

## **DISTRICT/PARISH LIAISON GROUP**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2021**

#### **Present:**

#### **Members from District Council/Parish/Town Councils**

Councillor Alex Dale – NEDDC and Unstone Parish Council and Dronfield Town Council  
Councillor Jeremy Kenyon – NEDDC and Eckington Parish Council  
Councillor Heather Liggett – NEDDC and Shirland and Higham Parish Council  
Councillor Jeff Lilley – NEDDC and North Wingfield Parish Council  
Councillor Mo Potts – NEDDC and Killamarsh Parish Council  
Councillor Alan Powell – NEDDC and Dronfield Town Council  
Councillor Pam Windley – NEDDC and Tupton Parish Council  
Councillor Anne Brown – Shirland and Higham Parish Council  
Councillor Guy Liggett – Shirland and Higham Parish Council

#### **Parish Clerks**

Sara Atkinson – Ashover Parish Council  
Andrew Tristram – Dronfield Town Council

#### **Also Present**

Joe Bradley – Executive Assistant  
Matt Broughton – Assistant Director of Transformation & Organisation  
Gill Callingham – Director of Growth and Economic Development  
Nicola Calver – Governance Manager  
Ken Eastwood – Joint Assistant Director of Environmental Health Service  
Sara Gordon – Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager  
Steve Lee – Strategic Partnership Coordinator  
Sarah Sternberg – Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer  
Jordan Waite – Citizens Advice Mid Mercia

#### **DPL Welcome and Introductions**

**G/31/**

**21-** Councillor Alex Dale, Leader of the Council, welcomed everyone to the  
**22** District/Parish Meeting. He thanked those present for attending.

Everyone present introduced themselves to the Group.

The Leader then provided an update on Council activities and events that have been taking place.

The Leader offered condolences to the family, friends and residents of Killamarsh following the recent tragedy. He advised that flowers had been left at the site following the incident on behalf of the Council and Rykneld Homes. The Leader advised that Rykneld Homes and the Council are continuing to support the Police and are offering support to the families and residents.

The Group were informed the Inspectors report on the Local Plan has been received. This is now going through the relevant processes and will come to full Council in due course for consideration.

The Leader advised that a lot of work has been taking place around Leisure. Eckington Swimming Pool had received a £1m which will be used to make the Centre more carbon friendly. Also, in line with the Clay Cross Town Deal, Sharley Park plans have been making progress.

It was advised that a lot of work was taking place on housing. £1.5m green homes funding had been secured from Government. The Council were also investing in housing development. There were currently 320 properties in progress with this increasing soon.

The Leader informed the Group that following a request from Government to support the Afghan Relocation Scheme, the Council have made an offer of two properties in the District. This is in line with what Government recommended per Council. Councillor Dale advised that consultation with parishes will take place in due course.

The Group were informed of two Meet the Council events that had recently taken place at Eckington and Clay Cross. These events were for the residents to interact with the Council and included a Question & Answers Session with the Cabinet. It was advised that more of these events will be taking place in the future and details will follow in due course. The Leader asked that the parishes help to promote these events.

The Leader informed the Group of the Armed Forces Covenant event that had taken place in Dronfield. The event was well attended and was very positive. The Council will continue to look at ways to support the Armed Forces further.

**DPL Apologies for Absence**

**G/32/**

**21-  
22**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillor William Armitage (NEDDC and Ashover Parish Councillor), Councillor John Funnell (NEDDC and Pilsley & Morton Parish Councillor), Councillor Roger Hall (NEDDC and Dronfield Woodhouse Councillor) and Councillor Philip Wright (NEDDC and Dronfield North Councillor).

**DPL Minutes of Last Meeting**

**G/33/**

**21-  
22**

The Group gave consideration to the Notes of the District and Parish Liaison Group held on 25 June 2021 and noted the content.

**DPL Digital Connect**

**G/34/**

**21-  
22**

Jordan Waite from Citizens Advice Mid Mercia was in attendance and gave a presentation on Digital Connect, a pilot project providing free digital skills training to the residents of North East Derbyshire.

The Group were informed that the aim of the project was to increase individuals' digital knowledge so that they are able to reach out and connect with

people/organisations. It was advised that society is moving more towards digital platforms and some individuals are being left behind due to a lack of knowledge.

It was highlighted that Covid has increased the use of digital connectivity and has continued to be the way forward. Therefore there is a need to educate those people that don't currently have the skills or knowledge.

The Group were informed that this project was exclusively for those residents of North East Derbyshire, with a target demographic of the over 50's.

It was advised that in order to reach out to as many residents as possible there needed to be a level of flexibility to the approach and an ease of access to resources. Therefore current locations where the project will be sited include Clay Cross, Dronfield, Eckington, Holymoorside and Stretton. This means that the maximum travel time for any resident is 20 minutes. There are also discussions about having a site in Killamarsh.

The Group were provided details of referral routes.

Following the presentation a request was made as to whether the Team could meet with parishes/residents in other areas to discuss the project. Jordan Waite confirmed it was possible should it be required.

There were discussions around accessibility for those with hearing difficulties and sight impairments but the Group was assured that these people would be accommodated and the Team would work with them to make sure they were given the support they required. Jordan Waite also advised that if the pilot project is successful and continues there may be a possibility to look into other ways to support people to make the service more accessible.

A request was made for the "Scam-Watch" to be reinstated that was an initiative funded by DCC, Police Crime Commissioner and other key agencies. Councillor Dale advised that he would follow this up.

**DPL** **HR Support**

**G/35/**

**21-  
22**

The Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager, Sara Gordon, provided an overview of the Council's HR Service.

The Group were informed that the Team currently provides a service to NEDDC and BDC, and cover a wide range of activities including advice and guidance, recruitment, contracts, reorganisations, employee relations i.e. grievances etc, learning and development, policies and strategies, occupational health access.

Sara Gordon advised that Parish Councils are able to access these services if they require.

Sara Gordon informed the Group that HR support costs range for £30-£50/hour. Occupational health appointments cost £100 per appointment. Prices are reviewed annual but pricing generally depends on the nature of support required.

The Group were informed that all details are included within the Trusted Services booklet that was issued some time ago. A copy of the Booklet will be circulated as part of the minutes.

**DPL** **Killamarsh Sports Centre**

**G/36/**

**21-** The Assistant Director of Transformation & Organisation, Matt Broughton,  
**22** provided an overview of Killamarsh Sports Centre.

Matt Broughton informed the Group that this had been a 2 year project working with the Parish Council following a request to support and assist with a number of issues including low membership number, staffing issues and H&S concerns.

This led to NEDDC Leisure Team working with staff to produce a Subsidy Reduction Plan for the Parish Council. This included an action plan for implementation covering a £900k investment, development of sales and marketing plan, customer satisfaction/insight and H&S action plan.

The Group were informed that Covid had a significant impact on the Centre. In March 2020 leisure centres were closed indefinitely. Killamarsh Parish Council were not eligible for support grants. The Parish Council furloughed their staff. Due to the challenge and risk facing the Leisure Centre there was a decision to be taken to either close the facility or pass it onto the District Council to operate.

As the Council had already undertaken a Subsidy Reduction Plan they had the information available and were able to make a decision in December 2020 to acquire the Leisure Centre on a long lease and agreed to invest £1m in refurbishment. In February budgets were agreed to enable the works. In April Cabinet agreed to invest further into the refurbishment, which was subsequently agreed by Council in July.

Matt Broughton informed the Group that the reason the Council has taken the above decision was to prevent the loss of a leisure facility, given their important for supporting healthy communities, addressing social isolation and obesity etc. NEDDC also have a track record of subsidy reduction and business improvement, and there was an opportunity to significantly reduce the subsidy.

The Group were shown digital images of what the Centre could possibly look like once refurbishment works have been undertaken.

It was advised that the commencement of works was imminent and subject to the outcome of the response from Building Control. If all approved, completion is expected Spring 2022.

Matt Broughton gave an overview of where the Council was in terms of its other Leisure Centres.

Eckington Pool has had significant investment with £1.5m refurbishment of the pool hall and plant room. £1m grant funding has been secured from Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. Works are due to complete in December 2021.

The result of this will provide a fully refurbished pool hall and a 260 tonne/year reduction in CO2 emissions.

Sharley Park is looking at a multi-million pound redevelopment with grant funding from Sport England and the Football Foundation. This will create a new community hub with leisure centre, hospital, café, soft play and some commercial space.

Works are expected to commence in September 2022 and complete by March 2024.

Dronfield Sports Centre has seen £40k feasibility works to decarbonise the Centre. Currently in the design stages but it is anticipated that £1.6m investment will follow. This will result in a 200 tonne/annum reduction in CO2 emissions.

It is anticipated that works will commence in September 2022 and complete in March 2023.

#### **DPL New Code of Conduct and LGA Model Code**

**G/37/**

**21-  
22**

Sarah Sternberg informed the Group that as a result of a report by the Committee for Standards in Public Life (formally the Nolan Committee) in 2019, the Local Government Association (the LGA) have produced a model code of conduct for local authority councillors.

NEDDC have adopted a version of this model code. There are additions that the Council considered necessary, but none of the additions alters the model code provisions. The model code did not differ from the Council's previous code in any major way.

The Group were informed that a letter will be sent to all Parish and Town Councils informing them that the District Council has adopted a new code. They will also be sent a copy of the code and they will be advised to review their own code and preferably adopt the LGA model code.

Parish and Town Councillors will also be invited to some training sessions. These sessions will be virtual, by Zoom. The dates proposed will be circulated as soon as possible.

#### **DPL Guidance for Parish Councils regarding Illegal Encampments**

**G/38/**

**21-  
22**

The Joint Assistant Director of Environmental Health, Ken Eastwood, provided an overview on gypsies and travellers following the few incidents of encampments over last couple of years.

The Group were advised that the Council has a duty to the gypsy and traveller community under the Equality Act and where possible tolerate short term encampments where there is no evidence of detrimental impact or unlawful activity.

It was advised that tensions and issues can arise when gypsies and travellers set up in areas. This was largely due to the damage they cause, littering and waste

issues, anti-social behaviour and other criminal activities they can present. However, it was highlighted that the majority of these people were law-abiding.

The Group were informed that trespassing on land is not a criminal offence, and it is the responsibility of the landowner to prevent it. If gypsies and travellers are camped on District Council land, the Council can evict them. However, the District Council is not responsible for moving gypsies and travellers camped on private land. But the Council will provide advice, guidance and support.

Ken Eastwood provided details of the different powers available to remove gypsies and travellers.

It was advised that in all cases the Council will visit encampments and make enquires regarding welfare, health and education. Appropriate referrals will be made. The Council will determine intentions and timescales. Waste collection and other services will be arranged if required. Also, advice and support will be provided to landowners if necessary.

**DPL Any Questions**

**G/39/**

**21-  
22**

Councillor Anne Brown asked whether the window replacement programme in Mickley was in place, following the concerns she raised at the last meeting with regards to the poor condition of many of the windows in properties in the area.

In addition, Councillor Anne Brown asked whether we knew what the requirements were for setting up a TARA group?

Unfortunately there was no representative from Rykneld at the meeting however, Gill Callingham agreed to pick this up with Rykneld so that they could respond appropriately.

**DPL Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**G/40/**

**21-  
22**

The next meeting of the District Parish Liaison Group was scheduled for 18 March 2022.

**DPL** **Close of Meeting**

**G/41/**

**21-** Councillor Alex Dale, Leader of the Council, thanked everyone for attending  
**22** and closed the meeting at 17:20 hours.