ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2025

Present:

Councillor Caroline Smith (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Richard Beech
Councillor Alex Dale
Councillor Fran Petersen
Councillor Kathy Clegg
Councillor Lilian Deighton
Councillor Carolyn Renwick

Also Present:

M Broughton	Director of Growth and Assets
D Johnson	Assistant Director of Property, Estates and Assets
J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
A Bryan	Governance Manager

ESC/39/25-26 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Tony Lacey.

ESC/40/25-26 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

ESC/41/25-26 **Wingerworth Lido**

Further to Minute ESC/33/25-26 of the meeting held 17 November 2025, the Committee considered evidence that had been gathered for the Committee's review into the future use of Wingerworth Lido and to review the decision-making processes of the Asset Management Board.

The Chair welcomed everyone and explained that Councillor P Kerry, Deputy Leader of the Council, was in attendance as a representative of the Council's Asset Management Board, and also Hollie Fisher from Wild Solutions.

Councillor A Dale raised a concern that Wild Solutions were a part of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, which were a paid consultant of the Council and that a representative of the angling trust should also have been included. The Chair confirmed that representatives of Angling Trust and Clay Cross Angling Association were present and the Committee could call upon them if they had relevant questions.

The Committee noted the strong response to the survey and consultation, including contributions from local residents and visitors from further afield. Feedback demonstrated significant value placed on the Lido and broad support

for reinstating angling, provided this was balanced with improved biodiversity outcomes. Members also recognised widely-shared priorities for accessibility, paths and seating improvements, and educational signage, as well as the desire for an inclusive space that supported youth engagement (schools, scouts) and wider community wellbeing.

Members considered the Council's commitment to improving biodiversity district-wide. The Committee considered that angling and biodiversity enhancements could be compatible, subject to appropriate management, and that returning sole management control to an angling association would not be sufficient on its own. Members instead favoured a collaborative governance model that included the angling association, the Parish Council, residents, a friends-style group, the Angling Trust, and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT).

Officers advised that DWT had been commissioned to develop a Biodiversity Improvement Plan (BIP) for the site, with survey work constrained largely to the April–September ecological window. Officers cautioned that, in the absence of the BIP, care was needed to avoid actions that could exacerbate ecological decline. However, officers acknowledged there was scope to explore interim arrangements, including angling alongside essential site management, if risks were manageable and expert advice was followed. Officers confirmed that the Council continued to meet its statutory reservoir responsibilities, that routine inspections and basic maintenance were ongoing, and that anti-social behaviour remained a Council responsibility.

The Committee requested that it consider the BIP upon its completion.

Members agreed the Committee's primary request was for the Council to engage immediately with relevant parties to explore whether angling could continue in the short term while ecological assessment work proceeded, provided this could be achieved without further ecological harm and was consistent with expert guidance. Members noted that some stakeholders favoured a temporary pause but agreed that the Council should test whether a controlled interim approach was feasible.

Some Committee Members proposed learning from effective partnership models elsewhere to clarify "what good looked like," particularly around balancing angling, water management and biodiversity.

Members observed that the Council may face additional ongoing maintenance costs or need alternative delivery partners. Members recognised the distinction between capital liabilities (e.g., dam or infrastructure) and revenue tasks (e.g., vegetation control) and it was reaffirmed that scrutiny's role was not to set budgets. The Committee agreed that biodiversity improvements should be a central priority, and that Cabinet may need to consider budget provision once the BIP had been received.

Members discussed governance and communications. Some Members commented that earlier messaging had been perceived as implying an intention to ban angling or to present angling and biodiversity as incompatible. Members stressed the need for clear communications and transparent processes.

Officers confirmed that land and asset management decisions were executive functions, with some matters delegated to officers. The Asset Management Board (AMB) operated in an advisory capacity and did not take formal decisions.

Members suggested strengthening governance by (a) introducing an annual AMB report to Cabinet; and (b) provide training for all elected Members on the AMB process and to set out the role Councillors play in the consultation process.

RESOLVED – that in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, and Committee members, the Senior Scrutiny Officer finalise the recommendations and submit them to Cabinet.

Addendum – agreed recommendations.

Wingerworth Lido

1. That the Cabinet approves the exploration of interim arrangements to reinstate angling at the earliest opportunity, prior to the completion of the Biodiversity Improvement Plan. Any reinstatement must be subject to robust management processes to ensure compliance with statutory duties and to prevent further degradation of the site, as advised by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

2. That the Council continues to undertake maintenance of the site and continues to allow Clay Cross Angling Association to inspect water quality and the welfare of their fish.

3. That Cabinet recognises the strong support for angling evidenced through the scrutiny review and public consultation and seeks to secure fishing as a long-term activity on the site beyond any interim arrangements, ensuring that all fishing activities and associated management contribute positively to biodiversity improvement.

4. That Cabinet ask officers to explore examples of best practice with other organisations on the running of an angling site i.e. Wingerworth Parish Council, Earl of Harrington's Angling Club (Derby City Council).

5. That Cabinet supports the enhancement of biodiversity at the Lido and recognises there may be financial investment required to deliver the Biodiversity Improvement Plan.

6. That Cabinet recognises the consultation feedback highlighting the need to enhance the area for greater accessibility, including improvements such as better pathways, seating, and educational signage to benefit children and those with mobility issues.

7. That the Council continues to work with stakeholders to develop an independent group (the same concept of a 'Friends of Group'), including the Parish Council, other local interest groups, and for the Group to be a consultee on the Biodiversity Improvement Plan and participate on implementation.

8. That the Biodiversity Improvement Plan is submitted to the Environment Scrutiny Committee upon its completion.

9. That the Environment Scrutiny Committee be informed of progress in terms of angling in the short-term and long-term.

AMB

1. That the Council provide training for all elected Members to understand the process of the AMB, and for them to be informed on the role they play in the consultation process.

2. An Annual Report on Asset Management decisions be submitted to Cabinet going forward, with the report being “open” to enable greater transparency of asset related decisions made.