

DISTRICT/PARISH LIAISON GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 25 JUNE 2021

Present:

Members from District Council/Parish/Town Councils

Councillor Pat Antcliff – NEDDC and Wingerworth Parish Council
Councillor Steve Clough – NEDDC and Killamarsh Parish Council
Councillor Charlotte Cupit – NEDDC and Stretton Parish Council
Councillor Alex Dale – NEDDC and Unstone Parish Council and Dronfield Town Council
Councillor John Funnell – NEDDC and Morton Parish Council
Councillor Heather Liggett – NEDDC and Shirland and Higham Parish Council
Councillor Mo Potts – NEDDC and Killamarsh Parish Council
Councillor Alan Powell – NEDDC and Dronfield Town Council
Councillor Kathy Rouse – NEDDC and Clay Cross Parish Council
Councillor Diana Ruff – NEDDC and Wingerworth Parish Council
Councillor Pam Windley – NEDDC and Tupton Parish Council
Councillor Philip Wright – NEDDC and Dronfield Town Council
Councillor Ann Brown – Shirland and Higham Parish Council
Councillor Guy Liggett – Shirland and Higham Parish Council
Councillor Philip Wheelhouse – Eckington Parish Council

Parish Clerks

Charlotte Taylor – Wingerworth Parish Council

Also Present

Joe Bradley – Executive Assistant
Gill Callingham – Director of Growth and Economic Development
Nicola Calver – Governance Manager
Lee Hickin – Director of Operations and Head of Paid Service
Rebecca Hutchinson – Health & Safety Coordinator
Steve Lee – Strategic Partnership Coordinator
Bronwen MacArthur-Williams – Health & Safety Manager
Lorraine Shaw – Managing Director, Rykneld Homes

DPL Welcome and Introductions

G/22/

21-22 Councillor Alan Powell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Communities & Communications, welcomed everyone to the District/Parish Meeting. He thanked those present for attending.

DPL Apologies for Absence

G/23/

21-22 Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Karen Hanson (Director of Environment and Enforcement), Dawn Kershaw (Clay Cross Parish Clerk) and Councillor Tracy Reader (NEDDC and Clay Cross Parish Councillor).

DPL Minutes of Last Meeting

G/24/

21-22 The Group gave consideration to the Notes of the District and Parish Liaison Group held on 26 March 2021 and noted the content.

DPL Leader's Update

G/25/

21-22 The Group received an update from Councillor Alex Dale, Leader of the North East Derbyshire District Council, who highlighted the Council's activities over the last few months.

Councillor Dale updated the Group on the changes to the recycling service, which was raised at the last meeting. He advised that following the changes to bring the service in-house, due to the contractor going into administration, the service was running as normal and little disruption had been seen following the changes.

The Group also heard about the Council's plans to increase capacity within the Environmental Health and Planning teams, to deal with the increasing workload.

Councillor Dale informed the Group that the Council had recently signed the contract to take over Killamarsh Leisure Centre. The Council will be looking at refurbishment options for the Centre.

Councillor Dale advised that the Clay Cross Town Investment Plan was now underway.

The Group were advised that housing and the use of Green Homes Grant was key for the Council at the moment. Regeneration was also a key focus for the Council and there were some exciting projects coming forward including the Clay Cross Regeneration, work around the Dronfield Civic Centre and the OPE schemes in Eckington and Killamarsh.

Councillor Dale expressed his thanks to the Parish Councils for all they were doing to support their communities and adapting to change recently. In addition, Councillor Dale gave an overview of what the Council has been doing to support local businesses including the distribution of around £40m to businesses across the district and wanted to express his thanks to the teams involved in making sure this was distributed.

The Group were advised of a new project, Digital Connect North East Derbyshire, which aimed to help people aged over 50 to build digital skills and confidence so that they are able to effectively use IT and access a wide variety of support, information, services and social networks online. This has been commissioned by the Health North East Derbyshire Partnership and was due to launch in mid-July.

Councillor Dale informed the Group that due to the delay in the lifting of restrictions, the Victory Festivals on 17 July based in Clay Cross and Killamarsh have had to be cancelled. Councillor Dale expressed his disappointment at the decision but stressed that it was necessary to maintain

the safety of our residents and visitors, and to be compliant with national expectations.

The Group were informed that the Council remained committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and commemorating its support for the Armed Forces community. Therefore, the Council are in the process of re-arranging a community based event for later in the year, which will retain some of the flavour of the Victory Festivals and previous VE Day and VJ Day anniversary events which were unable to take place due to Covid.

DPL Rykneld Homes, Service and Activity Overview

**G/26/
21-
22**

The Managing Director of Rykneld Homes Limited provided an update on the service and recent activities.

The Group was informed that during the pandemic RHL moving into a Joint Emergency Response Team with the Council to support our residents and communities. However, during this time housing services continued to be provided, and since November 2020 housing services have resumed as normal.

Since November RHL has delivered 36,000 repairs across the district. RHL have been 100% compliant on gas services and they have nearly done 100% on all electrical works/testing.

During the pandemic housing applications dropped however, this has now increased following the lifting of restrictions.

Income collection was only 3% down for the year, which was really good news. However, RHL continue to support tenants where possible and offer advice and financial support/guidance.

Despite the pandemic community involvement work was still undertaken, although done in different ways to usual but RHL have a programme of community activities that will take place over the summer.

Area Housing Offices are now permanently closed however RHL have been looking at other ways to connect with the residents that may struggle with, or not have, internet access. Lorraine Shaw advised that if anyone in the Group is aware of any residents struggling since the closure of the Housing Offices that they should contact Lorraine Shaw in the first instance.

Regeneration projects have been continuing and a lot of work is being undertaken with new builds and also jointly with the Council on utilising the Green Homes Funding.

Councillor Brown raised concerns with the development at Mickley and contractors leaving the estate in a mess. Also, she asked when the replacement of windows would be undertaken as this was due to take place and so far nothing had happened. Lorraine Shaw advised that as far as she was aware the issue with the contractors at Mickley had been resolved but should there still be an issue then for Councillor Brown to get in touch. In

terms of window replacements, Lorraine Shaw confirmed that a window replacement programme was in place and would share this in due course.

Councillor Funnell asked whether RHL would be introducing agile working in a similar way to the Council, and if so how would this affect services. Lorraine Shaw advised that office staff were already working remotely and were fully equipped to work and provide a full service, therefore there should not be any service issues going forward. Those staff (and contractors) that were based in the district to provide services were also currently providing a full service. Lorraine Shaw advised that at some point in the future, depending on how things progress, there may be some effects on building works but this was continually being monitored and will be dealt with should an issue arise.

Councillor Heather Liggett asked whether officers at RHL received bereavement training following her own recent experience with RHL, and also raised concerns around the policy and timescales to empty properties following a family bereavement.

Lorraine Shaw advised that the relevant staff do receive a basic level of training and apologised for Councillor Liggett's recent experience. In terms of the policy, Lorraine advised that this was a Council policy however, the details of the policy are a national guide that has to be followed. It was advised that RHL acknowledge that this can be a difficult time for people, both emotionally and financially, and RHL do what they can to help families during this time.

Councillor Heather Liggett also raised concerns around the housing allocation process as properties seem to be going to people outside of the district which means those that are wanting to move and stay within their current village are being forced to move to other areas of the district. Lorraine Shaw advised that again, this was a Council policy, however she would happily discuss with Councillor Liggett separately. Councillor Powell also advised that the Policy was due for review however he was unsure whether the review would resolve the issues raised by Councillor Liggett as the main problem is due to the number of properties available and that cannot easily be resolved.

Lorraine Shaw discussed the Government White Paper, and advised that the main focus of this was on consumer standards and compliance. It was advised that RHL were continually working towards this and are actively working on getting a "tenants voice" by actively consulting and engaging with tenants. There were several tenant groups set up which allowed tenants to have their say.

Lorraine Shaw advised that there was a Community Alarm Service that was available for all residents whether they are Council or private tenants.

The Group were advised that RHL are able to provide this service should anyone want it, and were working on future proofing the service going forward.

DPL Health and Safety Service

G/27/

21-

The Health & Safety Adviser, Rebecca Hutchinson, provided an overview of the

22 Council's Health and Safety Service.

The Group were informed that the Team had gone from 2 staff up to 5 members of staff, and this has now allowed the Team to provide an enhanced level of services, not only in-house but also externally.

The Council had recently achieved RoSPA Gold Award 2021.

The Group were informed that the Team had recently worked with CBC, who had paid for the service. This had proved really successful and was a good project for both Authorities. Links had now been established across both Authorities.

Rebecca Hutchinson advised that the Team were able to offer a wide variety of advice and guidance i.e. applying pieces of legislation to current work practices etc. They could also help with the production of key documentation if required. It was advised that the Team could also undertake inspections, either as a one-off or as a system of inspections, depending upon your needs and requirements.

The Group were informed that other services could also be provided including noise monitoring, so if there was an issue with noise within a work environment, this could be checked, and advice would be given including the need to issue PPE or additional PPE if current provisions are not up to standard.

Rebecca Hutchinson advised that there was a training programme in place, and Parish Councils do have the opportunity to access this. Prices are as follows:

- Fully Day Rate - £300
- ½ Day Rate - £150
- Training Courses – from £45/person
- Bespoke projects – prices depend on the level of work required

The Group were advised that should any Parish Councils wish to access the services of the Health & Safety Team they are welcome to contact the Team at any time to discuss individual needs.

DPL **Any Questions**

G/28/

**21-
22**

There were two questions submitted by Parishes prior to the meeting, details as follows.

- Councillor Heather Ligget – Shirland & Higham Parish Council : *I would like to ask if Rykneld staff have any Bereavement training?*

The answer to the question had already been covered and noted under the Rykneld Homes, Service & Activity Overview item.

- Councillor Potts – Killamarsh Parish Council : *Am having lots of complaints about the dirty state of the gennels/footpaths that intersect residential areas in Killamarsh. Also overhanging hedges along same routes. Some have been reported as almost impassable. Where are we please on the maintenance programme and can we expect to see these issues resolved shortly?*

Councillor Dale informed the Group that unfortunately Steve Brunt, Head of Streetscene, was unavailable to attend the meeting but had provided a response in advance.

It was informed that depending upon where the location of the paths, hedging etc was, would depend on whether it was a Council responsibility. It could be DCC land or under private ownership. Councillor Dale advised that Councillor Cupit would pick up the issue directly with Steve Brunt and respond back to Councillor Potts.

DPL **Date of Next Meeting**

G/29/

**21-
22**

The next meeting of the District/Parish Liaison Group was scheduled for 15 October 2021.

Councillor Dale asked the Group for any requests future agenda items. There were none put forward at the meeting however the Group were informed that any Parishes with a particular item they wish to see on a future agenda should contact Joe Bradley (joe.bradley@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk).

The Group discussed representation at the meeting. Councillor Dale stated that he felt attendance would improve once restrictions are lifted and meetings are able to take place in person. It was suggested that maybe the meetings at 4pm on a Friday were not ideal for everyone so this may need considering for future meetings.

Councillor Dale informed the Group that he was hoping that the Chair of the Council, Councillor Martin Thacker, would be present for a future meeting to discuss his Charity Appeal, Ashgate Hospicecare. The Group were informed that the Chair had a lot of upcoming events and if anyone would like to find out information on how to support the Appeal details can be found on our website.

DPL **Close of Meeting**

G/30/

**21-
22**

Councillor Alex Dale, Leader of the Council, thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 17:00 hours.