

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 12 MAY 2025

Present:

Councillor Caroline Smith (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor Graham Baxter MBE
Councillor Lilian Deighton
Councillor Fran Petersen

Councillor Richard Beech
Councillor Tony Lacey

Also Present:

N Clark	Rykneld Homes Director of Customer & Strategic Partnerships (Deputy MD)
H Brown	Head of Regeneration and Development
A Bashir	Improvement Officer
J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
B Pender	Environmental Protection Officer
T Fuller	Governance Officer

ESC/ Apologies for Absence

50/2

4-25 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Renwick.

With the agreement of the Chair, Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer contributed to the meeting virtually. He did not participate in any of the decisions taken.

ESC/ Declarations of Interest

51/2

4-25 There were no declarations of interest.

ESC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

52/2

4-25 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee held on 17 February 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

ESC/ Performance Management

53/2

4-25 The Improvement Officer presented a report to the Committee summarising progress on the strategies underpinning the Council Plan objective 'A great place that cares for the environment' for the period ending 31 March 2025.

Some Members had questions around the houses that would be eligible for improvements via the Warm Homes Grant. Committee were updated on the selection process for homes to be improved as part of the scheme. The areas of the district being specifically targeted were shared. Committee also discussed the

danger of scammers piggybacking on the scheme. It was shared that correspondence would be clear about who was working with the District Council. Committee also discussed the challenges of encouraging people to buy in to home improvement projects within private sector housing, and also raised the issue of timescales for installing air source heat pumps.

RESOLVED – That progress against the Council Plan “A great place that cares for the environment” objective was noted.

ESC/ Energy Efficient Homes

54/2

4-25

Committee received a presentation on the work Rykneld Homes were doing to improve the energy efficiency of the Councils housing stock. The presentation included an overview of social housing in the area, a look at the energy efficient bungalows in Danesmoor, the figures behind the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and the feedback from customers. The presentation also detailed the benefits for the area and the plan going forward.

Committee considered the presentation. It was suggested that the project was making a positive difference, particularly in terms of improvements to streetscene. Some Members had questions around the lessons learnt from the Danesmoor project. It was shared that it had been a very positive project and had been useful in terms of understanding the importance of engaging customers early on in the process.

Some Members questioned whether Rykneld Homes have a list of the improvements needed by each home. Committee heard that a full up-to-date Stock Condition Survey would be complete by the end of the year. Some Members requested clarification to the plan for upgrading properties in the future. Committee heard that there was an ongoing project in Stonebroom, a new warm homes project starting in May 2025 that was set to last 3 years and a long term plan to increase the uptake of air source heat pumps within the Councils housing stock. Committee heard that this provides a range of challenges for both technical installations and supporting customers to adapt to a new way of heating their home and managing the costs. In this context, the process for procuring air source heat pumps was shared, and the lack of skilled workers in the industry was discussed. Committee heard that Rykneld Homes were training their current skilled work force but more capacity in the sector is required.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation was noted.

ESC/ Air Quality Monitoring Update

55/2

4-25

Committee received an update on the air quality across the district. This included a breakdown of how air quality is measured (using NO₂ diffusion tubes), where the monitoring points are and an explanation of the threshold amount of NO₂ pollution that indicates whether air quality is of concern. Committee heard that the District was comfortably under the threshold across all locations monitored, which meant the air quality was good and there were no major concerns from the Environmental Health team.

Committee considered the update. Some Members questioned why multiple diffusion tubes are deployed next to each other at certain monitoring points within the District. Committee heard that it provides a reassurance that results are consistent and helps with national statistics regarding NO₂ reporting. It was also shared that a review on the locations of monitoring points is always conducted before the end of the calendar year and the team were open to suggestions. In this context, Members suggested locations where additional monitoring would be beneficial including Bowshaw in Dronfield, and Derby Road in Clay Cross, near the motorcycle centre.

RESOLVED –

That the update was noted.

**ESC/
56/2** **Cabinet Business**

4-25 The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a digest of Cabinet decisions taken since the last Committee meeting in February 2025. The digest set out key information for each decision.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer also presented Members with the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions for the period up to 15 May 2025.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

**ESC/
57/2** **Policy Development**

4-25 The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that there were no major policies for Members to consider.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer explained that there was nothing to bring to the attention of Members.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

**ESC/
58/2** **'Horizon Scanning'**

4-25 The Senior Scrutiny Officer updated Members on potential significant changes in the Council's operating environment, including changes to national legislation and regulation.

Members were informed that a watching brief would be kept on the impacts of the changes arising the County Council elections.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

**ESC/
59/2** **Work Programme**

4-25 The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented the draft Work Programme 2024/25 for the Committee to consider. Members heard that the 2025/26 Work Programme was being formed and suggestions were welcomed. In this context, Committee

discussed items for the 2025/26 Work Programme.

RESOLVED –

That Committee signed off the Work Programme 2024/25.

ESC/ Additional Urgent Items

60/2

4-25 None.

ESC/ Date of Next Meeting

61/2

4-25 The next meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place in the new municipal year.