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PUBLIC

To: Members of Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Places

Monday, 12 September 2022

Dear Councillor,

Please attend a meeting of the **Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Places** to be held at **2.00 pm** on **Wednesday, 21 September 2022** in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Matlock, the agenda for which is set out below.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Helen E. Barrington'.

Helen Barrington
Director of Legal and Democratic Services

AGENDA

PART I - NON-EXEMPT ITEMS

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of interest (if any)
3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2022 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Public Questions (30 minute maximum in total) (Pages 7 - 8)

(Questions may be submitted to be answered by the Scrutiny Committee,

or Council officers who are attending the meeting as witnesses, on any item that is within the scope of the Committee. Please see the procedure for the submission of questions at the end of this agenda)

5. Countryside Service Review (Pages 9 - 32)
6. Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership (Pages 33 - 40)
7. Derbyshire Highways - update
8. Work Programme 2022-23 (Pages 41 - 46)

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PLACES** held on Wednesday, 27 July 2022 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Matlock.

PRESENT

Councillor S Bull (in the Chair)

Councillors J Siddle, N Gourlay, D Greenhalgh, A Clarke (substitute for D Collins), P Moss (substitute for J Nelson) and D Murphy (substitute for R Redfern).

Also in attendance – Councillors B Bingham and G Kinsella.

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor D Collins, J Nelson, P Niblock and R Redfern.

Officers present: Roz Savage (Improvement and Scrutiny Officer), Michelle Spence and Bryn Walters.

13/22 **COUNCILLOR ALAN GRIFFITHS** The Chairman referred to Councillor Alan Griffiths who had recently passed away. The Committee observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

14/22 **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)**

There were no declarations of interest.

15/22 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

16/22 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (30 MINUTE MAXIMUM IN TOTAL)**

There were no public questions.

17/22 **MINERALS LOCAL PLAN PURPOSE AND KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM THE PROPOSED DRAFT DERBYSHIRE AND DERBY MINERALS LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

Michelle Spence and Bryn Walters from the Council's Development Plans Team, attended the meeting to inform the Committee of the purpose of the Minerals Local Plan and to provide an update on the

latest position in relation to representation received on the recent public consultation on the Proposed Draft Minerals Local Plan.

Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council were working together to prepare a new joint Minerals Local Plan which would cover the period to 2038. It would be called the Derbyshire and Derby Minerals Local Plan and the plan area would cover the geographical County of Derbyshire, excluding that part which falls within the Peak District National Park.

Derbyshire was one of the country's leading producers of minerals with limestone being the most important mineral. The working of Derbyshire's mineral resources brought significant benefits to both the local and national economy. Consequently, planning decisions about opening new sites or expanding existing sites were more apparent for Derbyshire's communities more than elsewhere in the country.

The Minerals Local Plan would set out priorities for delivering sustainable minerals development through its vision and strategic objectives. It will include a framework of strategic policies aimed at addressing those priorities, together with non-strategic development management policies aimed at avoiding, minimising and mitigating the adverse impacts of minerals development. The strategic policies will set out an overall strategy for the pattern and scale of mineral development and make provision for the supply of minerals (including cross-boundary supplies) over the Plan period. Where appropriate, they will identify specific sites for working.

The preparation of a local plan was a lengthy process and typically involved several stages of public engagement and consultation, both informal and formal and culminating in the submission of the plan to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for Examination in Public.

The two councils were currently at the informal 'preparation' stage of plan making and several rounds of extensive public consultation and engagement had already been undertaken in developing the Plan to its current stage. All the comments received in response to the previous consultations had been taken into account and used to inform the Plan's preparation and the development of the most recent Draft Proposed Minerals Local Plan consultation document.

The Derbyshire and Derby Development Plans Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), consisting of members from both councils,

provided a key co-ordinating role in steering the preparation of the Plan and the public consultations. The Committee had been involved in advising on all the previous public consultations and had been instrumental in shaping and developing the Draft Proposed Minerals Local Plan for public consultation. The consultation period had run for just over 8 weeks from 2 March 2022 to 29 April 2022.

All the representations received had now been logged, acknowledged and recorded. Some 463 individuals and organisations had responded to the consultation, making a total of 3,560 separate representations. The representors included national Government bodies and agencies, local authorities, mineral operators and other businesses, national and local interest groups, County Councillors, parish/town councils and individual members of the public. Approximately 70% of representors had submitted the same letter of objection mainly relating to climate change and fossil fuel issues accounting for 2,978 of the total representations. Members asked if the majority of representations that had been received were from Derbyshire residents. The officers agreed to look into this.

A report highlighting all the representors main objections and supporting comments was being prepared. This report had not yet been finalised and was currently in draft form. However, the draft Report of Publicity and Consultation was appended for information at Appendix 2 to the report as it provided a clear indication of the key issues raised in the representations. It showed that the key themes emerging from the Proposed Draft Plan consultation related to concerns and objections to the policies and text of the Vision and Objectives, Climate Change, Fossil Fuels and Hydrocarbons. More detail on the nature of the representations was set out under the chapter headings.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Michelle Spence and Bryn Walters for their informative presentation and looked forward to an update at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes:

- a) The purpose of the Minerals Local Plan; and
- b) The update on the latest position in relation to representations received on the recent public consultation on the Derbyshire and Derby Proposed Draft Minerals Local Plan.

UPDATE - (VERBAL REPORT)

The Chairman provided feedback to the Committee about the activities of the Highways Future Model Scrutiny Working Group.

To date, the Working Group had met twice and Neil Bennett, the Assistant Director for Highways Commissioning, had facilitated these meetings with officers from his team. The meetings had led to very productive discussions about how to better engage and communicate with Members and the general public about Derbyshire Highways.

A small group of Members from this committee had been involved, and other Members were encouraged to join in this work. It was an opportunity to add value and make improvements in how information relating to Highways Asset Management was understood and communicated.

As local members, a high volume of correspondence and comments about highways defects and maintenance was received. Therefore, it was important that Members devoted time to improving systems to ensure that the correct information was provided to the relevant people, in a timely manner.

So far in the working group meetings Members had:

- Shared the challenges they currently experienced in relation to the communication of highways information.
- Shared frequently asked questions from members of the public.
- Identified issues and topics where it would be helpful to have easily accessible explanations for Members to share with their constituents, or that could be accessed directly by the public.
- Put forward ideas about how information might be better communicated.

For example, the Group had reviewed and commented on infographics that concisely explained concepts and reduced the need for Members and residents to read large volumes of text.

- The Group had also talked about whether it would be helpful for the Highways Team to hold a series of surgeries for elected Members so that information could be shared during face-to-face conversations.

The in-person meetings had been working well, however the intention was to continue with the option of Members also being able to join online.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the update on the work carried out by the

Working Group and the request for more Members to take part.

19/22 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme for 2022-23 was circulated for review and members were asked to suggest any possible agenda items for the remainder of the year.

It was noted that the Bus Improvement Strategy item had moved to the September meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the 2022-23 work programme.

The meeting finished at 3.25 pm

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Procedure for Public Questions at Improvement and Scrutiny Committee meetings

Members of the public who are on the Derbyshire County Council register of electors, or are Derbyshire County Council tax payers or non-domestic tax payers, may ask questions of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committees, or witnesses who are attending the meeting of the Committee. The maximum period of time for questions by the public at a Committee meeting shall be 30 minutes in total.

Order of Questions

Questions will be asked in the order they were received in accordance with the Notice of Questions requirements, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

Notice of Questions

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by email to the Director of Legal Services no later than 12noon three working days before the Committee meeting (i.e. 12 noon on a Wednesday when the Committee meets on the following Monday). The notice must give the name and address of the questioner and the name of the person to whom the question is to be put.

Questions may be emailed to democratic.services@derbyshire.gov.uk

Number of Questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question, and no more than one such question may be asked on behalf of one organisation about a single topic.

Scope of Questions

The Director of Legal Services may reject a question if it:

- Exceeds 200 words in length;
- is not about a matter for which the Committee has a responsibility, or does not affect Derbyshire;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Committee in the past six months; or
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

Submitting Questions at the Meeting

Questions received by the deadline (see **Notice of Question** section above) will be shared with the respondent with the request for a written response to be provided by 5pm on the last working day before the meeting (i.e. 5pm on Friday before the meeting on Monday). A schedule of questions and responses will be produced and made available 30 minutes prior to the meeting (from Democratic Services Officers in the meeting room).

It will not be necessary for the questions and responses to be read out at the meeting, however, the Chairman will refer to the questions and responses and invite each questioner to put forward a supplementary question.

Supplementary Question

Anyone who has put a question to the meeting may also put one supplementary question without notice to the person who has replied to his/her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds detailed in the **Scope of Questions** section above.

Written Answers

The time allocated for questions by the public at each meeting will be 30 minutes. This period may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman. Any questions not answered at the end of the time allocated for questions by the public will be answered in writing. Any question that cannot be dealt with during public question time because of the non-attendance of the person to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer.



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PLACES

WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Report of the Executive Director - Place

Countryside Service Review

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Places with an overview of the purpose and content of a proposed new Service Business Plan that has been prepared for the Council's Countryside Service.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee is requested to:
 - a) consider the headline information presented on the proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan; and
 - b) provide feedback on the Service Business Plan that can be used to inform the completion of the document for its subsequent approval.

2. Information and Analysis

- 2.1 The Council conducted a fundamental review of the Countryside Service during 2019-20. The outcome of the review was a recommendation to create a Public Service Mutual to whom the Council would transfer the responsibilities and functions of the Countryside Service to. At this time, the primary drivers for change for progressing this arrangement were to evidence service quality and to secure financial savings for the Council via the Public Service Mutual's expected ability to self-fund its operations over the medium to long-term by accessing grant funding and generating profit from traded services.

- 2.2 These requirements were re-examined by the Council in 2020/21, given the importance that Derbyshire's residents and visitors have placed on the Countryside Sites since Covid-19 and the adoption of the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2021 – 2025. These new drivers for change led to the Council identifying that the Countryside Service had a revitalised role in directly delivering its strategic objectives and that the uncertainty caused by Covid-19 presented a significant risk to the commercial deliverability of the Public Service Mutual model.
- 2.3 Therefore, in Autumn 2021, the Council's Cabinet and Corporate Management Team agreed that:
- a) The Countryside Service is a critical part of the Council's offer to residents and visitors, and central to Derbyshire's climate change agenda.
 - b) The Service remains managed within the Council, albeit with the development of strong relationships with partners.
 - c) The Service draws up a new commercially focused business plan to ensure that it continues to meet the Council's needs in the future, with implementation in the next financial year.
- 2.4 Furthermore, it was agreed the new business plan should be developed in such a manner to allow the Council to retain its direction (governance and management) of the Countryside Service but also enable new and innovative improvement and growth initiatives to be secured, for example, through:
- An updated in-house delivery model.
 - A reappraisal of paused investment opportunities.
 - The identification of further invest to save opportunities.
 - A forward vision for a re-modelled in-house Service, which could include the creation of a Local Authority Trading Company or concessionary arrangements for potentially commercial assets.
 - An assessment of the outcomes the Service can reasonably deliver within an agreed financial envelope.
- 2.5 This position was reported to the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Places on 17 November 2021. Subsequently and in accordance with these objectives a new Countryside Service Business Plan has been developed. This report provides an update to the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Places on the scope and intentions of this new Plan.

- 2.6 The proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan establishes the strategic and operational direction for the Council's Countryside Service for the three-year period 2022-23 to 2024-25. The Plan reflects the high status that the Council has placed on addressing climate change, nature recovery, and using natural capital to stimulate inclusive social and economic growth for Derbyshire.
- 2.7 These circumstances offer a unique opportunity for the Countryside Service to invigorate its priorities, functions, and outcomes to make a step-change in its contributions to delivering the Council's strategic agenda. Success for the Service will depend not only on its nature conservation credentials but also its ability to forge new commercial partnerships, design alternative service models, secure efficiency savings and new funding sources, ensure quality standards, and co-produce solutions with communities.
- 2.8 The proposed new Service Business Plan is designed to enable these circumstances through the delivery of six policies:
- a) Providing expert, tailored, and value for money stewardship to the Countryside Sites.
 - b) Protecting, restoring, and enhancing Countryside Sites to promote natural capital and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
 - c) Designing and operating the Countryside Sites to improve public health and wellbeing.
 - d) Enabling the Countryside Sites to host opportunities to raise educational attainment, secure skills for employment, and initiate exciting career opportunities.
 - e) Creating social value by empowering Derbyshire's communities to lead the development of suitable Countryside Sites.
 - f) Generating economic growth by applying public, private, and social sector commercial enterprise to the remit of the Countryside Service.
- 2.9 A PowerPoint presentation (see Appendix 2) provides headline information from the proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan, as follows:
- The purpose of the Plan, which is to establish the strategic and operational direction for the Countryside Service.
 - An overview of the Countryside Service's portfolio of sites, resources, and responsibilities.
 - An appraisal of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relating to the Countryside Service.
 - The drivers for change that the Countryside Service needs to effectively respond to.

- The policies that the Countryside Service will prioritise (as referenced above) and how these will be delivered.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Relevant Council officers, including all Countryside Service staff, are being consulted on the draft Countryside Service Business Plan.

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 **Do nothing** - This option has been rejected as it will not achieve the objectives for the Countryside Service that the Council set in autumn 2021.

- 4.2 **Create a Public Service Mutual** - This option has been rejected for the reasons explained previously to the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Places and referenced in this report at paragraph 2.2.

5. Implications

- 5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Report to the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Places, Countryside Service Review, dated 17 November 2021.
<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s11081/Review%20of%20Countryside%20Service.pdf>

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.
- 7.2 Appendix 2 – Countryside Service Business Plan (Power Point Presentation).

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- a) Considers the headline information presented on the proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan.
- b) Provides feedback on the Service Business Plan to inform the completion of the document for its subsequent approval.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

- 9.1 To provide relevant information to the Scrutiny Committee to enable their consideration of the headline themes of the proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan.

- 9.3 To seek the Scrutiny Committee's feedback to inform the final drafting of the new Service Business Plan.

Report Author: **Rupert Casey** **Contact details:** **Rupert.casey@derbyshire.gov.uk**

Implications

Financial

- 1.1 The Council's financial contribution to the Countryside Service will be reduced by £0.400m over the period 2022-23 to 2024-15. A key priority within the proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan is to address this shortfall in funding through new income generating opportunities.

Legal

- 2.1 The proposed new Countryside Service Business Plan will support the Council in complying with the biodiversity and nature recovery duties placed on the Council by the Environment Act 2021. Furthermore, new service delivery models and contracts that may result from the Plan's delivery will have legal/commercial implications.

Human Resources

- 3.1 The staffing establishment of the Countryside Service will be reviewed during 2022-23 to ensure it is fit for purpose to deliver the proposed new Service Business Plan.

Information Technology

- 4.1 Information technology is an essential tool in the Countryside Service's stewardship of the Council's Countryside Sites and woodlands and trees.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 None directly relating to this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 Resilient, healthy, and safe communities.
- 6.2 High performing, value for money and resident focused services.
- 6.3 Effective early help for individuals and communities.
- 6.4 A prosperous and green Derbyshire.

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental, Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 None directly relating to this report.

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Derbyshire County Council Countryside Service

Service Business Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25 (draft)

Improvement and Scrutiny Committee

21 September 2022

Introduction

This Service Business Plan establishes the strategic and operational direction for Derbyshire County Council's Countryside Service over the three-year period 2022/23 to 2024/25.

The Plan reflects the high status that the Council has placed on addressing Climate Change, enhancing biodiversity, and using Natural Capital* to stimulate inclusive social and economic growth for Derbyshire.

These circumstances offer a unique opportunity for the Countryside Service to reinvigorate its priorities, functions, and outcomes to make a step-change in its contributions to delivering the Council's strategic agenda.

Success for the Service will depend not only on its nature conservation credentials but also its ability to forge new commercial partnerships, design alternative service models, secure efficiency savings and new funding sources, ensure quality standards, and co-produce solutions with communities.

Importantly, the Plan's Work Streams will be managed to enable the Council to review and approve their delivery at relevant gateway points.

* The term Natural Capital is defined in Appendix A.

The Countryside Sites

- 130 diverse Countryside Sites with an area of 1,660 hectares (4,100 acres).
- Many former industrial landscapes adjacent to communities.
- Managed by 54.9FTE staff, a cost to the Council of £2.186m pa, and generating an income of £0.932m.
- Provide an extensive network of existing Natural Capital across Derbyshire.
- 53 woodland sites that cover 850 hectares and so account for 51% of the Service's land management area.
- 17 of the Sites provide active and sustainable travel routes between the County's neighbourhoods and connecting large conurbations.
- The sites are popular visitor attractions due to their recreational, landscape, cultural, and heritage credentials.
- 16 are designated as County Wildlife Sites, eight are identified as being Local Nature Reserves, three are Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Eight of the sites have a "Friends Group" that takes a proactive role in their management and upkeep.
- Three sites have current Management Plans that have been prepared and accord with the Green Flag quality mark standard.
- Four reservoirs managed in accordance with the Reservoirs Act 1975) and regulated by the Environment Agency.

Service Strengths

- Valued by residents and visitors of Derbyshire – COVID-19 has demonstrated how important green spaces are to communities.
- Officers are highly skilled and qualified and have strong personal motivations to sustain the natural environment.
- Enabling the Council to demonstrate leadership in addressing Climate Change and promoting Natural Capital.
- Fostering strategic and operational partnerships with public, private and community entities.
- Many Countryside Sites are adjacent to Derbyshire's communities.

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Service Opportunities

- Managing, conserving, enhancing, restoring and developing natural capital and ecosystem services
- Optimising the social, economic, and environmental of the Countryside Sites.
- Providing expertise and resources for Derbyshire to adapt to, and mitigate, the impacts of Climate Change.
- Innovative / entrepreneurial new service models; new funding, staffing and partnerships e.g., Public Health and Social Care.
- Development of officers whilst attracting new capacity.
- Encourage and engage with a wider diversity of users and beneficiaries of the Countryside Sites.
- Enabling the improvement of the natural environment via a Derbyshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Service Weaknesses

- Very limited Management Plans in place for the Countryside Sites.
- No quality, accessibility or functionality standards set or monitored for the Countryside Sites.
- Lack of transparency on the type, cost, and quality of grounds maintenance provided by Vertas Derbyshire Limited.
- Officers are facilities management focused, and in providing routine and basic grounds maintenance tasks.
- Very limited proactive community engagement.
- No monitoring of the public use, or satisfaction with, the Countryside Sites.
- Effective promotion and co-ordination of conservation volunteering has been lost.
- Limited encouragement of social or private sector enterprise.

Service Threats

- Large and diverse portfolio of sites to manage that have formal and informal public access – land, water, and structures.
- Reduced revenue budget cost of the Service to the Council of £0.464m by April 2025 (a 35% reduction compared to 2021/22).
- Greater demand from the public, and a wider audience of interest, but limited current officer and funding capacity to co-produce solutions with communities.
- Vulnerability to health and safety risks due to grounds maintenance and capital asset management not being sufficiently effective.
- Loss of unique experience and know-how when officers' leave the Service.
- Workforce development and succession planning not advanced.

The Drivers for Change

Derbyshire

- County Deal for Derbyshire and Derby
- Derbyshire County Council - Council Plan 2021/25
- Derbyshire County Council - Medium-term Financial Strategy
 - £67m savings requirement for 2022/23 to 2026/27
 - Of which £40m has yet to be identified
- Derbyshire County Council - Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 - 2023
- Derbyshire County Council - Climate Change Strategy 2021 - 2025
- Derbyshire County Council – accepted Nature Recovery Notion of Motion (2 February 2022)
- Vision Derbyshire - Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2022)
- Derbyshire Economic Partnership - COVID-19 Economic and Skills Recovery Strategies 2021 - 2025
- Cabinet / CMT decision to prepare a new business plan for the Countryside Service (November 2021)

The Government

- 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) e.g. 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat
- The Environment Act 2021 e.g. Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net Gain
- Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (2020) e.g. nature based job creation
- England Trees Action Plan (2021) e.g. new Woodland Creation Partnerships

Six Policy Statements

- 1) Providing expert, tailored, and value for money stewardship to the Countryside Sites.
- 2) Protecting, restoring and enhancing Countryside Sites to promote Natural Capital and mitigate the impacts of Climate Change.
- 3) Designing and operating the Countryside Sites to improve public health and wellbeing.
- 4) Enabling the Countryside Sites to host opportunities to raise educational attainment, secure skills for employment, and initiate exciting career opportunities.
- 5) Creating social value by empowering Derbyshire's communities to lead the development of suitable Countryside Sites.
- 6) Generating economic growth by applying public, private, and social sector commercial enterprise to the remit of the Countryside Service.



Policy Statement 1: Providing expert, tailored, and value for money stewardship to the Countryside Sites

Policy Goals (objectives)

- A consolidated and multi-functional portfolio of Countryside Sites.
- Enabling inclusive, safe, and public access to good quality and varied green space environments.
- Effective and appropriate conservation and enhancement of Derbyshire's natural and historic environment.
- Securing new and significant social, economic, and environmental value outcomes.
- Allowing the Council to accurately assess the multiple benefits of green infrastructure to inform policy and business investment decisions.
- Demonstrating financial efficiency.



Policy Statement 2: Protecting, restoring and enhancing appropriate Countryside Sites to promote biodiversity and mitigate the impacts of Climate Change

Policy Goals (objectives)

- Securing Net Zero by 2050.
- Reversing the long-term decline of Natural Capital.
- Using ecosystems to mitigate the impacts of Climate Change.
- Enhance and restore delicate, rare, and irreplaceable habitats.

Policy Statement 3: Designing and operating the Countryside Sites to improve public health and wellbeing

Policy Goals (objectives)

- Improved physical and mental wellbeing of Derbyshire's citizens.
- Enhancing the life chances of Derbyshire's most vulnerable children, young people, and adults.
- Improved air quality.
- Alleviating demand on the health and social care system through preventative interventions.
- Demonstrating best practice in making "green" public health and social care activities more resilient and accessible, and of sustained self-use by participants.

Policy Statement 4: Enabling the Countryside Sites to host new opportunities to raise educational attainment, secure skills for employment, and initiate exciting career opportunities

Policy Goals (objectives)

- Improved GCSE attainment grades.
- All people in Derbyshire having opportunities to access good quality employment and lifelong learning.
- Those with learning disability and long-term health conditions can access suitable training and employment.
- Reducing young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET).
- An inspirational careers programme in the green economy, nature and heritage conservation, education, and social care.

Policy Statement 5: Creating social value by empowering Derbyshire's communities to lead the development of suitable Countryside Site

Policy Goals (objectives)

- Create circumstances for productive and collaborative relationships with Derbyshire's citizens and its Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector (the Sector).
- Organising, delivering, and sustaining public services to ensure the success of the Council Plan within an ongoing context of public sector austerity.
- Addressing long-standing inequalities in the county's deprived neighbourhoods.
- Higher levels of service user satisfaction, preventing expensive direct public sector interventions; and, making cost savings to the public purse through greater effectiveness and efficiency.
- Enhancing Derbyshire's democratic culture by enabling the participation of individual citizens and the Sector in making decisions that affect their communities.
- Strengthened influence, capacity, commercial expertise, collaboration, and sustainability of the Sector.



Policy Statement 6: Generating economic growth by applying public, private, and social sector commercial enterprise to the remit of the Countryside Service

Policy Outcomes (deliverables)

- Developing appropriate Countryside Sites as exemplars of Derbyshire's Natural Capital and / or heritage.
- Generating a sustainable, diverse, and complementary community, visitor, business, and natural environment benefits offer to society.
- Attracting local and non-local visitors, with their expenditure on site making a notable contribution to tourist spend in Derbyshire.
- Blending public, private, and social enterprise that co-produces the Countryside Sites future uses, development, funding, and management.
- Harnessing creative approaches and delivering innovative solutions to ensure financial viability that can be replicated and scaled-up.
- Acting as a primary sustainable travel hub for connectivity across the county and encouraging cycling and walking.
- Offering benefits that enhance the rural economy and space for start-up independent business to grow.



Next steps

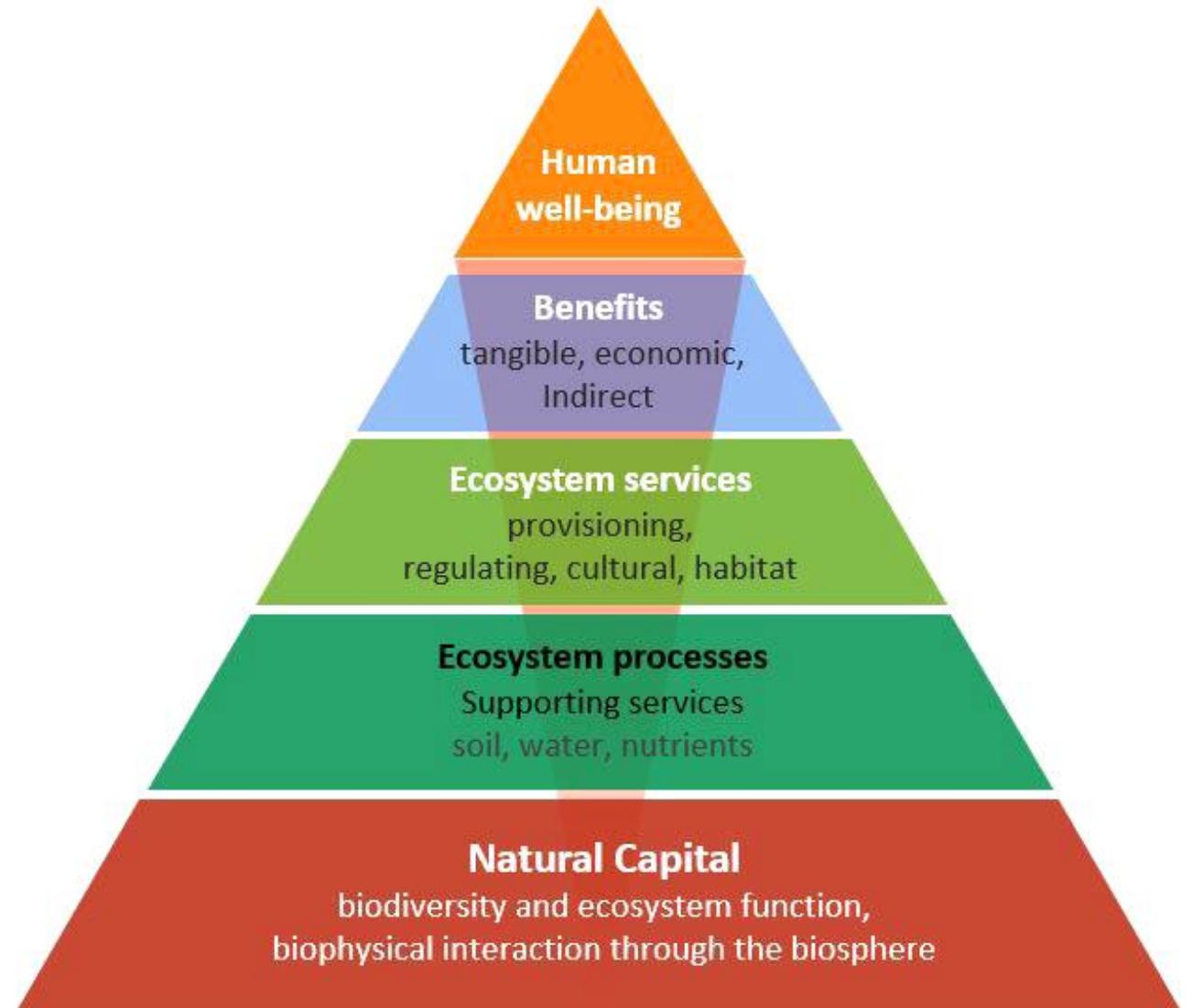
- 1) Consultation on the draft Service Business Plan with:
 - Councillor Carolyn Renwick, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Environment
 - Appropriate Council officers, including the Countryside Service staff
- 2) Feedback used to complete a final draft of the Service Business Plan
- 3) Service Business Plan to be considered by CMT / Cabinet in October 2022 for approval

Appendix A

Natural Capital

Natural capital represents the elements of nature that have value to society, such as forests, fisheries, rivers, biodiversity, land, and minerals. It includes both the living and non-living aspects of ecosystems.

Stocks of natural capital provide flows of environmental or 'ecosystem' services over time. These services, often in combination with other forms of capital (human, produced and social) produce a wide range of benefits to society.



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FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PLACES

WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Report of the Executive Director - Place

Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To report to the Committee on the work undertaken on the Bus Service Improvement Plan and associated Enhanced Partnership.

2. Information and Analysis

2.1 Background

On 15 March 2021, Government published the first National Bus Strategy for England. The main objective of the Strategy was to reverse the long-term decline in bus use nationally, which has been exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It aimed to achieve this by making bus services more frequent, reliable, better coordinated and cheaper. To enable this to happen, Government wanted to see major improvements in a variety of areas including bus priority measures, vehicle emission standards, the provision of service information, simplified ticketing arrangements and the joint marketing of services. The Government had committed to provide £3bn of new transformation funding nationally to help drive forward these improvements.

- 2.2 Under the deregulated model of bus provision, which had been in place since the 1986, most services are provided on a commercial basis. This means it is the bus companies themselves who decide the route of the service, the timetable, fares, types of vehicles used, etc, based on what

they think makes the best commercial proposition. It is only when bus companies decide that a route is not commercially viable that Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) can become involved by specifying and funding additional services to fill gaps in commercial provision. Prior to the pandemic, approximately 80% of bus passenger journeys in Derbyshire were made on commercially operated services, with the remaining 20% of journeys taken on routes directly funded by the Council.

- 2.3 To access the funding in the National Strategy, all LTAs in England, such as Derbyshire County Council, had to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and submit to Government as their formal response by the end of October 2021. They also needed to agree to play a larger role than they had previously done in the way bus services operated in their area by entering into either an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with their operators, or to introduce bus franchising loosely based on the London model (that is, Transport for London (TfL) oversee all fares, routes and timetables and competitive contracts are awarded to operators to run services under the TfL brand).
- 2.4 Derbyshire, like all the other LTAs in England, apart from Greater Manchester, agreed to enter into an EP. The purpose of the EP is to create a formal, collaborative agreement between LTAs and bus operators to deliver bus improvement objectives. As part of an EP, the LTA and operators can jointly agree to introduce a variety of changes, such as setting minimum service standards including the frequency of buses along specific routes, the type of vehicle to be used and the availability of ticket products and payment methods.
- 2.5 A considerable amount of work was undertaken to develop Derbyshire's BSIP during the summer and autumn of 2021, which involved consultation with a variety of stakeholders including members of the public, bus user groups, local businesses, borough and district councils, the Peak District National Park Authority, as well as the bus operators themselves. To oversee this work, an Enhanced Partnership Board was established. This included representatives from the Council, including the Cabinet Member - Highway Assets and Transport and the Executive Director - Place, as well as senior management from six different bus companies, which run services in Derbyshire who were nominated by their fellow operators following a meeting of all the companies who provide services in the county.
- 2.6 The Board was led by an independent Chair, Professor Margaret Bell, who is a prominent academic on transport matters and former resident of Derbyshire. From this process, a set of six overarching objectives for

bus provision in Derbyshire were developed. These are that bus travel should be:

- The first-choice mode for existing and new customers for most journeys across Derbyshire.
- Available for more journeys and which grows to meet customer needs.
- Affordable to use.
- Environmentally sustainable.
- Welcoming and friendly for existing and new passengers.
- A connected network that helps reduce social isolation.

2.7 The BSIP, submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) at the end of October 2021, set out a series of 38 ambitious measures to achieve the above objectives and improve bus travel across Derbyshire. These included a mix of capital infrastructure improvements, such as traffic signal and road changes to improve bus reliability, and a network of mobility hubs to improve connectivity between different bus services and to other forms of transport. Other measures involved enhancements to bus services, such as new routes and more Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), as well as better value ticketing options.

2.8 In line with DfT guidance, the BSIP programme was designed to be delivered over five years starting in April 2022, with funding of £104.9m being sought from Government in addition to local contributions from the Council and other stakeholders. A copy of the full BSIP can be seen on the Council's public transport website at [Derbyshire BSIP – Final 29-10-21.pdf \(derbysbus.info\)](#)

2.9 Following the submission of the BSIP to Government, work to formally agree the terms of the EP began. Consultation on this was undertaken with bus operators and other stakeholders in January 2022, in line with DfT guidance. Taking account of comments received in this process, a revised version of the EP Plan and EP Scheme (both legally required documents), were produced and subsequently approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 10 March 2022 (Minute No. 66/22 refers). This formally "Made" the EP between the Council and bus operators, which began from 31 March 2022. Copies of the EP Plan and EP Scheme can be seen on the Council's public transport website at [Derbyshire EPP 29.03.22 - final.pdf \(derbysbus.info\)](#) and [Derbyshire EPS 29.03.22 - final.pdf \(derbysbus.info\)](#)

2.10 There was initially very little feedback from the DfT on the contents of the Council's submitted BSIP, however, in February 2022, Derbyshire was mentioned in the Government's "Levelling Up" White Paper as an area

which would receive funding to improve bus services. Following this, a series of detailed discussions took place with the DfT and other Government officials on which elements of the BSIP were likely to be funded. During this process, it became clear that the DfT was scaling back the funding being made available nationally for BSIPs. This was due to the DfT having to allocate some of the proposed funding in the Bus Strategy to continue to provide emergency financial support to bus companies over a longer period of time than originally envisaged.

- 2.11 In April 2022, DfT made an announcement setting out the funding that would be available nationally to LTAs for BSIPs for the next three financial years, up until March 2025 (this was a shortening of the original timescales from five years). Of the 70 LTAs who submitted BSIPs, only 31 received indicative allocations with neighbouring authorities' areas, such as Cheshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and South Yorkshire, receiving nothing. Derbyshire was given an initial allocation of £47m which was the second largest amount awarded to a non-urban LTA.
- 2.12 Further discussions continued with the DfT in response to a number of specific questions it raised about the proposals. As a result of this, in August 2022, the DfT provided a detailed breakdown of the measures it would fund which are shown in the table 1 below and confirmed the funding settlement as £47,003,438. It is anticipated the first annual tranche of this money will be released to the Council in the near future.
- 2.13 At its meeting of 28 July 2022, Cabinet approved to delegate decisions to alter and vary the EP Plan and the EP Scheme (known as "Bespoke Variation Arrangements") to align with the BSIP funding in anticipation of final settlement. In addition, Cabinet approved delegated authority to the Executive Director – Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Highways Assets and Transport, to accept the final funding settlement from the DfT.

Table 1 Allocated BSIP funding until 2024-25

Measures	Capital funding	Revenue Funding
Bus priority measures including traffic signal changes, improvements to the highway to remove pinch points and roadworks management.	£19.27m	£0.79m
Better value ticketing including promotional ticketing offers and reduced values for key groups.	0	£7.05m

Better bus services including transport hubs, improved timetables on existing services and new services to key locations, more DRT services. Also includes improvements to information and marketing.	£3.65m	£16.24m
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3. Consultation

3.1 Detailed consultation took place during the development of the BSIP and EP Plan and EP Scheme. The EP Board continues to meet on a two weekly basis to agree the implementation process for the BSIP and other issues. A wider BSIP Stakeholder Group has also been established which includes passenger users' groups, other transport operators, the borough and district councils and business organisations. This group is chaired by Scott Knowles, the Chief Executive of the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce.

4. Alternative Options Considered

4.1 **Not to produce a BSIP and form an EP.** The Government made it clear in the National Bus Strategy that only those LTAs that took part in the process would receive funding for bus related activities. Failure to produce a BSIP and EP would also impact the Council's ability to get funding from the DfT for other non-bus transport project. This option was therefore not considered appropriate.

4.2 **To introduce bus franchising rather than an EP.** Franchising would bring with it considerable financial risks for the Council as it would be responsible for meeting the overall cost of providing all the bus services in Derbyshire not covered by passenger fares and other income. Currently, estimating this cost would be very difficult due to a number of factors including the impact of the pandemic on bus passenger numbers and fares revenue over the last 2 ½ years and the large increase in operating costs caused by the rise in fuel prices and staff salaries. In addition, the Council does not have the automatic right to introduce franchising as, under the existing legislation, only Mayoral Combined Authorities have these powers. To gain this authority from the Secretary of State for Transport, and start the process by the end of March 2022, was not considered a feasible option. Nationally, only Greater Manchester, which had already started the process to introduce franchising prior to the publication of the National Bus Strategy, has chosen to take this approach.

5. Implications

- 5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Copies of the BSIP and EP plan and scheme can be seen on the Councils website [Derbyshire BSIP – Final 29-10-21.pdf \(derbysbus.info\)](#) [Derbyshire EPP 29.03.22 - final.pdf \(derbysbus.info\)](#) and [Derbyshire EPS 29.03.22 - final.pdf \(derbysbus.info\)](#)

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- a) Notes the work undertaken on the Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme.
- b) Notes the funding which been allocated to the Council as part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan process.

9. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 9.1 A considerable amount of work was required to produce the Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme within the challenging timetable set out by the Department for Transport.
- 9.2 Derbyshire has received the second highest level of funding allocated across England for a non-urban Local Transport Authority as part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan process. This shows the measures proposed in the Bus Service Improvement Plan have been well received by the Department for Transport.

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Implications

Financial

- 1.1 Derbyshire has been awarded £47m over 3 years through the BSIP process. Of this £22.92m is capital funding to be spent on physical infrastructure and £24.08m is revenue funding for measures such as better value ticketing and improved bus services.
- 1.2 The Council has a total of around £35m committed revenue expenditure per annum across all transport services, such as statutory Home to School (HTS), Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), and Adult Social Care Transport. This also includes around £10m of concessionary fare payments which is a statutory duty and £4m for local supported bus services. As part of the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme, the Council has committed to continue to provide this funding. In 2022-23, the Council is also committing £2.2m from its capital programme on public transport infrastructure schemes.
- 1.3 The Government has recently announced that extra Covid bus service recovery grant funding for commercial services will be made available when the current funding arrangement ends in September 2022. This will cover the period from October 2022 to March 2023, however, at the moment it is unclear what level of funding will be made available to the different operators. Regular ongoing discussions are taking place between the Council and the operators about the sustainability of the various commercial routes and work is in hand to limit the impacts of any detrimental service changes.

Legal

- 2.1 Section 63(1) of the Transport Act 1985 places a duty on Derbyshire Council to secure the provision of '*such passenger transport services as the Council considers appropriate to meet any public transport requirement within Derbyshire which would not, in its view, be met, apart from any action taken by them for that purpose*'.
- 2.2 As part of the Strategy, the Government is proposing to issue further guidance to expand the definition of this duty to include services which are "socially or economically necessary".

Human Resources

- 3.1 To support the development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and EP extra staffing resources from external consultancies have been employed using funding providing by the DfT. The implementation of the various measures in the BSIP will be overseen by a Programme Manager with various Project Managers taking the lead on the many work streams. Work is also under way to recruit permanent staff to fill some vacancies within the Public Transport Team and provide the extra capacity required to implement the BSIP as part of a wider restructure of the team.

Information Technology

- 4.1 There are no direct information technology implications to this report.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Bus services are particularly important to a variety of disadvantaged groups, such as young people, older people, women, and those from economically deprived communities, all of which make a higher proportion of journeys by bus than the population as a whole. The introduction of an EP and the measures associated with the BSIP will not only enhance the quality of bus services available but will support the Council's wider 'levelling up' agenda across all communities and ambitions for driving 'good growth'. It will particularly improve the opportunity for these people to access a variety of key opportunities such as education, employment and health care provision.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 This proposal is helping deliver the following Council Plan priorities: Resilient, Healthy and Safe Communities; High Performing, Value for Money and Resident-Focused Services; A Prosperous and Green Derbyshire. Specifically, creation of an EP and the associated BSIP will also enable the delivery of Place Directorate priorities around sustainable transport and travel.

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental, Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

- 7.1 The following issues have also been considered: environmental sustainability and property.



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PLACES

WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Report of the Director - Legal and Democratic Services

Work Programme 2022/23

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To review the Committee's work programme and invite committee members to suggest possible agenda items for the remainder of the municipal year 2022-23.

2. Information and Analysis

- 2.1 It is considered good practice that each Scrutiny Committee develops and agrees an annual work programme. The identification of relevant topics and their allocation to a specific meeting date, focuses the work of the Committee and promotes transparency.
- 2.2 Scrutiny work programmes are best viewed as flexible documents. The timescales are indicative of when each issue will be considered by the Committee. Throughout the year timings may change and new issues may emerge. For example, new items may be identified from the Council's Forward Plan.
- 2.3 The work programme for 2022/23 is given at Appendix two and Members are invited to propose additional items to be considered for inclusion.
- 2.4 When identifying issues for the work programme Members are advised to consider:

- Whether the issue falls within the remit of the Committee
- How the issue aligns with the Council Plan priorities
- Whether the issue is in the public interest
- If there has been a change to National Policy and how this will affect people in Derbyshire
- If there are any performance, financial or safety concerns about a particular service or function
- How consideration by the Scrutiny Committee will add value.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Scrutiny work programmes are developed in consultation with Committee members. They are also informed by discussions with Executive Directors, who offer guidance about the timing of the Committee's involvement, to ensure that scrutiny work coincides with the availability of performance data, specific milestones, and appropriate stages of policy development.

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The option of not having a work programme was rejected as it is considered important that topics are allocated to specific meeting dates in order to focus the work of the Committee and promote transparency.

5. Implications

- 5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 None

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications
- 7.2 Appendix 2 –Work Programme 2022/23

8. Recommendation(s)

That the Committee:

a) Notes the 2022/23 work programme and considers any proposed revisions.

9. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

9.1 To focus the work of the Committee and promote transparency.

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Implications

Financial

1.1 None Identified for this report

Legal

2.1 None Identified for this report

Human Resources

3.1 None Identified for this report

Information Technology

4.1 None Identified for this report

Equalities Impact

5.1 None Identified for this report

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

6.1 Resilient, healthy and safe communities.

6.2 High performing, value for money and resident focused services.

6.3 Effective early help for individuals and communities.

6.4 A prosperous and Green Derbyshire

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental, Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 None Identified for this report

Places I & S Committee
2022/23 Work Programme

Wednesday 16 November 2022			
Topic	Lead Officers	Purpose/ Key Lines of Enquiry	Portfolio Holder
Derbyshire Library Service	Joe Battye Michelle Parker	To consider progress made against the Public Library Strategy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library Service offer • Mobile Library Service offer • The number of libraries transferred to community management • Customer satisfaction (as measured by the customer satisfaction indicator implemented across all libraries with effect from April 2022). 	Cllr Barry Lewis
Thriving Communities	Carol Cammiss Sarah Eaton Becky Lomas	What is the future direction of travel for this programme? How are the lessons learned being integrated into the design and delivery of services on a broader scale?	Cllr Hart
Wednesday 1 March 2023			
Topic	Lead Officers	Purpose/ Key Lines of Enquiry	Portfolio Holder
Minerals Local Plan	David Arnold Michelle Spence Carol Barnett	Pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Minerals Local Plan. This will take place after the draft plan has been considered by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) (Note Members of the Climate Change Scrutiny Committee will be invited to attend for this item)	Cllr Renwick
Flood Risk Management	Richard Ward	How well is the Council facilitating community flood resilience?	Cllr Kewal Athwal

		What lessons have been learned from flooding events and the Councils response to them over the past 12 months? What gaps (if any) are there in service provision?	
World Heritage Site	Adam Lathbury	What are the current issues and opportunities facing the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site? .	Cllr Barry Lewis
Wednesday 17 May 2023			
Topic	Lead Officers	Purpose/ Key Lines of Enquiry	Portfolio Holder
Integrated Rail Plan	Chris Hegarty	What is the Council's role in the delivery of the IRP? What are the implications of the IRP on Derbyshire – on passengers and the wider socioeconomic impacts on Derbyshire residents and businesses?	Cllr Renwick
Community Safety	Christine Flinton	As part of their Crime and Disorder role the Committee wish to scrutinise the delivery and performance outcomes of crime and disorder strategies across the county. What is the Councils role and approach in addressing community safety?	Cllr Hart

Note: The Committee is interested in the new Council wide arrangements for voluntary & community sector grants and would like to be kept informed of the timing of significant developments for possible inclusion in the work programme.