



**Derby City Council**

**Council Meeting  
Wednesday 22 July 2015**

**Public and Member Questions  
and Responses**



**COUNCIL – 22 July 2015**  
**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Subject</b>
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**Councillor Questions**

<b>A</b>	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Afzal	Brown Bin Charges
<b>B</b>	Councillor Roulstone	Councillor Russell	SEN Transport
<b>C</b>	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Shanker	Sunday Trading Hours
<b>D</b>	Councillor Harwood	Councillor Banwait	Audit Certificate 2013/14
<b>E</b>	Councillor Barker	Councillor Rawson	Cattle and Wholesale Market
<b>F</b>	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Afzal	City Centre CCTV
<b>G</b>	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Rawson	Derby Arena Events
<b>H</b>	Councillor Harwood	Councillor Rawson	Assembly Rooms Site
<b>I</b>	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Banwait	Job Evaluation Expenditure



**a. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Afzal**

**Can the Cabinet Member provide a detailed breakdown of the current shortfall in predicted revenue budget savings from the introduction of the administrations Garden Waste Charging Scheme?**

The service budgeted to save £1,278k following the introduction of the garden waste chargeable service.

The current estimated saving for 2015/16 is £1,051k, a reduction in the estimated saving of £227k. This reduction in saving is made up of:

- A reduced level of take up of the scheme by residents which resulted in a reduced income of £406k. For 2015/16 the number of customers is similar to that in 2014/15, although customers are still signing up for the service.
- Savings in the estimated tonnage fees of £24k following re-negotiation of the contract.
- Savings in the estimated collection costs of £105k through reduction in back office costs and reduced collection rounds.
- On-going saving following the initial set up costs of £50k.

**b. Question from Councillor Roulstone to Councillor Russell**

**Would the Cabinet Member please provide details of the administration's current position in respect of the provision of Home to School Transport for Children with Disabilities, following the withdrawal of the Cabinet's proposed changes to these families' daily travel arrangements?**

The council ran a consultation from 5 February to 16 April asking for views on proposed changes to home to school transport for students with special educational needs.

Two proposals were consulted upon, with the consultation open to everyone - views were sought from parents, carers, schools, colleges, health professionals, people who work with young people, etc.

Parents/carers felt strongly that there was a range of circumstances that should be taken into account when considering home to school/college transport.

After considering the feedback, the Council withdrew the proposals and decided instead *'to work with parents and their support organisations to develop options parents wish to explore because it is right for their child and family life.'*

The council have met with parents/carers who have offered a number of options, and parents have also contacted us offering ideas.

Officers will continue to have conversations with groups across the city to understand their views and suggestions.

**c. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Shanker**

**A proposal was announced in the budget to allow retailers and shops to open for longer on Sundays. The chancellor has said that the decision will be devolved to local authorities to decide upon.**

**Will the cabinet member detail the stance being taken by the administration in regard to the relaxation of Sunday trading hours in Derby?**

Whilst we are aware of the Government's announcement on Sunday Trading we have not yet seen any detailed proposals or timescales. It would be difficult to express a view on this until we have seen these proposals, considered the implications and consulted with the public and stakeholders.

**d. Question from Councillor Harwood to Councillor Banwait**

**It is with some concern to learn that the external auditors, Grant Thornton, have yet to close off the accounts for 2013/14 and have therefore not issued an audit certificate for that financial year. Can you give the reasons as to why this is the case?**

Grant Thornton has issued the Council with an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. However, the issuing of the audit certificate is also dependent upon Grant Thornton being satisfied with the Annual Governance Statement.

The Audit and Accounts Committee remains fully appraised of the progress the Council is making in respect of the Governance Statement and will review the same at the meeting on 29 September 2015.

As Vice-Chair of this committee Cllr Harwood is fully aware that the release of the Governance Statement is dependent on the conclusion of the on-going investigations of the Designated Independent Person (DIP) which we all remain unable to comment on at this stage.



**e. Question from Councillor Barker to Councillor Rawson**

**What consultation did council officers undertake with local businesses, stakeholders and existing tenants, prior to the Cabinet decision to demolish both the Cattle and Wholesale Market sites?**

The property review work we have undertaken has highlighted that the Council is incurring an annual loss of close to £300k in the operating of both the Cattle and Wholesale markets and that they are not sustainable in their current configuration.

Given the Council's current budget constraints difficult decisions need to be made regarding where we spend our money. It has therefore been recognised that action needs to be taken to eliminate these operating losses. The various recommendations set out in the Cabinet report were considered to be the best course of action that the Council can take to mitigate this financial position.

Legislation relating to and the structure of the various leases at the Cattle and Wholesale market is such that any serious discussion regarding the renewal of leases may have prejudice and restricted the Council's ability to address the long term issues on the site. In addition as the Council was a making commercial decision regarding the underperformance of one of its assets there was no statutory duty to undertake any consultation. Notwithstanding this, a letter was sent to every tenant affected on Monday 6 July 2015 informing them of the report going to Cabinet and providing them an opportunity to speak to officers with any queries that they had.

In addition meetings were held between Council Officers and representatives from Derby Markets auction in April and May 2015. At these meetings enquiries were made , given the declining revenues being received, regarding their long term vision for the site and it was explained that a report would be going to the July 2015 Cabinet about the future of the Cattle and Wholesale Market site. The information received from these meetings was reflected in the information set out in the Cabinet report.

Cabinet has authorised officers to work with existing tenants to endeavour to minimise disruption to their respective businesses. In addition, given that any demolition of the Cattle and Wholesale Market will not take place until after the leases have expired in May 2016, there is an opportunity for the various tenants and users of the site to bring forward for consideration any proposals they have for the site.

**f. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Afzal**

**Would the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the current position in relation to the monitoring of CCTV coverage in the city and what provision has been made for future maintenance of the systems equipment?**

The public area CCTV system is continually recording, with the cameras moving through pre-set positions. The recorded data is available for 28 days for the Police and other partners to access for evidence gathering. The control room is also available for operational use by the Police or other partners.

The 6 CCTV Monitoring Officer posts have been deleted and there is now no routine active monitoring of the CCTV system by council staff. 'Pubwatch' and 'Shopwatch' radio systems still operate between the licensed and retail premises, but there is no facility to call for CCTV monitoring, unless the Police are running an operation in conjunction with the radio schemes.

The control room is still used at specific periods for the monitoring and control of traffic. Technical and operational options are being actively explored by the Police to take control of the system to Police facilities.

A budget of £50k remains to maintain the current system of cameras. A renewed maintenance contract will be awarded in October 2015.

**g. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Rawson**

**Earlier this year the former cabinet member for Leisure & Culture stated that the council expected to be holding around 12 concert events per year at the Derby Arena. How many concert events are confirmed for 2016?**

It was proposed to host 12 events per year at Derby Arena (not specifically concerts) and, since opening, nine high-profile events have already been successfully staged at the venue. These were:

- The University Graduation Ceremony for 18,000 students
- The Opening Ceremony for 1,500 VIPs and members of the general public
- The 'Open Weekend' for over 5,000 members of the public
- Two televised National Badminton League events, one against Milton Keynes and one against Nottingham
- An Omnium Junior Cycling event
- A Disability Syndicate event for over 2,000 participants
- The Ten Pieces Concert with the BBC Symphony Orchestra involving over 4,000 local children
- The Jimmy Carr Show for an audience of 2,700 as part of the Derby Comedy Festival

Future events that are booked at the Arena include:

- A televised British Middleweight Boxing title fight
- A Revolution Series Cycling Event which is a qualifier for the Rio Olympics and stars Sir Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish
- 3 x Table Tennis Events (2 x Junior British League; 1 x Veterans British League)
- 2 x Taekwondo Events (North Midlands TAGB Taekwondo Championships and the National Taekwondo Championships)

- A repeat University Graduation Ceremony
- An Omnium National Cycling Event
- A Clarion Cycling Event

The hugely popular Derby Pantomime, a highlight of the city's events calendar, is Aladdin this year and will be staged at the Arena. A star-studded cast for this has already been announced and ticket sales are currently out-performing any previous pantomime in the city.

As you can see from this summary, Derby Arena is an extremely versatile venue that has successfully delivered a wide and varied events programme of national significance, truly putting Derby on the map.

Event enquiries continue to be taken on a regular basis and a pop/rock gig is currently being explored for 2016.

**h. Question from Councillor Harwood to Councillor Rawson**

**The Assembly Rooms has stood empty for some time now. Would the Cabinet Member please update me on the council's current redevelopment plans and if the building is being promoted for sale?**

To support the City Centre Master plan objectives, the Council is currently working up its future requirements and specifications for a new cultural facility for the city. Once this has been established we will then be in a position to assess any proposals regarding the future disposal of the Assembly Rooms. It is pleasing to note that we have had several positive enquiries from developers for the site and we look forward to working with these parties in the future.

**i. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Banwait**

**Will the Cabinet Member please detail both the current expenditure and the overall budget currently allocated to complete the on-going Job Evaluation process and related liabilities?**

The Council holds a Job Evaluation reserve balance of £9.4m (as at 31 March 2015).

£3.7m is set aside to fund implementation costs, including external evaluations and advice, legal advice, the internal staff team and the extended protection of earnings from the 2014 implementation.

The balance is set aside to address the future risk of costs arising from future protection of earnings, possible equal pay claims and any other one-off implementation costs. Any funding not required post implementation will be returned to the budget risk reserve to cover risks arising in the future budget plans.