



Council Meeting  
Wednesday 20 September 2017

Public and Member Questions  
and Responses



Derby City Council



**COUNCIL – 20 September 2017**  
**PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

Questioner	Respondent	Subject
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**Public Questions**

<b>A</b>	Simon Bacon	Councillor Afzal	Normanton recycling site
<b>B</b>	Carole Fenton	Councillor Afzal	Disabled parking bays
<b>C</b>	Lynn Lambert	Councillor Repton	Sustainability and Transformation Partnership consultation
<b>D</b>	Simon Bacon	Councillor Afzal	Normanton blue bin collections
<b>E</b>	Carole Fenton	Councillor Hussain	Reporting of substance abuse
<b>F</b>	Lynn Lambert	Councillor Repton	Sustainability and Transformation Partnership funding shortfall

**Councillor Questions**

<b>G</b>	Councillor Graves	Councillor Rawson	Alvaston District Centre
<b>H</b>	Councillor Skelton	Councillor Shanker	Taxi Licensing basic skills test
	Councillor Naitta		
<b>I</b>	Councillor M Holmes	Councillor Afzal	Local Transport Plan priorities 2018/19
<b>J</b>	Councillor Poulter	Councillor Afzal	Derby bus station
<b>K</b>	Councillor Hudson	Councillor Shanker	Resolution of Teaching Assistant dispute
<b>L</b>	Councillor Harwood	Councillor Rawson	St Peter's Street cycle lane
<b>M</b>	Councillor Roulstone	Councillor Afzal	Summer planting
<b>N</b>	Councillor Barker	Councillor Afzal	Public Space Protection Order
<b>O</b>	Councillor Smale	Councillor Raju	Community managed libraries
<b>P</b>	Councillor Potter	Councillor Rawson	Market Place waterfall
<b>Q</b>	Councillor Willoughby	Councillor Shanker	Accountancy fees
<b>R</b>	Councillor Grimadell	Councillor Rawson	City centre management
<b>S</b>	Councillor Graves	Councillor Shanker	Council press releases
<b>T</b>	Councillor Skelton	Councillor Russell	Education, Health and Care Plans
<b>U</b>	Councillor Naitta	Councillor Hussain	Homelessness provision
<b>V</b>	Councillor Hudson	Councillor Shanker	Voter ID pilot
<b>W</b>	Councillor Barker	Councillor Shanker	Standards complaint
<b>X</b>	Councillor Willoughby	Councillor Shanker	Value for money opinion
<b>Y</b>	Councillor Graves	Councillor Raju	Alvaston Park receipt
<b>Z</b>	Councillor Naitta	Councillor Shanker	Teaching Assistant agreement
<b>ZA</b>	Councillor Graves	Councillor Shanker	Financial and political governance



# Public Questions



**a. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Afzal**

**The city council removed the bring recycling site on Havelock Road in Normanton due to fly tip issues. This means that local residents have no ability to recycle their rubbish. When will the city council be replacing this bring site with an alternative site in that area of the community?**

As you have mentioned these sites have attracted fly tipping. The council do not intend to replace any of the bring sites with alternative sites due to the costs and resources needed to maintain them.

## **b. Question from Carole Fenton to Councillor Afzal**

**Why haven't the council introduced the traffic regulation order to make disabled bays mandatory instead of advisory so the council are in full control of who uses them?**

The current council policy is for advisory markings to be installed for on-street disabled parking bays. This is due to the fact that a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would incur a charge each time a bay, or series of bays were to be introduced and the cost per TRO is £5,000 which would have to be funded. The TRO is a lengthy legal process which can take six months or longer depending on the case and any local complications. It involves consultation with a number of key parties and is open to objections which have to be considered and resolved. Added to this, if the disabled bay was made under a TRO then it would have to be signed and lined in accordance with the current regulations and anyone with a legitimate blue disabled badge could park in the bay.

The benefit of the bays being advisory, instead of mandatory, enables the council to install and remove the bays in a timely fashion, without the need for legal consultation and consideration. In our current operations we often find that the person who requested the disabled bay will move home without notifying the council and this can lead to the bay being open to abuse by neighbours because of the lack of on-street parking, particularly in terraced housing areas. Removing a disabled bay under a TRO would again involve a legal process which would attract a similar fee to what was quoted earlier of £5,000, plus the cost to remove the signs and lines. The installation of advisory disabled parking bays in Derby remains effective to provide blue badge holders an improved facility to park close to their residence, where there is no suitable off-street parking provision.



**c. Question from Lynn Lambert to Councillor Repton**

**Save Our NHS campaigners in Derby note that the NHS 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' have spent around £21m nationally from March 2016 to May 2017 on management consultants. Derbyshire has spent £579,700.**

**Would the council agree that in practice these consultations have been far from perfect i.e. there have been no public meetings and discussions in Derby, contrary to what Councillor Martin Repton wrote in his reply on 23 November 2016 ('reassured that there shall be full and frank consultation taking place' on NHS STPs)?**

I would like to start by reiterating that the STP is a national NHS initiative and the local Derbyshire Joined Up Care plan is primarily about NHS services and this means that the city council in reality has limited influence over this plan.

Also that these questions would ideally have been sent and answered directly by our health colleagues as it is their area of responsibility. However, I would like to emphasise that the council has been encouraging our health partners to engage in full and frank discussions with the public about potential changes. You will see from the list of event opportunities and different methods of collecting people's views commissioners have made a good start to engaging widely. We are reassured these opportunities will continue to be available in the future for citizens to put their views forward.

We understand from our health colleagues that the STP planning process was complex and required specialist skills and additional capacity to deliver it in the timeframe required by NHSE. The health community took the decision to use consultancy services to bridge this gap and that is an operational matter for them.

Colleagues from Health have said that:

Health and care organisations in Derbyshire are working together to give people a great start in life, supporting them to stay healthy and live well. Given the scale of change which is taking place to bring health and care services together, we have invested in specialist consultants to provide specific advice and expertise to support the development of our plans. To avoid any doubt, the spend on consultants and the cost of consultation are not one and the same thing.

Local NHS services want to make sure they are doing all they can to get the plans right for people in Derbyshire and that sometimes includes investing in specialist skills and additional capacity to develop major plans.

During August colleagues from across health and care organisations have started a conversation on the proposed ideas set out in our plan, Joined up Care Derbyshire.

In partnership with Healthwatch Derby and Derbyshire health commissioners have started to visit community venues across the city and county to talk about how health and care services work now and how they might look in the future.

A timetable of consultation opportunities can be found at;

<http://www.southernderbyshireccg.nhs.uk/publications/joinedupcarederbyshire/events/>

The local NHS commissioners and providers are offering people different ways to get involved in the conversations such as answering a questionnaire, attending a meeting or joining a discussion online. They are attending meetings already planned by organisations and interest groups e.g. carers and voluntary sector; holding events themselves in partnership with Healthwatch and being present in different locations including hospitals and markets to give people the chance to drop in and find out more about the plans or for people to relay their comments.

The feedback received shall be presented back to clinicians and decision making forums to make sure that people's views and ideas are incorporated into the planning and thinking at the earliest stage.

In addition to these opportunities to get involved with the conversation on the future health and care services for Derbyshire there is also engagement work and consultations which has been taking place for some time and are a part of the plan but are working to different time lines. You can find out more about them here:

Derby and Burton Collaboration - <http://www.burtonderbycollaboration.co.uk/>

Better Care Closer to Home - <http://www.joinedupcare.org.uk/>

Belper - <http://www.southernderbyshireccg.nhs.uk/have-your-say/consultations/belper-health-services/>

Other - <http://www.southernderbyshireccg.nhs.uk/have-your-say/consultations>

If you have any suggestions about meetings we can attend please contact [enquiries@healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk). We will try our best to attend those

meetings that are suggested but we cannot guarantee we can attend everything that is suggested.

**d. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Afzal**

**With the successful work being carried out by the councils new Community Protection Officers to remove bins off streets in areas such as Normanton, will the council now return the blue bin recycling service to the streets targeted by the CPOs due to the reduced risk of bin contamination?**

The contamination levels of the blue bins were very high. It is the council's intention not to return the blue bin recycling scheme to these areas as it proved expensive to operate and administer.

**e. Question from Carole Fenton to Councillor Hussain**

**Why haven't Derby Homes considered bringing back housing visitors who would be trained in drugs and their abuse in drug houses owned by Derby Homes they would pass information onto the police instead of relying on tenants and homeowners for information?**

All of Derby Homes employees have received training to raise awareness of substance misuse. If an employee suspects there are issues of neglect or safeguarding in any of our properties we have clear guidelines on how such concerns should be escalated. Where concerns are raised which relate to criminal activity we have established processes which will inform the relevant authorities.

There are no plans to bring back the Housing Visitor role. Such a role used to visit tenants homes no more than once a year to check standards and compliance with the tenancy conditions. We do not believe that this is good use of our limited budgets.

We have a specialist team who deal with all complaints of serious tenancy breaches and take swift action against any tenant who is believed to be the perpetrator of either anti-social behaviour or engaging in criminal activity either in their home or the immediate locality.

We also have a specialist team of intensive housing management officers who engage with vulnerable tenants on a regular basis. This provides support to individuals and families with complex needs.

We believe that this approach of using a combination of specialist teams and general awareness raising and protocols for raising concern is a better and more effective way of using our resources. Our intelligence led liaison with police and multi-agency working has brought about a lot of information sharing and led to the detection of many drug issues in our properties. In turn we have worked in partnership to take successful criminal and civil actions.

Any member of the community can report concerns direct to Derby Homes or Derbyshire Police, this can be done confidentially and we take all reports of such behaviour very seriously. Unfortunately if a report is made confidentially there may be limits to what we can do but we respect that sometimes people do not wish to be identified due to fear of reprisals.

**f. Question from Lynn Lambert to Councillor Repton**

**Your reply to my question on 23 November 2016 mirrored the emphasis from the STP, stressing 'joined up care'. However, it underplayed the planned cuts to our NHS services and associated social care services. We note that the Southern Derbyshire AGM report (page 17) said that 'by 2021 there will be an estimated £219 million financial gap for Derbyshire's health system'. We are now told that that figure has rocketed up to £280 million.**

**Would the council agree that the NHS CCGs are doing an impossible job; that they cannot both improve the services and implement massive cuts?**

I would like to start by reiterating that the STP is a national NHS initiative and the local Derbyshire Joined Up Care plan is primarily about NHS services and this means that the City Council in reality has limited influence over this plan.

Also that these questions would ideally have been sent and answered directly by our health colleagues as it is their area of responsibility. However, I am happy to provide the following response:

All public services are working in challenging times and this financial backdrop makes it even more important that we work closely together. All 11 health and care organisations working on the future of Derbyshire's health and care plans, called Joined Up Care, are focussed on the financial plans to support the delivery of the right care for people across the county.

As part of this Derbyshire's four clinical commissioning groups are working towards having a more coordinated approach so teams can focus on specific schemes and all organisations can benefit from working together – preventing financial pressures from being moved around within existing structures and ways of working.

The figures stated give us all an idea of the financial challenge we face, just as all health and care systems do across the country, and they will alter over time due to inflation and other variables.

Regardless of the exact figure we must concentrate our efforts on new ways of managing and sharing financial risk across the health and care system, including councils, providers and commissioners to help everyone work towards having a financially stable system over the next few years and ensure we are delivering the best services for people living in Derbyshire.

What I have said previously and would adhere to is that I am committed to a properly funded high quality health and care service in Derby. The Council and I

shall not sign up to any detailed proposal that we feel compromises citizens' health and care.

By working collaboratively we know we can better meet our population's changing care needs. Information sharing between councils and the NHS has and will continue to improve planning, meaning people can avoid entering hospital or care homes and, if needed, have a quicker and smoother transfer from hospital.

It is crucial that we all seize the opportunity to lead the change that is needed to deliver the right services for the people of Derbyshire to support them to stay healthy and live longer using the resources we have in the most efficient and effective way.





# Councillor Questions



**g. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Rawson**

**Six months ago I asked this council what happened to the capital investment earmarked for 2015 for the Alvaston District Centre. You said that after the third phase was completed in 2014, further investment had been cancelled due to budgetary constraints. You went on to say more positively that you were waiting for capital investment to come available.**

**It is noted that very recently the council allocated over £2.7m to create a new Commercial Space and Library in the council house, with the council share being over £1.5m, and that £1m has been earmarked from reserves to correct the asset valuation debacle (a loss of £347m).**

**When can the people of Alvaston expect their final phase to be completed by adding these works to the capital programme? Alvaston needs to attract a more diverse set of businesses other than takeaways and charity shops? Your help in this matter would be greatly appreciated.**

As members are aware, as a result of the budget pressures upon the council, funding for this scheme was previously removed from the Capital Plan. I have previously promised that funding will be re-instated as soon as the budget allows.

**h. Questions from Councillors Skelton (i) and Naitta (ii) to Councillor Shanker**

- i) Under the Human Rights Act a taxi licence is deemed to be property. Such property cannot be taken from a person without very good reasons. If the Council were to revoke a licence due to the person not having passed the Basic Skills Test, how confident are you of winning any legal challenge if one materialises? Please give your reasons why.**
- ii) In your opinion do taxi drivers really need IT qualifications?**

I acknowledge the human rights position that a licence is property. However, the right to hold a licence is qualified, meaning that it can legitimately be interfered with when it is necessary and proportionate to do so. Council and the Licensing Committee have collectively made decisions about the merit of introducing a basic skills test requirement following extensive consultation with the trade and the public which broadly supported the introduction of the requirement.

Whether or not an appeal materialises and/or has prospects of succeeding will depend on the individual facts of the appeal. That being the case, it would be wholly inappropriate for me to speculate on the Council's prospects of successfully defending any such challenge.

Councillor Naitta, I assume from your question that you are referring to the requirement on taxi drivers to undertake basic skills qualifications in Maths English and ICT.

The introduction of this requirement was consulted on and has been the subject of consideration by both Council and Licensing Committee over a number of months.

Can I remind you both that you agreed to these proposals at Council on 23 November 2016.

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

**For many years now Derby City Council officers have liaised with all ward councillors to discuss and agree Local Transport Plan (LTP) priorities to be considered for inclusion in the following years work programme.**

**Can the cabinet member detail which wards have been approached by DCC officers to discuss and agree local LTP priorities for 2018/19?**

We are just starting the process to consult with Neighbourhood Boards in respect of their local priorities for inclusion in the 2018/19 Highways and Transport work programme. We will liaise directly with ward councillors in the five areas that do not have a Neighbourhood Board.

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

**The frequency of buses on Spondon Flyer service will be cut on 29 October and half of the route serving the village will be removed, as a result of the mismanagement of Derby bus station. Congestion and delays for services using the bus station make it impossible for operators to meet service timetables.**

**What measures is the Cabinet Member taking to manage the facility in an appropriate manner to remove the unnecessary delays and restore efficient bus services across the city?**

I am aware of the changes to the Spondon Flyer services and the Trent Barton to re-launch the Spondon and Ilkeston Flyer brands, with investment in refurbished buses.

The Spondon village centre to the city centre will be served by a Spondon Flyer or Ilkeston Flyer bus every seven or eight minutes.

Trent Barton states that the changes are necessary to provide better punctuality, as a result of increased traffic on the A52 and particularly the approach to the Pentagon Island.

There is no indication that congestion in the bus station is relevant to the service changes.

On the issue of the bus station, I have worked with the bus operators within the forum of the Strategic Bus Partnership to address directly the issues of congestion. As a result I have reached agreement with all of the bus operators to reduce congestion and to reschedule 'conflicting' services.

I have also ensured that officers have taken the opportunity to submit a bid (£3.6m) for government funding as part of the National Productivity Investment Fund for an extension to the bus station. We are waiting for an announcement from the Government.

**k. Question from Councillor Hudson to Councillor Shanker**

**Can the cabinet member please explain how the member for Derby North, Mr Christopher Williamson, has "helped to bring about a resolution" to the Teaching Assistant dispute?**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this question. It is rare indeed for a Conservative member to wish to highlight the dedication and commitment of a Labour MP but your desire to do so is a credit to you.

Chris Williamson was involved in meetings with both the trade union and the council and offered assistance in bringing about the constructive dialogue which resulted in an agreement being reached earlier this year – an agreement which the council has abided by and delivered against all of the commitments it made.

Following a period of stagnation in Derby North between 2015 and 2017, it was refreshing indeed that a parliamentary candidate from the constituency was able to offer the sort of assistance and support that we had become accustomed to prior to May 2015. It is clear that Derby North was one of many constituencies across the UK to benefit from the Prime Minister's astute judgment in calling a General Election when she did.

I can also confirm that at no point during the teaching assistant pay dispute did Mr Williamson's predecessor, Amanda Solloway, contact me to offer support to resolve the dispute.

## **I. Question from Councillor Harwood to Councillor Rawson**

**Did the council consult the general public and shops/businesses in the St Peter's Street area before deciding to install a dedicated cycle lane in this busy pedestrian area, which will cost the Derby taxpayers £250k for the provision of an unacceptable, unwanted and dangerous project?**

Delivering improvements to St Peter's Street and our public spaces is a vital component of our City Centre Masterplan, delivering significant economic benefits to Derby and the wider D2N2 region. The completion of St Peter's Street follows on from successful projects at both St Peter's Cross and The Spot.

Access for cyclists into the pedestrianised area, before 10am and after 5pm, would give cyclists the same access opportunities as all other vehicles servicing local shops etc.

Cycle access is subject to a Traffic Regulation Order being approved. This is subject to statutory public consultation, including the Police, who are supportive, followed by public consultation on the TRO.

We will not spend any money on the cycle infrastructure until the TRO is approved. The costs to allow access for cyclists are not £250k; they will consist of lining, signing and a number of cycle symbols embossed into larger paving slabs.

We are working closely with our Equality and Diversity forum to make sure that the improvements consider the needs of our most vulnerable people, in particular those who are blind and partially sighted. We have shared this with businesses within the Business Improvement Districts and Intu, and have carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment, that will be repeated as the project develops.

In the event that the TRO is not approved, then the public realm improvements will still be delivered, remain good value for money and contribute to delivery of the City Centre Masterplan.

Derby City Council are custodians of our city and we are striving to make our city safe and attractive for everyone.



**m. Question from Councillor Roulstone to Councillor Afzal**

**Can the cabinet member provide a full breakdown, on a ward by ward basis, of the total expenditure on this years much heralded summer planting at the cities major gateways. Could these costs include the cost of the planting, its installation and subsequent maintenance?**

The council has introduced flower beds on some of the main gateways in and out of Derby. These flower beds were prepared and then planted out in June 2017. We cannot provide an accurate cost ward by ward, however a full list of locations is indicated below.

The total budget allocated to this work is £105,000 and covers the purchase of plants, compost, fertilizer, preparation of beds, planting, watering and on-going maintenance; this includes vehicles, staff time and relevant equipment.

Locations are:

- Prince Charles Avenue junction with Ashbourne Road
- Palm Court Island
- Pentagon Island
- Frank Whittle Road junction with Wheatcroft Way
- Derby Road Asda Island
- Uttoxeter Road junction with Curzon Street
- Uttoxeter Road Royal Hospital
- Shardlow Road junction with Keldholme Lane
- London Road district centre handrail baskets
- Pride Parkway junction with Locomotive Way
- Pride Parkway junction with Royal Way
- Morledge junction with Corporation Street
- Full Street junction with Derwent Street raised beds

**n. Question from Councillor Barker to Councillor Afzal**

**Can the cabinet member bring Council up to date on the progress made by this administration in introducing Public Space Protection Orders within the Derby City area?**

Public Space Protection Orders will be a valuable tool for the police and council in keeping our city centre safe. They can introduce a range of prohibitions, primarily aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour.

As an administration we must ensure that any prohibitions are proportionate, are responding to real issues and, importantly, are enforceable.

The council have brought together evidence, information and intelligence from a range of partners to help us draft our proposed prohibitions. The council's legal services department are currently reviewing this information.

Following this the council will consult the wider public and statutory partners such as the local police and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Following a period of consultation it is anticipated that the PSPO will be considered by Council in November.

**o. Question from Councillor Smale to Councillor Raju**

**Could the cabinet member tell me what is the cost for a community volunteer group, of taking up the enhanced support package 1 and 2 for running each of the ten individual libraries which the council will no longer run?**

The Community Managed Library (CMLs) pack states: "the support packages will be available for a peppercorn charge and will offer CMLs a number of benefits."

A peppercorn charge would literally mean a nominal amount, for example £1, so that there is consideration and a legal arrangement entered into between the two organisations.

**p. Question from Councillor Potter to Councillor Rawson**

**It has recently been reported in the local media that the council has recently received two very financially advantageous offers from individuals, who feel it is more than viable to make the waterfall feature in Derby's Market Place operable once again. Restoring the waterfall to full operation may go some way to dispelling public opinion that clearly considers the council are disenfranchised with the public of Derby. Are these two offers going to be evaluated and the individuals receive the courtesy of even a belated reply from Derby City Council?**

My officers have contacted the company and are seeking to arrange a meeting with them as soon as practical. They will discuss with the company the legal and practical implications of taking on responsibility for maintaining the waterfall feature. We welcome any offers of free work but clearly this must not be to the risk of the public or the council.

**q. Question from Councillor Willoughby to Councillor Shanker**

**The accountants Ernst and Young in Appendix 4 of their report on the 2015-16 accounts, indicate an increase in their fees to reflect the extent of rework required to audit 3 draft statements and extensive use of valuations specialists, due to errors made by the council. What is the total cost to the taxpayer of this additional work?**

The ultimate costs of this major exercise have yet to be finalised but are not expected to exceed the estimated provision included in the 2015/16 accounts of £1.0m.

The costs of the fees are within the budgeted amount that has been discussed at the Audits and Accounts Committee. Councillor Willoughby, as a member of that committee, you should be fully aware of this.

**r. Question from Councillor Grimadell to Councillor Rawson**

**Time and time again the continued decline of our city centre and surrounding streets is highlighted by the Derby Telegraph. Will Councillor Rawson inform us all what positive steps the Labour Group will take to prevent this continued decline in addition to the introduction of the PSPOs?**

Safety in the city centre continues to be a key priority for this administration.

Working with a range of partners including the police, businesses and voluntary sector we have developed a strong partnership approach to tackle a range of complex and challenging issues.

This is evidenced by our recent receipt of the Purple Flag status in the way we manage our night time economy and a further award from ATCM (Association of Town and City Management) for our work in keeping the city centre safe and vibrant.

The council collaborating with our partners deliver a range of services and interventions in the city centre. These include:

- robust licencing arrangements
- Street Pastors
- Taxi Marshalls
- CCTV monitoring
- PEEP: targeting rough sleeping and begging with education, engagement and enforcement
- working with police on targeted enforcement operations
- drug and alcohol treatment services

**s. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Shanker**

**It is clear from the press releases from this council that normal council business is highlighted where there may be a positive outcome or spin on the story including all things Labour Party related such as local councillors and obviously Cabinet members.**

**It is also obvious that there is a reluctance to use any stories that involve councillors from other political parties, although I have seen a rare occasional story where a Labour councillor is joined by a member from another party but not named.**

**The press team have refused to use any of the positive Alvaston Ward stories I have supplied them which I can only assume is because we are UKIP councillors. In fact, on one occasion I was asked for photos where we were not featured! In July the Alvaston Fun Day, which is volunteer run, enjoyed a great day of fun for everyone and the unfurling of the Green Flag, largely earned by those volunteers under the Alvaston Park Friends (APF) badge. Both UKIP councillors worked all day at this event, and as part of the APF, welcomed the Mayor Councillor Whitby and his family, who presided over the ceremony. Even though many photos were taken, not one was used, one can only assume because they included 2 hard working UKIP councillors.**

**Can you advise the chamber what policy you have instructed the press team to work to?**

Content for the council's news web site is guided by the Media Protocol that has been used in its current iteration since 2014. The Protocol allows for photos and quotes from cabinet members, chairs of Neighbourhood Boards, scrutiny boards and committees as appropriate.

There is no party political bias by the Communications team, all of whom are politically restricted.

**t. Question from Councillor Skelton to Councillor Russell**

**Can you confirm whether or not it is now council policy that Education and Health Care Plans will only be given to children and young people in special schools and not to those in mainstream schools?**

No, it is not.



**u. Question from Councillor Naitta to Councillor Hussain**

**Homelessness remains high on the agenda and still on the increase. Is the council along with partner services doing enough? Can more be done to resolve this issue?**

Homelessness nationally continues to increase, and Derby is no exception. The advent of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which comes into effect on 1 April 2018, places greater emphasis on preventing homelessness and removes barriers for those that historically have not been classed as a priority for assistance.

Much is being done to respond to this increase and in preparation for the council's new duties, representatives from across statutory, voluntary and faith sectors have been working through the city wide Homeless Liaison Forum, to refresh actions and respond to emerging demands. A newly formed Strategic Homelessness Board is also working with statutory partners to provide coordination and direction.

Derby has a strong reputation of partnership working in responding to the challenges of homelessness and there remains a strong commitment to continue to support the city's most vulnerable.

**v. Question from Councillor Hudson to Councillor Shanker**

**Can the cabinet member confirm that despite being one of only two Local Authorities mentioned in: Securing the ballot, Sir Eric Pickles' review into electoral fraud, Derby City Council have declined an invite to participate in a pilot of Voter ID in the city at next years' local elections?**

Our elections are delivered against some of the most robust integrity planning in the country, and we are very happy to be working with and contributing to the Cabinet Office's strategic development of the Voter ID Pilot project.

Our Returning Officer has been actively involved with the Cabinet Office's project team.

Can I suggest that you ask a supplementary question in relation to the successful prosecution and imprisonment of a former Conservative Allestree councillor?

**w. Question from Councillor Barker to Councillor Shanker**

**Can the Labour group leader tell this Council what sanction he has taken against Councillor Nawaz of his Labour Group following a Standards Committee recommendation - held on the 18 July 2017 - where Councillor Nawaz was found to be in serious breach of the Councillors Code of Conduct by signing a council headed letter of reference for a Derby City taxi driver appearing before the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee?**

The Labour Group has been informed of the recommendation from the Standards Committee and will take action as it deems appropriate in line with the group's Code of Ethical Conduct.

**x. Question from Councillor Willoughby to Councillor Shanker**

**The Audit Results report for the 2015-16 accounts, issued recently by Ernst and Young, gave an adverse value for money opinion. The council have not put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in their use of resources.**

**What steps are the cabinet taking to address these concerns, in particular in the areas of:**

- **planning and risk;**
- **governance and major projects management;**
- **partnership working?**

Again, I am somewhat concerned that as a member of the Audits and Accounts Committee, you are asking this at Council.

You should be fully appraised of all the work this council is undertaking on the issues you raise. If this is not the case please address this with your group leader who may wish to replace you on this very important committee of the council.

**y. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Raju**

**Councillor Raju, you may recall at the last meeting you gave incorrect information about the spending of £3k receipt from Appleton's Fair and in your verbal response you said you would check the information and get back to me. Unfortunately, you failed to do that. Since then, Appleton's Fair paid for another period over the summer where more income was received by the council.**

**Consulting with Alvaston Park Friends some of the work you claimed this money was used for was paid for by them, such as the signage for the Science Garden.**

**As I stated last time, all three councillors, including your colleague, insisted this money was to be used for Alvaston Park. Can you now provide correct information about what this income was spent on, including the more recent income that does not include normal expenditure for the park?**

Since the last meeting, I have established that whilst the council originally paid for the signage for the Science Garden, the Friends group subsequently made a donation to cover the expenditure.

The list of items put forward at the last meeting were just some of the extensive programme of works undertaken at the park this year in preparation for the Green Flag judging. For example, the Council funded the full redecoration of the café and public toilets at a cost of £2,100.

In addition to the redecoration of the café, a full programme of refurbishment was undertaken including the provision of new furniture and equipment and a professional deep clean. Furthermore, the toilets are now professionally cleaned at additional cost, and having also been redecorated have been presented to higher standards for park visitors throughout the spring and summer. Additional significant costs (£3,150) have been incurred in fabricating and installing a new security barrier and, more recently, on the purchase and installation of two new sets of goalposts (£1,167).

Events such as fairs are one way that the parks service can achieve additional income to help fund improvements to achieve the standards that we will wish to achieve to enhance the visitor experience. We were very pleased to retain the Green Flag Award once again which is testament to the commitment of all stakeholders and user groups, not least Alvaston Park Friends, whose

contribution we fully appreciate and admire. Finally, I am very pleased that the Fairs proved to be extremely popular and successful, contributing to a vibrant park through the two holiday periods concerned. It is essential that we continue to be more commercial in our approach so that any income achieved can help towards offsetting reducing budgets.

**z. Question from Councillor Naitta to Councillor Shanker**

**Why has the council not honoured the agreement with that was signed with Unison, ACAS and the council in support of the Teaching Assistants?**

In line with the agreement signed by Derby City Council and UNISON on 17 March 2017, the council has made payments totalling £1.5m to 700 support staff where they suffered an actual loss in gross pay.

In addition, the council made a commitment to work with UNISON and Head Teachers to undertake a review of the special needs teaching assistant role. This has been done and was sent to Hay Kornferry to be evaluated.

We have now been advised of the grade outcome and under the terms of job evaluation, and it has remained the same grade. We have also been in discussion with UNISON about the proposed definition of a flexible 52 week contract.

**za. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Shanker**

**Two different auditors have now made adverse statements about the council's financial affairs and political governance. Yet in the last three years there has been no changes to the cabinet team, carrying on as if the problems do not exist. Even in Central Government reshuffles are the norm when problems are revealed.**

**Can the people of Derby expect any news soon?**

Perhaps Councillor Graves has been inattentive to the various actions that have been taken to address issues that have been identified over the last year, which is unsurprising given the infrequency of his trips into the Council House from his South Derbyshire home.

If he had been paying attention, he would know that progress has been made on all fronts. The steps that have been taken are positive actions, rather than the sort of symbolic changes in personnel Councillor Graves appears to be seeking.



