



Council Meeting
Wednesday 19 July 2017

Public and Member Questions
and Responses



Derby City Council

COUNCIL – 19 July 2017
PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

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Public Questions

a. Question from David Gale to Councillor Bolton

Did the Target Operating Model within the Project Phoenix report reference deficiencies in the council's records management provision, or were those issues identified later or earlier by other means and, if so, by what means and by whom, and what was done about those deficiencies?

Thank you Mr Gale for your question, which is virtually the same question you asked me at the Council meeting on 23 November 2016.

I can only reiterate what I said to you at the time – that the council takes its responsibility to secure records on children at risk of abuse and neglect very seriously and will continue to do so in line with its statutory responsibilities.

Clearly Derby City Council is dependent on its records to operate efficiently and to account for its actions. As a council we work hard to ensure that records are managed and controlled effectively to recognised standards and commensurate with legal, operational and information governance needs.

b. Question from Jonathan May to Councillor Rawson

What is happening to the area around Ascot Drive / Allenton residents have been waiting years for the answer to this question while the council and Tesco have sat on there hands. The whole thing has been a farce and a disgrace.

Tesco acquired a considerable area of land within the area in order to construct their Supermarket development. Following the changes in Tesco's requirements and the decision not to proceed with the retail development Tesco have subsequently sold their interests within the area.

Those properties at 39, 61, 67, 71, 73 and 75 Whitehurst Street were acquired by the council from Tesco in 2016 and now form part of the council's Housing Stock Portfolio managed by Derby Homes. All of these properties are now occupied by Derby Homes tenants.

In addition to the properties at Whitehurst Street, the council's ownership extends to the Allenton Market site and car park. The market continues to operate and good access is provided by the adjacent car park.

Due to the large proportion of the site now being held in various private ownerships (i.e. Rushden Enterprises/Euro Garages), the council have no direct control over the development of the privately owned land and assets.

In terms of ensuring the area is kept tidy, the Environmental Protection Team has in the past 12 months responded to two complaints and remedied issues regarding fly tipping on the site of the Mitre Public House and concerns around open access.

The Environmental Protection Team will continue to respond to any concerns or complaints that are received, however unfortunately due to current resource pressures the team are unable to undertake the necessary proactive work to establish whether there are any environmental issues.

It is acknowledged that this is an important area within Allenton and the council will continue to work with adjacent land owners to improve the area.

c. Question from Pat Palmer to Councillor Afzal

I would like to ask why our roads on The Chase have not seen a road sweeper in the last two years, the weeds that are growing by the kerb are well above the kerb. What do I pay my council tax for? Also why are our roads in such a bad state of repair, there are more potholes than there is road?

The road sweeper last swept The Chase on 20 June 2017 and we sweep the area approximately every eight weeks. The footway sweeper was last there on 4 January 2017. We have added another footway sweeper to the fleet which will increase sweeping frequency to every three months. Streetpride staff also litter pick The Chase once per week.

The Chase was sprayed with weed killer on 25 May 2017 and will be done again before the end of September.

The Chase is visited by our highway inspectors every six months and it was last inspected on 4 April 2017. The highway inspector picked up one pothole on the Chase and on nearby Lynwood Road; the inspector picked up four separate carriageway potholes outside 11, 13, 16 and 19 for repair.

Our inspectors walked the street again following this complaint and noted that the road condition was fine with no major defects present.

d. Question from Colin Tabberer to Councillor Afzal

I live on the City Point development. On a number of occasions when acting as either a private individual or representing a small Residents' Association, the question of the status of the development has arisen. I understand that despite the effective completion of the development, it has yet to be formally adopted. Can you confirm that this is indeed the case, and, if so, what exactly is holding up the procedure? The status of the site has a direct effect on a number of local issues.

My particular concern is access to the City Point site by Fire Appliances given the common occurrence of double side parking, particularly on "Match Days". I believe that the developers have an obligation to put forward a strategy to restrict this activity. Have they complied with this?

The City Point development has not yet been adopted. There is an agreement in place between the developers and the city council. The roads have been built to the satisfaction of the council, though they are still subject to final detailed condition checks.

The final checks and the adoption have been delayed by negotiations over the cost of carrying out surveys and design of a scheme to restrict parking, with particular concerns relating to match day parking. The council has been negotiating to ensure that the developers will commit to the costs and to the delivery of a solution. If the council adopted the roads without this commitment then the developers would have less interest in the delivery of solutions to congestion and parking behaviour.

Dialogue with the developers has been on-going and last week the developers indicated their willingness to progress the issues. Officers have now informed me that they expect to reach a formal agreement in the next few weeks. At that point I will ensure that officers make progress towards the delivery of a parking solution and the formal adoption of the roads within the development.

e. Question from Tom Banks to Councillor Rawson

What is the latest position concerning the provision of an iconic theatre and entertainment venue on the site of the Assembly Rooms, as reported in the Derby Telegraph on 15th June 2017?

Indicative Local Growth Fund Round 3 grant funding of £8.6m towards the project was confirmed in June 2017 by D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. I anticipate that Cabinet will be taking a decision on the options to proceed with a new Music and Performance Venue at its meeting on 6 September 2017.

An indicative timetable and programme of works will be presented as part of the cabinet report.

f. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Hussain

Selective licensing of private landlords was previously considered by Derby City Council for areas of the city such as Normanton ward. Normanton and its surrounding communities continues to spiral downwards and private landlords play a roll in this dire situation. East Staffordshire Borough Council has in recent weeks put in place a selective licensing scheme in areas of Burton so when will Derby City Council stand up and do the same for this city to help reverse the decline in our communities?

The Council recognises that selective licensing is an additional tool that can be used to address housing standards and other issues within some communities. However, community issues/problems vary considerably between areas and selective licensing is not appropriate in all situations. The council has previously considered its introduction in parts of Derby but found the implementation costs and government requirements prohibitive. We will continue to keep the situation under review and if there is evidence that the scheme would be beneficial we will pursue it.

Most landlords already provide a good standard of housing for their tenants so, at present, we are focusing our attention and resources on improving housing standards by tackling the worst landlords. To assist with this the Government is planning to introduce new legislation later this year to help local authorities identify and deal with 'rogue' landlords and broaden the licensing scheme for multi-occupied houses. Implementing these new provisions will be a priority for our Housing Standards team.

g. Question from Jonathan May to Councillor Afzal

What plans are being put in place in the event of a terrorist attack on the city?

Any queries about prevention of or response to terrorist incidents should be addressed to the Police and/or security services.

In terms of managing the consequences of large-scale or small scale 'non-routine' incidents, Derby City Council and partner agencies have a range of plans in place to ensure a co-ordinated response. These plans include the Derby Emergency Plan, City Centre Contingency Plan and a number of multi-agency plans.

Further information can be found at
https://www.derbyshireprepared.org.uk/our_plans/

h. Question from Pat Palmer to Councillor Shanker

Why does Councillor Banwait what to spend another £2.7 million pounds on the Council House? Hasn't he spent enough, I am sure there are more worthy cases than the Council House.

In November 2016, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced their intention to close the two Job Centre Plus offices in the city and to relocate the majority of their staff to the Council House. Since then officers have been in negotiations with the DWP to secure the best deal for the council.

On 5 July 2017 the DWP announced that following ministerial approval an agreement with the council has now been secured and that the two Job Centre Plus offices will close early in 2018 when they move into the Council House.

Last year we launched our Delivering Differently transformation programme. One of the principles of the new programme is to make the council a more commercial organisation and the deal we have reached with the DWP is an excellent example of this.

Of the £2.7m agreed by Cabinet, the DWP will directly pay the council £1.2m to redevelop the space they will occupy meaning the direct cost to the council of the project will be £1.5m. This will provide a new library facility, new meeting rooms for customers including a new accessible meeting room, new improved reception facilities and enhanced security.

The DWP will also pay the council an annual rental charge of £214k and a service charge of £277k. That means the council will receive an annual income from the DWP of £491k. Assuming the DWP remain in the building for the duration of their 15 year lease that means the council will receive £7.365m of new income.

Five years ago when we moved back into this building things were very different – we had more staff, our customers mainly came to visit us and partner agencies liked to operate from their own premises. The council now has 1000 fewer staff, customers mainly prefer to contact the council online and partners such as the DWP are looking to save money and improve the services they provide to customers by co-locating in buildings such as this.

This is an excellent deal for the council – it maximises the use of the ground floor of the building, it improves the service we can provide for both our and the

DWP's customers and it brings in much needed income to the Council helping us to protect valuable frontline services.

i. Question from Tom Banks to Councillor Raju

Given the major contribution made by amateur theatre and music groups to the cultural life of the city, can you give an assurance that the Derby Guildhall Theatre will continue to be available for use by these groups in the future?

In keeping with its usual operating model the Guildhall Theatre is currently confirming bookings from amateur theatre and music groups for up to 12 months in advance. There are currently no plans to change the operating model of the venue and it continues to be available for Derby's vibrant amateur community.

j. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Afzal

Please provide the city council's recycling rate for each quarter of 2015/16 and 2016/17 which it has removed from the council's score card which is circulated at Council Cabinet meetings.

Derby City Council recycling rates for each quarter 2015/2016 and 2016/2017:

Year	Quarter	Recycling Rate (%)
2015/2016	Q1	34.45%
	Q2	30.51%
	Q3	28.49%
	Q4	28.73%
2016/2017	Q1	37.03%
	Q2	37.23%
	Q3	32.33%
	Q4	32.11%

Councillor Questions

k. Questions from Councillor Graves and Councillor Harwood to Councillor Shanker

Councillor Graves

You may recall I asked about the necessity of employing a communications consultant in addition to the 8 in the communications team at a cost of £60k.

Your response stated that £60k was set aside and that this amount was the maximum allocated to this contract. It is approximately a year since the commencement of the contract so can you advise when the contract ends, what the current costs are and how much you expect the contract to cost overall?

Councillor Harwood

Last year the cabinet agreed to hire, on a fixed term contract, a communications / PR officer. With the contract about to expire, will there be continuation of the contract and if so for how long and at what cost?

The external Communications Consultant was appointed on 1 December 2016 so the contract will expire on 30 November 2017.

At the end of seven months the total spend was £33,270.

I am confident that at the end of the contract the amount spent will be less than the £60,000 set aside for this work.

I. Question from Councillor Care to Councillor Rawson

As it becomes clear that most, if not all, purported benefits of Brexit are illusory and that the process has already led to higher prices and reduced investment, and is likely to:

- **damage the NHS,**
- **hit manufacturing (particularly advanced manufacturing) and higher education,**
- **reduce opportunities for people to travel and learn, and to**
- **break social and family ties,**

What conversations have Derby City Council's leaders been having with our city's MPs to reinforce the many benefits to Derby of a soft Brexit or no Brexit – particularly given that two of our MPs were supporters of Remain last year?

Derby is fortunate to be a manufacturing city, with many of our largest and best known companies already operating globally, well used to exchange rate fluctuations and managing the uncertainties that this creates. However, the council recognises the significance of the UK's impending departure from the European Union.

Members are using every opportunity to help cushion the blow or mitigate some of the immediate likely economic impacts. For example, the council is promoting trade and export opportunities in India and China to local businesses. The council is also leading the preparation of a post-Brexit Economic Growth Strategy that will recommend a series of other interventions to enhance productivity, explore new market opportunities and build the innovation potential in our economy.

Members use every opportunity to influence Government policy via our dialogue with MPs. For instance, a recent event held at the Council House exposed a local MP to issues faced by universities in continuing to attract international students due to visa restrictions and the likely adverse long-term economic implications.

m. Question from Councillor Harwood to Councillor Rawson

In view of the fact that trees which that had been planted in Planters outside the council house, at considerable expense to the residents of Derby had died, why wasn't sufficient extra care taken to ensure that the trees in the planters in St Peters Street and at 'The Spot' were properly maintained by the contractor?

The maintenance of the trees, which were planted at The Spot, remains the responsibility of the contractor for three years from completion of the scheme in October 2016. The council noted the problems with the trees three weeks ago and raised the matter with the contractor, who has since replaced its landscape company. The new company is dealing with the issue. If the trees need to be replaced, they will be replaced at no additional cost to the council or the taxpayer. The maintenance contract will be monitored over its three year period.

n. Question from Councillor M Holmes to Councillor Raju

In November 2016, the Leader of the Council stated that Derby Arena is planned to breakeven with all subsidy removed by (financial year) 2018/19 with work underway to achieve this.

Recent income and expenditure released via a freedom of information request has revealed a worse than predicted loss of around £750k this year.

In light of this worsening financial position, can you re-confirm that Derby Arena will not require a financial subsidy within the next nine months (start of 2018/19 financial year) and update me on how this is going to be achieved?

I can confirm that the Derby Arena budget is on track to deliver the savings that were identified for 2017/18; there is no worsening of any position. The question has been based on a misinterpretation of the information that was provided as part of the FOI request and also a lack of appreciation of the latest approved budget position, which updated the 2018/19 and 2019/20 savings targets for leisure, culture and tourism services.

o. Question from Councillor Poulter to Councillor Rawson

Building a new Bus Station was made a priority by the 2008 - 2010 Lib Dem administration, despite concerns being raised by the Conservative group at the time.

The new building was promoted as a beacon for public transport in the city and the wider region and to make bus travel an attractive and desirable alternative to the car. However, in reality, was delivered with a flawed and short-sighted design that has been since mired with design and congestion issues.

To compound this, under the current Labour administration, the building and facilities have fallen into a poor state. Basic fixtures like seating are being damaged and not replaced, Christmas decorations hang all year round gathering dust and the cleaning budget has also been slashed.

In light of the recent announcement that a £5 million extension to the bus station will be built, what assurances will the cabinet member give that this further investment is the best use of tax payers money and will resolve current and future congestion issues and that the facility both present and future will be given the required amount of on-going investment?

Derby bus station has been and continues to be a hugely popular facility currently accommodating around 14 million passenger trips each year. This number has grown in recent years and the bus station is now operating at maximum capacity, a testament to its success as a building.

While there have been a number of congestion issues within the bus station in recent months, which have now been resolved, in part by bus operators making adjustments to their timetables, the bus station remains a facility that we can be proud of and which serves the residents of the city well.

Maintenance and operation of the bus station is paid for by bus operators who pay to operate services from the building. We work hard to keep the facility in a good state of repair and clean for customers but given the huge footfall there is naturally wear and tear that takes place.

The recent announcement that the bus station could be extended indicates that we aren't simply standing still. We recognise that growth in housing in and around Derby and potential new bus links to the proposed HS2 rail station at Toton amongst other things are likely to increase demand for bus services.

Extending the bus station to make space for new services makes sense and allows us to ensure that we provide the very best facilities for passengers into the future.

p. Question from Councillor Willoughby to Councillor Raju

What will the final outcome be for any Library that ultimately fails to move to community management (or similar) and that is not being retained within the recently agreed Derby City Council statutory Library portfolio?

As set out in the recently approved cabinet report:

In the event of it becoming apparent that a library faces imminent closure because no community group has come forward to set up a CML, or because a CML is in danger of collapse, the council will explore the possibility of additional mitigations tailored to the specific circumstances of the library that is facing closure.

q. Question from Councillor A Holmes to Councillor Afzal

Recently a local business man described Derby's City Centre as looking like a disaster zone and he is not alone. A commercial property expert also stated that Derby's city centre drug and drink problem is "crippling" efforts to improve the area and that the problem of drug taking has become "unreal". He reported that a few weeks ago there were four people "shooting up heroin at 11am outside his business premises". Local businesses feel badly let down and that their voices are not being heard.

St Peter's street also now has a well established reputation as a magnet for anti-social behaviour including those under the influence of drink and drugs regularly congregating. Drug dealing is also now common place, in plain sight of shoppers.

This area of the City Centre is also plagued with a large number of street charity workers intercepting shoppers at every turn along with mobile street sellers peddling low quality tat.

What does the cabinet member plan to do to resolve these issues as a matter of urgency before areas of the City Centre becoming increasingly no go zones for local people and visitors to Derby?

Derby City Council is working with a range of partners to improve our day time economy. We manage our night time economy very effectively as evidenced by our recent re-accreditation with purple flag status which is an award for the way we manage our night-time economy.

We are working with the police, probation as well as housing and food providers; our joint plan is focussed on engagement, education and enforcement. Recent police operations have resulted in a significant reduction in street begging and drinking.

r. Question from Councillor Hassall to Councillor Afzal

Can the Cabinet Member list the number of reports of fly tipping that the council dealt with (ward by ward breakdown if possible) in 2015/16, 2016/17, the first quarter of 2017 and the overall estimated cost?

Derby City Council don't hold the costs of fly tipping separately within our budgets, so estimated costs are based on the WasteDataFlow national average as a guide.

These figures are published as official statistics. The costs on the WasteDataFlow national database are based on the incident size categories 'single items', 'single black bags', 'car boot or less', 'small van loads' and 'transit van loads' are set in the system based on national averages. For the other categories, 'tipper lorry loads' and 'significant multiple loads', the costs are entered by the local authority. However, in the guidance, national average costs per loads are provided to help local authorities calculate their estimates. This approach aims to reduce differences in local estimation methods and therefore allow for equivalent comparisons to be made at the local authority level.

YEAR	REPORTED FLYTIPPING INCIDENTS	ESTIMATED COST – BASED ON NATIONAL AVERAGES
2015-16	4283	£200,556.00
2016-17	5316	£265,928.00
APR-JUN 2017	1527	£77,821.00
TOTAL	11126	£544,305.00

I can provide an analysis of this data by ward and have asked officers to provide this to you directly, when it is available.

s. Question from Councillor Potter to Councillor Afzal

Can the Cabinet Member detail the number of penalty notices and the number of prosecutions for fly tipping in 2015/16, 2016/17 and the first quarter of 2017.

	2015/16	2016/17	Q1 2017/18
FPN's	2	9	3
FPN – ABCPA *	-	6	0
Prosecutions	0	1	0
Simple cautions	1	1	1

*FPN's for waste issues served under the Anti - Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 – usage commenced start of 2016.

t. Question from Councillor Barker to Councillor Afzal

Will the Cabinet Member inform this Council of the number of sites within the City Boundary that have been occupied by travellers since April of this year - the total cost of applications to the County Court to regain possession of the land occupied and environmental clean up costs associated following removal?

Since April 2017, travellers have trespassed on council owned land on ten occasions, with enforcement action through the court having to be taken on nine occasions. The sites in question are:

1. Greenwich Drive South – 6 April 2017
2. Sunnyhill Recreation Ground– 7 April 2017
3. Staunton Avenue – 19 April 2017
4. Bishops Drive – 21 April 2017
5. Moorfield – 9 May 2017 – **No court action required**
6. Alfreton Road – 22 May 2017
7. Sinfin Golf course 12 June 2017
8. Oakwood Park – 2 June 2017
9. Bishops Drive – 12 June 2017
10. Chaddesden Park 28 June 2017

The total costs incurred for court fees and process servers (please note that this does not include officer time) is £3,679 made up of issue fees (9 x £355) and warrant fees (4 x £121).

There has also been a total of £2,184 spent on process server fees when notices and/or court papers have had to be served on the trespassers. Together, these give a combined sum total of £5863.00

The total cost of the environmental clean-up was £13,142.29. This figure does not include any officer time.

u. Question from Councillor Marshall to Councillor Shanker

Will the Cabinet Member please detail the spending on agency staff for the council in financial years 2015/16 and 2016/17 and the first quarter of 2017?

2015/16	£4,672,716.35
2016/17	£5,887,014.50
2017/18	£1,439,475.24

Note: DCC have a corporate contract to procure agency staff through Matrix and therefore the above figures are based on agency spend through Matrix.

v. Question from Councillor Webb to Councillor Shanker

What proportion of DCC staff who have face to face contact with the public have DBS checks in place?

Certain jobs within the council in social care are designated as requiring DBS checks. There are currently 1115 employees in those roles.

w. Question from Councillor Hudson to Councillor Afzal

The council recently increased flower displays and planting, but at the expense of grass cutting. Can the Cabinet Member please detail what grass cutting has been reduced and the locations?

The resources diverted to work on flower displays and planting delayed grass cutting across the city by an average of five days. This meant that the grass cutting cycle from start to finish across the city took on average five days longer than usual. No particular locations were affected more than any others.

x. Question from Councillor Smale to Councillor Afzal

Revenue raised via CCTV enforcement is stated as being re-invested in highways improvements. Can the cabinet member state what schemes this revenue has been used for in 2015/16 and 2016/17?

Any surplus generated by parking activities is added to the council's general revenue fund and is used to support the overall funding allocated towards highways and transport activities. It therefore isn't appropriate to allocate specific schemes against this revenue.

y. Question from Councillor Williams to Councillor Shanker

How many incidents have been reported involving school children on taxi journeys in the City in 2016/17?

Derby City Council has recorded 175 incidents that have been reported since 1 January 2016. To date, these include taxis being reported late and concerns about drivers, with a small number of more serious complaints that have been dealt with by a LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

All of the complaints have been fully investigated and resolved; we are not aware of any requiring officer action.

z. Question from Councillor Hezelgrave to Councillor Shanker

What comfort can be given that the new points system for taxi licensing offers assurance for the public and taxi drivers?

There have been a number of changes implemented to taxi licensing administration from 1 July 2017, with the Derby Point based system being one of them. These changes were considered and approved by Council and the Licensing Committee. The new Derby points based system provides the public and the taxi trade with a transparent and fair method of determining taxi licensing applications. The changes were only introduced from 1 July 2017 and will be subject to evaluation as to their operational effectiveness, no later than 12 months after implementation.

za. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Raju

Appleton's Fair that came to Alvaston Park in April (14-23) was charged £3k as income for using the park.

All local councillors were consulted (rightly so) asking for our opinions. Every one of the Alvaston Councillors asked for the receipts to go to Alvaston Park Friends. This idea was rejected by the department however, they did promise that the money would be used in the park.

Aside from the expected spending on Alvaston Park can you advise us what the extra spending was used for or is intended to be used for?

All council services are tasked with delivering differently and being more commercial in order to meet the real challenge caused by reduced subsidies. Events such as the fair at Alvaston Park are one way that the Parks service can achieve additional income to offset reduced budgets.

The income from the fair has been used to help fund an extensive programme of works, many of which were required in preparation for the park's Green Flag entry, the result of which will be announced on 19 July. The work undertaken has included:

- The purchase of 420 plug plants for the community garden island bed
- The cost of stain for the treating of seats, to both protect but also improve their appearance.
- Replacement of height barrier, including installation and associated repair works
- Signage for the Science Garden
- Provision of new timber bollards
- Path repairs around the lake
- Repairs to boards around the kickabout area
- Car park surface repairs.

zb. Question from Councillor Care to Councillor Afzal

Will the need to encourage more people to travel by bus rather than car, so as to help reduce air pollution and help meet targets for air quality, lead to a review of the budget for bus stop maintenance and cleaning which is currently less than £3000 per year (down from a spend of over £100,000 two years ago)?

The current budget in 2017/18 is £50,000 for bus shelter maintenance and cleaning, so it is not as low as the question suggests.

However, I do agree that we should encourage bus use as an alternative means of travel. The council will continue to work with partners and to take advantage of any funding opportunities that arise to improve our infrastructure. We will of course keep budgets under review and look for mechanisms to achieve more sustainable funding options.

zc. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Afzal

Back in September 2016 the question about formal adoption of City Point was raised. The final paragraph stated, 'we continue to actively pursue the developer and to move these matters forward in a manner which ensures that the risks to the Council and local residents are minimised and the development is adopted without further delay.'

Can you provide an update please? Could you also provide some clarity as to the reasons for such long delays?

The City Point development has not yet been adopted. There is an adoption agreement in place between the developers and the city council. The roads have been built to the satisfaction of the council, though they are still subject to final detailed condition checks.

The delay to formal adoption has been due to negotiations with the developer over the cost of carrying surveys and design of potential parking schemes, with particular concerns relating to match day parking. The council has been negotiating to ensure that the developers will commit to the costs and to the delivery of a solution. If the council adopted the roads without this commitment then the developers would have less interest in the delivery of solutions to congestion and parking behaviour.

Dialogue with the developers has been on-going and in last two weeks the developers have indicated their willingness to progress the issues. Officers have now informed me that they expect to reach a formal agreement in the next few weeks. At that point I will ensure that officers make progress towards the delivery of a parking solution and the formal adoption of the roads within the development.

zd. Question from Councillor Care to Councillor Afzal

As the warnings from climate scientists about the need to cut climate change emissions become ever more urgent, what plans does Derby City Council have in place to use its publicity opportunities (Twitter, Council Tax billing, poster boards, etc.) to encourage citizens to take action in their own lives to reduce Derby's overall carbon footprint?

The council's activity in relation to promoting this issue is focused on the delivery of a European project to help small businesses to become more energy efficient by offering grants and technical support which will run until November 2019. To date we are actively working with 95 businesses and have undertaken 49 energy audits resulting in 9 grants totalling approximately £68,000. Later this year the council will also be launching its new energy brand, Ram Energy, which will offer local people more opportunities to secure a competitive energy supplier and will also provide opportunities to promote energy information and advice.

ze. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Afzal

The canal path from London Road to Harvey Road has been the subject to many issues over the years.

Currently we have residents whose gardens back onto the path who are blighted by growth of hedging and trees that the council will not trim themselves. The overgrowth means that the sun is being blocked from their gardens and living areas. Unfortunately, the council will not allow the residents or their contractors to trim the hedging that lies on public land.

This has left these residents in a 'catch 22' situation, which impacts on their health and wellbeing.

Can the cabinet member please assert some political pressure to either get the council to trim the hedging they are responsible for or allow the residents to pay for a contractor to do it for them?

On behalf of these residents I should explain that they do not want the hedging removed merely trimmed to a more sensible height.

The tree section is aware of the issues in this area concerning trees on council land which are close to resident's boundaries. The tree section recently received a request from a local tree contractor on behalf of a resident whose property backs on to the canal path. The request was to pollard three Maple trees and one Sycamore tree.

Pollarding is not a suitable treatment for these types and ages of tree and will create an on-going maintenance burden for the council. With this in mind and in the interests of preserving public visual amenity the request to pollard was denied. The contractor was however advised of the property owner's right in common law to remove overhanging vegetation back to their legal boundary. The contractor was also advised that if in order to achieve the correct pruning cuts in line with British standards, we would be happy for them to prune back beyond the boundary where necessary. An indemnity form was provided to the contractor, which was filled in and returned, allowing them to work on council land.

The council values its tree cover and the wide ranging benefits the trees bring to the community. Issues such as loss of light are currently dealt with in the tree management policy.

We currently don't allow residents or their contractors to carry out work on council land beyond cutting back overhanging vegetation as we do not have the resources to check specifications or monitor this work.

Currently the Arboricultural team prioritise their time dealing with diseased and dangerous trees which have the ability to cause damage, injure residents, block sightlines and affect the highways network.

zf. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Shanker

It has been approximately one year since Cllr Banwait altered the rules for petitions restricting their use.

Can you tell the chamber how many the council received from July 2015 to June 2016 and July 2016 to June 2017? Can you also advise how many have been prevented from accessing the council agenda within the same dates?

Councillor Graves will be aware that a report of the Chief Executive proposing amendments to the Petitions Scheme was agreed by Council in July 2016. It is inaccurate to suggest that these changes were introduced by Councillor Banwait.

Between July 2015 and June 2016 Democratic Services received eleven petitions, totalling 13,877 signatures. Between July 2016 and June 2017 seventeen petitions were received, totalling 7,310 signatures. This does not include petitions in relation to planning applications, which are dealt with directly by Planning Officers.

In that period, no petition has been rejected as a result of the changes implemented in July 2016. Moreover, no petition received met the threshold for a debate at Council, either under the current or previous criteria.

zg. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Afzal

On the 30th June I forwarded the Chief Executive and the Leader of the council a message I received from a local resident.

'Can I please bring your attention to the ongoing problems of the Tesco issue in the Allenton area of the city, the housing is now derelict & falling down the weeds are now so high they are coming over the top of the 12ft fence, the Mitre pub is now closed & is yet another blight on the area. This once prosperous area is now starting to look a disgrace. The people of Allenton are doing their best to keep their own property in good repair but we feel we are being shunned by the council. Please can you find out what is happening in the long term & whoever now owns this area should be at VERY LEAST making this area clean & tidy, the people of Allenton are sick & tired of being treated as 2nd class citizens in our own community, I now call on the council all councillors & anyone else with interests in this area to stop talking & start getting this mess tidied up'

By the time I sent this question in (16th July) I had one reply from the Chief Executive and no reply from the Leader of the Council. On the 3rd July I was promised a briefing on the subject which is yet to materialise. The Council has created 50 pledges (some of which have already failed significant milestones) with 6 of these being super pledges. One of those top 6 is 'The Council will make Derby the cleanest English city within four years'

The Mitre and surrounding area is nothing short of a tip, as described by one local resident. When can we expect action to make this whole area a proud place to live as it once was?

Tesco acquired a considerable area of land within the area in order to construct their supermarket development. Following the changes in Tesco's requirements and the decision not to proceed with the retail development Tesco have subsequently sold their interests within the area.

Those properties at 39, 61, 67, 71, 73 and 75 Whitehurst Street were acquired by the council from Tesco in 2016 and now form part of the council's housing stock portfolio managed by Derby Homes. All of these properties are now occupied by Derby Homes tenants.

In addition to the properties at Whitehurst Street, the council's ownership extends to the Allenton Market site and car park. The market continues to operate and good access is provided by the adjacent car park.

Due to the large proportion of the site now being held in various private ownerships (i.e. Rushden Enterprises/Euro Garages), the council have no direct control over the development of the privately owned land and assets.

In terms of ensuring the area is kept tidy, the Environmental Protection team have in the past 12 months responded to two complaints and remedied issues regarding fly tipping on the site of the Mitre Public House and concerns around open access.

The Environmental Protection team will continue to respond to any concerns or complaints that are received, however unfortunately due to current resource pressures the team are unable to undertake the necessary proactive work to establish whether there are any environmental issues.

It is acknowledged that this is an important area within Allenton and the council will continue to work with adjacent land owners to improve the area.

zh. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Afzal

I welcome the fact that the council has received £70,000 for a new role to tackle terrorism and radicalisation. A recent report to the Integrating Communities Scrutiny Board also suggested that the Derby Muslim community had not been fully engaged by the Prevent Programme.

An article published in the Derby Telegraph on the 2 May stated that, 'the new role will also work to fight extreme right-wing political activity and hate crime, which the authority said has increased since Britain voted to leave the European Union'.

Can I say from the outset that leaving the European Union is not a terrorist act and adding this statement to the report merely shows the prejudice of the council and is inconsistent with the 57% of people in our city who wanted to leave the EU. Furthermore, whilst hate crime is abhorrent and disgusting, it does not come under the heading of Terrorism but is in fact criminal activity that is dealt with by Derbyshire Constabulary. Therefore, adding these two elements dilutes the real threat of terrorism through radicalisation, which as the report states is active and alive in Derby.

Can you assure residents of Derby that this money will be spent on real threats of terrorism? Do you think it is unfortunate that your comments unwittingly suggest that the majority of Derby citizens are partly responsible for the rise in terrorism?

It is important to understand the differences between terrorism and extremism. The Government have a counter terrorism strategy called Contest. The prevent element of this is led by the city council in partnership with local police and regional intelligence services. Prevent identifies vulnerable individuals and puts in place a range of interventions to prevent radicalization, which can lead to acts of violence and terrorism. The Government have recently funded a new post of counter extremism. This work will aim to build a strong partnership from within the city to promote our core British values and tackle hate crime which is a consequence of extremism. Counter extremism is distinct but complimentary to our work on prevent.

