Blagreaves Lane takes place on private land.

r. Councillor F Khan to Councillor Poulter

Potholes -

Can the Cabinet member confirm what the average waiting time is for a pothole repair and explain why the quality of repair has diminished?

The length of time taken depends on the severity and location of the pothole. The most dangerous are repaired within one hour of our contractor being notified (1.5 hours during out of hours times). This is often a temporary repair to alleviate an immediate danger.

Other less dangerous potholes can be repaired within 24 hours of notifying our contractor, this is still an 'urgent' response but the contractor will usually make a permanent repair on these avoiding the need for a follow up.

All other non-urgent potholes are generally repaired within 4-10 weeks when they can be programmed in by the contractor in a more effective and efficient manner.

We do have performance indicators on the urgent potholes and over the last twelve months the percentages achieved within timescale are:

- 1 and 1.5 hour responses – 92%
- 24 hour responses – 84%

With regard to quality we have been working closely with Carillion to improve. If specific locations are a cause for concern then we will investigate and, where necessary, we will instruct the contractor to return at their cost.

S. Councillor F Khan to Councillor Hickson

Royal Mail Sorting Office -

Can the leader/Chief Exec of the Council confirm what actions have been taken to date in discussing with Royal Mail the retention of a Sorting office for Derby?

The Chief Executive and I have had numerous contacts with Royal Mail Sorting Office in Derby since the announcement of the restructuring of Royal Mail Collection and Processing Services across the whole of their Midlands Region.

Councillor Khan will already know that the Derby Depot has three broad functions, which are:

- Collection and Processing
- Delivery (ie the postmen)
- Parcels and Packages

It is the collection and processing operation that is being rationalised. This involves seven such depots across the Midlands and, wherever possible, Royal Mail is looking to rationalise the use of floor space, and to use the most practical floor space and modern equipment possible.

The proposal for Derby is that the collection and processing function will close and be moved to Nottingham, because Nottingham simply has more modern and up-to-date machinery, and their building is also more modern and the operation is all on one floor. This is an unfortunate circumstance, but one in which we must understand that this is a business decision by the company.

The decision is not final, and I am assured by Mark Woodward, the Derby Manager, that this will affect 200 collection and processing jobs directly, and that the proposal is out to consultation with staff and trade unions. I am also told that within the proposed package, there is a considerable financial allowance for increased travel costs for those staff who opt to move to the Nottingham operation.

I believe that the main trade union, the CWU, has put forward a different proposal, but I have not had sight of this. Whichever option is chosen, I am assured that Royal Mail will go through the standard procedure of consultation with any affected staff. However, at present, Royal Mail are not sure whether there will need to be any voluntary, or even compulsory, redundancies. I am also assured that this will have no direct impact upon the quality of service given to

residents of Derby in the form of their postmen service nor the parcels and packages delivery service.

Councillor Khan will also be aware that this is one of a number of potential economic impacts on Derby arising from company restructurings, acquisitions, and rationalisation of property. The Council's actions in response to these have full cross-party support, and I can assure Councillor Khan that I will continue to engage with the other two party Leaders in all of our discussions with the Royal Mail and other employers going through periods of change and uncertainty over the next few months.

T. Councillor Higginbottom to Councillor Poulter

Further to the recent call-in on this matter [door-to-door bus service], where there was cross-party support to revise the decision based on human rights, what provision has been made for the residents of Mackworth who see this service as a lifeline?

Mackworth is fortunate in having high quality, high frequency, commercial bus services which have low floor access and provision for most users with mobility difficulties. The Arriva service 28/29 runs every 5 minutes and provide accessible transport connecting Mackworth to the city centre.

The cost of the “door to door” service was not sustainable and the decision to remove funding for the service was taken following extensive consultation, consideration of the options and having considered all the needs of users. The Council’s Director of Legal and Democratic Services has confirmed that the decision was made with regard to human rights and this was demonstrated within the comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment which supported Cabinets decision.

The consultation identified the supermarket service as being a priority for some people and as a result we have made arrangements for the service to be maintained until the end of the financial year with a further subsidy of £23k

and a small contribution from the users of the service. In the meantime we will continue to work with operators, organisations and the users to develop alternative provision.

In making its decision to remove funding for the 'door 2 door' services, as detailed in the Equality Impact assessment, Cabinet agreed to do everything possible to identify and encourage alternative travel arrangements. We are continuing to explore a number of potential alternative travel options which might be able to replace the door 2 door services. Cllr Skelton indicated that it may be possible for taxi's to provide transport to supermarkets for groups of people and this is one of the options being investigated. It is still too early to be definitive about what if any solutions might be secured.

Officers will be writing to existing users of the door 2 door service and will continue to keep them advised about any developments required to service their needs.

U. Councillor Hillier to Councillor Jones

The agenda tonight is aptly concerned with the announcements surrounding a number of industries in Derby, but we should not forget the ongoing cuts to the public sector which are also affecting jobs and services and which people rely on. Smaller though they might be, the cumulative effect is growing. My question concerns part of this cumulative effect.

Since the agreement of your budget last year affecting library services, could you now tell me the total reduction in library opening hours across the City compared to last year, giving an example of the new opening hours?

New library opening hours, agreed by cabinet on 15

February 2011, came into effect on 4 July. A new, tiered approach has been introduced as follows –

- **Tier 1**, comprising the Central Library only – 38.5 hours per week
- **Tier 2**, comprising 11 libraries – 31.5 hours per week each
- **Tier 3**, comprising 3 libraries – 28 hours per week each

Total weekly hours across all 15 libraries have fallen from 570 to 469, a reduction of 17.7%. However the change varies from library to library, and at three libraries – Allenton, Chellaston and Mackworth – opening hours have increased.

V. Councillor Russell to Councillor Skelton

Cuts to council services are having a devastating impact on the most vulnerable in our community. The cuts to services for the elderly and disabled are hitting particularly hard, most recently with the reduction in care services, now being given only to those with high priority need, and the removal of much relied upon dial-a-ride bus services.

Can the Cabinet Member confirm the Council are committed to care for the elderly and as such there will be no cuts to Day Care services in the city?

I can confirm the Council is committed to the care and support of older people – we are also committed to improving choice for people through the increased take up of personal budgets. We have a responsibility to make the best possible use of resources which is why Cabinet on 19th July will be considering a report on day centres for older people. That report re-affirms that all older people with eligible needs will continue to receive care and support from the Council.

W. Councillor Dhindsa to Councillor Hickson

What plans does the Council have to maintain current funding for neighbourhood managers and support staff to celebrate the success of Ward-based Neighbourhood Boards and Forums that empower residents to better communicate and highlight gaps in services that they experience in their street and neighbourhood; hold the Council and other agencies to account and thereby improve local services.

As with all services, the newly established City and Neighbourhood Partnerships are currently reviewing priorities, structures and roles in light of budget pressures and changing demands.

The review will incorporate draft proposals on how to support and improve Neighbourhood Boards and Forums to effectively empower and engage local residents. The review will also address the particular gaps identified by Members and communities to ensure the needs of local neighbourhoods and communities are adequately reflected in the delivery of City and partner agency priorities and outcomes.

The Neighbourhood Boards and Forums and individual elected Members will be consulted on the proposed review of the service and will have an opportunity to help

shape future roles that reflect the needs of the neighbourhoods.

X. Councillor L Winter to Councillor Holmes

Why does Derby City Council not have a policy to ensure that every child that the council transports from home to school and back, and on school activities is transported in a vehicle with one seat belt per child?

The Council's position has not changed since November 2010 when a similar question was submitted to me as Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment.

Therefore, I would re-affirm that the law covering the fitting of seat belts is contained within Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations.

The regulations require that taxis have seat belts fitted to all forward facing seats. However, in Hackney carriages, if occupancy of the taxi requires the use of the pull down rear facing seats then belts are not required. There are no requirements for buses to have seat belts although coaches and minibuses must have them fitted.

All transport arranged by the Council at the request of schools complies with the necessary legislation.

Buses are used to take school children to swimming lessons at either Moorways or Queen Street for example - travelling relatively short distances within the City and mainly on 30mph roads.

Any school that wishes to do so, can opt out of this arrangement and hire a coach with seat belts fitted. That remains an option for each individual school to decide upon.

Y. Councillor Bolton to Councillor Williams

Will the Cabinet Member tell me how many schools have expressed an interest to seek conversion to Academy Status and what will the impact be on the City Council services and budget?

15 schools have expressed an interest.

In terms of impact this will depend on the number of schools who become Academies and the current services they buy from the LA. Even as Academies, schools may decide to buy back LA services if they are efficient, effective and value for money. Several LA Services could be affected if schools decide to purchase elsewhere e.g. personnel, payroll, school improvement services. The LA will try to continue offering and managing these services (until they become non-viable). An alternative approach is that we actively go down the route of traded services in a more proactive way.

When a school transfers to an academy, the land and buildings transfer and an adjustment is made to the balance sheet to reduce the Council assets. This is a balance sheet transaction and has no effect on the revenue financing of the Council.

For day to day financing (revenue) the Dedicated Schools Grant is adjusted by two factors.

Firstly the delegated budgets of the maintained school transfers to the academy. Secondly a per pupil amount of the centrally held Dedicated Schools Grant is also transferred to the academy (this represents services that are provided by the Council on the schools behalf that are funded by the **DSG**).

The Academy also receives additional funding for the additional responsibilities transferred from Council budgets but currently the Council's budgets are **not** deducted for this. There is currently double funding here which will no doubt be addressed in the forthcoming schools funding review.

Z. Councillor Shanker to Councillor Hickson

Following the judgement in the High Court of Justice in relation to the waste plant proposed for Sinfin Lane, can you confirm what Derby City Council will now do to uphold its democratic integrity in which you were involved, while successfully defending the Planning Control Committee at a thorough public enquiry.

The Secretary of State has to re-determine the matter afresh. But there is no absolute obligation to hold an inquiry to do so. In deciding what approach to take the Secretary of State has to have regard to the law, appropriate guidance and the specific circumstances of the case.

It is open to the Secretary of State to invite written submissions, on the relevant points of challenge, from the interested parties. Although Secretary of State may feel it justifies reopening of the inquiry so as to take evidence to address all those issues, or opening a new one but concentrating on those aspects of the decision which were challenged.

Normally the new inquiry would concentrate on those aspects of the decision which were successfully challenged rather than hearing all the evidence afresh.