



Council Meeting Wednesday 21 November 2018

Public and Member Questions and Responses



Derby City Council

COUNCIL – 21 November 2018
PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

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Public Questions

a. Question from David Walton to Councillor Smale

Could we please consider banning parking on pavements, as in Scotland they have introduced a ban with some success. The law allows each local authority to act independently with regards to parking restrictions. Will the Cabinet Member consider doing as other local authorities have done by banning parking on pavements throughout the city? Parking restrictions are working well within the city centre, can they be extended throughout the city?

The current policy on footway parking bans in Derby focuses on the city centre area. This recognises that the city centre is a unique environment, with very high footfall, and a high frequency of vehicles stopping for short periods to load and unload. The city centre also has fairly comprehensive parking regulations, which also make it easier to sign or instruct drivers where and when they can legitimately park.

This makes the city centre different from other district centres and residential areas.

Implementing a full ban across the city would of course only have any real meaning if it could be enforced to a reasonable level. Given the size of the city, this level of effective enforcement is unlikely.

I do recognise that parking on footways can be a key concern for pedestrians and particularly wheelchair users, people with children (particularly in pushchairs) and for anyone with physical or visual impairment.

The parking policy does allow for requests to be made for individual streets, or small collections of streets, to be added to the footway parking ban. As part of any investigation, pedestrian safety, footfall, carriageway widths and traffic flows, will all be considered. Other alternative physical measures to ensure that footways are available for pedestrian use will also be considered.

I would encourage anyone with concerns to raise the issues with their Neighbourhood Board. The boards can then consider commissioning further investigation.

b. Question from Moira Findlay to Councillor Webb

As from 30 November the services offered to support Carers by Creative Carers will cease because of withdrawal of funding from Derby City Council. This has been a vital service to enable carers to continue to support their loved ones and thereby saving the Council a considerable amount of money by not calling on social services as much. Can the cabinet member for adult services please tell me what is planned now this service is being taken in house to continue this essential support?

All contracts with the council are time limited and the contract with Community Action Derby (in turn delivered by Creative Carers) was due to end in August 2018. A contract extension was agreed until the 30 November and offered until the end of March 2019. Community Action Derby are not in a position to accept any further contract extensions beyond this date, therefore their contract with the Council will end this month. Carers who have used the services under this contract are being contacted with details of the alternative arrangements and support in place that they can access. This includes support that is provided in the following ways:

- Directly by the council in the form of social work assessments for them and/or their loved one; this can include arranging a Personal Budget/ Direct Payment to meet individual support needs including short breaks; sitting services; and family breaks etc.;
- Directly by Local Area Coordinators or from advice and information we provide as a council through our Talking Points in communities;
- By Derby Direct, Derby Homes and the Healthy Housing Hub should Carers need general advice or help with housing matters, including accessing equipment or housing adaptations;
- Via the council's Shared Lives cares or using organised respite to enable Carers to have a break from caring whereby their loved one is cared for temporarily by someone else – for example by care provided to them at home, on a supported holiday break or in a residential care home;
- By a commissioned service provided under a contract with Derbyshire Carers Association to help us deliver on our statutory duty to provide needs assessments, as well as providing more general information and advice;

- By a commissioned service provided under a contract with Making Space to help carers whose loved one has dementia;
- By a commissioned service with One Advocacy who can provide advocacy support for carers or their loved ones;
- By a commissioned service provided under a contract with Richmond Fellowship (Derby City Life Links) to help carers whose loved one has a mental health need;
- By Derby Direct, to identify if any discounts or exemptions apply with regards to Housing Benefit or Council Tax. Derby Direct can advise on a range of other council services which may support carers including refuse collection and gritting, telecare, support with housing and accessing a Blue Badge;
- Derby City Council fund health and wellbeing support through 'LiveWell' and there is also free and discounted access to council sports centres, leisure facilities and many arts venues for Carers when supporting loved ones;
- By helping Carers to access a range support for and training through the Adult Learning Service; the Winter Friends initiative; VSPA (Voluntary Sector Single Point of Access); other voluntary and community groups.

Carers should contact the council directly on 01332 640000 and we will arrange for an assessment of needs to take place. If carers are already known to the council, we can review their current situation in light of the services coming to an end through the arrangements with Community Action Derby/ Creative Carers.

c. Question from Mick Vernon to Councillor Smale

I was in the chamber at the last full council when the majority voted in favour to terminate the waste plant contract with immediate effect. I was also in the following cabinet meeting when this was deferred until reports came in on the 19th November. Why is the will of full council still being ignored?

d. Question from Darren Bales to Councillor Smale

The incinerator plant in Sinfin has been in breach of contract for 8 weeks now. Sinfin and the rest of the city that will be affected by this polluting, stinking waste plant are still waiting for you to take the action passed in the last full council meeting. When are you going to terminate the contract?

Thank you for your questions Mr Vernon and Mr Bales.

Since the Full Council resolution on 27 September, we agreed as a Cabinet on 10 October to defer any decision on the resolution until officers were able to provide the appropriate technical, financial and legal information.

In this regard, a further report will be considered by Cabinet on 12 December 2018.

e. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Smale

How much per tonne will the council now be paying Biffa Waste Services for the processing of the blue bin material after the cabinet agreed recently to pay Biffa Waste Services more due to issues relating to the export of material to the likes of China?

This question is similar (though not identical) to one recently asked under EIR (Environmental Information Regulations) rules.

Now, as it was then, a response to this question is likely to significantly compromise Biffa's negotiating position nation-wide in what is clearly a continually volatile market segment. I consider that there is a balance to be struck between acknowledging such compromise and the need for transparency, which this administration is fully committed to.

On this occasion, my view is that the balance lies in maintaining the confidentiality of the agreed negotiated position. That is a decision I feel is justified at the present time while acknowledging that, as the market situation changes, hopefully in the weeks and months to come, that position can be reviewed.

f. Question from George Morland to Councillor Roulstone

The council adopts a bullying tactic towards landlords in the private housing sector insisting that they are responsible for the council tax payments on their empty houses yet when it comes to city centre commercial property landlords you fail to adopt the same tactics. Given that the high streets are dying on their feet and a return to providing city centre living accommodation is the best solution to the dire need for more housing, whilst saving our green belts, making these commercial landlords responsible for the short fall in Council Tax could well encourage them to convert their properties.

A prime example is the BHS site which would make a great ground floor arcade for small retailers with the upper floors given over to flats, after all it is the business that has been made bankrupt not the landlord who, if facing huge financial charges for the outstanding tax, may well consider selling it at a reduced figure to the council or at least work with the council to resolve the issue of empty shops in our city centre.

Thank you for your question Mr Morland.

Income from Council Tax payers is used to provide many council services and services provided by the Derbyshire Fire Authority and Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner. Many of these services are equally as important for the tax payers of empty or unoccupied properties as they are for occupied ones and therefore it is right that the owners of empty or unoccupied, domestic properties in the city should make a contribution to the cost of local services.

Turning to commercial properties, the current Business Rates scheme is based, broadly, on national rules and this includes the rules on how and when empty or unoccupied business premises are charged Business Rates. Whilst the national rules provide for an initial brief period where business rates is not charged on unoccupied premises after this period has expired a full business rates charge is levied on most unoccupied business premises.

Charging Council Tax on empty or unoccupied domestic properties and Business Rates on unoccupied business premises is also designed to encourage the owners to bring them back into use and the council will continue to use the powers it has to continue doing this.

In response to your point about needing to bring empty commercial premises back into use and create more housing in Derby, the council's City Living Fund

was set up to enable the conversion of redundant commercial property into residential units. This fund is available to property owners as a loan to pay for conversion works and is a practical example of the council's commitment to city centre regeneration and accelerating housing development. Also, Derby's Economic Strategy and City Centre Masterplan recognises the changing face of our high streets and the need to bring a mix of uses and activity into the city centre to keep it vibrant and sustainable.

g. Question from Dorothy Skrytek to Councillor Smale

As Councillors may know, the companies Renewi, Green Investment Group, Interserve, Resource Recovery Solutions et al, lobbied the UK Government, successfully, to weaken pollution limits from incineration, including nitrogen dioxide.

Nitrogen dioxide pollution is the reason why the Derby Air Quality Management Areas were set up (although the one for particulates also needs reinstating now, on Victory Rd)

As recycling collections (bluebin) are dismantled across the city, to feed the disposal contract 'calorific' values, this means that more, previously reduced, reused & recycled plastics, will be destroyed instead, leading to increased nitrogen dioxide emissions, as well as dioxin.

Derby is one of the UK Governments Clean Air Zones in which nitrogen dioxide emissions are supposed to be reduced, not increased.

The incineration plant is already causing noise, stink and lack of sleep in the immediate area, as well as spreading pollution across the city and county.

We ask what the council is doing, towards ending the contract and whether it will persuade the other signatories to the Inter-Authority Agreement, to withdraw from the contract.

Since the Full Council resolution on 27 September, we agreed as a Cabinet on 10 October to defer any decision relating to termination until officers were able to provide the appropriate technical, financial and legal information.

In this regard, a further report will be considered by Cabinet on 12 December 2018.

h. Question from Nigel Runcorn to Councillor J Khan

Derbyshire NHS Commissioners have proposed to decommission the Psychodynamic Psychotherapy service which works with adults severely abused as children. There are many flaws to their process. They have taken 14 months to begin the consultation so paralysing future planning and causing deep insecurity for to Service Receivers and leading now to the closure of this in demand service to new referrals. The evidence base for the service has been misrepresented by Commissioners in their public document and this and other arguments made are prejudicial to a fair process. Can the Council assure patients, therapists and the public that the Adult and Health Scrutiny Committee will, at its next meeting, thoroughly scrutinise this proposal and address its many flaws.

Thank you for the question, Mr Runcorn.

Yes, I can confirm this issue is already on the scrutiny board's work programme for consideration at its next meeting.

i. Question from Peter Robinson to Councillor Webb

In response to my question put to the council meeting of September 27 relating to the Derbyshire Psychotherapy Service unit Councillor Webb stated that the plan was 'to improve access to all'. Can he assure us that the plan is to guarantee access for those with needs for long term, intensive therapy, instead, of merely diverting demand to short term non-intensive therapies?

Thank you for the question, Mr Robinson.

My response at the previous meeting stated that it was the CCG which had confirmed it had plans to improve access to all Derbyshire people. To that end I would refer you to the CCG for more detail on their proposals.

j. Question from Amanda Lofley to Councillor Smale

Please advise what measures have been put in place to ensure the output of Nitrogen Dioxide levels do not reach 50mg at any time of the day or night which can be harmful to people's health and why is it acceptable for the stench to affect people detrimentally in their homes ,gardens, allotments and places of work.

Primacy for monitoring air quality, noise and odour relating to the operation of the plant is with the Environment Agency (EA) as the regulator. This is managed under the contractors operating permit issued by the EA.

The Council continues to seek feedback from the EA with regards their monitoring and potential for follow up action. Issues are also raised through the Community Liaison Meeting (CLG) where the EA are present.

The council monitor and report on local air quality under the Local Air Quality Management Regime (LAQM) across its administrative area. This includes Nitrogen Dioxide.

k. Question from Dave Clasby to Councillor M Holmes

In Derby City Council's recently published proposals to improve air quality on Stafford St it was proposed to remove two pieces of cycling infrastructure on Friargate with no proposed mitigation or compensation. Please can Derby City Council explain how this decision was arrived at?

The proposal as shown at present does include the removal of a very short length of cycle lane on one side of Friargate, a right turn facility, and the reduction of an existing short length of bus lane.

The schematic graphics (note these are not final construction designs) in the proposal show that additional right turn capacity is to be provided from Uttoxeter Old Road into Ashbourne Road. This is to assist with the flow of traffic and forms part of the wider area traffic management strategy.

The council is under a legal requirement in terms of roadside nitrogen dioxide as well as having a legal duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to 'secure the expeditious movement of traffic'. To achieve this council is encouraged to make the best use of the existing road network, and most importantly, to take a balanced approach to the needs of all highway users.

This does not prevent the council from promoting different forms of travel, nor does it require the council to always favour one form of travel over others. As the local highway authority, the council has to consider the often competing needs and views expressed by the range of interests in the city.

It is important to remember that there is a high quality off road cycle route along the full length of Friargate, as well as an on-road cycle lane marked on the carriageway heading away from the city.

It is also important to remember that the council has provided at least 5km of new or improved cycle routes in each of the last 3 years, and this work continues across the city.

The consultation on the preferred scheme for reducing roadside nitrogen dioxide, also invites comments and suggestions for wider measures, which include active and sustainable travel as part of the longer term solution.

It is the longer term transport solutions, and the opportunities of future funding that we all need to be focusing on for the benefit of all of the residents of the city.

I. Question from Pauline Inwood to Councillor Grimadell

What are the plans for the Moorways pool development now? The previous administration's plans were well advanced and were to provide a much needed 50m pool, but is this no longer your plan?

Work has been continuing to finalise the design of the new Swimming Pool Complex. The priorities have been to progress a comprehensive value engineering exercise and to progress a feasibility exercise to consider whether there are benefits of considering an enhanced design for the leisure water.

To ensure that these proposals are affordable the new Swimming Pool Complex, along with other projects within the council, has been part of the MTFP budget discussions taking place, which are due to be concluded in the coming weeks.

m. Question from Jyoti Wilkinson to Councillor Grimadell

What consultation was undertaken before the closure of Peartree library?

Full public consultation was undertaken in developing the current Library strategy, part of which was to identify the Pear Tree library provision as one of the five libraries within the council's statutory offer. The council is therefore obliged to ensure library provision is available in the locality.

The Pear Tree Library building was temporarily closed in April 2018 to allow maintenance works to be carried out. Subsequent survey works identified that significant works were required to be undertaken to the building. Consequently the building has remained closed.

Cabinet, on 14 November 2018, agreed to the relocation of the Pear Tree Library service provision to the nearby St Augustine's Community Centre.

n. Question from Jamie D'Arcy to Councillor Barker

How many decisions have been made following public exclusion since May 2018?

Thank you for the question.

Council Cabinet meetings since May have involved the consideration of 72 reports, 61 of which have been held in public session while 11 have been subject to exemptions. A total of 16 reports have been considered at Cabinet Member Meetings, 14 in public and two in private.

Elsewhere, Audit and Accounts Committee has considered 29 out of the 32 reports in public, with three being subject to exemptions, while 41 out of the 42 reports considered by our scrutiny review boards since May were in public and just one was in private.

Our Executive Scrutiny Board considers Cabinet business so I won't double count those figures, but in addition to that the board has considered a further 19 reports, all in public.

Between them, Council, Conservation Advisory Committee, Corporate Parenting Committee, Licensing Committee and its General Licensing Sub, Health and Wellbeing Board, Personnel Committee, Planning Control Committee, SACRE and Standards Committee have considered 126 reports, all in public.

The total of the above is 290 reports considered in public and 17 in private. The one employee appeal and 17 taxi licensing appeal cases heard this year have all been in private due to the legal requirement to do as the information relates to individuals.

A committee or councillor will only ever agree to exclude the press and public when explicitly advised to by officers acting on requirements under the various Local Government Acts.

o. Question from Mick Vernon to Councillor Smale

With the massive emphasis being put on the contract for the waste treatment plant, why have RRS been allowed to ignore the part that states a 20 day notice period must be provided to both councils before commencing the 14 day test?

Thank you for your question Mr Vernon.

RRS have not been allowed to ignore the 20 days' notice period that should be provided to both councils before the commencement of the 14 day acceptance test.

This is still an unresolved matter under consideration between RRS and the two councils.

p. Question from Simon Bacon to Councillor Smale

A document published prior to the Nov 14th Council Cabinet meeting relating to the new free brown bin service for garden and food waste contained a specific legal section referring to the Sinfin waste incineration project - the contents of which were to be considered in private session. Does the city council agree that recycling of garden and food waste must come before the incineration of garden and food waste in Sinfin?

Thank you Mr Bacon for this question as it is also very timely.

With the introduction of our new and improved free garden and food waste collection, we are very much demonstrating our commitment to recycling. Not only does it cost less for the city to dispose of, it diverts it away from landfill. This will put us back on course to meet the government's target of 50 per cent recycling rates by 2020.

q. Question from Peter Robinson to Councillor M Holmes

ClientEarth, the environmental lawyer group, have stated that the government's plans to tackle air pollution in cities such as Derby is unravelling into a "shambolic and piecemeal mess". ClientEarth says that Derby's proposals are particularly of concern because the favoured scheme "does not seem to be based on any kind of assessment of the possible impacts on air pollution in the city". It is reported (November 13) that Derby Council "declined to comment when approached by the Guardian". Could the council please comment now?

The Guardian newspaper asked for a comment on a letter sent by Client Earth to the council. It is more appropriate for the council to respond directly to Client Earth, rather than via the media.

Since May I've been very happy to comment on this very challenging and complicated issue, and I can provide a comprehensive response to the question as follows:

The council has a very specific legal duty to deliver a scheme that will reduce roadside nitrogen dioxide to below the legal limit of 40 micrograms per cubic metre of air, as determined by the government modelling requirements, and to achieve this in the quickest possible time.

The modelling shows that Derby has one point of exceedance, which is Stafford Street, and the council is therefore required to develop a scheme to reduce nitrogen dioxide at this location. This is why the council's preferred option is a scheme to target the area of exceedance as per the legal requirement.

The council's scheme has been modelled using the DEFRA modelling requirements. The data shows that the scheme will achieve compliance and that no other areas will be pushed into exceedance as a result of implementing this scheme.

The final scheme will require approval of the Secretary of State, and all of the data will be provided as part of the final submission. The Secretary of State will not approve a scheme that does not achieve compliance.

The consultation also sets out proposals that go beyond strict compliance on Stafford Street, and invites the public to comment on and contribute to the development of these proposals. These include proposals to; expand electric vehicle charge-point infrastructure, an incentive scheme to replace the worst

polluting vehicles, and a scheme for introducing mobility credits to reduce car usage.

The council is also already delivering cycling improvements, and has introduced a public e-bike scheme. In the near future we will be exploring innovations in public transport and additional ways to support active and sustainable travel.

The immediate task for the council is to achieve legal compliance, but this is a serious issue and one that I fully intend to ensure is further addressed as part of other future transport related funding opportunities.

r. Question from Dave Clasby to Councillor M Holmes

Does Derby City Council believe that improving infrastructure and the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport improves air quality and the health and well being of the people of Derby?

The proposal as shown at present does include the removal of a very short length of cycle lane on one side of Friargate, a right turn facility, and the reduction of an existing short length of bus lane.

The schematic graphics, that's aren't final construction designs, in the proposal show that additional right turn capacity is to be provided from Uttoxeter Old Road into Ashbourne Road. This is to assist with the flow of traffic and forms part of the wider area traffic management strategy.

The consultation on the preferred scheme for reducing roadside nitrogen dioxide, also invites comments and suggestions for wider measures, which include active and sustainable travel as part of the longer term solution.

It is the longer term transport solutions, and the opportunities of future funding that we all need to be focusing on for the benefit of all of the residents of the city. That includes the continued improvement of cycling infrastructure.

s. Question from Pauline Inwood to Councillor Grimadell

What is the medium and long term plan for Queens' Leisure Centre as it is very important the plans for the two provisions are timetabled to ensure full continuous service?

It is recognised that as Queens Leisure Centre is currently the only swimming facility in Derby provided by the council, and as such we agree that it is important that the medium and long term plans for this facility are aligned carefully with our plans for the new swimming provision being developed for the city.

Councillor Questions

t. Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Williams

Further to my question of the 22 October, still not answered:

How many and what percentage of children looked after were born outside of the UK please?

What does that equate to money and compared to the whole budget (actual or expected)?

As of 7 November 2018 there were 89 of the 543 children looked after that had been born outside the UK making a percentage of 16%.

The costs of the placements are £2.8m plus £750,000 social work costs from an overall budget of £32.9m (£23.2m placements and £9.7m social work).

u. Question from Councillor Bettany to Councillor Webb

A good friend of mine who sadly passed away nearly two years ago lived at 28 Nunsfield Drive, Alvaston. This is a three bedroom semi-detached property in a private residential street, but the property belongs to Derby Homes. It is still empty and many local residents have asked me why. Could I ask for some clarity on this please?

This existing three bedroom house has been identified as being suitable to extend and create a larger family home. This is an approved corporate initiative to meet high levels of demand on our waiting lists from large families, some of whom have complex needs which we are unable to meet through our existing stock.

The work planned is for a two storey extension providing a five bedroom home with extended ground floor living space, improved disability access and a ground floor wet room.

As one of the four homes initially identified there has been a long lead in time to set up arrangements with architects, obtain planning and prepare full specification prior to works being commenced.

All of the preparatory detail and planning approvals are now in place and Derby Homes are currently procuring contractors to commence work on site early in the New Year.

Now that frameworks and systems are all in place future properties that are identified as suitable for extensions will proceed to work stage more quickly.

v. Question from Councillor J Khan to Councillor Grimadell

What do you believe will be the impact on the local community in Normanton, Pear Tree and Arboretum by removing such a valuable and historic library?

St Augustine's Community Centre is half a mile from Pear Tree, so this valuable library service will continue to be delivered in the community which it serves. The new facility will combine the new library with the existing activities and services within the community centre and Madeley Centre creating a 'community hub'.

w. Question from Councillor Peatfield to Councillor Barker

Will you be ensuring all polling stations record how many voters are turned away during your Voter ID trial, and of those, how many don't return to vote?

Yes. As part of the Voter ID Pilot we will be recording how many voters are turned away from all polling stations in the city, and of those, how many do not return to vote.

x. Question from Councillor Russell to Councillor Williams

Every child matters, every day in mainstream education matters. In the light of the recent BBC news item on the national scandal of the number of pupils being secluded, often for lengthy periods of a week or weeks, in isolation booths rather than their mainstream classrooms, to what extent have you proactively begun to investigate the extent to which this affects our own school population, and have you already started a dialogue on this with the Regional Commissioner to get the figures for our Academies and with the Opportunities Board on how it can help address the issue, in conjunction with the council, along with some work by Voices in Action to capture anecdotal evidence and suggested solutions from a pupil perspective?

Thank you for raising this very important issue.

I would want to start by reassuring Cllr Russell and Council that the issue of tackling the exclusion and seclusion of children and young people in our schools, regardless of who runs them, is one I take seriously.

Indeed, last week I attended the National Children's and Adults Conference and was involved in various debates about this issue with both Her Majesty's Chief Inspector and the Minister for Children and Families, Minister Zahawi. I am also increasingly getting out to more schools where I always make a point of discussing their approach to exclusion and the wider inclusion agenda, and have asked officers to ensure this matter is raised more strategically at our Schools Forum which I also regularly attend.

The issue of tackling exclusion and seclusion is not a new one in Derby. Councillor Russell, you will no doubt remember the previous bid we made, in conjunction with school partners and with Nottingham City Council, to bid to the Department for Education's Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) for funding to ensure that exclusions and seclusions are minimised. Unfortunately, whilst this bid was unsuccessful, the local Opportunity Area Board has asked Derby City Council to consider whether the SSIF bid can be reworked and whether local schools would support a reworked proposal going to the Opportunity Area Board for consideration. This is currently being worked up and if taken forward then I would expect consultation with young people to be built in to the proposal, and this could include a discussion at Voices in Action.

Whilst schools are required to record numbers of children who are excluded, it is more difficult for Councils to capture information about seclusion. This is because

there is no agreed definition of what constitutes seclusion and therefore no valid data base could be collated.

However, only this week a paper came to my Cabinet Member Briefing on exclusions in Derby, and one of the actions arising from this was to ensure we enter into a strategic dialogue with the leads of the primary and secondary strategy group about seclusions.

y. Question from Councillor Bayliss to Councillor M Holmes

Having been briefed by officers regarding Alvaston district centre and being provided with the layouts which show the planned improvements why cannot this project be progressed in a similar way to the improvements in Mackworth, where the improvements were done quickly in advance of the building work and the council recovered the costs later from s106 payments from the developers?

The reason we have postponed works at Alvaston District Centre is that the mitigation measures required for the new housing development will mean re-aligning the kerbs along that stretch of highway. This means that any public realm works in advance of this re-alignment would be abortive. It is far more sensible to wait until all negotiations with the developers are concluded and then deliver improvements to ensure that all funding is used efficiently and works are not subsequently undone.

z. Question from Councillor Shanker to Councillor Grimadell

Having missed your own deadline to complete the New Swimming Pool review and having spent tens of thousands on this review when will it be complete and when will the residents of Derby know what your plans are?

A feasibility exercise to explore whether there are benefits of considering an enhanced design for the leisure water are near to completion.

At the same time work has been continuing to finalise the design of the original new Swimming Pool Complex and the priority has been progressing the comprehensive value engineering work.

It was always envisaged that these pieces of work would be extensive in order to achieve the best possible outcome for the city.

To ensure that these proposals are affordable the new Swimming Pool Complex, along with other projects within the council, have been part of the MTFP budget discussions taking place, which are due to be concluded in the coming weeks.

aa. Question from Councillor Eldret to Councillor Poulter

Does the current administration truly respect diversity in our city and in the make-up of this chamber?

We certainly do respect diversity and we should all be very proud of what we have in place in our city.

There are red ribbons for World AIDS Day on your seat to show our commitment and yesterday for the first time marked Transgendered Remembrance Day by raising the trans flag.

It is for each political group to take responsibility to make sure their councillors come from a range of backgrounds reflecting equality in Derby.

bb.Question from Councillor Graves to Councillor Barker

I have now been given many weeks worth of evidence that shows the hackney carriage ranks are being misused and abused by private hire taxi drivers.

I have sent in information to the licensing committee asking them to investigate but I believe there is a delay in any formal response.

There is definitely a deterioration in our taxi services with many private hire drivers taking advantage of a lackadaisical approach to enforcement combined with many registrations coming from outside of the city. I have numerous photos showing private hire drivers waiting to pick up ad-hoc hires by either flaunting the strict rules or asking potential customers to call their office whilst illegally waiting on a hackney rank.

Can I ask what action and activity is the council undertaking to ensure the only hackney drivers use the ranks and private hires are hired only through telephone calls?

Since submitting your question Councillor Graves, I understand that you have received a response about the matters you raised.

As you will know, our Licensing Officers speak to vehicle drivers where necessary when they are undertaking work in the city centre, including speaking to drivers of all vehicles that wait in hackney carriage ranks incorrectly. Drivers generally move on when asked and the private hire vehicles usually have jobs which we check on the vehicle's data heads. We regularly undertake joint enforcement work with colleagues from Derbyshire Constabulary and also other local authority licensing enforcement teams.

Also, information about incorrect parking is regularly reported on to Parking Services.

In relation to private hire bookings, with the advent of new technology, telephone calls are not the only way this can be done. All private hire bookings must be pre-booked. If they are approached directly by a customer, they cannot take the booking or deliberately indicate they are available for immediate hire. If they do, this is illegal plying for hire. They should direct the customer to contact the base to make a booking. We carry out plying for hire exercises and have had two successful prosecutions recently with others in the pipe line.

cc. Question from Councillor Peatfield to Councillor Poulter

Could you please provide the dates and minutes of cross-county meetings that you have had with Derbyshire County Council regarding the Sinfin Waste Plant?

I have attended meetings on the 2 and 6 August, 26 October and today. The main reasons for the meetings have been to brief respective Leaders on the current state of the project. No minutes or actions were produced.

dd.Question from Councillor Bayliss to Councillor Smale

Having seen in the press the parking 'blitz' in Allestree, that was reported with pictures from Darley ward, when can Alvaston hope to see such a campaign?

Short focused operations such as the one just carried out in Allestree are not the everyday work of the Parking Service. They are resource intensive and the purpose of such operations is carefully considered.

As you are probably aware the service does include parts of Alvaston within operations on match days. For other issues I would advise that you report concerns and locations to Parking Services and the service will investigate if, or what level of operation, may be appropriate for Alvaston.

ee. Question from Councillor P Pegg to Councillor M Holmes

Can you explain how a refurbished Assembly Rooms will attract residents, visitors and investment to Derby and also how this will support the City Centre economy in comparison to a purpose built performance venue?

The Assembly Rooms has been closed since the fire in March 2014 creating a negative impact on the city centre economy and a huge gap in our cultural and night-time offer.

The refurbishment of the Assembly Rooms would deliver enhancements and improve the flexibility of the venue. That would mean we can re-open this key facility much more quickly than we could if we demolished the venue, and adjoining car park, and then proceeded to build a new facility.

This will attract residents, visitors and investment and support the city centre economy.

Questions to Derby Homes

ff. Question from Councillor Graves to Derby Homes

Further to my question sent on the 19th October 2018 which has not been answered at the time of this question, can you provide me with the following information please:

How many tenants are paying the Garden maintenance payments with their rents?

How much this generates for the scheme?

What the surplus is from this payment?

Currently there are 503 tenants on the Garden Maintenance Scheme.

The money generated will fluctuate as it is dependent on the number of customers on the scheme. The 2018/19 estimated income (net of VAT and assuming no bad debts) is £107k.

There is no surplus from the scheme. It currently operates on a break even basis compared to the direct service provision costs.

gg.Question from Councillor Graves to Derby Homes

Can you advise what due diligence you go through when providing grants to the Enthusiasm group? I.e. are you certain you know what they spend the money on?

Can you also advise how much the grant is and whether the former leader of the council is now employed by them?

The grant to Enthusiasm is awarded by Derby Homes. Derby Homes have a comprehensive performance framework relating to this area of work. Enthusiasm are required to provide quarterly monitoring information on the levels of service and engagement that they provide. All activities are aligned with the Derby Homes Children's and Young Persons' strategy. All of this information is reported to the Derby Homes Operational Board.

The grant is £100,000 a year. As a grant, it is required to be approved by the Derby Homes Operational Board, which is comprised of a majority of tenants, and then confirmed by the council. The latest grant was approved by the Operational Board in April 2018, and confirmed by the council on 26 June 2018.

Any questions about the employees of Enthusiasm should be referred directly to them.

