

MINUTES of the meeting of the **DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**
held on 17 June 2020 at County Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Councillor T Ainsworth (In the Chair)

Councillors D Allen, R Ashton, K S Athwal, J Atkin, N Atkin, Mrs E Atkins, S A Bambrick, N Barker, B Bingham, Ms S L Blank, J Boulton, S Brittain, S Bull, Mrs S Burfoot, K Buttery, Mrs D W E Charles, Mrs L M Chilton, J A Coyle, A Dale, Mrs C Dale, J E Dixon, Mrs H Elliott, R Flatley, M Ford, Mrs A Foster, J A Frudd, R George, K Gillott, A Griffiths, Mrs L Grooby, Mrs C A Hart, G Hickton, R Iliffe, Mrs J M Innes, T A Kemp, T King, B Lewis, W Major, P Makin, S Marshall-Clarke, D Mc Gregor, R Mihaly, C R Moesby, P Murray, G Musson, R A Parkinson, Mrs J E Patten, J Perkins, Mrs I Ratcliffe, B Ridgway, C Short, P J Smith, S A Spencer, A Stevenson, S Swann, D H Taylor, Mrs J A Twigg, M Wall, Ms A Western, G Wharmby, Mrs J Wharmby, B Woods and B Wright.

28/20 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** There were no apologies for absence.

29/20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** There were no declarations of interest.

30/20 **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING** On the motion of Councillor B Lewis, duly seconded,

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

31/20 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN** On the motion of Councillor B Lewis, duly seconded,

RESOLVED that Councillor T Ainsworth be appointed Chairman of the County Council for 2020-21.

Councillor T Ainsworth (In the Chair)

32/20 **APPOINTMENT OF CIVIC CHAIRMAN** On the motion of Councillor J Atkin, duly seconded,

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs J A Twigg be appointed Civic Chairman of the County Council for 2020-21.

33/20 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CIVIC CHAIRMAN** On the motion of Councillor Mrs C A Hart, duly seconded,

RESOLVED that Councillor R A Parkinson be appointed Vice-Civic Chairman of the County Council for 2020-21.

34/20 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS** The following announcements were made:-

(a) The Chairman welcomed Councillor Ruth George to her first meeting of the Council following her election to the Whaley Bridge Division.

(b) The Chairman invited members of the Council to observe a two minute silence in memory of those who had passed away as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and also in memory of George Floyd and in support of the Black Lives Matter campaign. Two minutes silence was observed.

35/20 **REPORT ON UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION AND AMENDMENTS TO THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS RESULTING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE ASSOCIATED EMERGENCY LEGISLATION** The Director of legal Services and Monitoring Officer informed Council of updates to the Constitution and amendments to the arrangements for meetings required as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated emergency legislation.

During the current pandemic and since the introduction of the lockdown arrangements, new legislation had been implemented in respect of the Council's governance arrangements, duties and obligations regarding decision-making and meeting arrangements. A number of these had resulted in the requirement for changes to be made to the Constitution on an emergency basis.

As a result of the lockdown arrangements and the ban on public gatherings, a number of Council meetings, including the Annual General Meeting had to be cancelled or postponed. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Meetings) Regulations 2020 came into force on 4 April. The Regulations provided that a local authority could hold meetings on such days and at such times that they may determine and enabled local authorities to move, cancel or alter the frequency of meetings, including the Annual General Meeting without further notice. It also dis-applied constraints and

timeframes specifying when meetings must be held, such as the Annual General Meeting.

The Regulations provided the ability for Elected Members to attend meetings remotely provided that they were able to hear and be heard, and where possible, to see and be seen by the other Members in attendance (either in person or remotely) and by any members of the public who were entitled to attend. They also clarified that any reference to being “present” at a meeting includes remote access.

Public participation at meetings was required to continue and this must be facilitated remotely. Remote access was clarified as meaning participation by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcast and live interactive streaming.

To provide for continued public participation, it was intended that the procedure for public questions be amended for occasions where meetings take place remotely so that questions would continue to be submitted in writing in accordance with the Constitution, but would be presented at the meeting by the Chair. Supplementary questions would be asked in writing after the meeting and would be responded to in writing, with the question and response being published on the Council’s website.

The Regulations enabled it to be sufficient for public notice of meetings to be published on the website only, rather than also requiring a notice to be posted at the Council offices. Similarly, it was sufficient to publish documents which were required to be “open to inspection” by the public on the Council website, rather than being required to provide a hard copy.

Consequently, the Regulations also provided local authorities with the ability to make or change the Standing Orders relating to the arrangements for meetings within their Constitution to facilitate voting, member and public access to documents by remote means, as well as remote access of the public and press to meetings to enable the Regulations to be effected.

Therefore, it was proposed that the arrangements for meetings be amended in accordance with the provisions of the new Regulations as described above, and that the Procedure Rules for all meetings within the Constitution be amended to reflect these provisions and the revised arrangements.

In addition, the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020 came into force on 26 March 2020. These provided the power for relevant and authorised persons to enforce business

closures and restrictions and issue fixed penalty notices in the event of failure to comply. The Secretary of State had issued notice that officers designated by Local Authorities were to be relevant and authorised persons for the purposes of the legislation regarding enforcement.

Therefore, in accordance with delegation 18 of the Delegations to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services of the Councils' Scheme of Delegations at Appendix 1 of the Constitution, namely the power to undertake any revisions or amendments to the Constitution required as a consequence of amendments or variations to legislation, or the implementation of new legislation, the Director of Legal Services agreed to the new Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020 being added to the list of legislation specified at delegation 1 of the Delegations to the Director – Community Services with immediate effect to enable enforcement and administrative duties under the new regulations to be undertaken by Trading Standards staff.

On the motion of Councillor B Lewis, duly seconded;

RESOLVED to (1) note and approve the amendments to the arrangements to meetings to enable remote participation at meetings;

(2) approve the necessary updates to the Procedure Rules in Constitution to reflect the amendments to the arrangements for meetings; and

(3) note and approve the amendment to the list of legislation within the Council's Scheme of Delegations to the Director – Community Services to enable enforcement and administrative duties under the new regulations to be undertaken by Trading Standards staff.

36/20 APPROVAL OF THE SCHEDULE OF APPOINTMENTS

Cabinet appointments and portfolio responsibilities were determined by the Leader of the Council and were presented to the Council for information. Details were attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The allocation of seats on Committees to political groups was determined in accordance with the principles of political balance and nominations to seats on Committees was determined by the political groups. Attached at Appendix 2 to the report was the schedule of appointments for 2020-21 to committees. Proposed appointments to outside bodies were detailed at Appendix 3 to the report.

On the motion of Councillor B Lewis, duly seconded;

RESOLVED to (1) note the Leader's appointments to Cabinet and the portfolio responsibilities;

(2) note the appointments to Committees and Sub-Committees; and

(3) approve the appointments to serve on outside bodies.

37/20 **REPORT OF THE LEADER** Councillor Lewis passed on his congratulations to the Civic Chairman, Councillor Twigg, and Vice-Civic Chairman Councillor Parkinson on their new roles and he hoped they would be able to fulfil them more in the community soon.

There had, as the Chairman had already indicated, been a lot going on since the last Council meeting on 5 February. There had been a seismic shift in the way we now functioned as a society due to the global coronavirus pandemic. Its impact had been widely felt right across Derbyshire and by its residents, its businesses and, of course, by the Council itself. We were still very much in its grip and the way we were meeting today highlighted how we have had to adapt and change our working practices.

Coronavirus was a faraway worry when it started to come to public attention back in late December 2019 and few could have predicted just how much this virus would change the world. In Derbyshire, we first discussed it at a Cabinet and Corporate Management Team meeting on 12 January and it was added as a standing item for our next one on the 29 January. Councillor Lewis was thankful that colleagues took this approach, because it was critical for our preparedness in the coming weeks and months. No one would have failed to notice just how quickly councils swung into action to support communities, reconfigure services and even provide whole new services in a matter of days.

As the Chairman has already said, the journey for us as a local authority over the past year had been a rocky one. Moorland fires had occurred earlier last year, and indeed we have seen more this year thanks to the unprecedented dry and sunny weather this spring, combined that with the irresponsible actions of a few people lighting barbeques during the lockdown. We had the Whaley Bridge dam incident last August and the devastating floods of last November and the damaging storms that we saw earlier this year. Derbyshire then saw its first case of Covid-19 in the East Midlands in February, so preparedness for us in Derbyshire had become second nature.

Since then the prospect of some form of lockdown was feeling more of an inevitability and, of course, then the announcement came on

the 23 March from the Prime Minister that draconian restrictions were required to contain the coronavirus pandemic in the UK. In the following days, the Council had to mobilise and equip for new ways of working and huge amounts of thanks go to our IT Teams in particular, for moving so swiftly and enabling us all to work in the way that we were now working.

Government has moved in an unprecedented way as well, pumping an initial £330bn into providing relief and grants and creating an unprecedented scheme for furloughing staff and since then adding more support for businesses in the form of Business Interruption loans and then recent discretionary grants. With Government backing, the NHS moved at a pace in an astonishing way building the new Nightingale Hospitals and radically creating capacity.

Also, £3.2bn had been provided to local authorities to meet Covid costs; £2bn for cycling and walking schemes; £250m for active travel schemes to help unlock town centres, something that we had been working hard on recently. The Council had got on with the work of creating the Covid-19 Community Response Unit (CRU) days before Government announced that we even needed these hubs to deal with vulnerable and shielded residents in our communities. The Council launched a £1m fund to provide relief to residents, businesses and the self-employed and donated £100k to Foundation Derbyshire to ensure food banks in Derbyshire had the resources they needed to meet the crisis. With their match funding we made a real and immediate impact, plus we put in additional resources to FairShare and direct support to Derbyshire food banks totalling another £53k. All of this was in-train by the time the lockdown button was pressed.

In seven days, the CRU, a whole new county-wide service, was launched. This saw us working initially with 280 organisations, including District and Borough Councils, CVS organisations and businesses. Warehouse space was procured and we redeployed and trained countless people such as librarians from closed libraries into new roles. We dealt with thousands of enquiries and ensured thousands of vulnerable people had access to help. Hundreds of food parcels, prescriptions and other necessities were delivered to support shielded individuals across Derbyshire. Where possible we safeguarded jobs and businesses whose immediate situation looked precarious by utilising their services as part of the response effort. This was an unprecedented response by the County Council involving rapid partnership working on a scale never seen before, enhanced by the work we already had in-train as part of the Vision Derbyshire approach.

The shielded list for Derbyshire currently stood at nearly 31,000 residents. These were people who were clinically determined to be at

higher risk of complications from Covid-19. There were almost 11,000 social care clients who were not on the shielding list but would be considered vulnerable, along with other groups in Derbyshire, who could be considered vulnerable around broader health inequalities. These factors correlate with low income households and people working in higher risk occupations which were low paid and also broader healthcare risk factors - a cohort that required the annual flu jab, for example. If included as a basis for determining vulnerability then that number would be over 200,000 residents.

The latest figures on the work of the CRU, gives a flavour of the on-going work. As at last week 3,727 vulnerable people had been registered for support. 1,073 individuals across Derbyshire had volunteered. 325 organisations had volunteered or were involved in the effort to support residents. Last week there were 270 calls, 103 new people registered and 188 food boxes were delivered, plus 40 requests for people wanting help around social isolation. As of last week our household waste recycling centres, which reopened on the 18 May, had seen more than 60,000 vehicles pass through them.

As for our libraries, which closed their doors back in March, more than 1,100 people had registered for the first time during lockdown accessing e-books, magazines and other online materials.

In the first month of lockdown, 10,500 potholes were filled, so our road gangs were out there working hard achieved despite practising social distancing, travelling in two vehicles etc. The overall scale of work since lockdown started had been absolutely enormous.

Councillor Lewis wished to put on record his thanks to the thousands of people in all local authorities in Derbyshire, from Elected Members of any political flavour, to the dedicated officers and staff, some of whom have worked nearly 24/7 to pull all this together and maintain the hard work ever since. The skills, resilience and energy that they have shown had been amazing.

There were many people to thank in the emergency services, again too many to mention, from the Police, the Army, East Midlands Ambulance Service, the Clinical Commissioning Groups, all still very much involved and very much in response mode, albeit a little more relaxed now than it had been.

The local response by the LRF initially led by our Public Health Director, Dean Wallace, continued to lead those efforts and Councillor Lewis thanked all of those in the voluntary, community and independent sectors and in many businesses who had helped, as well as other individuals and volunteers who had come together with us to help

residents in this our bleak hour really for not just our nation but for this County. They all had his sincerest thanks because none of this would have been possible without them.

In the thick of it all there have been many people, a list too numerous to mention all of them, but to highlight just one or two. Dean Wallace, our Director of Public Health, played a critical role in this public health emergency, especially early on, as have all our Executive Directors and Assistant Directors right across the organisation and, of course, Liz Partington and her staff, as ever, had been the glue that holds together the Emergency Planning Department in Derbyshire in a year that he was sure none of them would forget very easily.

The Communications Team had worked remarkably hard with Julie Odams at the helm getting regular briefings out to all our staff, to our councillors, to MPs, as well as being the lynchpin of the LRF communication efforts, managing many difficult issues sensitively and professionally. One key example was creating the Derbyshire Spirit Campaign to bring people together during what had been a very challenging time. Elements of that were around relaxing the restrictions which saw an influx of visitors to the County which created some worries and tensions in some of our communities.

Our excellent and critical support staff, the unsung heroes and heroines had worked largely unseen including in places like our care homes, supporting vulnerable residents in their homes, working at County Hall, which had been nearly empty for many weeks now, from the commissionaires to the cleaners, they have been central to the efforts and key workers that we have been celebrating on those Thursday nights when we all clapped for the NHS, our carers and our key workers. These have been tough times and they all deserve our thanks.

Our commissionaires, for example, lit up the building to mark VE Day and illuminated County Hall in blue on Thursday nights. Tonight they will turn County Hall purple to support the Black Lives Matter Campaign and mark the tragic death of George Floyd in the USA.

There have been many too whose small acts of kindness to their neighbours, their communities had gone mostly unnoticed, but have brightened and cheered the lives of many. These people too deserve our thanks because they have been the glue that holds our communities together, not to mention the many, many people who had supported elderly, vulnerable and shielded residents by doing their shopping and checking they were safe and well.

Finally, Councillor Lewis wished to on record his thanks to the Leader of the Opposition Party, Councillor Paul Smith, with whom he had remained in constant contact, thrice weekly in the early phases of the emergency and we still maintain a weekly Skype call. He has added constructive challenge to all we have done and he has been immensely helpful throughout. It shows that when the chips are down all politicians, and especially local politicians, can work for the benefit of residents and put the knock-about of politics aside. He would continue to work with Councillor Smith while restrictions remain in place to continue that constructive dialogue. It is something that he hoped has changed the dynamics of politics in Derbyshire to one that was less confrontational as the norm to one where we can work together more when it was needed.

Councillor Lewis reported there have been regular and at times daily briefings to councillors and MPs and that he had also chaired a regular meeting with all the MPs cross-Party to ensure we work through and get support on key issues and ensure their constituent concerns were addressed.

One of the early issues we worked through was that of PPE in the various settings we have in Derbyshire, which was a hot national topic for a while. It was pleasing to say that our Enterprising Council approach since 2017, which overhauled how we do procurement in Derbyshire, alongside the hard work of the LRF, has meant that our PPE issues haven't been perhaps as acute as those in other local authority areas. That is not to say we were, or indeed are immune from the issues and won't have pressure points, but we have been better able to prepare and to ensure that we have stocks for our 23 care homes and Derbyshire home carers and support other providers where possible ensuring good mutual aid.

It meant too that we are more responsive to opportunities to procure our own stocks alongside those of the LRF's preparedness efforts. Generally in Derbyshire, thanks to our efforts to modernise our organisation services, we have been more responsive. We also discussed matters early on relating to concerns about blanket care home testing, the worries about asymptomatic carriers, again big national questions and issues, and we lobbied for more of that testing.

Another area that we discussed was Covid costs. Currently the Council's run rate of costs, income shortfall and delayed achievement of planned savings continues at around £10m a month. Without further Government support we will run out of the £37m of funding made available in mid-July.

Particular thought also needed to be given to how we can support the recovery of the County with the new “normal”. The Council will need to make significant investment if it is to help stimulate the local economies to mergers from the impact of the pandemic in the coming months.

The Council is developing a recovery strategy which will examine how the Council returns to business as usual activity and seeks to adapt its operations to comply with social distancing guidelines. It is anticipated that there will be additional costs associated with the recovery which are yet to be fully identified. Continued Government support is therefore vital. Various statements have been made by Ministers and MACLG around further support being made available. We have been asked to undertake specific things in response to Covid-19 where income streams are irrecoverable and Council Tax and Business Rates income has dropped as well.

The Council are in a similar position to every other local Council in the country, in that we are reliant on continued further support from Government to meet post-Covid costs. Without that further support every Council had to consider scaling back significantly on the other spending areas during the current financial year and, of course, we have seen the CCN statement today that in not too long a time we could be looking at a £2.5bn deficit across upper tier authorities which would mean using up all of the general reserves we have, so we are looking at potentially redrafting medium-term financial plans and re-examining the long-term reserve levels as well. This is just one area where we need to be sure we talk to our local MPs, the County Council’s Network, the Local Government Association to ensure that we are lobbying to get that critical support. It is not a big issue at the minute, but it could be if it is not addressed.

There are some things that help. Mileage done by officers and councillors has dropped massively. Face-to-face meetings of all sizes are now routinely conducted by Skype and Zoom and MS Teams proving that we can conduct business using these technologies and not emit countless tonnes of CO2. We have to capture and make these new ways of working as embedded as we possibly can.

It is vitally important that we get Derbyshire’s economy back on its feet. We are all familiar with the headlines: 20.4% contraction of UK economy in April, the largest ever monthly fall. A further 600,000 jobs lost from the economy. Locally we have seen JCB announce job losses of several hundred, Rolls Royce around 9,000 globally, but that includes significant losses here in Derbyshire and Derby due to the massive global downturn in civil aviation. This will, and is, having an impact on supply chains which in turn will impact on more Derbyshire jobs.

Youth unemployment is one of the most worrying factors in this and whilst schools are shut and are likely to be below capacity for some time, the educational opportunities for young people is disrupted with the potential to impact on a whole generation. We must not let that happen and we must do all we can to get businesses working again, help restart the economy and get Derbyshire going again.

Whilst it is hoped that the economy will recover quickly we are on a knife edge with the R-rate and at risk of a potential second wave and still some time away from a vaccine which will mean restrictions in some form will remain for some time yet. It is an impact that is being felt by our important cultural, tourism and hospitality sectors in Derbyshire as well and we are working hard to support them.

Locally we have established the Derbyshire Economic Recovery Board, a Strategic Board that provides some oversight and hopefully direction when needed to aid the recovery efforts of all partners in Derbyshire and the city and this will now meet monthly. The work of Vision Derbyshire, a key collaboration between all the Derbyshire local authorities has become pivotal to the efforts to regrow the economy. Councillor Lewis would remain in touch with Members about the work we are doing because everybody has a role to play in this and it is fundamental to the regrowth of the economy, as is the issue of clean growth, the rebooting of the local and national economy, but with green sustainable technologies at its heart. This is a Government ambition that we can all support given where we were already going prior to Covid-19 and which will provide the future training and job opportunities for all our young people in Derbyshire.

Councillor Lewis mentioned the towns' work that was going on around the active travel work. The Council was working across 60 locations across the County Council and more now, including some 26 main towns. Each have plans implemented for them or are about to be implemented. The work of the County Council is going to be critical to establishing that work on the ground in a meaningful way. Whatever is in a plan isn't necessarily what is going to be on the ground when it is done. It is a matter of working through some of the issues on the ground, coming to a better scheme at the end of it and that is where County Councillors working in conjunction with businesses and residents will play a key role in the coming weeks and months.

There are many other things to talk about such as the Florence Nightingale Care Home we have temporarily established to take Covid-19 discharge patients from hospitals. However, Councillor Lewis expressed the hope that we could all soon return to the Chamber at

County Hall and he looked forward to this and to seeing all Members then.

Councillor P Smith thanked Councillor Lewis for his kind comments in terms of his role and support that he had been giving through the Covid-19 pandemic. Obviously we are working our way through the pandemic and it was pleasing to hear that he had touched on the economic implications for Derbyshire and what the Council were hoping to put in place going forward.

Councillor Smith had been extremely proud to have worked in this role and having come into this role quite recently, he did not envisage that the country, and the world in effect, would be dealing with an outbreak of this nature. Councillor Smith paid tribute to his Group who had fully supported him in working with the Council and as a Leader of the Group, he had taken an active role, as had been explained by Councillor Lewis, to come up with solutions to some of the issues that we have been facing. He had always been a massive advocate of local government and always recognised the role that it plays. Unfortunately, there had been years of austerity which obviously impacted greatly on not only Derbyshire, but communities throughout England and he did not ever want to see us go back to that position and he was hoping and praying that we could continue getting the support that is required to take us through this terrible situation that we have found ourselves in, the staff and everybody associated with Derbyshire, throughout Derbyshire, key workers, people working in shops etc all doing their bit. The Community Response Unit response had been absolutely fantastic.

Councillor Smith stated that he couldn't be critical about anything the Council had been doing. He had been part of the process and had been heavily involved. The economic side and the recovery for industry is the next issue that the Council will be facing and he would always give his commitment and support to anything that could help ease the burden on people and help get a recovery plan in place as quickly as possible.

Everybody knew somebody who had been affected by this. It had been a real game changer in terms of how people operate and Councillor Smith would like to say on behalf of the Labour Group, thank you to everybody who has committed and supported communities out there and people out there and given as much as they can in terms of time and effort to continue to support them going forward. Councillors come into local government to improve the lives of people and that is what I think we have attempted to do and he would continue to do that while ever he was a representative of any Council going forward.

Councillor M Wall asked would the Leader of the Council agree that at a suitable juncture, we should review the activities that have been taking place in the last three months with a view to capturing lessons learnt, things that we have done well and things that perhaps we could have done better?

Councillor Lewis responded that it was important that we do capture the good work that has gone on. It was also important that the Council capture anything that had not worked quite as well. That was how we learn as a local authority. Some of the things already touched upon around the green agenda in terms of the way we now conduct meetings. We can save so much money and time and maybe as a consequence if we are doing more home working using new technologies perhaps we need fewer buildings, things like that we can look at in the fullness of time Councillor Lewis agreed that we need to capture all those elements and a review of that should be conducted, but also what needs to be captured is the way we have worked, the way we have pivoted as an organisation so quickly, so readily. Normally County Councils of all flavours are quite risk averse and tend to go through processes ad infinitum from inception to delivery to ensure that every box is ticked, every 't' is crossed and 'i' is dotted. Sometimes we can leap and do something because we need to do something and it is a response to a need, we can capture the good things out of that and we can learn from the bad. That is very much where we are with our response to coronavirus, we can do things in new ways in the future, the Council could pivot more quickly and deliver services in new ways.

Councillor S A Spencer informed Council about the work that was taking place in the town centres because it was immensely challenging for all those concerned, in particular the ETE Department. He wished to reassure the public that these were temporary measures to try and help business and allow social distancing, allowing people to use the town centres as safely as possible.

He also stated that it was going to be incumbent on the local Members who represented those areas, to be directly involved in those discussions. The Council had a plan and an idea of what it wished to put into action, but these were up for continual review and tweaking on a regular basis. If we have an inconsistency where we need loading bays or access to certain areas that we don't have shown on plans, he would hope that the local Members, the District Councils and everybody else who was involved, would get involved in discussing that with Highways officers and then we would tweak it accordingly.

Councillor Spencer urged people to be patient with the Council and to understand what we were trying to achieve. There were going to be some people who find it challenging and difficult to deal with, but he

urged all the local Members from all sides of the Council Chamber to come together and try and do our best to deliver these changes that were required. We know that social distancing changes might come along and at that point we would review what we are doing and how we are implementing this programme. He paid tribute to the time, effort and commitment of those individuals because the people involved had been working 24/7 on this scheme and in challenging circumstances. He urged that we continue to work together to deliver what was needed to be done in our town centres. The Council could then move on to cycling areas etc and other points of interest.

Councillor D Allen stated that Councillor Lewis had mentioned the support for the NHS and I think that had been really well received and the public really did feel the NHS had done a fantastic job, but that also applied to care workers in the community and County Council workers, which he am sure Councillor Lewis recognised as well.

Councillor Allen stated that Scrutiny Members, had had a meeting with Chris Clayton of the CCG and he explained quite a lot. The thing that has to be watched is in the future when the crisis reduces a little, we need to make sure that we work very closely with Health, ensure that our community services are very important and they will be supported there. There has been a very high increase in the amount of work that is done with the Health Service and how that is resourced in the future will be difficult to sustain, particularly with all the pressures that are going to be around, but he wished put on record his appreciation of all the care workers both in the NHS and in local authorities and in the private sector. There has been a lot of support there for people often unrecognised.

Councillor Innes thanked Councillor Spencer for explaining how the Council is moving forward. She wanted to thank all the staff and all the councillors and everybody in Derbyshire, the whole population of Derbyshire, on how we have handled this crisis. We have had low numbers compared to other counties and she thought that was really good.

Councillor E Atkins stated that it was nice to know that some people were consulted about changes to their towns. Unfortunately, New Mills woke up to find that changes had been made virtually overnight and the changes were made without any consultation. Councillor Atkins was now getting complaints from shops and outlets saying they have lost £100 in the day's takings, so she believed we needed a serious review of what went on. Our shops are so very important for our local people. We have a nice little community. We have shops and we have a little market and we want to keep it. She asked that what has happened be looked into and things turned round

for her community and for shops because she wanted to keep them, they are very important.

Councillor S Burfoot stated that she had been taking a keen interest in the measures that may or may not happen in Matlock and she has had several email discussions with officers about what might happen. Luckily or not the measures have not actually taken place yet in Matlock and she had been assured that she would be informed about what was going to happen. She had sent some suggested measures which she had been assured would be looked at prior to anything being implemented.

Councillor Burfoot recognised the efforts that the Highways' engineers were putting in to what they had been instructed to do by the Government but some of the schemes particularly Traffic Regulation Orders and there are several in Matlock that were on the cards, which hadn't as yet gone out to public consultation. Councillor Burfoot would be pleased if the schemes could be expedited.

Councillor Spencer responded that the programme was being steered by a sub-group of the LRF. It was being chaired by the County Council's Highways Team. It was also being worked on very closely by the Borough Councils across the whole of the County. Each town and each area of the County had been allocated to an individual officer at Borough Council level to disseminate information to local communities, local Parish Councils and anybody who has a particular interest in the issues that we are attempting to address. Councillor Spencer was aware that this had not been working as well as it might in some areas and the Council were trying to address that with the Borough Councils concerned.

Councillor Spencer thanked Councillor Burfoot for making some highly beneficial and sensible proposals with regard to the solutions the Council trying to put in place for Matlock town centre and those would be given due consideration.

With regard to New Mills, Councillor Spencer confirmed that Councillor Atkins had been consulted prior to the implementation of changes taking place. With regard to the issues that had been raised locally by some community groups, Councillor Spencer had spoken to some of those on a personal level and had assured them that nothing was written in tablets of stone. Nothing that had been put in place could not be changed or adjusted to assist the businesses in the town and it would be beneficial if there was a positive contribution from the locally Elected Members on these issues, working with us to deliver improvements and assist the businesses to get back to some form of normality.

(a) Question from Marie Davies to Councillor J Wharmby, Cabinet Member for Adult Care

I would like to ask if the Council are still proposing to send Covid patients into the Covid Free Home Whitestones. If the answer is yes then why are the relatives and stakeholders not being kept informed and their views on the matter being taken into account?

I ask the councillors namely Wharmby and Lewis again as I have done many times, my mother pays the full cost of her care to live at Whitestones this is her HOME. Would any of the councillors or DCC officers pay for the privilege of putting your life in danger by having the same staff caring for COVID patients and then the Home residents on alternating shift patterns? How are we to believe anything you tell us as for so long you intimated to separate staffing which you have finally admitted is not the case!

I would also like to ask for an enquiry as to whether the councils actions of not responding to relatives concerns and complaints either in a timely manner or even at all! My family has had poor standard responses to our concerns and not within a timescale that is in anyway acceptable!

Councillor J Wharmby responded that although the isolation wing at Whitestones is now set up and operating we have to-date not had any requests for admissions of people who have been tested as Covid positive, but not completed their 14 day isolation period. Although we do not intend to step down this isolation wing, not least because we may need to use it for current residents who may be found to be already asymptomatic through the home care testing arrangements or who become Covid positive in the future, but also because subject to a second wave of pandemic we may need to utilise the facility to support larger numbers of people than currently. Now that the new service is operational at the Ada Belfield facility in Belper, temporarily named the Florence Nightingale Unit, we intend to divert any new Covid positive hospital discharge referrals to that unit whilst capacity remains available.

Mrs Davies, I can assure you it is not the Council's intention to mislead people. As I said the isolation wing has not been used to-date. Staff working in the isolation wing would not be a completely separate team but they would not work in both units in the same day. If the way in which it was described previously has caused confusion that was not intended. My reply to your emails, I responded in seven working days

and in some cases less. Your last email I forwarded to the person you requested.

(b) Question from Hilary Cave to Councillor J Wharmby, Cabinet Member for Adult Care

I welcome the decision not to proceed with the closure of seven DCC care homes at present. Does this mean that the Council is simply postponing closures, or that you now intend to retain those homes for the foreseeable future? I ask this question because I am aware, as a family carer for many years, that care home beds are becoming scarcer with every year that passes; and because I have seen for myself the high standards of care and staffing provided by council-run homes.

Councillor J Wharmby responded that as pointed out, the outcome of the consultation was discussed at the Cabinet meeting on the 4 June 2020, and it was decided that none of the DCC care homes will close until another local care home or alternative provision is in place.

As a result of the decision, we now need to undertake revised modelling and planning to identify how the whole care home market can work together to respond to both the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and long-term future demographic demands in Derbyshire to ensure that there is the right amount of the right type of accommodation and support for the future. That work will generate proposals for consideration which will be subject for further Cabinet reports in due course. We will keep residents, relatives and staff updated as this work develops. In the interim the Council will be developing plans to undertake any necessary urgent repairs and maintenance which may be required at these homes which have been proposed for closure.

On the suggestion care home beds are becoming scarce, I can assure you they are not. The impact of the pandemic has seen people choosing not to move into residential care and the high standard of care provided by our staff I totally agree. They always give exceptional care and at this difficult time they are going above and beyond.

Subsequent to the meeting, Ms Cave asked the following supplementary question in writing:

If DCC is revising its plans for care home provision in order that the market can operate to provide enough places, are you able to tell concerned residents what this plan is? For instance, what part will County Council homes play in the revised plan: does it provide safeguards to prevent private sector provision increasing, thus costing the authority more and potentially making well-trained and skilled

County Council staff unemployed; and when will recently-halted assessments for residential places, perhaps one reason for the fall in demand, resume?

Councillor Wharmby had responded in writing, that the Council are unable to provide details of this plan as it hasn't yet been written and we need time to work on it. The June Cabinet report refers to the fact that we will publish it by December 2020. In terms of: "recently-halted admissions for residential places", we ceased to allow new admissions to the 10 homes included in the consultation from September 2019 at the point at which we were aware of the work needed and in particular of the need for re-wiring and for mitigation to be put in place to reduce any risks to residents . Whilst the position will be kept under review it is not envisaged that we will be admitting any new residents whilst we remain concerned that to do so could increase the level of risk.

39/20 **PETITIONS** There were none received.

40/20 **COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS**

(a) Question from Councillor E Atkins to Councillor J Wharmby, Cabinet Member for Adult Care

In the statement agreed by the Cabinet at their meeting on 4th June 2020 , regarding the care homes issue, the following phrase was used

"None of the homes proposed for closure would close unless a local care home or alternative provision was available to replace it and further consultation was undertaken as appropriate"

Can the Leadership explain what the phrase 'local care home' actually means in this context - does it mean a care home in the same town/village or within a couple of miles, would this be a County Council-operated care home or one in the independent sector and, if the County Council were to opt for 'alternative provision', what sort of provision might that be?

Councillor J Wharmby responded that the phrase "local care homes or alternative provision" means all the options that you have mentioned in your question. We will look at what is appropriate for each area and determine the local needs and circumstances. We will communicate with our Scrutiny Committee and further consultation will be undertaken as appropriate. Thank you, Chairman.

(b) Question from Councillor R George to Councillor C A Hart, Cabinet Member for Health and Communities

This Council agrees with the Leader of the Council that our Voluntary Organisations are central to the effort to keep residents healthy, safe and supported during the current pandemic and welcomes his assurance that all necessary resources will be made available to them to deal with the Covid-19 Pandemic and its impacts on local society.

Will the Cabinet Member for Commissioning, Communities and Policy therefore ensure that VCS funding is not reduced to any area in October, including cuts in High Peak of 44%, pending an assessment of long-term needs following the pandemic and the value and requirements for our Voluntary Sector services in each area.

Councillor Hart responded that she realised that your question was actually addressed to the Leader, but as you have probably seen in the paperwork today with the Council appointments, I am the Cabinet Member responsible for the community and voluntary sector, so therefore I will respond to your question.

I am sure that colleagues will be very well aware that the Council has been undertaking a review of community sector grants and the role of the ECS infrastructure organisations over the last 18 months. The role and shape of public services and the relationship and demands placed on infrastructure providers has really changed significantly over recent years and it was certainly the right thing to do to do this review.

When reviewing the existing approach, it was critical to ensure that resources would align to the Council's ambitions and that there would be a consistent and equitable approach right across the County and this encourages also the long-term sustainability of the sector moving forward. Accordingly, in January 2020, Cabinet agreed proposals for a new way of working with infrastructure providers for subsequent consultation with the sector and the public.

The current pandemic, the start of which coincided with the consultation process, has emphasised the importance of civil action and the role that the voluntary and community groups and organisations play in Derbyshire at a local community and district level. Their response to the crisis has been absolutely invaluable and I have seen it first-hand in my own Borough in Erewash. We have been holding health locality meetings every week with partners and our local CVS and infrastructure providers have been magnificent in their efforts. I am sure most of you in your homes will say the same about the response in your own wards. They have mobilised resources across our

communities to ensure that vulnerable people have enough food and medication to support their health and wellbeing during the very challenging times. More than ever this has highlighted the need to ensure that in future there is a core consistent offer of support to the community and voluntary sector across all parts of the county.

We all recognise that Covid-19 has changed the context and landscape for the review of the infrastructure support and discussions have been taking place to revise the proposed approach in the light of this. The Council received over 800 representations to its consultation and detailed analysis of this has supported those discussions. Many key elements of the new approach we have proposed, including key principles, and our desire to work on a consistent set of outcomes were very broadly supported and it is essential that we continue to take this work forward.

I am pleased to say that we will be bringing recommendations to Cabinet at the end of July, a couple of months on, on the review of the infrastructure provision and proposals to take forward work over the next twelve months. Proposals will seek to work with infrastructure providers to secure better outcomes; take stock of the challenges and opportunities that are presented through Covid-19 whilst not disadvantaging any area in terms of a reduction to existing funding allocations. We will continue to do all we can to work with infrastructure providers and the wider sector to support the Derbyshire response and recovery over the forthcoming months alongside our existing plans that roll out through the thriving communities and Vision Derbyshire. We need to ensure that this is done in a way that builds upon a consistent and coordinated provision and does not widen current disparities across the County.

I will just finish the response to the question. We all know that Covid-19 has had a devastating effect not just in this country but worldwide and we know that there are going to be many varied challenges ahead not just in the next few weeks but months and possibly years. I think a lot of things we were doing or are doing now and looking forward to doing in the future may have changes made to them because of Covid-19 and I hope that our response when we get the report to Cabinet at the end of July will show how we have responded to this Covid crisis. Thank you.

Councillor George asked the following supplementary question:

Thank you very much. I very much welcome Councillor Hart's tone of response there and the acknowledgement that there will be revisions to the proposals. I am concerned that these will be coming forward at the end of July if there are still proposals for any changes to

be made that involve reductions on the 1 October. I believe you said that there would not be any reductions in the current year to any District, but if you could confirm Councillor Hart that would be extremely welcome to all those organisations who are doing such an incredibly good job of supporting our communities at this time. Thank you.

Councillor Hart responded that as I say I can't go into details because the report is being prepared and it will be presented to Cabinet as soon as possible, but it would probably be towards the end of July. I don't really want to go into discussions, but I can assure you that the Covid crisis has changed some of the things that we were going to do. We will be looking at how we can proceed forward. We did need to do the review, it is a sensible thing to do, but of course now we have to work with the Covid situation and some of the things that it is throwing up. I can give assurances we will be looking at this very carefully. I am sure we will get the report there and nothing will be happening until then. I can assure you the funding is safe for the moment.

41/20 **MOTION** Council considered a Notice of Motion as set out below:-

Motion submitted by Councillor P Smith

In March the Department of Health and Social Care recognised that ensuring full sick and isolation pay for outsourced workers working in NHS premises was an essential infection control measure. This motion is to ensure that those working in the social care sector have parity with their NHS colleagues in Derbyshire.

The motion:

This motion recognises that those working in the social care sector have parity with their NHS colleagues in Derbyshire.

That this Council will continue to insist that social care providers in Derbyshire commit to paying full sick and isolation pay to their workers as a condition of receiving part of the Government's £600m for infection control funding.

The Council also welcomes the inclusion of a recognised 'Death in Service' benefit for all Adult Social Care workers.

The motion was duly seconded, voted upon and declared to be carried.

42/20 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC** **RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining

item on the agenda to avoid the disclosure of exempt or confidential information.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS CONDUCTED AFTER THE PUBLIC WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING

1. Request To Support the Dismissal of ICT Consultants By Means Of Voluntary Redundancy Resulting From The ICT Management Team Restructure – Executive Director Commissioning, Communities and Policy (Contains information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and contains information relating to information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Authority)