

# Public Document Pack



**North East  
Derbyshire  
District Council**

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Date: Friday, 12 July 2024

To: **All Members of the Council**

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held on **Monday, 22 July 2024 at 2.00 pm in the District Council Offices**, Mill Lane, Wingerworth, Chesterfield S42 6NG

Group meetings will be arranged, where necessary, by the Group Leaders.

The meeting will also be live streamed from the Council's website on its You Tube Channel. Click on the following link if you want to view the meeting:

[North East Derbyshire District Council - YouTube](#)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Steuberg".

**Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer**

# **AGENDA**

## **1 Apologies for Absence**

## **2 Declarations of Interest**

Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any items on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

## **3 Minutes of Last Meeting (Pages 5 - 19)**

To approve as a correct record and the Chair to sign the attached Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Monday 20 May 2024.

To approve as a correct record and the Chair to sign the attached Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Monday 20 May 2024.

## **4 Chair of the Council's Announcements**

## **5 Leader of the Council's Announcements**

## **6 Public Participation**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 8 to allow members of the public to ask questions about the Council's activities for a period up to fifteen minutes. The replies to any such questions will be given by the appropriate Cabinet Member. Questions must be received in writing or by email to the Monitoring Officer by 12pm (Noon) twelve clear working days before the meeting.

No questions have been submitted under Procedure Rule No 8 for this meeting.

## **7 Social Housing Regeneration Scheme - Stonebroom (Pages 20 - 24)**

Report of Councillor P Kerry, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Finance

## **8 Scrutiny Committees Annual Report 2023-24 (Pages 25 - 40)**

Report of the Chairs' of the Business, Communities, Environment and Services Scrutiny Committees

## **9 To answer any questions from Members asked under Procedure Rule No 9.2**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 9.2 to allow Members to ask questions about Council activities. The replies to any such questions will be given by the Chair of the Council or relevant Committee or the appropriate Cabinet Member. Questions must be received in writing or by email to the Monitoring Officer by 12pm (Noon) twelve clear working days before the meeting.

**Question 'A' – Councillor C Cupit to Councillor J Barry, Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets**

Can the Cabinet Member outline what the Council is doing to support start-up and incubator businesses in the District and particularly in Clay Cross?

**10 To consider any Motions from Members under Procedure Rule No 10**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 10 to consider Motions on notice from Members. Motions must be received in writing or by email to the Monitoring Officer by 12pm (Noon) twelve clear working days before the meeting.

**Motion 'A' - Proposed by Councillor C Cupit**

This Council notes the initial proposals by National Grid to install a new 400 kV overhead electricity line between Chesterfield and Willington, which is currently at an informal consultation stage. Council also notes and supports the provision and planning of a secure energy supply for our communities and for the future.

However, Council notes with concern the potential impacts of the proposed new pylon line through North East Derbyshire and particularly the indicative route through some of our District's most treasured rural landscapes. Council also notes the significant resident objections and concerns over these proposals so far and expressed concerns over the impact the indicative route would have on listed buildings, valued landscape areas and the rural character of our countryside – both during and after construction.

Council therefore resolves for the Managing Director to write, on behalf of the District Council, to National Grid outlining this Council's concerns and objections to the proposals and urging them to pursue an alternative.

**11 Chair's Urgent Business**

To consider any other matter which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.



**North East  
Derbyshire**  
District Council

**Access for All statement**

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## COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 20 MAY 2024

#### **Present:**

Councillor Gerry Morley (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor Christine Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer

Councillor Neil Baker

Councillor Joseph Birkin

Councillor Kathy Clegg

Councillor Andrew Cooper

Councillor Lilian Deighton

Councillor Stuart Fawcett

Councillor Christine Gare

Councillor David Hancock

Councillor Daniel Higgon

Councillor William Jones

Councillor Carol Lacey

Councillor Heather Liggett

Councillor Fran Petersen

Councillor Stephen Reed

Councillor Kathy Rouse

Councillor Derrick Skinner

Councillor Mick Smith

Councillor Lee Stone

Councillor Martin E Thacker MBE JP

Councillor Helen Wetherall

Councillor Pat Antcliff

Councillor Nigel Barker

Councillor David Cheetham

Councillor Stephen Clough

Councillor Alex Dale

Councillor Michael Durrant

Councillor Mark Foster

Councillor Kevin Gillott

Councillor Lee Hartshorne

Councillor Pam Jones

Councillor Pat Kerry

Councillor Tony Lacey

Councillor Nicki Morley

Councillor Stephen Pickering

Councillor Michael Roe

Councillor Ross Shipman

Councillor Caroline Smith

Councillor Richard Spooner

Councillor Kevin Tait

Councillor Richard Welton

#### **Also Present:**

L Hickin

M Broughton

J Dethick

S Sternberg

A Maher

N Ellis-Hall

T Scott

J Hayden

Managing Director - Head of Paid Service

Director of Growth and Assets

Director of Finance and Resources & (Section 151 Officer)

Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

Governance Manager

Temporary Senior Governance Officer

Governance and Scrutiny Officer

Senior Scrutiny Officer

#### **COU Election of the Chair of the Council**

**/1/24**

**-25**

The retiring Chair of the Council, Councillor M Thacker MBE, called for nominations for the election of a new Chair of the Council for the 2024-25 Municipal Year. Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that Councillor G Morley be elected as Chair of the Council. The Motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED – That Councillor G Morley be elected Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year (by acclamation).

**COU** **Address of Gratitude to Members by the Newly Elected Chair of the Council**

**/2/24**

**-25**

Councillor G Morley accepted his election as Chair of the Council. He thanked Members for the honour which they had given him and for the opportunity as Chair to both serve the Council and to help communities throughout the District.

The Chair of the Council explained how he would aim to support a range of community groups and local initiatives through his Charitable Appeal, rather than support just one worthy organisation. Many of these community groups, he stated, would benefit from receiving even small amounts of financial assistance. Councillor G Morley made clear that he intended to donate his Special Responsibility Allowance as Chair in order to help provide this support. He would also seek to raise funds throughout his term of office to help ensure that these groups continued to receive ongoing financial assistance.

**COU** **Address of Gratitude to the Outgoing Chair of the Council**

**/3/24**

**-25**

The Chair of the Council, Councillor G Morley thanked the retired Chair, Councillor M Thacker MBE, for his services to the Council and the District during his term of office. He stressed that he had carried out his role with fairness and dignity. He mentioned the work and effort which Councillor Thacker had put in to raising funds for the Ashgate Hospice through his charitable appeal.

The Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor A Dale, thanked Councillor M Thacker MBE for carrying out his duties as Chair of the Council so effectively and for his hard work in raising funds for Ashgate Hospice.

Councillor D Hancock thanked Councillor M Thacker MBE and praised his role as Chair of the Council. Councillor H Wetherall also expressed her gratitude to Councillor M Thacker MBE as Chair of the Council for the lessons which she had learned from him in helping to carry out her role as a new Councillor.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker, thanked Councillor M Thacker MBE for his service as Chair of the Council and congratulated him on the funds which he had raised for his charitable appeal.

Councillor M Thacker MBE thanked Members for their kind words. He stressed that it had been a privilege to serve as Chair of the Council, in the fiftieth anniversary year since it was established. He highlighted his involvement in the community during the year and specific events which he had attended as Chair. He also highlighted the £55,000 which had been raised through his charitable appeal in support of Ashgate Hospice. He thanked his Appeal Committee, Elected Members, officers of the Council, the District and Parish Councils and the staff of Rykneld Homes Limited for their assistance in this. He thanked his consort, Jean Spencer for her help and support during this year of office and during his previous period as Chair, in 2021-22.

Councillor G Morley presented Councillor M Thacker MBE with the Past Chair of the Council medal as a token of appreciation.

RESOLVED – That Councillor M Thacker be thanked for carrying out the office of Chair of the Council during the 2023-24 Municipal Year (by acclamation).

**COU** **Apologies for Absence**

**/4/24**

**-25** Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Barry, G Baxter MBE, R Beech, S Cornwell, C Cupit, P Elliott, M Emmens, M Fletcher, C Renwick, and P Windley.

**COU** **Declarations of Interest**

**/5/24**

**-25** There were no declarations of interest.

**COU** **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**/6/24**

**-25** RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 4 March 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record (by acclamation).

**COU** **Election of the Vice-Chair of the Council**

**/7/24**

**-25** Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that Councillor Christine Smith be appointed as Vice Chair of the Council for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year.

Councillor Christine Smith gave thanks to Members for her nomination.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Christine Smith be appointed Vice Chair of the Council for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year (by acclamation).

**COU** **Composition of the Cabinet**

**/8/24**

**-25** The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker, informed Council of the Cabinet Members and their Portfolios, appointed for the 2024-25 Municipal Year.

Councillor N Barker

Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Finance

Councillor P Kerry

Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Finance

Councillor J Birkin

Portfolio Holder for Council Services

Councillor J Barry

Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets

Councillor S Pickering

Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place

Councillor K Rouse  
Portfolio Holder for Health and Leisure

RESOLVED – That Council noted the composition of the Cabinet for the 2024/2025 Municipal Year.

**COU** **Proportionality of the Council and Appointments to Committees**

**/9/24**  
**-25**

Members considered the proposed appointments to Committees. The report to Council set out the nominations of the Majority (Labour) Group. In addition to these the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor N Barker, nominated Councillors M Smith and K Clegg to serve as Substitute Members on the Planning Committee.

With the agreement of the Chair, the Leader of the Conservative Group circulated the nominations of his Group.

On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor D Hancock confirmed that Councillor P Windley had been nominated to serve on the Business Scrutiny Committee.

On behalf of the Independent Group, Councillor H Wetherall confirmed her nomination to serve on the Standards Committee and for Councillor A Cooper to serve on the Planning Committee.

Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion to approve the proposed appointments. The motion was put to vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Committees of Council as set out in the report be retained for the 2024-25 Municipal Year.
- (2) That the size of the Committees as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed for the 2024-25 Municipal year, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules.
- (3) That the proposed appointment to Committees as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and updated at the meeting be agreed. (by acclamation).

**COU** **Appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees**

**/10/2**  
**4-25**

Council considered a report on the appointment of elected Members to serve as the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Council's Committees for the 2024/25 Municipal Year. The nominations from the Majority (Labour) Group were set out in the report. The report made clear that the Majority Group sought nominations from the Conservative Group and the Independents Group for named Vice Chair positions.

The Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor A Dale, nominated Councillor N Baker to serve as Vice Chair of the Services Scrutiny Committee and Councillor W Jones to serve as Vice Chair of the Business Scrutiny Committee.



RESOLVED – That Council appoint the nominated elected Members to serve as the Chair and Vice Chairs of the specified Council Committees (by acclamation).

**COU** **Schedule of Meetings for the 2024-25 Municipal Year**

**/11/2**

**4-25**

Council was asked to agree the proposed schedule of meetings for the 2024-25 Municipal Year.

Councillors N Barker and P Kerry proposed that the schedule of meetings be adopted. The motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED – That Council approved the proposed Schedule of Meetings for the 2024-25 Municipal Year (by acclamation).

**COU** **Appointment of the Council's Representatives to serve on other organisations (Outside Bodies) - NOW PUBLISHED**

**/12/2**

**4-25**

The report to Council set out the proposed appointments to serve on other organisations (Outside Bodies) for the 2024/25 Municipal Year. It was proposed that the existing appointments be confirmed, but that Councillor D Skinner be nominated to serve on the Stonebroom Community Association, in place of the existing appointee, who was not an elected Member of the Council.

Councillors N Barker and P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that the proposed nominations be approved.

RESOLVED – That Council appoint the nominated elected Members to serve as its representatives on other organisations for the 2024-25 Municipal Year (by acclamation).

**COU** **Review of the Council's Constitution**

**/13/2**

**4-25**

Members were asked to approve the proposed Constitution of the Council for the 2024-25 Municipal Year. This had been produced following an extensive review by the Standards Committee. The purpose of this review, it was explained, was to make sure that the Constitution remained up to date, that it was compliant with legislation and provided the appropriate rules to ensure the good governance of the Council. Following on from the review, Standards Committee had agreed a range of specific changes, which Council was now asked to agree.

Members discussed the report. Councillor A Dale made clear that he did not support some of the proposed changes. He highlighted Section 10, Council Procedure Rules, Rule 8, the changes to Questions by the Public, which he felt would prevent those who were 'Carers' for people living in the District from being able to ask questions. He also highlighted the change to Section 16, Members Planning Rules, which would preclude Planning Committee Members from determining on Planning Applications located within their wards.

Councillor M Foster also indicated that he would not support the change to

exclude members from determining planning applications in their own Ward. He contended that that this would place the wards which they represent in a worse position than those wards which did not have Councillors serving on Planning Committee.

Councillor D Hancock expressed similar concerns about the impact of the proposed changes on public speaking at Council meetings and indicated that he would not support the proposed Constitution. Councillor R Shipman made clear that he too would not support the proposed Constitution for similar reasons. Councillor S Reed argued that businesses located outside of the District but which operated within North East Derbyshire, ought to be allowed to ask questions.

Councillor R Welton raised concerns about the proposed change for the Monitoring Officer to make non contentious appointments to committees in the event that vacancies arose, which he felt might involve the post holder in political decisions.

The Chair of Standards Committee, Councillor K Gillott, explained the reasons for the proposed changes and their intended benefits to the Council. He made clear that the Standards Committee would continue to review the Constitution as part of its work programme for the year. The concerns raised at the meeting would be addressed as part of this, And in particular, what the actual experience of the changes had been and whether, as a consequence, they needed to be revisited.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Councillors N Barker and J Barry proposed and seconded a Motion to approve the proposed Constitution.

The Motion was put to the vote and was approved.

**RESOLVED -**

- (1) That following on from the review carried out by Standards Committee Council approves the proposed Constitution for the 2024-25 Municipal Year
- (2) The Standards Committee be asked to undertake a further review of the Constitution, as part of its annual work programme for the 2024-25 Municipal Year and to make any recommendations for change to Council, as appropriate.
- (3) That the Monitoring Officer exercises their Delegated powers to make changes to the Constitution arising from any new legislation, administrative errors, or conflicts in interpretation during the course of the Municipal Year, in consultation with the Chair of Standards Committee, as appropriate.

**COU Scheme of Delegation**

**/14/2**

**4-25**

Council considered the Scheme of Delegation as outlined in Section 22 of the Council's Constitution.

Councillors N Barker and P Kerry moved and seconded a motion to approve

Officers recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED – That Council approved the Scheme of Delegation as set out in the Council's Constitution (by acclamation).

**COU** **Operation of Urgency Rules and Thresholds for Key Decisions**

**/15/2**

**4-25**

Council received the report on Operation of Urgency Rules and Thresholds for Key Decisions for consideration. Members were informed of the proposed changes to increase the financial thresholds of Key Decisions, in order to take into account the impact of inflation on them.

Councillors N Barker and P Kerry proposed and seconded a motion to approve officer recommendations as contained in the report.

RESOLVED – That Council:

- 1.1 Noted that no decisions had been taken over the past 12 months under Special Urgency rules in the Council's Access to Information Rules.
- 1.2 Noted that no decisions had been taken over the past 12 months under the urgency provisions (called General Exception) in the Council's Access to Information Rules.
- 1.3 Agreed that the financial thresholds for Key Decisions be raised to £125,000 (Revenue) and £310,000 (Capital).

(By acclamation)

**COU** **Chesterfield Football Club - Return to the English Football League**

**/16/2**

**4-25**

Council was reminded that Chesterfield Football Club had returned to the English Football League and that it had done so as National League Champions. The National League Trophy had been placed in the Council Chamber as part of a programme of displaying it across communities in North East Derbyshire.

Council welcomed K Jackson, the Deputy Chief Operating Officer of Chesterfield Football Club, who explained the work of the Community Trust in working with and supporting local communities. He highlighted its work with young people, the Armed Forces community and those experiencing mental health issues.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker, thanked the Club and Community Trust for its work and on how successful it had been in engaging with local communities. It was, he stated, truly a community club.

Councillor M Thacker congratulated the club on its return to the English Football League and its work with and to support local communities. Councillor H Wetherall welcomed the support which the Community Trust provides to children and young people, including those who are or who have been in care.

At the conclusion of the discussion agreed to formally thank the Club and the Community Trust for their success and hard work.

**RESOLVED** –

- (1) That Chesterfield Football Club is congratulated for its success in returning to the English Football League as National League Champions.
- (2) That the Community Trust be congratulated and thanked for the work which it does to support communities and people across North Derbyshire.

**COU Chair's Urgent Business**

**/17/2**

**4-25** None.

## **COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 20 MAY 2024**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Gerry Morley (Chair) (in the Chair)  
Councillor Christine Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer	Councillor Pat Antcliff
Councillor Neil Baker	Councillor Nigel Barker
Councillor Joseph Birkin	Councillor David Cheetham
Councillor Kathy Clegg	Councillor Stephen Clough
Councillor Andrew Cooper	Councillor Alex Dale
Councillor Lilian Deighton	Councillor Michael Durrant
Councillor Stuart Fawcett	Councillor Mark Foster
Councillor Christine Gare	Councillor Kevin Gillott
Councillor David Hancock	Councillor Lee Hartshorne
Councillor Daniel Higgon	Councillor Pam Jones
Councillor William Jones	Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Carol Lacey	Councillor Tony Lacey
Councillor Heather Liggett	Councillor Nicki Morley
Councillor Fran Petersen	Councillor Stephen Pickering
Councillor Stephen Reed	Councillor Michael Roe
Councillor Kathy Rouse	Councillor Ross Shipman
Councillor Derrick Skinner	Councillor Caroline Smith
Councillor Mick Smith	Councillor Richard Spooner
Councillor Lee Stone	Councillor Kevin Tait
Councillor Martin E Thacker MBE JP	Councillor Richard Welton
Councillor Helen Wetherall	

#### **Also Present:**

M Broughton	Director of Growth and Assets
J Dethick	Director of Finance and Resources & (Section 151 Officer)
L Hickin	Managing Director - Head of Paid Service
S Sternberg	Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer
A Maher	Governance Manager
N Ellis-Hall	Temporary Senior Governance Officer
J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
T Scott	Governance and Scrutiny Officer

#### **COU Apologies for Absence**

**/18/2**

**4-25** Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Barry, G Baxter MBE, R Beech, S Cornwell, C Cupit, P Elliott, M Emmens, C Fletcher, C Renwick and P Windley.

#### **COU Declarations of Interest**

**/19/2**

**4-25** Councillor G Morley indicated that he would Declare an Interest in Item 12 – Upgrade of Pitch and Path Installation at Sharley Park, Clay Cross, at the

appropriate point on the agenda.

**COU     The Council's Commitment to the Armed Forces Community**

**/20/2**

**4-25**

The Council's Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Stuart Fawcett, informed Members that he now intended to formally re-sign the Armed Forces Covenant. Councillor Fawcett explained that this would be a further confirmation of the Council's ongoing commitment to the District's Armed Forces Community and in particular, the promise to ensure that those who currently serve in the Armed Forces, who have served, and their families, were treated fairly and with respect. The Armed Forces Champion reminded Members of the Council's long-standing support for the Armed Forces Community, and how this commitment was recognised when the Council received the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award.

Councillor S Fawcett thanked the Members and officers who had provided support to the Armed Forces Community. He gave special thanks to his predecessor as Armed Forces Champion, Councillor M Thacker MBE.

Councillor S Fawcett re-signed the Armed Forces Covenant. This was witnessed by Colonel John Wilson OBE DL, Vice Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire and Kirsty Lawrence, Deputy Director of Employer Engagement for the East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association. The Vice Lord Lieutenant praised the Council's support for the Armed Forces community and its commitment to continue this support into the future.

**RESOLVED** – That Council welcomed the re-signing of the Armed Forces Covenant and its continuing support for the Armed Forces Community (by acclamation).

**COU     Public Participation**

**/21/2**

**4-25**

There were no questions from the public.

**COU     Council Plan Annual Report 2023-24**

**/22/2**

**4-25**

Members considered the Council Plan 2023-27 Annual Performance Report. This highlighted the progress which had been made towards achieving the Plan's goals and objectives during its first year in operation – 2023-24. In particular, it highlighted key successes. These included the delivery of projects financed through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, work to regenerate Clay Cross through the Town Deal and a significant increase in social housing for rent.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker, welcomed the progress that had been achieved and the 'One Team' approach throughout the Council which had enabled this. He thanked all who had contributed and especially the work of the previous Administration, that the Plan had built upon. He made clear that further progress would be required on specific targets and goals as the Plan progressed, He stressed how important it would be to work with the parish and town councils and community groups to achieve this. He also hoped that the Council's Scrutiny Committees could help by identifying through their work programmes possible improvements.

Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that the Annual Performance Report be noted.

Councillor A Dale welcomed many of the positive improvements which had been achieved, building on projects launched during the previous Administration. He highlighted issues where he felt that the current Administration had not been collaborative, or transparent during the year. In this context he mentioned a specific planning permission which had been granted, changes to the green bin policy and regeneration priorities.

Councillor R Shipman felt that the report did not explain what initiatives or improvements the Council had not taken or achieved. He also queried the suggested role for the Scrutiny Committees in identifying ways of achieving the Plan's goals and objectives. He felt that officers had too great a role in running the Council. Councillor M Foster also felt that the Plan should have made clear what initiatives or improvements had not been introduced or achieved.

Councillor M Thacker MBE felt that further information was required about the progress on longer-term projects, such as progress on implementing the British Deaf Association Charter initiatives. He also highlighted the importance of focusing on the rural as well as urban parts of the District within the Plan.

Councillor N Barker exercised his right of reply. He reiterated the valuable role which the Scrutiny Committees could play in helping to achieve the Council Plan Objectives and the need to collaborate with other organisations on this. He agreed with some of the specific points that had been made, including the need to provide more information about ongoing initiatives. He praised officers for their work in collaboratively supporting Members, as part of the One Team approach to ensuring that the Council was well run and effective.

The Motion was put to the vote and was approved.

RESOLVED – That the Progress against the Council Plan 2023-2027 be noted (by acclamation).

#### **COU Review of the Council's Policy Under the Licensing Act 2003**

**/23/2**

**4-25**

Members were reminded that under the Licensing Act 2003 the Council had responsibility for administering and regulating licences for the sale and supply of alcohol in the District. As part of these responsibilities it was required to prepare and publish a Statement of Principles (or 'Policy') every five years. The current Policy was published in 2019 and was now due for renewal.

The Report to Council explained that a revised Policy had been produced. The revised Policy proposed specific minor amendments to ensure that it complied with the current legislative requirements. The revised Policy had been subject to a public consultation exercise, to which there had been only a minimal response. Following on from this consultation exercise, the Licensing and Gambling Committee agreed to the proposed Policy at its meeting on 30 April 2024. It recommended the Policy to Council for approval.

Councillor C Lacey, as Chair of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee and Councillor S Pickering, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place, both expressed their support for the revised policy. Councillor M Thacker suggested that the approach to consultation should be reassessed in order to secure a more comprehensive response to future consultation exercises. The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place indicated that he would support such a reassessment.

Councillor S Pickering and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion to approve the Policy. The Motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED - That Council approved the recommendation from the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee and agreed that the draft Statement of Principles (Policy) under the Licensing Act 2003 be now adopted with immediate effect (by acclamation).

**COU To answer any questions from Members asked under Procedure Rule No 9.2**

**/24/2**

**4-25**

The Chair of the Council confirmed that two questions had been received.

Question 'A' - Councillor A Dale to Councillor J Barry, Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets

A question had been submitted by Councillor A Dale to Councillor J Barry, the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets on what Cabinet's decision to designate the Southern Avenue site as the priority regeneration scheme would mean for other regeneration projects. The full text of the question from Councillor A Dale, marked as Question 'A', was set out in the agenda for the meeting.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker responded to the question in Councillor J Barry's absence. Councillor N Barker made clear that prioritising the Southern Avenue site would not adversely impact the other regeneration schemes. These would still be pursued as resources allowed. Rather, the prioritisation was intended to give a clear strategic steer to officers and external partners of the site's strategic importance to the Council. In this context he quoted Section 4.4 from the report to Cabinet in March 2024 which stated that: "Identifying The Avenue as the priority regeneration project does not mean resources will not be used to deliver ongoing schemes such as Clay Cross Town Deal, Dronfield Masterplan, etc or any of the pipeline schemes [set out in the report]."

Councillor A Dale asked a supplementary question. He asked whether the Administration would continue to pursue the redevelopment Plan for Eckington, in the event that further Levelling-up or other funding became available. The Leader of the Council explained that specific problems had to be addressed in order to progress the Redevelopment Plan, but that the Administration remained committed to it. In this context Councillor N Barker explained that he had raised the matter with the elected Mayor of the East Midlands Combined County Authority, Clare Ward.

Question 'B' - Councillor N Baker to Councillor J Barry, Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets



A question had been submitted by Councillor N Baker to Councillor J Barry, the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Assets about what consultation would take place with Wingerworth and other local residents about the redevelopment of the Southern Avenue site. The full text of the question from Councillor N Baker, marked as Question 'B', was set out in the agenda for the meeting.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker responded to the question in Councillor J Barry's absence. He reminded Councillor N Baker that that the Southern Avenue had now been designated as a strategic site for development for more than twenty years. He also pointed out that extensive consultation had taken place on the site as part of the process for developing the current Local Plan. Under this Plan, it had been earmarked for housing development, some of which had already been delivered. Councillor N Barker made clear that any applications for further developments would be subject to the normal planning processes.

Councillor N Baker asked a supplementary question about whether a traffic impact assessment would be conducted before any decision was made to move forward with specific redevelopment, including the possible relocation of the Depot to Mill Lane.

Councillor N Barker made clear that traffic assessments would taken place as part of the process for drawing up up and determining on planning applications for the site. He stressed the importance of addressing the traffic problems at the junction of the A61 road with Mill Lane and the need to install traffic lights as a practical, lower cost solution, to the traffic problems at that junction. The Leader of the Council made clear that the Council was looking at options to relocate the Depot from its current site in Eckington, which was prone to flooding, but that no decision had been taken on this.

**COU    To consider any Motions from Members under Procedure Rule No 10**

**/25/2**

**4-25**

**Motion A**

Members considered a Motion submitted by Councillor D Hancock which called for the decision to make an annual charge for additional green bins to be rescinded, as contrary to the Constitutional requirement that new policies should be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, prior to approval by Council. It also proposed that the former policy of granting additional bins free of charge, based on evidenced need, should be reinstated. The full text of Councillor D Hancock's Motion was set out as Motion 'A' on the Agenda for the meeting.

Councillor R Shipman seconded the Motion. He felt it inappropriate that the decision to change existing policy, by instituting a charge for additional green bins, had been taken by officers under delegated powers, rather than by Council. Councillor R Welton made clear that he would also support the Motion. He contended that the issue ought to have been discussed and decided on by Council.

Councillor A Dale indicated that he too would support the Motion. He expressed

concern that this change in policy would ultimately lead to charges for all green bin collections and would have a regressive financial impact on many of the District's residents.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place, Councillor S Pickering, made clear that he would not support the Motion. He explained that during the short period in which the new arrangements had been in place, 739 properties had asked for additional green bins. There had been no increase in fly tipping or in green waste being placed in the general waste bins. He contended that there was a lot of support for the new arrangements, and that just two complaints had been received. Councillor S Pickering also queried the reasons for the submitting the Motion and highlighted the difficulties facing Local Government as a result of significant reductions in financial support from Central Government.

Councillor H Liggett stated that she would support the Motion. She gave examples of problems facing residents who could not afford the charge for an additional green bin and how this had resulted in them in disposing of green waste in other ways.

Councillor K Gillott made clear that he would not support the Motion. He argued that it was based on a misunderstanding of Council Procedure Rules, which did not require every executive decision to first be considered by a Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet before being agreed by Council.

Councillor D Hancock exercised his right to reply. He contended that as the summer progressed there were likely to be more problems with green waste as a result of the change. He reiterated the point made by other Members that the charge would have a regressive impact on those who could not afford an additional green bin. Councillor D Hancock also reiterated his view that Section 10.5 of the Council Procedure Rules required changes to all Council Policies (excluding those covering regulatory matters) to be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, before being determined by Council.

On a Point of Order raised by Councillor K Gillott, the Monitoring Officer confirmed the position of the Constitution on this matter and Councillor Gillott's understanding of it.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Motion was put to the vote and rejected.

**COU** **Chair's Urgent Business**

**/26/2**

**4-25**

The Chair agreed that an additional urgent item be taken relating to the Business of the Council in its capacity as Trustee of the Clay Cross and Danesmoor Miners Welfare Recreation Ground Charity.

**COU** **Declarations of Interest relating to the Council Business in its capacity as Trustee of the Clay Cross and Danesmoor Miners Welfare Recreation Ground Charity**

**/27/2**

**4-25**

The Chair, Councillor G Morley declared an interest in Item 12 - Upgrade of Football Pitch and Path Installation at Sharley Park, Clay Cross in his capacity as a trustee of the Clay Cross and Danesmoor Miners Recreation Ground Charity.

He indicated that he would not take part in Council's discussion or determination on this item and would leave the meeting at the appropriate time.

**COU** **Exclusion of Public**

**/28/2**

**4-25** **RESOLVED** – That members of the public be excluded to avoid disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

**COU** **Upgrade of Football Pitch and Path Installation at Sharley Park, Clay Cross**

**/29/2**

**4-25** Councillor G Morley left the meeting at this point. The Vice Chair of the Council, Councillor C Smith, took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The report to Council as Trustee of the Clay Cross and Danesmoor Miners Welfare Recreation Ground Charity, sought agreement to specific Utility Easements to secure the Utility supply to the Clay Cross Active sport and leisure centre and to the '3G' football pitch. Members were informed why the agreement was now required and the very slight changes to be made.

**RESOLVED** –

That the Council, as Trustee, agree to the Independent Network Operator (IDNO) Cable Rights as outlined in the report, and a 99 year lease to MUA Electricity Limited as outlined in the report, including any minor changes or ancillary agreements, in order to secure the utility supply to Clay Cross Active and the 3G Football Pitch.

## North East Derbyshire District Council

### Council

22 July 2024

#### **Social Housing Regeneration scheme - Stonebroom**

#### **Report of Councillor P Kerry, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Finance**

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Jayne Dethick, Director of Finance & Resources (S151 Officer)

Contact Officer: as above

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#### **PURPOSE/SUMMARY**

To seek Council approval for additional borrowing to fund the replacement community building as part of the wider regeneration scheme at Stonebroom.

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Council approves borrowing of £0.650m to fund the replacement community building as part of the wider regeneration scheme at Stonebroom.
2. That Council approves the inclusion of this addition to the scheme in the HRA Capital Programme.
3. That Council approves the revised Capital Financing Requirement, Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit as set out in the financial implications of this report.

---

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Finance and Risk**

Yes ✓

No

##### **Finance**

##### **Prudential Borrowing**

In November 2023, Council approved borrowing of £15.4m for the regeneration scheme at Stonebroom, the balance being funded from 141 receipts. At the time this didn't include the potential cost of redeveloping the community facility on the site as further consultation

and feasibility was required. This is now complete and at its meeting on 18 July Cabinet agreed to proceed, subject to approval of funding. The additional borrowing requirement is £0.650m, bringing the total borrowing requirement for the scheme to £16.05m. Approval of borrowing is not a delegated function in the Council’s Constitution and is therefore a decision for Council.

The implications of the borrowing required must be taken in the light of the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance. When deciding to incur borrowing, the Council must satisfy itself that such borrowing is prudent, affordable, and sustainable. Therefore, the viability model for the scheme needs to demonstrate that income streams are sufficient to cover the cost of borrowing over the period of the loan.

The viability analysis has taken place and the requirements of the Prudential Code through the modelling of the revenue impact of the scheme in the HRA 30-year business plan can be met. Rental streams over the loan period are sufficient to meet the costs of the additional borrowing and other associated revenue costs such as repairs and maintenance.

Should Council choose to fund this scheme, viability will need to be regularly reviewed, especially at key milestones such as contract award. Any variations that result in an increase to the envelope scheme cost will require further consideration by Cabinet and ultimately Council should additional borrowing be required. This is recognised in the report at 1.3, and a review process is in place to facilitate.

The approved capital programme, borrowing limits and capital financing requirement will need to be increased by £0.650m to reflect the additional borrowing requirement. The Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for borrowing will also need to be increased by the same amount. By revising the Capital Financing Requirement, Council is in effect approving that officers may enter into further borrowing up to £0.650m. The table below demonstrates this:

		<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>
		<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Approved Capital Financing Requirement		229.2	233.8	236.6	232.9
Add prudential borrowing HRA		0.10	0.55	0	0
Revised Capital Financing Requirement		239.2	234.35	236.6	232.9
Revised Operational Boundary		244.2	239.35	241.6	237.9
Revised Authorised Limit		249.2	244.35	246.6	242.9

**Legal including Data Protection**

Yes ✓ N

There will be legal considerations as the scheme progresses. Any specialist advice required in relation to the scheme will be procured as required.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Staffing**

Yes No ✓

There are no staffing issues arising directly from this report.

On Behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**DECISION INFORMATION**

<b>Decision Information</b>	
<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:  <b>NEDDC:</b> <b>Revenue - £125,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £310,000 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	Shirland and Stonebroom
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabinet <input type="checkbox"/></b> <b>SMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/></b> <b>Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></b>	Yes  Details:

**REPORT DETAILS****1 Stonebroom Regeneration programme**

- 1.1 In November, Council approved borrowing of £15.4m to fund the proposal by Cabinet to replace 50 prefabricated homes at Stonebroom with 74 new bungalows. The Cabinet also undertook to consider a proposal to include the area of Council land occupied by a community building into the layout and the option to construct a replacement community building on Council land at Cleveland Road. The existing community building needs substantial investment and relocating makes better use of the available land from a wider

regeneration perspective, but further work was needed to assess the practicalities of doing so.

- 1.2 Feasibility and consultation work has now been completed regards inclusion of the land and the community facility into the scheme. Consultation on the plans was positive and the benefit of relocation as part of the wider scheme confirmed. The development cost of the community building was not included in the original scheme costs of £17.9m as further work was needed at the time of approval. This has now been costed at £0.650m, increasing the overall scheme cost to £18.55m.
- 1.3 Costs for the community building are indicative at this stage, certainty around them will become firmer as the project progresses into contract. The viability assessment has been based on funding being prudential borrowing within the HRA. To demonstrate viability and meet prudential borrowing rules, income streams must be sufficient to cover the cost of borrowing over the life of the loan. The additional costs of the scheme have therefore been modelled through the HRA 30-year business plan and at this time meet those requirements. A process is in place to provide regular reports and updates on cost implications as part of the project delivery, this will include periodic progress updates to Cabinet.
- 1.4 The main contract has been procured by Rykneld Homes and phase 1 is due for completion in June 2025 with the further two phases scheduled to complete by spring 2028. This is a complex regeneration scheme with many residents remaining on site whilst works are undertaken and requiring temporary and permanent moves as the phases complete.
- 1.5 Subject to approval of funding, the redevelopment of the community building along with 7 bungalows will be separately procured by Rykneld Homes. It is expected that works will commence in December.

## **2. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 2.1 The regeneration scheme at Stonebroom supports the Council's commitment in its Council Plan to build, acquire and facilitate the delivery of more high-quality social housing for rent in the district.

## **3 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 3.1 Not to build the community facility. This was rejected due to strong community support for the facility and the regeneration benefits to the wider scheme.
-

## **DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>Background Papers</b>	
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
Jayne Dethick Director of Finance & Resources (S151 Officer)	01246 217078



## North East Derbyshire District Council

### Council

22 July 2024

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

#### Report of the Chairs of the Business, Communities, Environment and Services Scrutiny Committees

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Joe Hayden, Senior Scrutiny Officer

Contact Officer: Joe Hayden, Senior Scrutiny Officer (01246 217155 / [joe.hayden@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:joe.hayden@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk))

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#### **PURPOSE / SUMMARY**

To provide Members of the Council with an annual overview of the work programme of the Committees during 2023/24.

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Members review the attached Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee's activities in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- 

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

**Finance and Risk:** Yes  No

**Details:**

N/A

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

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**Legal (including Data Protection):** Yes  No

**Details:**

N/A

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

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Staffing: Yes  No

Details:

N/A

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

## DECISION INFORMATION

<b>Decision Information</b>	
<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:  <b>NEDDC:</b> <b>Revenue - £125,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £310,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	None
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cabinet</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SMT</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes  Details:

### Links to Council Plan priorities, including Climate Change, Equalities, and Economics and Health implications.

All

## REPORT DETAILS

### 1 Background

- 1.1 The main purpose of the report is to allow Members to review the summary of Scrutiny's activities during 2023/24.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview on the core activity for each of the Committee's and details some of the findings.

## **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

- 2.1 Section 14 of the Constitution requires the Council to appoint four Scrutiny Committees to discharge the functions conferred by section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and regulations under section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.2 Within the Terms of Reference, the four Scrutiny Committees have delivered the following functions:
- (1) reviewed and/or scrutinised decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
  - (2) made reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Cabinet in connection with the discharge of any functions;
  - (3) considered any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
  - (4) assisted the Council and the Cabinet with the development of future policies and strategies.
- 2.3 Each of the four Scrutiny Committees have conducted their proceedings in accordance with the Terms of Reference and the Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Section 14 of the Constitution.

## **3 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The attached provides an overview of the work completed by Members of the Scrutiny Committees during 2023/24, and reviews the impact of work completed.
- 3.2 Members are asked to note the report as required by the Council's Constitution.

## **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 This report and the appendix have been prepared on behalf of the Scrutiny Committees with a view to informing Council of the Committee's undertaking of their statutory responsibilities.
- 4.2 There are no alternative options as Members are required to report to Council on an annual basis as determined in the Constitution.

## **DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24
<b>Background Papers</b> (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None	



**North East  
Derbyshire**  
District Council

**Scrutiny  
Annual Report  
2023/24**

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## **Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committees 2023/24**

### **Business Scrutiny – Council Plan Objective ‘A Great Place to Work’**

Chair – Councillor Suzy Cornwell

Vice Chair – Councillor Steve Clough

### **Communities Scrutiny – Council Plan Objective ‘A Great Place to Live Well’**

Chair – Councillor Stuart Fawcett

Vice Chair – Councillor Michael Durrant

### **Environment Scrutiny – Council Plan Objective ‘A Great Place That Cares for the Environment’**

Chair – Councillor Caroline Smith

Vice Chair – Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer

### **Services Scrutiny – Council Plan Objective ‘A Great Place to Access Good Public Services’**

Chair – Councillor Mick Smith

Vice Chair – Councillor Heather Liggett

## **Introduction**

May 2023 saw a change in the Council's administration. With this came a change in the Council Plan and its objectives. Given these changes it seemed more appropriate to realign the Scrutiny Committees to reflect the Council Plan objectives.

The Council's Constitution and Terms of Reference were amended to reflect the changes to the Scrutiny Committees.

At the start of the Municipal Year the then Senior Scrutiny Officer left the Authority, and this left the Scrutiny Committees without a designated Officer for several months until the role was filled in January 2024. Prior to the recruitment of the new Scrutiny Officer the Council's Governance Manager provided support where possible.

Throughout 2023/24, our Scrutiny Committees have conducted their functions in accordance with their Terms of Reference.

The focus of the Scrutiny Members over the next year will be on the challenges facing the Council, the Council's service provision and also the service provision of our partners. We aim to ensure that Scrutiny makes a valuable contribution through its work and look forward to another year of collaboration with the Cabinet and officers of the Council to the benefit of our communities.

## **Summary of the Work Undertaken During 2023/24**

Each of the Committees has completed its Work Programme with the time available shared between consideration of key strategies and policies of the Council, performance monitoring, reviewing Cabinet decisions and identifying key areas for potential Review.

### **Scrutiny Committees – Work Programmes**

Given the changes in the Council's political administration, Council Plan and aligning the Committees to be in line with the Council Plan objectives the first meeting of the municipal year for all of the Scrutiny Committees was to provide Members with a remit of their Committee. This included going through their terms of reference, an overview of how the Committees will operate and ways of working. At the first meeting each Committee also considered their Work Programme for the year ahead.

Further details of the topics the Committees covered as part of the Work Programme for the year are highlighted below.

#### **Business Scrutiny**

During the year the Committee met on five occasions.

##### **Business Base Analysis**

The Council's Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer attended the Committee to present an analysis of the business base in the District, this included detailed information on the areas of the analysis and the reasons for the analysis. It also included graphs to display the sector split into number of businesses, employment, enterprises, micro-businesses, business start-ups and survivability. Members were also shown a map setting out the locations of different types of businesses in the District.

The Committee were informed that a lot of people were commuting outside of the District for their jobs.

The Committee discussed what the Council were doing to attract businesses to the District and were informed of what was currently being done and the support available, however the Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer explained that one of the largest issues was having enough land, however the Council were looking at opportunities available.

##### **Clay Cross Town Deal Programme**

The Committee received an update on the progress of the Clay Cross Town Deal Programme from the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Programmes, which included updates on milestones, Clay Cross Active, the Town Centre regeneration, the Low Carbon Challenge Fund and the rail and energy strategy.



Members discussed how jobs were created by the Scheme and how this compared to the target set, and were informed by the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Programmes that jobs created could start to be counted once the construction phase had commenced, and ultimately once the site was built and the new retail and hospitality businesses were open to trade.

#### UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

The Council's Assistant Director of Regeneration and Programmes delivered a presentation to the Committee to inform them of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The Committee were given a financial overview, details of the delivery mechanisms and budget commitments.

#### Residents Survey Results

The Committee were informed of the outcomes of the Residents Survey that had been undertaken. The Members were informed that the purpose of the survey was to further understand resident perceptions of the local area and local services.

The Committee discussed the findings and highlighted some areas that may be of interest, namely those around shops and access to jobs, in the future Work Programme.

#### Digital Derbyshire – Digital Connectivity

Digital Derbyshire (Derbyshire County Council) delivered a presentation to the Committee to provide further information on digital connectivity and internet access across the District.

Members were informed about areas with superfast and fibre coverage, broadband availability, mobile phone coverage and projects being undertaken to increase speed in certain areas.

The Committee were informed that there was a procurement process underway to procure equipment that could be used to measure connectivity within certain areas.

The Committee discussed coverage across the District and those areas where reports of low coverage ("not spots") were being flagged up by local residents/businesses. Members expressed their concerns that there was still a lot more work to be done to improve coverage across parts of the District and the need to follow this up at a later stage to see whether progress has been made.

#### Asset Management Strategy

The Committee consulted on the Asset Management Strategy that was in the process of being updated and revised. The Council's Assistant Director of Property, Estates and Assets presented the Strategy to Members and gave a brief overview of its purpose and aims.

The Committee were very positive and felt the Strategy was informative and well laid out, with particular reference to the usefulness of highlighting the relevant documents that support each element of the Strategy.

## **Communities Scrutiny**

During the year the Committee met on four occasions.

### **Council Tax Premium on Empty Homes Policy**

The Committee were informed of the Council's Council Tax Premium on Empty Homes Policy. The Assistant Director of Communities informed the Committee about proposals to impose a Council Tax premium (or additional charge) on those homes which had been empty for two or more years and to encourage the owners to occupy, offer to rent or sell them for owner-occupation.

Members discussed the problem of empty homes in the District and the impact with which unoccupied homes can have on local communities. Members also discussed the income that might be generated from a premium and how this could be used by the Council to help owners bring their properties back into use.

The Committee were informed that the creation of an Empty Homes Officer post was to be created to support this work and that the post would be self-funded with the first year being funded from the available grant to give the scheme time to get established.

### **Damp and Mould in Homes**

The Managing Director of Rykneld Homes informed the Committee of the national damp and mould in homes issue, including the 2020 death in Rochdale of Awaab Ishak, the changes needed and led by Government, the Housing Ombudsman/Regulator and changes to the Regulation of Damp & Mould.

The Committee were informed of the steps already taken by Rykneld Homes, in terms of Council owned properties, including a Damp & Mould Policy, new processes and a specialised trained team to support the work.

The Members were presented with a "Condensation and Mould" leaflet that was to be distributed to tenants. The leaflet set out steps to prevent damp and mould, and guidance for when both are found in homes. Members found this highly informative.

The Managing Director of RHL also updated the Committee on disrepair claims and the impact this has on service delivery. RHL proactively manage such cases and always prefer to work with tenants directly on such issues rather than through legal recourse however sometimes this is the only option available.

The Committee were also interested to know what the Council were doing with regards to damp and mould issues in privately rented homes and were informed that Environmental Health and its Private Sector Team were the relevant service to speak to regarding this. Given this, Environment Health were invited to attend at a later date to provide an overview from their perspective.

The Assistant Director of Environmental Health and the Housing & Public Health Team Manager informed the Committee of the steps they had taken to support tenants in privately rented properties. Members were informed that when private tenants contact

with the Council about damp and mould issues the tenant is advised to firstly make contact with the landlord, and if the landlord fails to address the issue the Council would then intervene by making contact with the landlord. The Committee were pleased to see that the Council and Rykneld Homes were taking measures towards this issue.

### Residents Survey Results

The outcomes of the Residents Survey that had been undertaken was presented to the Committee. The Members were informed that the purpose of the survey was to further understand resident perceptions of the local area and local services.

The Committee discussed the findings with particular interest around the responses for activities for older children/teenagers, with a view that it may be a topic the Committee wished to explore at a later date.

### Adaptations Policy

The Council's Housing Intelligence and Assurance Officer informed the Committee of the recent changes to the Council's Adaptations Policy. They were informed that the Policy required amending due to a Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman complaint, which related to recent changes in case law. The Housing Intelligence and Assurance Officer also made clear that this policy only applied to Council tenants.

Members were given an overview of the implications following the changes and highlighted that adaptation costs were likely to rise in the future.

The Committee discussed the changes and had particular concerns about the cost implications. Given this the Committee has agreed to review this at a later date to determine how the changes in policy have affected the Council.

### Annual Review of the Council's Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

The Committee is statutorily required to review the Council's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) under the Police & Crime Act.

The Community Safety Partnership Manager outlined for the Committee the performance of the CSP during 2023/24. The Committee heard that reported crime had increased by 5.4% since last year which equated to an extra 4620 calls/reports. Stalking and harassment had seen an increase of 10.2%, this was reflective with how the Police were now reporting these crimes as well as some high-profile cases. Burglary had seen an increase of 6.1%. Shoplifting had significantly increased by 27.3%, this has been impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. Public Disorder had seen an increase by over 68 crimes this year. However, the stats reported were on par with Derbyshire as a whole.

Various areas of work within the Partnership were outlined which included the Domestic Abuse Act, Prevent Strategy, Target Hardening Project, community projects including Extreme Wheels, ASB Case Reviews, Wildlife Cams which are covert cameras put into people's homes to detect ASB and other crimes to make people feel safer, and Domestic Homicide Reviews.

The Committee heard about the tools and powers that could be utilised by the Partnership which included Community Protection Warnings, Community Protection Warnings, Fixed Penalty Notices and Closure Warnings.

The Community Safety Partnership Manager discussed those areas that had worked well this year including the relationships with partner organisations such as the Police and Rykneld Homes, the ASB Tasking meeting, Corporate Enforcement Group and the Police Tasking meeting.

The Committee were informed of potential challenges/issues for the coming year, this included managing the expectations of the local community, managing the level of work that comes through including the diversity of work that is received. The Safer Streets 4 and UKSPF funding were also due to end this year, which supports the ASB work mainly Extreme Wheels initiative, so funding will be limited after this point. However, further funding options are being followed up to help fund this area of work.

### **Environment Scrutiny**

During the year the Committee met on five occasions.

#### **Energy Efficient Homes (Danesmoor)**

The Committee heard from the Director of Property Services & Development (Rykneld Homes) who gave an update on energy efficient homes work undertaken by Rykneld to 9 new bungalows at Pine View in Danesmoor.

Members were informed that a range of energy-efficient technology had now been provided to the properties, including extra-wide cavity walls, solar panels and charging points for electric vehicles.

The Committee discussed the programme of works on existing Council owned properties, different heating methods and the challenges this may bring.

#### **Biodiversity Net Gain – Environment Act**

The Assistant Director of Planning attended the Committee to discuss the Environment Act, the implications of the Act for the Council and Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

The Committee were informed that the Environment Act placed specific requirements on Councils to ensure the delivery of biodiversity net gain, and the steps the Council had taken to meet this.

Members were keen to look at this aspect further at a later date.

#### **Residents Survey Results**

The Committee were informed of the outcomes of the Residents Survey that had been undertaken. The Members were informed that the purpose of the survey was to further understand resident perceptions of the local area and local services.

The Committee discussed the findings and the relevance they had for the Council and this Committee.

### 100% Plant-Based Council

The Committee looked into the Council becoming 100% plant-based food, this followed on from the full Council meeting on Monday 29 January 2024 where a motion moved and seconded by Councillor F Adlington Stringer and Councillor H Wetherall which called on the Council, in line with its Climate Change Strategy, to commit to 3 key commitments.

Council accepted that these issues could not be resolved at the meeting and with this in mind an amendment to the motion was agreed so that the Environment Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider the three proposed commitments, assess their advantages and disadvantages and, finally, to make any recommendations for action.

The Committee undertook this spotlight review and heard from Leisure Services as well as undertaking significant desktop research. A number of recommendations were put forward to Cabinet at its meeting on 20 June 2024.

### Climate Change Strategy

The Programme Manager and Sustainability Officer consulted the Committee on the Council's Climate Change Strategy. Members were given an overview of its purpose and advised that the Strategy had been updated to better align with the Council Plan.

The Committee discussed the Strategy and felt that it reflected the current Council Plan's vision and priorities.

### Air Quality Monitoring

The Service Manager (Commercial & Environment) and the Team Manager (Environmental Protection) presented the 2024 Air Quality Annual Status Report and informed the Committee of the Council's current position on air quality monitoring, and what the Council would be doing to monitor air quality in the District in the future.

The Committee learned about the types/sources of air pollution, Environmental legislation and the work already taking place to monitor Nitrogen Dioxide levels.

Members were pleased to learn that air quality was slowly improving but were keen to keep monitoring air quality in the District.

### **Services Scrutiny**

During the year the Committee met on five occasions.

### Equality Plan

The Improvement Officer presented a report to notify the Committee and seek comments on the proposed Equality Plan and objectives for 2023-27. Members were informed that the document sets out the Council's legal responsibilities, approach to equalities and equality objectives, it also included profiles of the District and the Council's workforce.

### Annual Review Letter – Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO)

The Committee were informed of the Annual Review letter of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LG&SCO). The Customer Service Manager explained that during the period 2022-23, two complaints had been upheld, both relating to Planning.

The Committee were initially concerned that both were related to Planning but the Customer Service Manager gave an overview of the complaints and advised that Planning issues could be very complex, which was why complaints like these were often made towards Planning & Development Services.

### Engagement & Improvement Strategy

The Director of Finance & Resources consulted with the Committee on the Council's Engagement & Improvement Strategy and informed that the Strategy would aim to improve engagement with residents, partners and businesses.

The Committee were looking forward to seeing how the Strategy progressed.

### Budget Monitoring

The Committee has responsibility for scrutinising the Council's budgets and have been presented with quarterly budget monitoring reports for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme. The Director of Finance & Resources also informed the Committee of revisions to the 2023/24 budget.

Members also considered budgets of the Council's leisure facilities and expressed concern that some areas had not achieved a budget surplus. This was explained to Members and they were informed that the primary reason for this had been due to increasing energy costs.

The Director of Finance & Resources also informed the Committee of the Council's Financial Resilience, which meant its ability to remain viable, stable and effective over a sustained period, and being able to face pressures and demands and adapt to unforeseen changes. The Committee were given details into areas such as the current financial climate and the warning signs of not maintaining good financial health.

The Committee discussed the Council's resilience and concluded that the Council showed strong and stable financial health.

### Four-Day Working Week

The Committee were presented with information relating to a four-day working week which came as a result of Members discussing the subject at the informal Services Scrutiny Committee on 11 July 2023, where Members mentioned a pilot being carried out at South Cambridgeshire District Council. Members were also presented with an attachment where Lee Rowley MP had submitted his concerns about the pilot scheme to South Cambridgeshire District Council.

At the time, the Managing Director informed the Committee that Central Government had not yet issued any guidance on the issue so for the time being, the Council would monitor what unfolds at South Cambridgeshire District Council. He also confirmed that this was not something being considered by the Council.

Members discussed the subject and were keen to be informed of any progress in future.

### Talent Pipeline Strategy

The Managing Director delivered a presentation to the Committee to inform them of the Talent Pipeline Strategy, which was aimed at a longer-term approach to recruitment and development. The presentation summarised aspects of the Strategy such as the Council's workforce profile and how the Strategy would be promoted. The Committee discussed the Apprenticeship Levy and the advantages/disadvantages of using volunteers.

Overall the Members felt that steps taken in the Strategy were very positive. Later in the year the Committee were given an update on the Strategy including a summary of achievements since its launch.

### Residents Survey Results

The Committee were informed of the outcomes of the Residents Survey that had been undertaken. The Members were informed that the purpose of the survey was to further understand resident perceptions of the local area and local services.

The Committee discussed the findings relevant to their remit, namely access to health services and public transport provision, but it was felt that both areas would be difficult to scrutinise because neither came within the responsibilities of the Council. However, with the role of Scrutiny also being there to "influence" partners it was agreed that the areas maybe something the Committee wished to look at further at a later date, time permitting.

### People Strategy

The Managing Director gave an overview of the new People Strategy, and informed the Committee that the four main objectives of the Strategy were to nurture a great culture, to ensure wellbeing, to always improve and to effectively communicate and engage.

The Committee were informed that the Strategy would be supported by an Action Plan which included a number of areas to measure success, and a Working Group would be set up to include Members of this Committee to monitor the progress of the Strategy.

Members discussed the Strategy and were keen to be kept informed of progress made.

### Gully and Drainage Cleaning

The Committee were given an overview of how the gully and drainage cleaning system operated. They were informed that keeping gullies clean and fully operational was the responsibility of Derbyshire County Council, who contracted the clearance works through an agency agreement to the Council, and the Council receive an annual fee for delivering the service.

The Assistant Director of Streetscene and the Streetscene & Waste Services Manager informed the Committee of the cleaning frequency, methods for cleaning and what was being done to help reduce flooding.

The Committee discussed the service and expressed concerns that there were several drainage/gully pots along the A61 and other areas of the District that do not appear to be cleaned as frequently. The Committee were informed that the Council was currently undertaking a Street Cleansing Review which should address specific areas of concern i.e. those prone to flooding. The outcome of this review would be shared with the Committee.

### **The Year Ahead – 2024/25**

Following the appointment of Members to the Scrutiny Committees at full Council on 20 May 2024, Work Programmes will be discussed and developed.

Suggestions for Scrutiny Review topics will be considered. These will be discussed at the first Scrutiny meeting of the new municipal year to prioritise which subjects should be reviewed.