

Council 20th June 2018

Item 3 (a) Questions submitted by the Public pursuant to Rule 8 of the Council Procedure Rules.

i) Question submitted to Cllr Ann Syrett, Leader of the Council by Judith Duvall

The Mineral Plan Community Action Group, was formed to represent the communities of Bolsover, Creswell, Eckington, Barlborough, etc. following an invitation from Derbyshire County Council (DCC) to contribute to their New Mineral Plan consultation process.

We anticipate working very closely with local elected members of Bolsover Town Council, Bolsover District Council and Derbyshire County Council on the development of the New Mineral Plan and specifically on the sections relating to Unconventional Gas Extraction (High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing) otherwise known as 'fracking'.

The group has already held a meeting with Bryn Walters (Principal Planner, Development Plans) and had communication with Michelle Spence (Team Leader, Development Plans) where our outline comments were submitted. We are now planning future meetings with the Mineral Plan officers in order to supply more detailed and fully researched and documented information.

A major concern at the present time is the proposal by the Oil and Gas Industry to take planning applications for exploratory drilling out of the hands of local planning authorities in order to speed up the planning process and the Government appear minded to support this wholly undemocratic step. It is for this reason we feel that a detailed and robust Mineral Plan for Derbyshire is essential in maintaining local control over planning and should be given a high priority.

We have grave concerns over many aspects of fracking with regard to public health, water supply, environmental contamination, noise and traffic management. The roles of the EA, HSE, public utilities for example, Severn Trent Water, together with local rescue service contingency plans should be examined closely as this is a new and wholly untried industry in the UK.

Importantly to note, Inspector Elizabeth Ord at the hearing of the North Yorkshire County Council's Mineral and Waste Development Plan was minded to accept the following proposals:

- Definitions of extraction processes of Conventional Gas Extraction, Exploratory Wells and most importantly, Unconventional Gas Extraction (High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing) should be clarified with some urgency.*
- Set back lines from residential buildings of 500m. (We would press for a minimum of 1000m).*

New research is constantly being resourced and published eg. a recent paper outlining the dangers of UGE in mining areas and proximity to faults was published by Prof. Peter Styles of Keele University (former adviser to David Cameron) in April 2018 advising a set back distance of 850m from major fault lines.

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At all times the Community Action Group wishes to work constructively and consult with local and county elected representatives together with their respective planning officers in order that best practice for Derbyshire is achieved.

We would like to ask the BDC:

For their recognition and acceptance of this group and its aims of working towards a comprehensive and detailed Mineral Plan together with how, in their view, this can best be achieved?

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Extract from the Council's Constitution

**PART 4
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Council Procedure Rules

8. Questions by the Public

8.1 General.

- (a) Members of the public may ask questions of members of the Cabinet at ordinary meetings of the Council.
- (b) Time allowed for questions and answers shall not, without the consent of the Council, exceed 15 minutes, or in the case of one questioner, 5 minutes.
- (c) Questions and responses shall not be a matter of debate.

8.2 Notice of Questions.

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Monitoring Officer no later than midday seven clear working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must name the Member of the Council to whom it is to be put.

8.3 Number of Questions.

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question and no more than one question may be asked on behalf of any one organisation.

8.4 Scope of Questions.

The Monitoring Officer may reject a question if:

- (a) it is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the District;
- (b) it is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- (c) it is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months;
- (d) it requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information;
- (e) it breaches any procedure rule;
- (f) it relates to an item on the agenda for that Council meeting; or
- (g) it relates to a District Council planning application that is in the process of being determined.

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If a question is rejected the person who submitted it will be notified in writing before the meeting and given the reasons for the rejection.

8.5 Record of Questions.

The Monitoring Officer will enter each question in a book open to public inspection and will immediately send a copy of the question to the member to whom it is to be put. Rejected questions will include reasons for rejection. Copies of all questions will be circulated to all members and will be made available to the public attending the meeting.

8.6 Order of Questions.

Questions will be asked in the order of which notice of them was received, except that the Chairman of the Council may group together similar questions.

8.7 Asking the Question at the Meeting.

The Chairman of the Council will invite the questioner to put the question to the member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, the question will not be dealt with.

8.8 Supplementary Question.

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one brief supplementary question without notice to the member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original request or reply. The Chairman of the Council may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in rule 8.5 above or if the question takes the form of a speech.

8.9 Response

An answer may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer
- (b) where the desired information is in a council publication or another published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

8.10 Reference of Question to the Executive or a Committee.

Unless the Chair of the Council decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any Councillor may move that the matter raised by a question be referred to the Executive or the appropriate board or Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.