



Derby City Council

**Council Meeting
Wednesday 4 March 2015**

**Public and Member Questions
and Responses**

COUNCIL – 4 March 2015
PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
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Public Questions

A	Dorothy Skrytek	Councillor Afzal	Incinerator Costs
B	Dorothy Skrytek	Councillor Afzal	Dioxin Autism Risk

Councillor Questions

C	Councillor Wood	Councillor Martin	Arena Seated Capacity
D	Councillor Graves	Councillor Banwait	Cabinet Research Officer (1)
E	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Banwait	Cabinet Research Officer (2)
F	Councillor Williams	Councillor Banwait	Leader's Surgery Posters
G	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Afzal	Pedestrian Injuries
H	Councillor Graves	Councillor Banwait	Chellaston Academy
I	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Banwait	Moorways e-Shot
J	Councillor Williams	Councillor Banwait	Government Funding
K	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Afzal	CCTV Enforcement
L	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Martin	Moorways Pool Funding
M	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Martin	Arena Event Timings

a. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Afzal

How much is the incineration plant going to cost the council, including yearly interest payments? If interest rates go up between 3 and 5 per cent, please include those costs too.

The Council has committed £25m of its capital programme as a 'contribution' towards the construction of the New Waste Treatment Facility in Sinfin. Based on the current interest rate projections of 3.71% for 2017/18, which is the anticipated point at which the borrowing will be taken, the annual fixed interest payments are forecast to be £927,500 per year for 25 years. The remaining share of the City's cost of the construction of the New Waste Treatment Facility is built into the annual unitary charge to the contractor.

b. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Afzal

New studies have been released in the US showing that exposure to air pollution in pregnancy doubles the risk of autism in children ([Medical Express](#)).

In future court cases regarding the effects of incineration pollution whose side will the council be on - polluting industrial companies or the public?

The responsibility for emissions from the plant sits within the Environment Agency and it is they that issue the permit to operate.

The Council works within the statutory framework on pollution control set by central government, and also follows relevant guidance on such matters that may be issued by the Environment Agency.

By their nature, legal proceedings are evidence based. Should the Council be involved in any legal proceedings in the future on such matters, for whatever reason, it will be guided in the conduct of those proceedings by the legal advice and representation it receives, at the material time.

c. Question from Councillor Wood to Councillor Martin

What is the maximum seated capacity of the Derby Arena if holding a concert event?

The maximum seating capacity for a concert event at Derby Arena is 3,600. The actual seating capacity for each individual concert will depend on the seating layout that is chosen which best suits the staging and technical requirements of the event.

d. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Banwait

With budgets so tight, was the creation of a Cabinet Support Officer a good decision when two Labour Cabinet Members work part-time, paid for by the public purse, for Chris Williamson MP in a similar role?

The employment of cabinet members outside of their council capacity is quite obviously not a factor in determining a departmental structure.

If the questioner is inferring that the council should not employ people where cabinet members are skilled to do the same job, then it is a surprising assertion. I would have expected the questioner, as a former Cabinet Member himself, to know that a councillor is precluded by law from working for the local authority to which they are elected.

e. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Banwait

In light of the need to set a balanced 2015/16 budget, is the Labour administration still committed to the grade 7 (£23,945 to £27,323) post of 'Cabinet Research Officer' created in September 2014?

The post was created on a temporary basis, so the concept of it being an on-going "commitment" for the Labour administration or anyone else is nonsense. The budget for 2015-16 does not include provision for this post.

Given the questioner's on-going fixation with this post, it is surprising that he hasn't been paying closer attention.

f. Question from Councillor Williams to Councillor Banwait

Last week there were two life sized posters with a picture of Councillor Banwait advertising the Leader's surgery in the Council House reception. How many other posters, banners and leaflets are there in the city with pictures of the Leader of the Council on and how much did they all cost?

The two roll banners produced to advertise the Leader's surgeries cost approximately £75.00 each to print. They were designed in house and printed locally in Derby. There are no other materials produced to promote the Leader's surgeries.

Design of all Council materials that include the image of the Leader is done in house at no additional cost these include the Council Plan, Council Tax booklet, Your Councillors leaflets for the different wards and Councillor and Leadership poster in the Council House reception.

g. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Afzal

At a recent cabinet meeting, the Leader of the Council defended his administration's policy of CCTV enforcement at bus stops by stating it was a "safety measure to avoid potential injury or even death to pedestrians."

Would the Cabinet Member please detail the number and nature of reported injuries to pedestrians, in the year prior to the roll-out of CCTV enforcement, where a vehicle parked in and obstructing a bus stop was identified as the cause or a contributory factor?

The enforcement of no stopping restrictions at bus stops brings potentially significant benefits for bus passengers. The Council has, over many years and different leaderships, seen fit to invest in public transport by providing high quality bus stops many with raised kerbs and facilities for pedestrians. Inconsiderate and inappropriately parked vehicles can make access for buses impossible or difficult and ultimately it is the passengers who are disadvantaged particularly those who have mobility requirements and parents with pushchairs.

More than 18 million bus passenger trips are made each year in our city. The bus station alone accommodates approximately 12 million passenger journeys demonstrating just how important the bus is to the residents of the city. Maintaining high frequency service that provides real opportunities for everyone in the city to access essential services is important and something I think needs support from the Council.

While the information that we have about the difficulties caused by vehicles stopping in bus stops is mainly anecdotal and gathered largely from complaints made by bus passengers and bus operators there are a few statistics that may help answer Cllr Poulter's specific question.

In the year up to April 2013, before CCTV enforcement of bus stops, school keep clear markings and pedestrian crossing zig zag markings commenced, there were 110 pedestrian injury collisions across the city recorded by police. Twenty-three of these collisions occurred near parked vehicles resulting in four serious and 19 minor injuries. Three of the collisions occurred at or near bus stops.

In the most recent 12 month period where police statistics are available the number of pedestrian injury collisions increased slightly to 115 although the number of collisions occurring near parked vehicles fell to 18 (two serious and 16 slight injuries). There were two collisions that took place at or near bus stops.

h. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Banwait

How much did it cost the authority to provide legal advice to Chellaston Academy offered by the Labour Leader Councillor Banwait?

There have been no legal costs incurred in respect of Chellaston Academy or an issue relating to Chellaston Academy.

i. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Banwait

On the 13 February 2015 a 'What's happening in Derby' e-shot was sent out that featured a lead story using the wording, 'Moorways Pool saved from Government cuts' and 'We've saved Moorways from Government cuts for the next 12 months thanks to a management restructure saving over £600,000.'

This mail shot has not only potentially breached protocols but the process of drafting, authorising and instructing its delivery bypassed the Director of Legal & Democratic Services, the Chief Executive and the Director of Strategic Services who have confirmed they were neither consulted, aware of its content or that it was being distributed.

Would the Cabinet Member please provide details of the process that led to the circulation of this mail-shot, including the council officers and departments that were instructed to prepare and distribute it?

Content for the 'What's Happening in Derby' e-shot is put together by the Communications Division. It routinely contains information that is timely and relevant to those who have subscribed to receive it each month. On this occasion, content related to Moorways Pool was included as it was timely, but an error was made in the wording of that paragraph. Approval is not sought for content in the drafting stage, but it is circulated for comment and amendment before sign off and distribution.

On this occasion, the comment, amendment and sign off processes were not followed by the team members involved.

Subsequently, the Head of Communications has spoken to those team members and stressed the importance of following the correct sign off processes. For future editions of the e-shot, the drafts, including amended versions will receive sign off from the Head of Service at each stage prior to final approval and distribution. Those officers named above will also have sight and approval prior to distribution.

It is a most unfortunate error that the Division takes very seriously and offers its apologies to all concerned.

j. Question from Councillor Williams to Councillor Banwait

How much external funding has the Conservative led government given Derby City Council since 2010?

None.

k. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Afzal

At a recent cabinet meeting, a report detailed an “over achievement of income targets in traffic and transportation” and it confirmed this related to CCTV enforcement revenue.

Would the Cabinet Member provide:

- **The actual cost of operating the CCTV enforcement activities across the city in this period?**
- **The original income revenue target, for CCTV fixed penalty enforcement activities across the city?**
- **The actual current income revenue, received to date from CCTV penalty notice enforcement activities across the city?**

The introduction of CCTV enforcement cameras enabled the Council to enforce certain restrictions including school keep clear markings, zigzag markings at pedestrian crossings and bus stops and bus lanes. The introduction of CCTV cameras was in direct response to demands from the public and partners including bus operators.

Council Officers originally anticipated that approximately 2000 to 2500 Penalty Charge Notices would be issued via evidence gathered from CCTV cameras during 2014/15. It was anticipated that this might generate approximately £55,000 in income with approximate annual costs of £20,500 for equipment maintenance and £3,500 for administrative costs resulting in a surplus of approximately £31,000.

Up to the end of February 2015, £43,000 has been achieved from enforcement action using the vehicle-mounted CCTV camera but it is the static cameras, particularly at the Nottingham Road bus lane and the Railway Terrace bus stop, that have detected considerably more abuse than had previously been thought would be the case. The income from these cameras now totals £196,000 bring the overall income total for CCTV camera enforcement to £239,000. Costs associated with the operation of the equipment have increased proportionally bringing the potential surplus to £182,000.

A requirement of Cabinet's decision to allow CCTV enforcement to commence was that the Council's actions were publicised and that both warning signs and warning notices were issued in each location. It was anticipated that the publicity campaign and the issuing of warning notices for a number weeks prior to Penalty Charge Notices being issued would have a significant impact of the abuse that was occurring at these locations and it has come as something of a surprise how slowly driver behaviour is changing. The number of contraventions occurring at the rail station and on Nottingham Road has reduced significantly in recent weeks and it is anticipated that this will drop further.

I. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Martin

Following the recent announcement by the council regarding Moorways Swimming pool, you stated during an interview on Radio Derby that it was “extra money from government” that led to Pool “being saved” from closure.

Can you please offer details of the government funding you were referring to?

The ‘extra money’ is actually a smaller reduction in government funding cuts than anticipated at the time we commenced the budget consultation and was announced as part of the Government’s final settlement. This has allowed the Council to adjust its forecast in setting the overall budget. I also referred to measures we had taken within the Council to cut the budget spend which were rendered necessary by the severity of the cuts from central government, without which the small difference in the anticipated settlement would have made no difference in terms of the Council's capacity to save valuable services.

m. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Martin

Would the Cabinet Member please provide the “get in” and “get out” times that are being quoted to promoters in regard to any enquiries to hold major concert events (such as a touring rock or pop act) appearing at the Derby Arena?

We do not quote ‘get-in’ and ‘get-out’ times to promoters as these will be specified by the promoters themselves in liaison with the event team. The exact times will be determined by their particular production requirements.

It is anticipated that on occasions, work will take place overnight to turn the infield from a sporting activity programme to an event format in order to reduce the impact on the programme.