

PUBLIC

MINUTES of the meeting of the **DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** held on 15 July 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, R Flatley, M Ford, Mrs A Foster, J A Frudd, R George, K Gillott, 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, S Swann, D H Taylor, Mrs J A Twigg, M Wall, Ms A Western, G Wharmby, Mrs J Wharmby, B Woods and B Wright.

45/20 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors H Elliott, A Griffiths and A Stevenson.

46/20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** There were no declarations of interest.

47/20 **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 17 June 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

48/20 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS** The following announcements were made:

49/20 **REPORT OF THE LEADER** Councillor Lewis thanked all the staff for their on-going hard work in these still challenging times as the Council looked to reopen more services whilst adapting to this new "normal". All the residents of Derbyshire had appreciated the huge efforts that had been made on their behalf and on behalf of their family members where our staff particularly provided care and assistance to those family members. A huge amount of work was going on, not just out in our communities, but in virtually all walks of life, from Children's Services to our libraries, (which were beginning to reopen and are the subject of a question later on) along with all our registration officers.

A lot of work had been going on adapting our streets, our towns, our villages to coping with the new social distancing that we needed to do. He thanked all Elected members for the work they had done in their communities in working proactively with our staff and officers. They had been working round the clock to deliver all these measures throughout all our communities in Derbyshire as we adapted to the circumstances and adapt to local experience.

As each week passed, the Council seemed to see more and more changes and, of course, one of those was that our schools were returning to something like “normal”. More and more children of key workers and vulnerable pupils had been returning on-going over the last few weeks, particularly in those key years. The Council had identified Reception, Year 6 and so on and more pupils in Derbyshire were going back to schools than in many local authorities in the UK. It was a great achievement and it was testament as well to Jane, Ian and their teams working closely with those schools to achieve that.

The Council was adapting day-to-day to circumstances and changing guidance in all sorts of areas, not only as a local authority, but businesses and residents out in our communities. Of course, the latest was the wearing of face masks from the 24 July in shops and certain various other settings.

Councillor Lewis thought that it was important to note that the Local Resilience Forum Recovery Group, chaired by Jane Parfremment, was undertaking a lot of work around these dimensions to get Derbyshire back on its feet and to help with the economic recovery. He had spoken at the last meeting about the Derbyshire Economic Recovery Board. It meets for its second meeting next week. Councillor Lewis didn't have to tell any Member how dire the situation was for businesses out there at the moment and for employment, particularly for young people, and as a local authority, we were going to be doing all we could to ensure we can drive economic growth to provide jobs and opportunities for all people, but particularly young people as well, because otherwise we risk a generation of young people being out of work and not getting opportunities, so there were going to be some key announcements coming out over the course of the next few weeks and he looked forward to engaging with all Members of the Authority to hear their thoughts and seek all their views as well.

Last Friday saw the first meeting of a Local Outbreak Board, another important step and an important component in managing future localised outbreaks of Covid-19 in Derbyshire. This comprised a key partnership between ourselves, the County Council chair it, and our Public Health colleagues. Councillor Lewis was Chairman and

Councillor Carol Hart was the Vice-Chairman of that Board. The Board worked closely with the CCG and NHS colleagues of course as well as Districts and Boroughs. That was going to be incredibly important as we move forward.

Critically the Council now had the level of data needed to be able to effectively monitor the number of cases, ie that sort of postcode level data that we have been talking about quite frequently for Pillar 2 testing. The Council would continue to push for better frequency of that data so that our colleagues in Public Health and the LRF have a better view and better granularity. Test, trace and isolating were key planks of that work and we sincerely hoped that we never have to implement restrictions, but being prepared, communicating and being able to respond in affected communities was absolutely critical. Experience from elsewhere in the UK, not too far down the M1 in Leicester, for example, and in the rest of the world, indicated local outbreaks could occur anywhere and we have to be vigilant and responsive.

Councillor Lewis referred to the terrible news of the fire in Buxton recently, the Fairfield Community Centre in Councillor Grooby's Division a couple of days ago, that completely destroyed that building. The damage was very extensive and investigations as to its cause were still on-going. Councillor Lewis wanted to reassure that community that the Council would do all we could to support Councillor Grooby in her efforts to ensure some interim provision, if the Council could, and to help find longer-term solutions for that community.

It was the second fire in recent months to impact on Derbyshire communities following the devastating fire in Long Eaton at Harrington Junior School in Councillor Hickton's Division where the Council are supporting the school and community through a tough time.

Councillor P Smith asked the following question of the Leader:

Could I ask a question regarding care home and care workers' testing? My impression is they are currently being tested weekly. Could you confirm that is the case? You have made reference to it going forward and that is still happening.

In terms of reference to wearing a face mask, does Councillor Lewis think it is acceptable to rely on shop workers in effect who have a lot of pressure on them at this moment in time and have been doing a sterling job in delivering and opening and allowing people to go into their shops safely, that the onus is put on them in terms of enforcement of wearing face masks and are we taking the lead in this in terms of getting information and publicity out and starting that process?

In applauding what has been done in terms of care workers, health workers and everybody else, do you think the Prime Minister was misguided in his comments regarding residential care homes and the way that that was managed in terms of restricting Covid in those establishments? It seems to be pretty unfair of him. Do you think he ought to apologise to all those people who have put themselves on the front line to protect elderly residents? I would like to hear your views on that. Thank you.

Councillor Lewis responded that in terms of care home testing, Councillor Smith would be familiar with the residents' testing which was taking place on a regular basis plus regular testing of staff through cycles on a 28 day basis. Councillor Smith would also be aware, because he sits in the same briefings as he did around these particular issues, that if cases were found then that cycle was repeated until the cases had been dealt with, identified and so on, so yes, there was regular testing going on in care homes, on a monthly basis at least.

In terms of face masks Councillor Lewis thought the advice was quite clear nationally, that from the 24 July, people would be required to wear face masks in settings such as stores and so on. The media campaign around communications had been quite robust. Certainly on social media, it was very widely talked about there so everybody has the general gist that they had to wear face masks in particular settings. The reasoning for that was quite clear as well and certainly here in Derbyshire we would be reinforcing that. The Communications Team at Derbyshire County Council would be responding alongside the LRF to ensure that.

As for the Prime Minister's handling of care homes, the nation had been through some very difficult circumstances in dealing with Covid-19 and no nation in the world has a perfect solution to these issues. The Council knew locally that care homes were going to be a pressure point. Councillor Smith and Councillor Lewis have had many conversations about that particular topic and our concerns locally about how we deal with that, particularly the issue of asymptomatic transmission and we were pushed back by the LRF to get all those sorts of key responses that we needed so we were quite clear locally about how we dealt with it.

When it comes to the national response, Councillor Lewis was sure in the fullness of time, once we are through the other end of this, there would be a lot of looking at the details of what happened during the Covid-19 pandemic, who said what and how and what policies were implemented, when, and should they have been sooner or should they have been later, all these sorts of things. He was sure that would be picked up in that but at this moment in time, we are doing our very best

here in Derbyshire and we have been doing it in partnership, that is the key thing.

Councillor G Hickton asked the following question of the Leader:

As you are aware teachers, pupils and staff were devastated by the Harrington School fire which lies in my Division. I would like to ask the Leader what provision is being put in place while plans for a new school are being worked on?

Councillor Lewis responded that, yes, it was a devastating fire and it was devastating for the community. The School was closed for a week at that time and it was pleasing to say that all the children of key workers and vulnerable children were able to get back into school using the Children's Centre in Long Eaton. The demolition of the junior school was subsequently completed and pupils had moved back on to the school site and were occupying some accommodation actually on the site of the neighbouring Wilsthorpe School. Following that move they had also been joined by Year 6 pupils as part of the preparation for transition into secondary school.

The Council had received tenders for the temporary accommodation that would be located on the Harrington Junior playground and then an order was going to be placed for that. It probably already had been by now. That accommodation would be available for the whole school from September and would remain in place until a new school could be built. The design for that school had now commenced but it was too early to give you as yet a firm date for its completion, so you can see a huge amount of work has gone into providing a localised response there for Harrington School and a real commitment Councillor Dale, to ensure that a new provision was put in place and a new school is built there for those pupils.

Councillor S Burfoot asked the following question of the Leader:

I appreciate that our Highways' officers have been working really hard to deliver the social distancing measures etc in our towns. As a result of this work they have had to do there have been lots of schemes and work that seem to have been put on hold to some extent. If I am being very parochial, I would mention there are Traffic Regulation Orders that we have been waiting on for months and months now in Matlock to be put out to consultation. We have a petition from residents on Smedley Street. We have a motion that has come from Matlock Town Council to Derbyshire County Council about Starkholmes and I am just wondering at what point can we expect our officers to take these things up, in particular the Traffic Regulation Orders? Residents have been told that these regulation orders would be put out to

consultation but this was months and months and months ago. When can we expect these sort of things to become a priority? Thank you.

Councillor Lewis thanked Councillor Burfoot for her questions, some of which he couldn't obviously answer at this moment but he would ensure she got a proper answer.

Just on the point of Traffic Regulation Orders and the consultations, part of the measures that we have had to put in place more recently to help our communities respond to Covid and get back to business, had meant that much of that work had been redirected into TROs in that sphere. There was a huge amount of work going on there and that naturally that means our resources at this moment in time were going to be taken up mostly by that but the Council would endeavour to get you an answer to your questions soon.

50/20 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS** No public questions had been received.

51/20 **PETITIONS** There were none received.

52/20 **COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS**

(a) Question from Councillor Stuart Brittain to Councillor S A Spencer – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure

Residents of Brimington, Tapton and Calow are appalled that the County Council/you closed Crow Lane without any consultation with them, their elected representatives and Chesterfield Borough Council. I am told by officers there wasn't time to consult given the urgency of getting the high street open again Post Covid lock down and that it is only temporary. However, temporary could be as long as 18 months. This is far too long. Re-booting the economy following Covid 19 is crucial but long-term solutions must be right for anyone that means proper consultation must take place. Will the Cabinet member commit to a full consultation in the autumn?

Councillor Spencer thanked Councillor Brittain for the question and felt it would be useful to provide a bit of background to how we reach the position that Councillor Brittain had highlighted in his question.

There was a sub-group of the LRF which dealt with our reaction to the Covid-19 situation and the measures we are putting in place around town centres and further afield on protected walkways and cycle way areas, of which Crow Lane was one of those particular areas. On

that sub-group, there were representatives from every District Council across the County and the County, the Police, Fire and they had a full understanding of what proposals were being put forward and what was likely to be put in place. It was unreasonable to suggest that the District Council, in this case Chesterfield Borough Council, were not aware of the proposals as they were involved in the drawing up of the proposals.

With regard to Crow Lane, Councillor Brittain would also know that there were people who had been objecting to the closure that had taken place but there were also a significant number of people who had actually written into the Council and also started a petition to support the delivery of the proposals that had been put in place in Crow Lane. Councillor Spencer estimated from his inbox and from the available information that it was very much a 50/50 split at this moment in time without being scientifically exact.

This proposal has had written support from Chesterfield Hospital, of which he had a letter, and it had also received support from the local MP on the Monday and on the Tuesday he had changed his mind, so perhaps Councillor Brittain could elaborate on that for me because he did arrive at the photo call to bring about this proposal and he was photographed at the site holding the placard at the time.

With regard to the measures, the measures were put in place under Section 14 of the Road Traffic Act which basically gives the Council the power to implement these proposals on the basis of safety under Covid-19 legislation immediately without going through a full public consultation process which would normally be the case. The Council were also bound by this legislation to continually monitor how these schemes were working; to evaluate their success or otherwise; to take on board expressions and views of local residents and continue to take those into account as and when we reach a final decision, if we choose to take that particular course of action.

Councillor Spencer was prepared to give Councillor Brittain an assurance that we would, at some point, if these schemes were deemed to be something that might be considered as a permanent measure, carry out a full public consultation process in the traditional mechanism, but what he was not prepared to do at this moment in time was give Councillor Brittain an assurance that it would be on the timeframe he suggests. Circumstances that prevail would determine when and how this consultation takes place. The Council would continue to take on board the details, the representations and would monitor and assess the success or otherwise of the proposal.

With regard to all the other stuff that was going on, the Council did have to remove 17 illegal posters that were fastened to lamp posts

around the adjacent site on Monday. Whilst Councillor Spencer did not know where they appeared from, he did have a copy if Councillor Brittain would like to see one, it was unfair to suggest that all the residents of his constituency or his Division were opposed to the proposal because that was misleading, not correct and factually not the case.

Councillor Brittain asked the following supplementary question:

First of all as Councillor Spencer well knows, my friend the MP came along and gave support to a temporary closure. That line was deleted from the press release that was issued and he made it clear that he was not in support of a permanent closure.

Secondly, my days of climbing up lamp posts and putting up posters are gone. I am not aware of the poster - well I am aware that they had been put up, but I have not done so myself.

What I would also like to ask is, why this was the only place on the over 20 that you put through under this Emergency Power Order where you have not consulted? This and Ashbourne, which you know well and presumably you know all about, were the only two places where you did not consult and I find that rather surprising.

Finally, you talk about this was in full agreement with Chesterfield Borough Council. That is not the information I have and I would be grateful if you could provide evidence to me that Chesterfield Borough Council were in support of this. I can absolutely assure you that I was not told about this and I am assured by the Borough Council that they were also not told about this so I look forward to that.

I have to say I am disappointed. The vast bulk of my constituents who we have surveyed, unlike you, are in opposition to this proposal. Nearly all, I would say, of the people I have had writing to me are not in my Division where this is based. Finally, the amount of cyclists that go there to the hospital has been very slight and looking at Crow Lane, which is extremely steep, I am not at all surprised, but we have done checks on this and frankly the number of people who were attempting this journey is very small, so I will look forward to your information on why you think Chesterfield Borough Council agreed to this and can I tell you I am very disappointed that you cannot give a quicker timetable.

Councillor Spencer responded that he had already explained to Councillor Brittain, and to everyone else, this was a sub-group of the LRF and he could not speak for how that information was disseminated from the representatives that sit on that particular group on behalf of Chesterfield Borough Council. He was disappointed that they had not

shared it with everybody far and wide. He did not know the discussions that took place as he was not there in person as it was an officer led group.

There are various views on this proposal. And he spoken to one of Councillor Brittain's constituents only on Friday. He had a long conversation with her about it because she had just received one of your surveys you had popped through the letter box. She took a photograph and explained what it said etc etc. She said she was most distressed that anybody was considering taking this closure off. Those were her words, not his.

Councillor Spencer recognised that throughout this process the Council had not consulted as such, and when he said "consulted" there was a laid down prescribed process for consultation. The Council had not consulted on any of the proposals that had been introduced under the Covid-19 legislation so you were not unique, you were not being treated any differently to Ashbourne or Ilkeston. Councillor Spencer apologised if you did not receive the information in a timely fashion and he had said the Council that we were working on that and I think it has been improved quite dramatically. However, unusually for the first time ever, the Council would be able to do an analysis of the outcome of a possible change before it becomes a permanent change and at no time had the Council said this was a permanent arrangement. It was a temporary measure under Section 14 of the Highways Traffic Act that was allowed to stay in place for up to 18 months. Councillor Spencer did not believe it would be in place on a temporary basis for up to 18 months and he was not prepared to commit to a timeframe, but he would commit to this Authority, if this ever becomes a permanent arrangement, to do a full, proper consultation at which point everybody would have their chance to have a say about the future delivery of how Crow Lane should function as a highway or something else it may choose to be in the future. That is his commitment and circumstances would determine when that takes place. Councillor Spencer was sorry Councillor Brittain you are disappointed, but that was the position. He didn't know the discussions that took place and it was not about whether they agreed to it, the Borough Council were involved in the decision-making process. They were at the meeting and there were specific officers who were delegated to be at that meeting, so he was sure Councillor Brittain would be able to find that out from Chesterfield Borough Council. He was sure Trish Gilby would be more than happy to share that with him.

(b) Question from Councillor R George to Councillor A Dale Cabinet Member for Young People

Many people have found the period of lockdown difficult, but especially families with children with special needs, and I am sure all councillors will wish to join me in paying tribute to those families and to the schools and services who have supported them in very difficult times.

Staff at Special Schools such as Peak School in Chinley have worked throughout lockdown with children who through no fault of their own have no concept of hygiene let alone social distance, providing necessary personal care and close interaction with children, with little support in guidance or practical measures such as PPE.

What is this Council doing to ensure that families with children with special needs receive the help they need, and that schools which deal with children with serious health needs are fully supported to do so as safely and well as possible?

Councillor A Dale responded by firstly associating himself with the comments Councillor George made at the beginning of your question in paying tribute to those families as well as the schools and services who had been supporting them. Most parents, Councillor Dale included, would agree that lockdown had been a challenge, but we would all agree that this pales in comparison to the challenges faced by parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities who had not been able to access school provision and particularly those who were very significantly disabled.

School staff and governors had also been working tirelessly over the past few months and Jane Parfremont and he had recently written to all of them to offer our deep gratitude for their immense efforts over the course of this year. Our schools had continued to be at the very heart of our communities and they have provided great leadership to support families, but Councillor Dale would also like to pay tribute to all those working within Children's Services within Derbyshire. Our staff had been going above and beyond to support children and their families in what had been an immensely difficult time for all involved and they were a real credit to this organisation and he was immensely proud of his Department.

Councillor Dale took issue with Councillor George's comment that special schools had had little support in guidance or practical measures. At the very beginning of lockdown, all schools were quickly sent information around PPE and basic hygiene which was intended to be passed through to parents and families as well. The Council very

quickly commissioned Esteem, Multi-Academy Trusts to offer comprehensive support and work with all the special alternative provision schools in the County during Covid-19. Through this work they had convened weekly meetings with special or alternative provision head teachers and supported them on issues such as risk assessing young people to determine whether they were best educated in school or whether their provision could be met at home. This arrangement had also been commended and highlighted as good practice by the Government in a letter to the Trust from the Minister, Baroness Berridge.

Officers working on PPE supplies and home school transport had regularly met with special and alternative provision head teachers. The Council enabled all special schools to order PPE from our own suppliers to ease the burden of accessing it for them and indeed he understood Peak School had taken this opportunity up.

The Council had supported schools with their risk assessments, including the guidance being updated last week. In addition, Council officers had met regularly with primary, secondary, special school and alternative provision head teachers and also formed a school led group called Future Shape Education to help plan the education sector's recovery from Covid-19. The Future Shape Group had been looking at issues such as Early Years' guidance, emotional health and wellbeing for pupils and held two County-wide webinars looking at cross phase transition.

The County Council regularly updated and published Frequently Asked Questions for school leaders around issues such as HR, summer opening and September arrangements, in order to try to digest some of the key information within a rapidly changing situation to ease some of the burden on our school leaders.

The Council had been working with schools and health services within weekly special head teacher meetings in order to share information across the school community and support the return of children back to school through this difficult period.

In terms of the support offered to children and their families, since going into lockdown, the Council had increased the frequency of all contacts and visits to all vulnerable children and young people who were open to our early help and safeguarding department, including specialist teams like care leavers, fostering and youth offending. These had been taking place at least every ten working days and assessments of risk and need on all these cases had updated more frequently to enable us to understand how lockdown was impacting on children and their families and to respond quickly to any changes.

The frequency of visits and risk assessment reviews had enabled a speedy response when families had been in acute distress or in need to prevent family or placement breakdown. For some, this assessment had enabled us to quickly identify if and when short breaks, packages of care or any other specialist support had been needed in response to family crisis. Children's Occupational Therapists had continued to work with families to provide equipment, advice, replace and organise repairs and respond to crises.

A more joined-up process within our SEND services had been developed to ensure all involved with professional agencies were working with these vulnerable children so that they were communicating well, considering all relevant and accessible information in their assessments and coordinating contact and outreach for children and families. It had also meant they had been able to respond more quickly and effectively to any change of circumstances to these very vulnerable children. All SEND children had been allocated an education key worker to support the SEND process.

Parenting courses, parenting assessments and family time had been converted to a virtual platform to support our interventions and outreach to families and a Strategic Partnership Group was developed around predicting the demand as we moved forward. This Group would give consideration to spikes in demand and hidden harm from both a single and multi-agency perspective and response.

A local directory of community-based services had been developed and this had been circulated to partners to enable them to access community resources. This was particularly to support families during the summer period when schools were closed but not exclusively so, and together with schools the Council were also collating a list of early help provision from schools to pass to families to support them during the summer holidays.

A variety of partners, including Children's Services, had also developed a number of virtual resources which had been shared across the partnership of agencies including videos to support future language development and videos to support traumatised children. Practitioner forums and training were also now being delivered virtually supporting partners with their early help offer and their own development.

While this was not an exhaustive list, it showed that the Council had been working tirelessly with partner agencies to support our schools, children and families through the worst of this pandemic. Staff had gone absolutely above and beyond and what makes their achievement so much more impressive is that they have done all of this

while also having to radically redefine the way we operated almost overnight and adjust to everything that the pandemic might have thrown at them personally.

There would always be some families who feel they had needed more support than we had been able to offer but Councillor Dale hoped Councillor George would still join him in paying tribute also to the tireless efforts of staff from across Children's Services in Derbyshire. Thank you.

Councillor George asked the following supplementary question:

Thank you for the response, Councillor Dale, and yes, she did pay tribute to all the support staff as well who had been supporting both families and schools but particularly with children with special needs. It was very difficult using virtual resources at a time like this and so a lot had fallen on both staff and schools and with families who had needed to make sure they had that one-to-one provision in place to support the children with serious difficulties. Councillor George was asking whether the funding for catch-up, which would very much apply to children with special needs, even though they had been in school quite often during the lockdown period, whether that would be applied to special schools and what the County Council would be doing to ensure that those children could get the catch-up that they needed and that families could get the respite that they had so often been lacking because of the circumstances recently?

Councillor Dale responded that he absolutely agreed in terms when we first came into the lockdown situation, the public health advice was very strong that many services needed to stop happening and the burden therefore did fall particularly on families and schools and he recognised that that had been a real challenge for a lot of those parents in that situation.

The question was in relation to the sort of tuition support over the summer holidays, the catch-up learning and the exact guidance on how that could be delivered was still awaited. Special schools were able to access it and the Council were looking very closely at how we supported them in that regard in terms of ensuring that they could access catch-up tuition. Councillor Dale would be very happy to provide further information in writing once that guidance had been clarified.

Councillor George asked for a response to my question on respite breaks because that was the second part of my supplementary which was so important to parents.

Councillor Dale responded that he had referred to that in the answer to the question at the beginning. The Council had clearly to be very careful in terms of the public health guidance around respite. All cases were being risk assessed and where it was deemed appropriate, the Council were trying to provide respite care to parents, but obviously the Council had to balance that against the public health implications of Covid in ensuring we were doing that in a compliant way, so respite had been taking place. It could be argued that there should be more opportunity for it now given that some of the restrictions were easing. Councillor Dale would be very happy to go away and look at that and see what more we could do on that point, but as far as he knew respite had still been happening but it had to be a bit more selective in terms of who we were able to offer that to on a risk assessed basis.

(c) Question from Councillor E Atkins to Councillor B Lewis, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture and Tourism

So far, over last week and the present week, 14 Derbyshire libraries have either re-opened or are about to be reopened. Why have no further provisional re-opening arrangements been even mentioned and why have no libraries whatsoever in the Central Area of the High Peak been listed in the early opening category?

Councillor Lewis wished to reassure Councillor Atkins there was no intention of course to disadvantage anyone. The Council had just come through an unusual set of circumstances so Councillor Lewis welcome the opportunity to provide an update about the Library Service here in Derbyshire and how the Council were responding positively with our reopening plans as we emerged from this pandemic.

In line with Government advice, the Council had been looking at a range of options and exploring opportunities for reopening our libraries and had been helped in our planning by the national tool kit provided by Libraries Connected which was designed to help local authorities reintroduce their services gradually in line with the latest public health advice. Clearly the most important factor in planning a phased return to library buildings, was protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and library customers by making sure all our libraries were safe.

At the moment, the Council were focused on opening the first two tranches of libraries, 14 of our largest libraries out of a total of 45, during July and see how this progressed. There were no specific dates for when all the other libraries would be open as we had very much concentrated on opening those larger busier libraries which give opportunities for just those people Councillor Atkins was talking about, if they could get to them first, and all future reopening would be done on a

phased basis reflecting on any lessons learnt from the earlier openings. The Council's overall aim was naturally to reopen all 45 libraries as quickly as possible, but only when it could be done safely. With our reopening plans, the Council needed to address at all times the practical needs and concerns of the service and cover issues such as risk management; who should return to work; social distancing; behaviour management; cleaning and hygiene and communications to staff and users. The Council had looked at all those issues in all those libraries and we need to consider now and in the future how to operate safely and to further develop those services as community needs shift due to the current crisis.

Councillor Lewis emphasised that there could be significantly more challenges to overcome when we were opening smaller or shared library buildings such as those located in High Peak in terms of space available for example to enable social distancing for customers and staff, as well as very practical issues such as finding enough space to quarantine books safely for the required 72 hours. All of these were particular challenges in some of those smaller shared spaces, so that was why the Council was taking those tentative steps at the beginning of the reopening process and depending on our success, it was hoped to be able to open all libraries, including those in High Peak, as soon as is practically possible.

Councillor Lewis emphasised that the excellent online offer, which provided access to a comprehensive range of electronic resources, goes from strength to strength and was freely available to all Derbyshire residents via the County Council website and had grown exponentially during the Covid crisis. Finally, he had asked for all updates about library reopening plans to be included in future editions of the Members' Newsletter so all Members were kept aware. The current information was also available on the Council website.

53/20 **COUNCIL PLAN REFRESH 2020-21** The Executive Director – Commissioning, Communities and Policy presented the Authority's revised Council Plan Refresh 2020-21.

The Council Plan sets out the future direction of the Council, the outcomes that the Authority was seeking to achieve and priorities to focus effort and resource. In May 2019, Council approved a substantially revised Council Plan for 2019-21, which sets out a smaller number of focused priorities, supported by key deliverables. A review and refresh of the Plan takes place each year to ensure the Plan remained up to date and was fit for purpose. Cabinet recommended the Authority's Council Plan refresh 2020-21, on 16 March 2020 for approval by Full Council.

However, the outbreak of coronavirus and the ensuing pandemic has had a significant impact on the work of the Council and as a result, a further review and refresh of the Council Plan had now taken place. Key changes to the Plan reflected the vital community leadership role the Council had played and would continue to play over the next twelve months, in ensuring work with partners and local communities addressed both the challenges and opportunities presented by Covid-19 and climate change.

In particular, the Plan looked to harness the positive changes resulting from the recent disruption and would ensure the Council continued to:

- Work alongside local communities, partners and businesses, providing strong leadership, support and the reassurance needed to direct people through the crisis. Build on our Derbyshire Spirit and harnesses the increased number of local volunteers who have mobilised during the current pandemic, supporting local communities and the voluntary and community sector to thrive.
- Maximise the opportunities presented by the increase in remote home working and the reduction in travel to accelerate our asset management proposals and reduce our carbon footprint.
- The revised Council Plan refresh 2020-21 was attached at Appendix A to the report. The Plan was supported by a more detailed delivery plan, which had been updated and is attached at Appendix B to the report. The delivery plan sets out clear timescales and lead responsibility. The refreshed Plan and delivery plan were recommended for approval by Full Council. The Council would continue to assess progress through regular monitoring of the delivery.

RESOLVED to approve the Authority's refreshed Council Plan 2020-21.

54/20 **DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES PLANS** The Executive Director – Commissioning, Communities and Policy presented the 2020-21 updates to the Departmental Service Plans 2017-21.

Service Plans set out how each department would contribute to the outcomes and priorities set out in the Council Plan Refresh 2019-21. The Council Plan outcomes, which outlined what the Council was working towards with partners and local people were detailed along with the five priorities outlined in the Council Plan, which provided a focus for effort and resource.

The Service Plans described how departments would work towards achieving the outcomes and priorities set out above and on 16 March 2020, Cabinet recommended the refreshed departmental Service Plans 2020-21 for approval by Full Council. The outbreak of coronavirus and the ensuing pandemic has had a significant impact on the work of the Council and as a result, a further review and refresh of departmental Service Plans had taken place. The revised departmental Service Plans 2020-21, attached to this report, had now been amended to ensure there was a continued focus on the Council's work with partners and communities to tackle both coronavirus and climate change.

RESOLVED to approve the revised 2020-21 update to Departmental Service Plans 2017-21.

55/20 **UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION** The Director of legal Services and Monitoring Officer reported on proposed amendments to the Constitution to ensure that it remained up to date and fit for purpose.

The revised Constitution was implemented in May 2019. However, as part of the regular review of the Constitution, proposed changes have been agreed by the Governance, Ethics and Standards Committee, details of which were presented. Council was recommended to approve the amendments.

RESOLVED to approve the amendments to the Council's Constitution as detailed in the report.

56/20 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION – CONSULTATION ON A MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTED MEMBERS** The Director of legal Services and Monitoring Officer informed the Council of the consultation launched by the Local Government Association (LGA) on the draft Member Code of Conduct which would run for ten weeks from Monday 8 June until Monday 17 August 2020.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life in January 2019, undertook a review of the current standards framework to assure themselves that it was conducive to promoting and maintaining the high standards expected by the public. The review identified some specific areas of concern and identified a number of risks in respect of the current rules around conflicts and declaring of interests, gifts and hospitality and the increased complexity of local government decision making.

The Committee made twenty-six recommendations and identified fifteen recommendations of best practice to improve ethical standards in local government. The recommendations included the suggestion for the

LGA to create an updated Model Code of Conduct to enhance consistency and the quality of local authority codes.

The LGA had now developed a Model Code of Conduct and had indicated that it intended to create additional guidance, working examples and explanatory text. The LGA had also launched consultation on the draft Member Code of Conduct, further details of which were presented. A copy of the Model Code of Conduct was also attached at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED to note the consultation and draft model code of conduct for elected members launched and prepared by the LGA.

57/20 REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNANCE, ETHICS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE FOR THE YEARS 2018-19 AND 2019-20 Council received the Report of the Chairman of the Governance, Ethics and Standards Committee.

Article 11 of the Constitution required the Chairman of the Governance, Ethics and Standards Committee to provide an Annual Report. The refreshed Constitution was implemented in May 2019 and therefore, this was the first annual report provided under those requirements. The report outlined the work done by the Committee over the last year and provided an indication of the work programme for the next municipal year. As this was the first report provided under the requirements of the refreshed Constitution, it covered the municipal years of both 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 in order outline the involvement of the Committee in the preparation of the refreshed Constitution.

The report of the Chairman of the Governance, Ethics and Standards Committee was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED to receive the report of the Chairman of the Governance, Ethics and Standards Committee attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

58/20 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

To confirm the exempt minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 June 2020.