

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2025

Present:

Councillor Michael Durrant (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Graham Baxter MBE (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Richard Beech
Councillor Pam Jones
Councillor Tony Lacey

Councillor Stephen Clough
Councillor Carol Lacey

Also Present:

K Drury	Information & Improvement Manager
L Pepper	Assistant Director Communities
F Green	Community Safety Manager
D Parker	Housing Intelligence and Assurance Officer
H Summers	Ryknelld Homes Ltd
J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
T Fuller	Governance Officer
N Ndiweni-Roberts	Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire
D Wilson	Police Representative
M Smith	Police Representative

CSC/ Apologies for Absence

38/2

4-25 An apology for absence had been received from Councillor K Tait and P Windley.

CSC/ Declarations of Interest

39/2

4-25 None.

CSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

40/2

4-25 RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the Community Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 13 November 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CSC/ Meet the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire, Nicolle Ndiweni-Roberts

41/2

4-25

The new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Derbyshire presented Committee with the Police and Crime Plan for Derbyshire 2024-2029. The presentation included a breakdown of strategic priorities and an overview of the key partnerships the PCC was working in. This was followed by a question and answer session on the key topics that had been submitted by Communities Scrutiny Committee prior to the meeting. The PCC was joined by colleagues from

the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) to help answer questions about specific issues affecting the district.

Committee welcomed the informative presentation. Members considered the questions on the key issues affecting the district that had been circulated prior to the meeting. This included questions on police visibility, rural crime, e-scooters, violence against women and girls and road safety.

Committee discussed Police Community Officers attending Parish meetings. It was accepted that organisational challenges and priorities prevented Officers from attending every meeting. In this context, it was suggested that Officers could send a report to Parish meetings when unable to attend.

Committee heard that there was a focus on improving the 101 service, with several positive changes being made in July of 2024. It was shared that there were still some challenges affecting the service and victim satisfaction would remain a highly important topic to be worked on. Some Members requested statistics on call handle rates since the changes implemented in July. It was suggested that these figures be shared outside of the meeting.

Committee received an update on the ongoing projects concerning police stations in Clay Cross and Killamarsh. Officers from the SNT addressed questions relating to the composition of the team manning the stations, the benefits of the new police stations and traffic issues resulting from the project in Killamarsh. In this context, the Officers explained the role and advantages of the SNT.

It was shared that rural policing was a high priority for the new PCC. In this context, Members heard that there is a specific rural crime team to tackle crimes unique to rural communities. The likelihood of this team being expanded was discussed. Some Members requested detailed figures on rural crime rates and response times. It was suggested that these figures be shared outside of the meeting.

Committee discussed the challenge that violence against women and girls represented to the District. The PCC explained the steps being taken to address the issue and emphasized the need to focus on perpetrators. In this context, the Call It Out campaign was highlighted as encouraging the challenge of unacceptable behaviour. Committee heard that NEDDC and PCC were working in partnership to support communities affected by violence against women and girls.

Committee heard about the work being done to remove e-scooters from the streets and were informed that the seize and dispose initiative that had been in place since November 2024 had resulted in 264 e-scooters being seized.

Committee discussed road safety and dangerous driving issues affecting the District. Committee were updated on the powers the Police had to address dangerous vehicles. Some Members highlighted specific locations, particularly around schools, where road safety is an issue. Committee were updated on the measures to prevent dangerous driving and improve road safety. Members heard that community organisations will be able to apply for funding in order to set up Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs). The process of applying for funding and the capacity/challenges of running SIDs were discussed.

Members had further questions regarding specific cases of arson, out of court disposals and the funding being made available to support the recruitment of more Police Officers.

Members wished to congratulate the Derbyshire Constabulary on recent convictions and expressed overall appreciation of Police work in the District. It was shared that this would be passed on to the relevant teams.

Committee thanked the PCC and colleagues for attending the committee meeting and providing informative responses to the key issues affecting the District.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52.

The meeting reconvened at 12:00.

CSC/ Adaptations Policy Update

42/2

4-25 With the agreement of the Chair item 6, Adaptations Policy Update, was taken next.

The Council's Housing Policy and Assurance Officer and the Head of Neighbourhood Services (RHL) presented Committee with a report that outlined the implications of the changes made to the Adaptations Policy. This included a breakdown of the adaptation requests made under the amended policy, the impact on tenants and the impact on the Council/Rykneld Homes Limited.

Committee considered the report. Members queried specific homes that were in need of adaptations. In this context, the point of contact for adaptation requests was shared and it was agreed that contact details would be circulated outside of the meeting.

Some Members had questions around the criteria for declining adaptation requests and the level of declines under the new policy. It was shared that the policy update would lead to previously declined adaptation requests being accepted and that decisions to refuse adaptation could be appealed. It was felt that this represented a positive for tenants.

Committee were informed that at this stage there had been no major financial implications resulting in the changes to policy. However, it was difficult to determine what the requirement will be for adaptations going forward in the next 12 months, but the situation will be monitored.

RESOLVED –

That the update was noted.

CSC/ Performance Management

43/2

4-25 The Information, Engagement and Performance Manager presented a report setting out progress on the strategies underpinning the Council Plan objective 'A great place to live well' for the period ending 31 December 2024.

Members were updated on progress under the following objective sub-categories in Appendix 1 of the report:

- 1) A community with lifelong good health.
- 2) A place to live that people value.
- 3) A place where people enjoy spending time.

Some Members queried what mitigation was in place to deal with the impacts of long-term absences. It was clarified that the long-term absences follow process as set out by the sickness policy.

RESOLVED -

That progress against the Council Plan “A great place to live well” objective was noted.

CSC/ Cabinet Business

44/2

4-25

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a digest of Cabinet decisions taken since 21 November 2024. The digest set out key information for each decision.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer also presented Members with the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions for the period 15 January 2025 – 15 February 2025.

Committee were updated on the Communities Scrutiny Review of Leisure Activities for Older Children/Teenagers that had been sent to Cabinet on 23 January 2025. Committee heard that all 5 recommendations put forward in the review had been accepted and that the work had already begun to action them. Members discussed the idea of advertising vouchers for leisure activities in foodbanks and on school notice boards. It was shared that proactive engagement with schools had taken place and the team working on implementing the recommendations in the review was clarified. It was agreed that Senior Scrutiny Officer would send the suggestions made at the meeting to the relevant officers.

RESOLVED –

That the update was noted.

CSC/ Policy Development

45/2

4-25

The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that there were no major policies for Members to consider.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

CSC/ 'Horizon Scanning'

46/2

4-25

The Senior Scrutiny Officer updated Members on potential significant changes in the Council's operating environment, including changes to national legislation and regulation.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer explained that there was nothing to bring to the attention of Members.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

CSC/ Work Programme

47/2

4-25 The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented the draft Work Programme 2024/25 for the Committee to consider.

Committee considered a motion in regard to planning enforcement and the affect that developers breaching planning conditions had on communities, that had been referred to Communities Scrutiny Committee at the full Council meeting on 25 November 2024. It was agreed at the full Council meeting that the motion would be considered in conjunction with the recommendations made by the Organisation Scrutiny Committee in June 2023, following a planning enforcement review. Committee discussed their options in terms of progressing the referral. Some Members suggested that the original recommendations had already been implemented.

Committee discussed the difficulties in enforcing planning conditions against large developers. Some Members felt that they didn't know enough about the enforcement of planning conditions and before looking at the motion suggested that they hear more about the process and key issues. It was suggested that Committee ask for the Assistant Director of Planning to attend a future meeting to address how planning enforcement difficulties affect communities.

RESOLVED –

That the Work Programme for 2024/25 be approved.

CSC/ Additional Urgent Items

48/2

4-25 None.

CSC/ Date of Next Meeting

49/2

4-25 The next meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 14 May 2025 at 10.00 am.