

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2024

Present:

Councillor Christine Smith (in the Chair)

Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer	Councillor Pat Antcliff
Councillor Neil Baker	Councillor Nigel Barker
Councillor Jayne Barry	Councillor Graham Baxter MBE
Councillor Joseph Birkin	Councillor David Cheetham
Councillor Kathy Clegg	Councillor Stephen Clough
Councillor Andrew Cooper	Councillor Suzy Cornwell
Councillor Charlotte Cupit	Councillor Alex Dale
Councillor Lilian Deighton	Councillor Clive Fletcher
Councillor Mark Foster	Councillor Kevin Gillott
Councillor David Hancock	Councillor Lee Hartshorne
Councillor Pam Jones	Councillor William Jones
Councillor Pat Kerry	Councillor Carol Lacey
Councillor Tony Lacey	Councillor Heather Liggett
Councillor Fran Petersen	Councillor Stephen Pickering
Councillor Carolyn Renwick	Councillor Kathy Rouse
Councillor Ross Shipman	Councillor Derrick Skinner
Councillor Mick Smith	Councillor Richard Spooner
Councillor Martin E Thacker MBE JP	Councillor Richard Welton

Also Present:

L Hickin	Managing Director - Head of Paid Service
J Dethick	Director of Finance and Resources & (Section 151 Officer)
M Broughton	Director of Growth and Assets
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
M E Derbyshire	Members ICT & Training Officer
T Fuller	Governance Officer
T Bamford	Civic Administration Assistant

COU Election of the Chair of the Council

/45/2

4-25

Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that Councillor C Smith be elected as Chair of the Council. The Motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED – That Councillor C Smith be elected as Chair of the Council for the remainder of the 2024/25 Municipal Year (by acclamation).

Councillor C Smith in the Chair

COU **Address of Gratitude to Members by the newly elected Chair of the Council**

/46/2

4-25

The Chair Councillor Christine Smith gave thanks to the Council for electing her as chair. She highlighted the unprecedented situation and discussed she was very honoured and would carry out her role to the best of her abilities. She hoped to be a great ambassador for the community. She noted that she had been involved in the Council for a long period of time, and that in relation to supporting charities, she would carry on with Cllr Morley's wishes with any money raised being donated to local community groups.

She went on to detail that she had attended a number of events since stepping up including primary school summer fairs and the Eckington mining memorial. Coming up, she had a McMillian coffee morning and the Wingerworth art exhibition.

COU **Apologies for Absence**

/47/2

4-25

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Beech, M Durrant, P Elliott, M Emmens, S Fawcett, C Gare, N Morley, S Reed, M Roe, L Stone, K Tait and P Windley.

COU **Declarations of Interest**

/48/2

4-25

In relation to item 13 – Motion 1 (Minute COU/57/24-25 below refers) Councillors A Dale, C Renwick, C Cupit and K Gillott declared that they were Derbyshire County Council Members.

COU **Minutes of the Last Meetings**

/49/2

4-25

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 22 July and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 12 September 2024 were approved as true and correct records.

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

/50/2

4-25

Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that Councillor G Baxter be elected as Vice Chair of the Council. The Motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

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

COU **Leader of the Council's Announcements**

/51/2

4-25

The Leader of the Council, Councillor N Barker gave thanks to Alan Maher the retiring Governance Manager for his contributions to the Council. He welcomed Amy Bryan as the new Governance Manager. He discussed that it had been quiet over August, but things had picked up and he had begun to work with various stakeholders, including Chesterfield College, where they had discussed the importance of further education. Additionally, he highlighted that ISG had gone into administration, and that it had affected not just the Council, but others across the country. They were working with their delivery partner to continue to deliver

work as planned.

He went on to discuss that he had met with all members affected by the National Grid proposals; various concerns which had been raised, and had been fed into the Council's response. He had also met with Councillor C Renwick to ensure that a coordinated response was submitted with Derbyshire County Council.

The Council's response to the NPPF had been discussed and approved at Cabinet. It had been accepted that the proposals may cause issues, so a transition period had been requested. He clarified that the Council would not be building over green space. Additionally, any speculative development issues, and unmet needs in other areas had been addressed in the response. He clarified that the public would still be involved in the planning process.

The Council heard that they had achieved a C2 from the Housing Regulators which covered all four consumer standards. Inspectors had identified specific areas of work and Rykneld were addressing this. They would be reassessed in the next 18 months.

COU Public Participation

/52/2

4-25 No questions from the public had been received.

COU Appointment of the Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee -
ADDITIONAL ITEM

/53/2

4-25 Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion that Councillor M Durrant and Councillor G Baxter be elected as Chair and Vice Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee. The Motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED – That Councillor M Durrant be elected Chair and Councillor G Baxter be elected Vice Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee (by acclamation).

COU NEDDC Revised People Management Policies

/54/2

4-25 The report to Council, presented by the Managing Director highlighted that a number of People Management policies had been revised. These were detailed and it was explained that they were regularly reviewed. The policies had gone through a process of robust design in collaboration with staff and unions. For ICT and Cyber Security, these had come through the Joint ICT committee route. Moving forward there would be face to face and virtual meetings, in order for all trade unions to continue to work collaboratively.

Cllr D Hancock outline a number of areas where he had concerns.

Lee Hickin, Managing Director, responded that these issues had been captured, and he highlighted that they had spent twelve months on these policies and that every trade union, senior officer, and representative had been involved in designing the policies and it had been a robust process. He stated that he would go back to the group to pick up the points raised rather than holding up the

policies.

Councillor A Dale requested that in future it would be helpful for the procedural changes to have tracked versions for transparency.

Councillor J Barry noted her agreement with Councillor D Hancock on some of his points but discussed that these policies were all quite similar and required further discussion in light of the issues raised.

Councillor D Cheetham discussed the new legislation in relation to employers proactively addressing sexual harassment policies. Lee Hickin, Managing Director, confirmed that work was being carried out to proactively prevent these issues occurring and informing everyone of the new legislation.

Councillor N Barker stated that he believed that the policies should be agreed today so that there was an up-to-date policy in place. Further work could then be carried out regarding Councillor D Hancock's comments and could be brought back to Council for any amendments to be considered.

Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded a Motion to approve the policies.

RESOLVED – That the Dispute Resolution and Grievance Policy, Employee Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy, Sickness Absence Management Policy and Information & Cyber Security Policy be approved.

COU Appointment of Independent Persons

/55/2

4-25

Council considered a report which sought the extension of the appointment of the three Independent Persons. The Monitoring Officer, Sarah Sternberg, noted that there was a requirement to have an independent person in post to deal with Member complaints. There were currently three in post, but the Council needs to reappoint all three until 2027 to ensure that there are Independent Persons appointed.

Councillor N Barker and Councillor P Kerry moved and seconded the Motion. The Motion was put to the vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED – That:

- (1) Amanda Orchard and David Richardson, be reappointed as Independent Persons under the Localism Act 2011 until the end of May 2027.
- (2) Graham Hudson be confirmed as an Independent Person under the Localism Act 2011, until the end of May 2027.

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

/56/2

4-25

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

Question 'A' – Councillor D Hancock to Councillor S Pickering, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Place

Could the member for Environment and Place provide Council with details of the measures being taken to reduce the number of missed refuse collections on a weekly basis.

Councillor D Hancock reiterated that this was not a criticism of the workforce but to raise awareness that there were issues and ask what was being done about them.

Councillor S Pickering agreed there were a number of reasons for some bins being missed, which included blocked access, breakdowns, and new housing developments. He went on to discuss that in relation to blocked access from parked cars, refuse workers did knock on doors but often without luck. Letters were also sent to residents on these streets requesting that the street be kept clear on collection days. The Council had no enforcement powers, but if the bins were left full, the bin men did try to call back the next day. Residents could also contact the Council to notify that their bins had not been emptied. He went on to inform Members that there had been ten new vehicles added to the fleet, with a rolling replacement programme in place. Additionally, extra rounds had been created for new developments.

Councillor D Hancock asked a supplementary question in relation to whether relocating the vehicle depot would be useful.

Councillor S Pickering shared that there were new arrangements for a relocated depot, but he confirmed that this would not address blocked access, nor would a new fleet. He went on to explain to Members that from January to August 2024, four million bins were emptied with just four thousand missed.

Councillor D Hancock responded that every week it was the same bins, on the same streets which were being missed.

Question 'B' – Councillor R Welton to Councillor N Barker, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Finance

Given the new Government's proposed changes to the NPPF and the impact these may have on the District and its planning policies, will the Leader reconsider what is effectively a 'closed shop, invitation only' membership of its Local Plan Steering Group and allow Groups to choose their own representatives, take and publish full minutes of meetings, in order to have the inclusion, accountability and transparency so often promised to members and residents.

Councillor N Barker agreed that it was a good time to review the situation, and consequently informed Council that the membership and composition for the Local Steering Group was being explored. The group needed to be reestablished in the next few weeks due to the likely changes to the NPPF.

Question 'C' – Councillor A Dale to Councillor N Barker, Leader of the

Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Finance

The previous Government had a clear focus on levelling up and regenerating northern and midland communities like ours. Clay Cross and nearby Staveley received £25million each, our Hospital has had major upgrades and the Barrow Hill Line was due to be re-opened for passengers. Dronfield also successfully secured £20m for regeneration over the next 10 years. In the first two months of the new Labour Government, they have already scrapped the Barrow Hill Line plans, which our former MP had worked tirelessly on and which had cross party support from across South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire, all to fill a supposed black hole which they've helped to create with inflation-busting public sector pay rises. Will the Leader of the Council agree to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and our new local MP to urge them not to give up on the regeneration of communities like ours when preparing for the autumn budget and to match the commitment of the last Government to invest £20m in improving Dronfield over the next 10 years?

Councillor N Barker stated that he would not.

Councillor A Dale highlighted his disappointment and asked if it was because some areas were more deserving of regeneration.

Councillor N Barker noted that he was not denying that infrastructure was needed but appreciated that a longer-term plan was required. He agreed that the funding for Dronfield would have been good for Dronfield but that the government needed to focus on all of the District. He highlighted that the Council had an active role in the Industrial Community Alliance, which did campaign for ex-coalfield and industrial regeneration. He also shared with Members that a more cooperative approach with other authorities was being taken.

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

/57/2

4-25

Motion 'A' – Proposed by Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer

Council notes:-

North East Derbyshire's electric vehicle (EV) charging network is the worse in the entire country, covering a mere 1.3% of "on-street" households;
The Council are currently failing to meet its government set target of 517 EV charging points by 2030, with just 17 currently in situ;
Despite a Government target of 35%, just 15% of residents are able to adopt a 'green commute';
Given the rural nature of the District, the inadequate provision of bus routes between villages and failure to invest seriously in active travel infrastructure, EV's play an even more crucial role in decarbonising our area.

Council resolves:-

(1) To swiftly investigate the feasibility of installing EV charging points at all 17 of its car parks across Clay Cross, Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh.

(2) To write to the East Midlands Mayor requesting support for North East Derbyshire through their plans to 'rollout more charging points for electric vehicle'.

(3) To write to Derbyshire County Council, recent recipients of a shared £17.6m Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) grant, requesting urgent support in North East Derbyshire.

Councillor F Adlington-Stringer moved the Motion.

Councillor F Adlington-Stringer then moved an amendment to the Motion, so (1) would read 'To expedite and expand the investigation of the feasibility of installing EV charging points at all 17 of its car parks across Clay Cross, Eckington, Dronfield and Killamarsh and other appropriate assets.

Councillor A Cooper seconded the proposed amendment.

The amendment put to the vote and passed. The amended Motion became the Substantive Motion.

Councillor N Barker welcomed the opportunity to debate the subject and was fully behind the intention. He highlighted that the green agenda needed to be expanded but that this Motion should have been raised in a different way. The Council was already in the process of agreeing a policy with other authorities for a County Council approach. Feasibility studies had recently been conducted, the County Council were the lead agency and discussions in relation to funding had been carried out. Councillor N Barker moved an amendment that the Motion be deferred to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor A Dale highlighted that the Conservative Group broadly supported the Motion. The broader point was that charging points within car parks were not well utilised, and investment for on-street charging points should be the way forward. He disagreed with the note in point four which related to bus routes, as it was not necessarily true, there was some investment, but more was needed.

Councillor C Renwick informed Members that of the £17.6m local electric vehicle infrastructure grant fund, £6.6m had been awarded to Derbyshire County Council and the funding stipulated that electric vehicle charging points should be carried out in residential areas, where there was little or no off-street parking. Councillor C Renwick then provided details of three schemes that were currently being progressed regarding vehicle charging.

Councillor S Cornwell discussed that she supported the amendment but was disappointed the original Motion had not included all areas within the District. She shared that in her Ward there were appropriate areas in Holmewood which could benefit.

Councillor K Gillott seconded the amendment and highlighted that the issue needed to be discussed at the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor R Shipman responded that Councillors should be encouraged to bring debates to Council, as it created a healthy approach to debate and transparency. On the wider point of the Motion, more charging points were needed, and it did appear that this was being addressed but debating it could speed up the process. He went on to discuss that off street parking needed to be more environmentally friendly as these points would boost more electrical vehicles on the road.

Councillor F Adlington-Stringer stated that he rejected the amendment, as the Council was failing on its green targets.

The amendment was put to the vote and passed. The amended Motion became the Substantive Motion.

The Substantive Motion was put to the vote and passed.

RESOLVED – that the Motion be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

COU **Chair's Urgent Business**

/58/2

4-25 There was no urgent business.