

BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2026

Present:

Councillor Suzy Cornwell (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Richard Welton (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Christine Gare
Councillor William Jones

Councillor Lee Hartshorne
Councillor Tony Lacey

Also Present:

K Drury
J Hayden
T Scott

Information & Improvement Manager
Senior Scrutiny Officer
Governance and Scrutiny Officer

BSC Apologies for Absence

38/2

5-26 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fletcher and Windley.

BSC Declarations of Interest

39/2

5-26 There were no declarations of interest.

BSC Minutes of Last Meeting

40/2

5-26 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Business Scrutiny Committee held on 10 November 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

BSC Performance Management

41/2

5-26 The Information & Improvement Manager presented a report setting out progress on the strategies underpinning the Council Plan objective 'A great place to work' for the period ending 31 December 2025.

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

- 1) Community with a diverse range of commutable employment that match the skills of residents.
- 2) Community with growing commutable employment opportunities.

Members referred to the section of the report about the Shop Front Scheme and how it stated that it would be issued as 20 grants, and asked how this would be split up geographically. The Information & Improvement Manager agreed to investigate this.

RESOLVED - That progress against the Council Plan "A great place to work"

objective was noted.

BSC **Digital Connectivity**

42/2

5-26

The Senior Scrutiny Officer explained to Members that the Derbyshire County Council Officer scheduled to be at this meeting had recently left the position, and therefore there was no Derbyshire County Council attendance at this meeting. In the absence of Derbyshire County Council representation, the Senior Scrutiny Officer provided Members with some of the information that would have been provided, in addition to a Derbyshire County Council Cabinet report from October 2025 on digital connectivity and the work required to bring communities up to the current digital age was also shared with Members.

The Committee discussed the information provided.

The Chair spoke about the information and felt it suggested there were still many parts of the District's digital connectivity that needed attention. The information stated that within the District, 1.95% had no network available of download speeds above 2mbps. Members asked for a breakdown of where these people with no network were.

Members also raised some discrepancy around the couple of areas highlighted with very low connectivity. Several Members raised areas that they were aware of that were areas with low connectivity so the data provided was felt to be questionable.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer explained that she would investigate a breakdown of the 1.95% with no network.

The Committee also requested that the concerns raised at the meeting in terms of digital connectivity were raised with the Cabinet, with a request that they lobby their counterparts at Derbyshire County Council, and ask for reassurance that the new funding streams that had been set up for digital connectivity work were focused on those areas with very low connectivity.

RESOLVED - That the update was noted.

BSC **Cabinet Business**

43/2

5-26

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a digest of Cabinet decisions taken since the last Committee meeting in November 2025. The digest set out key information for each decision.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented Members with the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions for the period up to 15 February 2026.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

BSC **Policy Development**

44/2

5-26

The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that there were no major policies for Members to consider. She added that an update on the Growth

Strategy would be coming soon.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

BSC **Work Programme**

45/2

5-26

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented the draft Work Programme 2025/26 for the Committee to consider.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer stated that the Growth Strategy was in the Work Programme for the 11 May 2026 meeting.

There was discussion around the EMCCA Growth Plan and where the Council fits into it. There was also discussion around future topics based around what we can do to support out businesses, such as EMCCA and business rates.

The Committee noted the Programme for the remainder of the year.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme 2025/26 be approved.

BSC **Reflection on the Council Plan**

46/2

5-26

The Chair expressed her views and felt that this had been a positive meeting and a lot of constructive discussion had taken place.

BSC **Additional Urgent Items**

47/2

5-26

None.

BSC **Date of Next Meeting**

48/2

5-26

The next meeting of the Business Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 11 May 2026 at 3.00 pm.