

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 15 FEBRUARY 2023

a) Question from Karl Barrow to Councillor B Lewis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change

“The current debate over the large-scale deployment of solar arrays on productive farmland requires a willingness to prioritise every other alternative site for solar PV first. That includes both Council owned buildings and land and also the increasing number of recently constructed commercial buildings in Derbyshire, including large logistics centres. Many of these have good connections to the National Grid. This council should encourage installation on commercial roofs by proactively identifying suitable premises and working with those businesses to raise their awareness of both the economic benefits to their business and the wider environmental benefits.

So, since this council was elected in 2017, how many solar panels has this council installed on its own estate and how many has it directly facilitated by working in partnership with Derbyshire businesses to identify opportunities for large scale installation of solar PV arrays on such buildings?”

b) Question from Anne Thoday to Councillor B Lewis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change

“The Climate Change Strategy Annual Review of Progress shows very little decline in projected emissions from the Council’s core and grey fleet over the next 10 years. The County’s fleet of vehicles is around 550. At the current rate of replacement (5 in 2022) how long will it take to convert all of the council’s vans to ZEVs?”

There are no targets for the grey fleet and apparently no policy to reduce the mileage accrued by employees during their working day. At a meeting with Cllr Barry Lewis in July 2019 Derbyshire Climate Coalition recommended a number of climate actions including “Commission Energy Saving Trust to conduct a grey and green fleet review of the council before the end of the year”. This is something many councils have been doing for years – saving money, improving safety and reducing emissions. Why have the Council still not done this?”

c) Question from Wendy Bullar to Councillor B Lewis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change

“19 of the 27 targets contained within the Climate Change Strategy Annual Review of Progress either have no target data, no baseline data, or are just reiterations of government targets. Some examples:

1. “Reduce manufacturing and construction emissions by 70% ...”. We do not know the size of manufacturing and construction emissions in Derbyshire. How can this target be rated as ‘good progress’?
2. “24,000 skilled green jobs to be created in Derbyshire by 2030”. How can we measure progress when we do not have any figures for Derbyshire?
3. “All owner occupiers and renters to have access to education and training programmes to decarbonise their homes by 2025.” There is no meaningful measure for this target, other than councils are *exploring* this. Despite this, progress is rated as ‘good’.

Will DCC revisit the action plan and ensure the targets are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely)?

d) Question from Laura Stevens to Councillor B Lewis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change

"At the Climate Scrutiny meeting on 10 October the Council tabled a paper on climate change performance reporting <https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s16801/Climate%20Change%20Performance%20Reporting%20-%202022-2023%20Q1.pdf>. Out of 32 actions, half (16) were rated as ‘green’ or ‘on track’ while a further 15 were rated as amber or some risk to timetable, with one was rated as ‘red’ or unlikely to achieve timetable.

Given the lack of progress on so many climate targets this suggests that either the rating for these actions is wildly optimistic or that the actions themselves are not sufficient to meet the targets and further actions are needed. Please advise which of these it is?"

e) Question from Kathy Farr to Councillor B Lewis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change

“In the Annual Progress Report for the Climate Change Strategy, one of the targets is for “All existing owner occupier domestic properties [to be] EPC rating C by 2035.” The progress against this is marked red in respect of work to engage with residents “to understand what support they need to enable them to retrofit their own homes and to co-design and co-deliver a programme of activities”.

Given that many conversations have already taken place with residents, what is taking the Council so long to deliver any tangible action on this on the ground? Many community groups, including Transition Chesterfield and other members of Derbyshire Climate Coalition, have made practical suggestions of

how we can work together with the Council and offered support. What is stopping the Council taking up this offer of support and when can we expect the first real action on the ground?

e) Question from David Locke Councillor B Lewis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change

Have the council explored the use of quiet lane legislation to make all of the roads on a designated cycle route safer for cyclists, this legislation will enable speed restrictions and signage to reduce the danger to cyclist.

Cycling numbers will only increase if the DCC make roads safer for cyclists.

Suggestion:

1. Identifying suitable routes that link key towns, key villages and places that are being used by cyclist, again in conjunction with cycling groups.
2. Identify methods of making those routes safe for a family of 4 to use. These methods can include Quiet Lane legislation, 20 mph speed limits, signage, clearly segregated cycle lanes, bridleways, bike friendly train or coach links.

If the Council is serious about cycling for commuting and leisure, they must be prepared to upset car drivers. Net Zero will only happen if we all consider future generations and not immediate inconveniences.