

Council Meeting Wednesday 19 January 2022

Public and Councillor Questions and Responses



COUNCIL – 19 January 2022 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

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Public Questions

a) Question from Nathalie Hollingworth to Cllr Hassall

Would the Council consider making the whole of Derby City a Clean Air Zone to help protect residents from particulate matter thereby improving their health as well as contributing to reaching the net-zero carbon target?

Derby's Air Quality Action Plan has been approved by Cabinet and sets out a wide range of air quality improvement measures designed to keep Derby within the National Air Quality Objectives/regulations, including particulate matter (PM).

Clean Air Zones (CAZ) were developed by the Government to address Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) issues associated with road traffic emissions. Given that vehicle tailpipe emissions contribute only a negligible amount to overall particulate emissions, a CAZ is not generally seen as an effective solution.

Whilst there is a National Objective for PM₁₀, Derby City Council have not been at risk of exceeding this target for over 12 years. Although there is currently no national legal standard for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), the Council does include measures within its formal Air Quality Action Plan designed to improve PM emissions within the city.

The recently passed Environment Act 2021 includes a requirement for the UK Government to create a National Target for PM_{2.5} by October 2022. Once this is done, the Council will review any local measures that need to be considered to meet this standard.

b) Question from Brendan Connelly to Cllr Smale

Can you please explain why you are proposing to increase council tax to the maximum legal amount allowed for the 4th year running when your election manifesto before coming to power clearly said it would be the minimum amount?

The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget. National Central Government funding for Local Government has been rebalanced over the medium term meaning that there is less support from Central Government Grants and more reliance on local taxes to fund the activities of the Council.

Over recent years the Council has experienced a huge demand in its services, particularly care services supporting the most vulnerable children and adults in Derby. This has led to a significant cost increase in these services.

Despite an ambition for the Council to keep local taxation to a minimum, it is has been necessary to increase Council Tax to fund the significant cost and demand increases which the Council has faced.

The Table below illustrates the major funding sources and financial pressures facing the Council over recent years with a comparison to 2010/11. This shows the reduction of Core Government Grants and the increased reliance on Council Tax as a major source of Council Funding.

Funding	10/11	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
- Retained Business Rates	-	58.900	57.840	60.803	62.709
- Core Government Grants	109.649	18.898	12.524	12.728	13.868
- Council Tax	80.161	93.027	97.323	102.552	107.597
- Estimated Surplus/(Deficit) on Collection Fund (one-off)	1.248	-	0.588	-0.941	-1.967
- Better Care Fund	-	19.720	21.864	23.951	24.583
- Public Health	-	19.258	18.749	19.274	19.756
- Other Grants	23.765	4.980	11.720	19.833	29.827
Total Resources Available	214.823	214.783	220.608	238.200	256.373
Pressures	24.226	6.76	12.388	13.616	22.754

c) Question from Ruth Coates to Cllr Hassall

What are the council's plans for the Friar Gate Goods Yard? How much longer is it going to stand empty and derelict?

The Council has been working with the site owner Clowes for some time to bring forward a scheme at Friar Gate Goods Yard.

Clowes' latest proposals are for a mixed-use, office-led scheme, which has been presented in outline terms to Council officers.

Consideration is being given to this scheme becoming the subject of a bid to the next round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The deadline for this has not yet been announced but is anticipated to be Summer 2022.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Clowes and DCC has been drafted for further comment and we will release further details as soon as we are able.

d) Question from Pauline Inwood to Cllr Hassall

In preparing the new Local Plan, I understand that stakeholders are to be involved during 2022. With regard to provisions related to climate change and other environmental considerations such as biodiversity, how will you choose which stakeholders to involve?

Cabinet approved the start of work on a new Local Plan in December. The Local Plan is one of the most important documents we develop as it sets out our strategic planning policies, including a housing target, which affect spatial development in the city over the long-term.

The Plan covers many areas, not only housing but also climate change and biodiversity as you say, and it is essential that we have comprehensive engagement across a wide range of people and organisations as we develop the Local Plan.

The Council's Statement of Community Involvement sets out how and when we will engage with people in developing the new Local Plan, and members of the public who wish to be kept updated can sign up to Local Plan consultation list.

I encourage everyone to get involved.

More information and a sign-up link can be found on the emerging Local Plan webpage: (https://www.derby.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/local-plan/emerging/

e) Question from Philip Hutchinson to Cllr Hassall

Derby City Council was mandated by government to reduce nitrogen dioxide levels below 40µg/m3 in 2015 due to the fact nitrogen dioxide is associated with increased levels of heart and lung disease. Despite spending much of the last two years in lockdown, it has failed to do this, even when nitrogen dioxide pollution has been linked to higher Covid-19 deaths. Will the council apologise for failing to protect the people of Derby through its inaction on air pollution?

Derby was selected by Government in 2016 as one of the first five trial areas for reducing roadside nitrous dioxide or NO₂. Each of the five trial areas worked closely with Government to carry out detailed analysis, using the process designed by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), to establish areas of non-compliance with the EU regulation. This found that Derby had one area of non-compliance - Stafford Street.

The traffic management scheme currently being delivered, was developed within the terms of the national guidance focusing on points of exceedance and included public consultation on the preferred solution. While progress has inevitably been delayed by the impact of Covid-19, the junction works and installation of a dynamic control system have been completed, which limit the traffic flow through Stafford Street.

The latest Air Quality Annual Status report, available on our website, indicates that NO_2 levels are decreasing across Derby. Our 2020 monitoring data confirmed that the national objective for annual average for NO_2 was achieved in all but one monitoring site. This was around Stafford Street and even here it was only 0.1 above the objective value of $40\mu g/m3$.

We of course continue work with DEFRA to mitigate Stafford Street NO₂ levels and fulfil the Ministerial direction to deliver the Government approved plan, which will enable the Government to meet the legal targets on roadside NO₂. This will include monitoring emission levels on the identified exceedance area over the next few years.

f) Question from Simon Bacon to Cllr J Pearce

Does the council have a current understanding of the carbon intensity of the residual black bin waste of the city? If so, what is it per tonne of waste ie how much carbon is in the waste?

Based on the residual waste composition that was carried out in 2017 and applied to the tonnage and the landfill diversion rate from the last full year of 2020/21, this gives a total tonnes of CO2 equivalents of 10,117.

This would then give a carbon intensity of the black bin as 0.18 tonnes of CO2 equivalents per tonne of residual black bin waste.

g) Question from Brendan Connelly to Cllr S Khan

What timescale is given for a complaint about a councillor from the public to be answered?

Complaints about councillors made under the Councillor Complaints Procedure will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. The Complaints Procedure places no overall timescale on the resolution of complaints, as the time a complaint takes to resolve is dependent on its complexity and the severity of any alleged misconduct. Nevertheless, the Monitoring Officer seeks to ensure all complaints are brought to a conclusion as quickly as practically possible.

h) Question from Ruth Coates to Cllr Hassall

We all know we need to reduce the number of cars on the road. What is the council doing to offer people a credible alternative to driving and entice them out of their cars?

The Council has provided support for active travel and for public transport for many years. This continues with current investment from Government funding as part of the Transforming Cities Programme. Derby was fortunate to secure £60m, as part of a joint bid with Nottingham City Council for projects which focus on sustainable travel.

The Transforming Cities Programme includes a project to introduce a zeroemission rapid transport link between the city centre and Pride Park. This would be a significant change to the public transport network in the city and will hopefully become the foundation for an expanding network in future years. There will be extensive cycling and walking improvements and measures to assist with bus punctuality. Further public transport improvements are also anticipated as part of the Government's National Bus Strategy and the development of Bus Service Improvement Plans.

The Council was one of only four areas to be part of the Future Transport Zone trials. In September 2021 the Council launched DerbyGo, a 'live lab' participant led trial of a Mobility as a Service, or MaaS, platform. The trial is being run with the support of the University of Derby and Derby College. This research and development will test how technology can provide direct to customer information, and how that will assist with journey integration and travel choices. We hope it could become one of the largest trials in Europe. As part of the Future Transport Zone, we also plan to develop and trial community and campus transport hubs.

It is important to say that travel is good for us. It is essential for our work, health, leisure and to build strong communities. Our demand for personal mobility is, however, deep-rooted in our lives. How we travel, the vehicles we chose, the fuel we use, and who will own and drive them, are all questions where technology is challenging our thinking, and will accelerate changes over the next 10 years. To stimulate and support change the Council is investing in active travel and is working to bring new technology into the city, including creating the local conditions for the implementation of future fuels, not just for transport, but potentially for industrial and domestic energy.

i) Question from Pauline Inwood to Cllr Hassall

Could you please say what the take-up of the carbon literacy training for councillors has been – how many councillors have completed the one-day course?

So far 10 councillors have completed the course and a further two are due to complete a couple of outstanding modules soon.

I have undertaken the course, along with the majority of the Climate Champions. I found it very informative, and it helped me understand some the complex science in a more digestible way. It was also very beneficial to discuss this important topic with fellow councillors in a smaller cross-party group.

I would encourage all councillors to sign up for the next round which will be run virtually over two Saturday morning sessions on:

- 29 January
- 5 February

We will also plan to offer training to councillors and colleagues on the mornings of 10 and 17 February.

j) Question from Simon Bacon to Cllr J Pearce

How much did the Council spend on recycling and waste reduction promotion to residential households in 2020/21, and how much does it plan to spend in 2021/22?

In the years requested, spend was as follows:

2020/21 - £8,385 2021/22 – forecast to be £21,500

However, the above is not an accurate representation of all the work done in this area because some promotions are:

- done at no/little cost such as that done by social media or school talks for example.
- accounted for in officer time or within existing resources, for example, door knocking activities or in-house design and print work.

We also employ two officers on a full-time basis who focus much of their time on waste reduction, improving the take-up of recycling and improving recycling quality, as well as general waste awareness and education.

Councillor Questions

k) Question from Cllr Shanker to Cllr Poulter

Will the Council Leader join me in thanking every resident in Derby who has helped with the City's covid response and all those who have had their vaccinations? Does he therefore also agree with me that parties held at Downing St, particularity those held during the period of National Mourning on the eve of Prince Philips funeral, were illegal, insulting and inappropriate?

As I have done throughout the last two years, I applaud the sacrifice and perseverance of everyone in Derby. They have responded to the challenges of the pandemic with dignity and determination.

The Deputy Leader made the position of myself and my Conservative colleagues very clear in the interview he gave to BBC Radio Derby last week. Irrespective of party affiliation, we expect the Prime Minister and their staff to uphold the highest standards of conduct; the allegations are deeply concerning and risk undermining our shared efforts to tackle Covid-19.

I) Question from CIIr Lind to CIIr Smale

Why does the proposed three year budget not plan for predicted growth in Children's Services?

The proposed budget includes 0.125m identified for Children's Social Care demographics for 2022/23 as well as £7.4m of Children's pressures.

For future years (2023/24 and 2024/25) there is a total of £6m of additional social care pressures badged incorrectly as Adult demand pressures, the £6m has been earmarked for Social Care, inclusive of both Adults and Children's services.

The Council continues to actively implement demand management initiatives to manage demand and costs. In addition, a placement spending review panel has operated for the past six months. These measures are having a significant impact with the number of looked after children reducing in the second half of the year.

m) Question from CIIr Lonsdale to CIIr J Pearce

Now that the council has the funds for the safe crossing on the Manor Kingsway/Kingsway retail Park roundabout. I request that the council, give residents a time frame in which this work will be carried out?

We are currently in the early stages of development of the scheme which will provide safe controlled crossing points on the A514 (outer ring road).

It will be formally included on the capital work programme for 2022-23 which will enable us to take forward development of the full scheme design and costs, along with procurement of a contractor to carry out the works.

Depending on supply chain and material availability, which is currently being affected by Covid-19 and other shortage issues, it is possible that work could start on-site in late 2022 but it is impossible to be definitive at this moment.

n) Question from CIIr Martin to CIIr Webb

The Cabinet decided to significantly increase the Council's grant to Padley for their proposed new premises because it had become apparent that the initial assessment of the price and costs required to purchase and renovate it was a considerable underestimate. Can you please disclose all the Council costs to-date, including officer time spent on re-locating Padley?

Cabinet approved the relocation of the Padley Centre in March 2021. In November an update report was published with an additional £74K of Capital Approvals required, an increase of less than 5% - this is not a considerable underestimate!

The relocation includes acquiring existing interest on Beckett Street as part of the land assembly linked to Becketwell, as well as supporting the Padley Group to acquire new premises as part of their revised offer. To date, the Council has spent £112,000 spent on legal, valuation, project management and consultancy fees.

Officer input to the relocation of the Padley Centre is part of the wider Becketwell project and is not separately recorded.

o) Question from CIIr Repton to CIIr McCristal

When exactly will the Moorways Sports Village open?

Moorways Sports Village is a great example of an excellent Derby City Council project that remains on time and on budget.

It is due to open in Spring 2022, as planned. The exact date will be announced with our successful leisure operating partner once we have agreed their mobilisation plan for opening the venue.

We are very proud of our colleagues who have worked with our partners to successfully achieve the delivery of an outstanding leisure venue for our city.

These are certainly very exciting times in the history of Derby, and this venue will be available very soon to be used by millions of people for decades to come.

p) Question from Cllr Dhindsa to Cllr Smale

In 2018 your Conservative administration decided to shut down and sell off Peartree Carnegie Library, despite strong opposition from the local Normanton community residents, local Labour Councillors representing Normanton and Arboretum Wards and others.

The excuse you hid behind was that the cost of repair, especially to the roof, would be too high and unaffordable to the Council – figures of £1.2 to £1.5 million were quoted at the time. Many, including us local Labour Councillors questioned these costs. We strongly opposed the loss of a historic and well used community asset in the heart of one of the most deprived parts of the City. I suspect if it had been in a less deprived part of Derby it would have been saved.

In a recent Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board, that I Chair, it was revealed by one of the City Council Officers that the current occupants of the building have renovated the asset into a high end, high quality retail boutique shops facility. When I asked the Officers what the cost of these works could be, they estimated that it would be no more than £500K!

Imagine my shock and anger when I heard that this was a third of the costs used to close down and sell off a local community asset.

Can you explain how this can be and why did you remove such an important and well loved local facility as the Peartree Carnegie Library building, that had been gifted to the City, on the pretext that it would cost too much to renovate. Especially when you spent at least £750K to relocate the library to St Augustine Community Centre?

Owing to structural defects discovered during a planned renovation of Pear Tree Library, a decision was approved at Cabinet in November 2018 to move the library function to the nearby St Augustine's Community Centre and declare the building surplus to the council's requirements.

The Council then ran an open tender process seeking expressions of interest from parties who could bring the building back into use and for it to be sustainable in the long term.

The successful bidder has carried out the work envisaged and opened the facility, ensuring the future condition and use of the asset has been secured for the time being and at no cost to local residents.

The Council does not have information on the amount spent by the successful bidder.

q) Question from Cllr West to Cllr McCristal

Can the Cabinet Member share the figures of how much has been spent on the Guildhall since it closed, as promised at November's Council meeting?

The current spend is £1.212 million capital investment and £56K revenue spend.

r) Question from Cllr Care to Cllr Barker

How may electronic advertising screens (both free standing and on bus stops) are there on Council-controlled land, including highway? How much does DCC receive per year for hosting these? How much energy do these use? Please estimate usage if exact figures are not available.

There are currently 17 Clear Channel digital screens which are under a Derby City Council contract. The screens currently used are certified as using an average of 6,859 kWh annually for a double-sided unit, and 4,003 kWh annually for a single-sided unit annually. The income arrangements are subject to commercial sensitivity so cannot be released at the current time.

Other companies like BT and JC Decaux have submitted planning applications for additional screens. Five have been approved with a further three are awaiting decision. These do not generate any income for the Council.

The Council is in the process of entering into a new contract for Advertising and Street Furniture which boasts a number of green credentials as well as other social and economic benefits. For example, we expect to achieve a 49% annual energy saving when compared to other similar screens. Total annual CO2e saved = 132,272 kWh/y x 0.21233 = 28,181 kgCO2e.

s) Question from CIIr Martin to CIIr Williams

The Government has promised just 7,000 air purifying units for all the schools in the country. What is the Council Leadership doing to ensure that all classrooms in Derby have an air purifying unit, and what are they doing to ensure that care homes in the city also have access to purifying units?

The Department for Education does not hold a central list yet, so the Council does not have any data on this. Nationally, deliveries are only just starting to Special and Alternative Provision settings, and mainstream school applications are still open to bids. Once deliveries have been completed, we can find out from Derby schools if there are any gaps in provision and consider the options available.

Care Homes are not part of Government guidance/requirements for these units, and it would be for each care provider to consider as appropriate but not a requirement for registration with the Care Quality Commission.

t) Question from Cllr Shanker to Cllr McCristal

When do you expect the Pleasure Boat to be operational on the River Derwent?

The Council is working alongside the Derby and Sandicare Canal Trust (DCSCT) to support this voluntary organisation bring their ambition for a public leisure boat on the River Derwent in the city centre to fruition. Building on the success of the trial launch of their boat in Autumn 2021, officers are supporting DSCT on a range of issues and current plans indicate this will be finalised by Summer 2022.

u) Question from Cllr Repton to Cllr McCristal

How much were the total costs for the "We Love You (Derby) Tent?

The Market Place Initiative (including the marquee) has been key to re-igniting vibrancy and activity in the City Centre and creating a cultural space as part of the wider offer. Funding of £769K (including significant external funding from external Welcome Back Funding and High Street Safety Funding) was identified. The estimated costs for the initiative in 2021/22 are £776K.

v) Question from Cllr Dhindsa to Cllr Webb

Last week at Executive Scrutiny Board, I welcomed and supported a paper to apply to Central Government for Community Champions Programme funding for £485K to promote COVID19 vaccine uptake amongst 'hard to reach' communities. I understand the Government invited Derby to apply as we are one of the Local Authorities where vaccine take-up is low.

Whilst this would be welcome, and I hope that we are successful in getting this funding, many of us are already volunteering and championing vaccine take-up. Indeed, last year at a members' briefing, when we were told that some parts of Derby had a low vaccine take-up, many councillors volunteered to help get the message out to those neighbourhoods especially in the most deprived parts of the City.

It is disappointing that this was not actioned, as agreed nearly 3 or 4 months ago. I am not sure how long it will be before we get confirmation of Government funding, but we need to do what we can in the meantime. Why is it that (as of last week) we had not actioned a decision taken at the members' briefing last year?

Vaccination uptake varies notably across the city and has been reported at Member Briefings as well as through a range of groups and meetings.

Vaccination uptake is available through an <u>interactive map</u> which shows uptake down to Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) – census-based geography of on average 7,200 population.

It is also recognised that vaccination uptake is disproportionately lower in certain ethnic minority groups and deprived communities.

Responsibility for the delivery of the vaccination programme sits with our NHS colleagues and we are actively supporting to reduce inequalities in uptake. A Vaccination Inequalities Group specifically focuses on this.

A range of activities have, and continue to be, undertaken working in partnership with communities including:

- Communications on vaccination schedule and offer, including a leaflet to promote first and second dose to households in areas of low uptake in the week commencing 10 January
- Walk-in offer at Midland House
- Expansion of pharmacy offer in early 2022

- Engagement/conversation programme to explore attitudes to vaccination in Derby's Black communities. A list of FAQs is in development which responds directly to issues raised.
- Targeted hyper-local pop-up 'roving' offer planned for early 2022.
- Two Vaccine Inequalities Leads and two project officers (funded by Covid-19 grants) have just been appointed to provide further strategic and operational leadership on vaccine inequalities across Derby and Derbyshire.

The offer from many councillors to support vaccination uptake and help get the message out is very much appreciated and helpful. In response to this, regular updates alongside how Councillors can support the vaccination programme are provided through, for example, the weekly In Touch with Councillors bulletin and direct emails.

As described in the latest edition of In Touch with Councillors, support can be provided by councillors through continuing to actively share posts to promote the campaign.

The reasons people don't take up the vaccination are complex and varied. Our newly appointed Vaccination Inequalities Lead and the recently funded Vaccination Community Champions programme will further help us to take significant strides forward.

If councillors feel that they are able to offer support beyond that promoted in recent communications, please contact our Public Health colleagues.

To note, funding for the Vaccination Community Champions Programme has now be confirmed by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

w) Question from Cllr West to Cllr McCristal

An operator was due to be selected for Moorways before Christmas. Has an operator now been selected?

There has been excellent progress on the leisure operating partner project.

A successful bidder was due to be identified before Christmas, which was successfully achieved as planned.

As well as the leisure operating partner being selected, in addition, we have also provided an in-principal Award of Contract.

An announcement on who our operating partner will be is to be made once the standstill period has successfully concluded.

x) Question from Cllr Care to Cllr Webb

How is Derby City Council engaging with or promoting the "Wear Warm" campaign from Utilita? www.wearwarm.co.uk They have found that around half of households heat their homes to over 21C (18 – 21C is optimum) and are linking with charity shop sales of warmer clothing to save money, save CO2 and reduce items going to landfill.

Derby City Council has a longstanding programme of work to promote 'Staying Warm and Well this winter'. Support is provided for cold homes, energy bills or tariff, energy efficiency, financial hardship, food shopping or bills, homelessness or eviction, home maintenance, information on the winter flu jab and Covid-19 support.

This support is offered in partnership with Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Community Action Derby.

We have not been involved in this particular campaign but would be happy to review the details.

y) Question from Cllr Shanker to Cllr McCristal

Now that the Becketwell performance venue deal should be unconditional and fully signed up, can you confirm if this has happened and when will you release the details for public scrutiny?

The Council continues to have discussions with the developer of the Becketwell Performance Venue prior to the project moving to unconditional stage. The Council will make an announcement at the appropriate time when this stage is reached.

z) Question from Cllr Care to Cllr Webb

Thank you to the Cabinet for accepting the recommendation to consider what sort of appropriate reporting process to key stakeholders should be used as part of the Anchor Executive Group in Derby and Derbyshire. When is Cabinet going to actually consider and agree what this appropriate reporting process should be, or if this has been done, what is it?

Whilst Cabinet supported the recommendation from Executive Scrutiny, it will be necessary for Derby City Council to work with the other Anchor Institutions in Derby and Derbyshire on developing and agreeing the reporting processes. In the first instance, this will need to be considered by the Anchor Group and then any reporting processes developed. The work of the Anchor Group is reported through the Council's quarterly performance reporting and so any progress and impact would be reported to Cabinet through the quarterly performance report.

aa) Question from Cllr Repton to Cllr Poulter

What more can councillors and officers do to help Derby County Football Club avoid liquidation and/or asset stripping via the sale of players for next to nothing because of the dire situation they have been put in?

The Council and stakeholders from across the city have come together to pledge our support to Derby County Football Club to help resolve the current impasse between the administrators, the English Football League and other interested parties.

I will be delivering a statement at the start of this evening's meeting which sets out the most recent developments in greater detail, to which opposition spokespeople will have the opportunity to respond.

bb) Question from CIIr Care to CIIr Webb

With Government ministers now considering that Covid is endemic, the reduction to only 5 days isolation and growing concern that even after three jabs vaccination protection wanes, how is Public Health working with partners to help build individual resilience to Covid to minimise infection, hospitalisation and deaths in Derby?

COVID-19 currently remains a Pandemic, although we anticipate it will become endemic when the prevalence in the community becomes lower and the spread more predictable.

We are continuing in our pandemic response which includes:

- Working with the NHS to support their vaccination roll out. This includes
 working directly with communities and Community Action Derby to ensure
 accurate information is shared and barriers understood. We will be able to
 enhance this work with our Vaccine Champions work with a grant award
 just agreed with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
 Communities (DLUHC).
- Promoting advice and guidance to our residents on reducing risks, including our 'Do the Right Thing for Derby' campaign.
- Supporting business as appropriate to reduce the risks of transmission for staff and customers.
- Working closely with social care to ensure vaccination is maximised and all infection control measures are in place.
- Working closely with schools to ensure preventative measures are in place and to provide advice and guidance when outbreaks occur.

Our response includes regular meetings with the Local Resilience Forum, Derbyshire County Council Public Health (through the Covid-19 health protection board) and key city partners through both our weekly Incident Management Team meeting and our regular Outbreak Engagement Board.