



The Arc
High Street
Clowne
S43 4JY

To: Chair & Members of the Council

Monday 22nd July 2024

Contact: Amy Bryan
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Dear Councillor

COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 31st July 2024 at 10:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 3 onwards.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. S. Fielden". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

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- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

COUNCIL AGENDA

***Wednesday 31st July 2024 at 10:00 hours taking place in the Council Chamber, The Arc,
Clowne***

Item No.		Page No.(s)
1.	Apologies For Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of: a) any business on the agenda b) any matters arising out of those items and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
3.	Chair's Announcements To receive any announcements that the Chair of the Council may desire to lay before the meeting.	
4.	Minutes To approve the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 22 nd May 2024. To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 22 nd May 2024.	4 - 21
5.	Productivity Plan	22 - 69
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10.	Appointment of Member Champions	129 - 133
11.	Bolsover Place Launch (Presentation)	Verbal Report
12.	Chairman's Closing Remarks	

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillors David Bennett, Anne Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Amanda Davis, Mary Dooley, Louise Fox, Steve Fritchley, Justin Gilbody, Duncan Haywood, Rob Hiney-Saunders, Cathy Jeffery, Lucy King, Tom Kirkham, Duncan McGregor, Clive Moesby, Tom Munro, Sandra Peake, Lisa Powell, Jeanne Rospin, John Ritchie, Phil Smith, Emma Stevenson, Janet Tait, Ashley Taylor, Catherine Tite, Rita Turner, Vicky Waplington, Deborah Watson, Jen Wilson, Carol Wood and Jane Yates.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Theresa Fletcher (Service Director Finance & Section 151 Officer), Jim Fieldsend (Service Director Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Pam Brown (Service Director Executive, Corporate Services and Partnerships), Sarah Kay (Assistant Director of Planning and Planning Policy), Louise Arnold (Legal Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer), Thomas Dunne-Wragg (Scrutiny Officer), Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer) and Amy Bryan (Governance and Civic Manager).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Ruth Jaffray (Chair of Standards Committee).

CL1-24/25 ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

The Chief Executive sought nominations for the position of Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

Moved by Councillor Steve Fritchley and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor

RESOLVED that Councillor Tom Munro be appointed as Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

Having signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and taken on the Chains of Officer, Councillor Tom Munro took the Chair.

Councillor Tom Munro thanked Members for nominating him and he undertook to be fair and even handed in the role.

CL2-24/25 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Tom Munro

RESOLVED that Councillor Rita Turner be appointed Vice Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

Having made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and taken the Vice Chair's medallion, Councillor Rita Turner took the Vice Chair's seat.

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CL3-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Will Fletcher, Donna Hales, Chris Kane and Sally Renshaw.

CL4-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

CL5-24/25 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair was delighted to announce that he had raised £3,500 over the past year for his chosen charity, the Royal British Legion. Unfortunately, no representative from the charity had been able to attend the meeting so the cheque presentation would be rearranged.

CL6-24/25 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Rita Turner
RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th March 2024 be approved as a correct record.

CL7-24/25 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor Steve Fritchley, Leader of the Council, stated that the Members of the Executive would be:

Councillor Duncan McGregor	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder – Corporate Governance
Councillor John Ritchie	Growth
Councillor Sandra Peake	Housing
Councillor Mary Dooley	Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Clive Moesby	Resources
Councillor Anne Clarke	Environment

The Members of the Junior Executive would be:

Councillor Phil Smith	Growth
Councillor Janet Tait	Housing
Councillor Jane Yates	Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Duncan Haywood	Resources
Councillor Jeanne Raspin	Environment

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CL8-24/25

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES AND PROPORTIONALITY 2024/25

Council considered a report in relation to the establishment of the Council's committees and proportionality for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

In line with the provisions within legislation and the Council's Constitution, the Annual Meeting of Council was required to:

- appoint at least one Scrutiny Committee and other such committees as the Council considered appropriate to deal with matters which were neither reserved to Council nor were Executive Functions;
- decide the size and terms of reference for those committees;
- decide the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the Political Balance rules.

The size of each committee were set out in Appendix 1 to the report. There were no changes proposed to the current established structure and the terms of reference for each committee would remain as currently set out in the Council's Constitution. Appendix 2 to the report showed the allocation of Committee seats which best met the requirements of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as far as was reasonably practicable.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor David Bennett

RESOLVED that (1) the Council's committees, their terms of reference and the size, as set out in Appendix 1 be established for the 2024/25 Municipal Year in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.1(k);

(2) Council agrees the allocation of seats on committees as set out in Appendix 3, in accordance with the political balance rules;

(3) authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and relevant Committee Chair (when appointed), to make amendments to the terms of reference for committees arising within the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

(Monitoring Officer/Governance & Civic Manager)

CL9-24/25

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS

Council considered a report in relation to nominations for Members to serve on committees and advisory groups for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

The committees were subject to the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The advisory groups were not subject to the same political balance requirements.

Nominations received from political groups in advance of the meeting were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

COUNCIL

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Catherine Tite
RESOLVED that the nominations to committees and advisory groups as set out below be agreed:

Committees

Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee

Councillors David Bennett, Rowan Clarke, Justin Gilbody, Chris Kane, Lucy King, Sally Renshaw, Janet Tait and Jane Yates

Local Growth Scrutiny Committee

Councillors Will Fletcher, Duncan Haywood, Tom Kirkham, Tom Munro, Jeanne Raspin, Ross Walker, Jen Wilson

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

Councillors Amanda Davis, Louise Fox, Donna Hales, Lisa Powell, Phil Smith, Rita Turner, Victoria Waplington, Deborah Watson

Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Councillors Rob Hiney-Saunders, Mark Hinman, Cathy Jeffery, Emma Stevenson, Ashley Taylor, Catherine Tite, Carol Wood

Employee Appeals Committee

Councillors Steve Fritchley, Duncan McGregor, Rita Turner
Deputies – Councillors Jane Yates, Rowan Clarke, Janet Tait

Employment and Personnel Committee

Councillor Mary Dooley, Duncan McGregor, Tom Munro, Sandra Peake, Deborah Watson

General Licensing Committee

Councillors David Bennett, Anne Clarke, Amanda Davis, Mary Dooley, Will Fletcher, Lisa Powell, Jeanne Raspin, Emma Stevenson, Ashley Taylor, Rita Turner

Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee

Councillors David Bennett, Anne Clarke, Amanda Davis, Mary Dooley, Will Fletcher, Lisa Powell, Jeanne Raspin, Emma Stevenson, Ashley Taylor, Rita Turner

Planning Committee

Councillors Rob Hiney-Saunders, Chris Kane, Duncan McGregor, Tom Munro, John Ritchie, Phil Smith, Janet Tait, Deborah Watson, Jen Wilson, Carol Wood

Safety Committee

Councillors Amanda Davis, Justin Gilbody, Tom Munro, Jeanne Raspin, Jane Yates

Audit Committee

Councillors Cathy Jeffery, Chris Kane, Tom Munro, Lisa Powell, Carol Wood (and 2 co-opted members)

Standards Committee

Councillors Anne Clarke, Louise Fox, Justin Gilbody, Duncan Haywood, Tom Kirkham, Jane Yates (and 1 co-opted member)

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Union/Employee Consultation Committee

Councillors Rowan Clarke, Mary Dooley, Duncan Haywood, Sandra Peake, Ross Walker, Vicky Waplington

Joint Committees

ICT Share Services Committee

Councillors David Bennett, Steve Fritchley and Clive Moesby

Shared Services Scrutiny Committee (also known as Joint Scrutiny Panel)

Councillors Will Fletcher and (two vacancies – names to be confirmed)

Advisory Groups

Pleasley Park and Vale Conservation Area Joint Advisory Group

Councillors Chris Kane, Tom Kirkham, Tom Munro, Janet Tait, Catherine Tite

Local Plan Implementation Advisory Group

Councillors Rob Hiney-Saunders, Chris Kane, Duncan McGregor, Tom Munro, John Ritchie, Phil Smith, Janet Tait, Deborah Watson, Jen Wilson, Carol Wood

Member Development Working Group

Councillors Rowan Clarke, Mary Dooley, Louise Fox, Justin Gilbody, Cathy Jeffery, Sandra Peake, Jen Wilson

Tenant Participation Review and Development Group

Councillors Sandra Peake, Janet Tait, Ashley Taylor, Rita Turner, Jane Yates

(Monitoring Officer/Governance & Civic Manager)

CL10-24/25 NOMINATIONS OF CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES

Members gave consideration to the submitted nominations for Chairs and Vice Chairs and the Chair sought any further nominations from the floor.

Councillor Deborah Watson stated that as one of the longest standing Councillors, she was disappointed that once again the Chairs and Vice Chairs had already been selected by the administration in advance of the meeting.

The following positions were contested and were put to the vote as follows:

A vote was held on the appointment of Vice Chair of the Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee, nominations had been received for both Councillor Sally Renshaw and Councillor Justin Gilbody. Councillor Sally Renshaw was appointed as Vice Chair of Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.

There had been only one nomination submitted for the other positions being considered. Any bodies not referred to would appoint the Chair at the first meeting.

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RESOLVED that the following be appointed Chairs and Vice Chairs for the 2024/25 Municipal Year:

Audit Committee

Chair – Councillor Tom Munro

Vice Chair – Ruth Jaffray (Independent Appointed Person)

Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Chair – Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders

Vice Chair – Councillor Ashley Taylor

Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

Chair – Councillor Donna Hales

Vice Chair – Councillor Rita Turner

Local Growth Scrutiny Committee

Chair – Councillor Tom Munro

Vice Chair – Councillor Jen Wilson

Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee

Chair – Councillor David Bennett

Vice Chair – Councillor Sally Renshaw

Licensing Committee(s)

Chair – Councillor Emma Stevenson

Vice Chair – Councillor Amanda Davis

Planning Committee

Chair – Councillor Tom Munro

Vice Chair – Councillor Chris Kane

Employment and Personnel Committee

Chair – Councillor Duncan McGregor

Vice Chair – Councillor Deborah Watson

Standards Committee

Chair – Ruth Jaffray (Independent Appointed Person)

Vice Chair – Councillor Jane Yates

Local Plan Implementation Working Group

Chair – Councillor Tom Munro

Vice Chair – Councillor Chris Kane

(Monitoring Officer/Governance & Civic Manager)

CL11-24/25 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Council considered a report in relation to the list of Outside Bodies (Council functions) appointments for 2024/25.

No nominations had been received so it was proposed that the Monitoring Officer be

COUNCIL

given delegated authority to make the appointments.

The term of office for each appointment would run until the date of the next Annual Council meeting in 2025, unless otherwise specified.

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make the appointments to Outside Bodies (Council functions).

(Monitoring Officer/Governance & Civic Manager)

CL12-24/25 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer presented a report proposing to approve the Scheme of Delegation as outlined in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

It was a requirement under Council Procedure Rule 1.1 (o) of the Council's Constitution that the Annual Council Meeting agree the Scheme of Delegation.

The Scheme of Delegation outlines the specific delegation of Council and Executive Functions to officers. The scheme includes general powers delegated to all senior managers together with specific powers delegated to the:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Service Director Finance and Section 151 Officer
- Service Director Corporate and Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

The scheme also outlined the Proper Officer Provisions.

There was one proposed change which had been considered by Standards Committee on 15th April 2024. The change was to enable the Strategic Director of Services to purchase vehicles above the Key Decision threshold. The report explained that the Council sets the budget for capital spend, including an amount for replacement vehicles. The purchase of individual vehicles was then approved by either officers under delegated powers or Executive if the value of the vehicles to be purchased exceeded the Key Decision threshold for capital spend, i.e. £150,000. It was therefore proposed that the Officer Delegation Scheme be amended to enable the Strategic Director of Services to agree to the purchase of all vehicles. This power would only be used where the Council's Contract Procedure Rules had been complied with.

The Scheme of Delegation for Officers was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor David Bennett

RESOLVED that the Scheme of Delegation for Officers, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(Monitoring Officer/Governance & Civic Manager)

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CL13-24/25

OPERATION OF URGENCY RULES AND THRESHOLDS FOR KEY DECISIONS

Council considered a report which advised Members of any Key Decisions taken under statutory Urgency Rules in the previous 12 months, any decision taken under Urgency Rules with the Council's Scrutiny Rules (this was where call-in provisions were waived as the decision was urgent and could not be reasonably deferred), and to set the Key Decision threshold for the forthcoming year in line with the constitutional requirement at Annual Council meetings.

The report set out that one Key Decision had been taken using Special Urgency rules in the previous 12 months. This had been a decision in respect of a Public Space Protection Order.

The report stated that all Key Decisions were subject to the Council's call-in provisions which were set out in the Scrutiny Rules. Call-in provisions may be waived only where a decision was urgent. A decision was urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interests. The Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee (or, in their absence the Chair of Council or Vice Chair of Council) must agree both that the decision proposed was reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency were required to be reported to Council. In the past 12 months, five decisions had been taken using urgency provisions to waive call-in. These decisions had been:

Lease in respect of Property at Former Construction Block, The Arc (Decision by the Chief Executive on 17th July 2023)

Dog Management Public Space Protection Order (Decision by the Chief Executive on 25th October 2023)

Renewal of Insurance Policies (Decision by the Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer on 29th September 2023)

Appointment of Contractor to Deliver Hyper-Local New Zero Innovation Programme (Executive – 6th November 2023)

Award of three-year Idox Software Maintenance Contract (Executive – 15th April 2024)

The report recommended that the Key Decision thresholds remained the same, which were:

- Revenue Income, Savings or Expenditure - £75,000
- Capital Income of Expenditure - £150,000

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Tom Munro

RESOLVED that (1) the decisions that had been taken over the past 12 months under Special Urgency Rules, be noted.

(2) the decision that had been taken over the past 12 months under Urgency Provisions in the Council's Scrutiny Rules, be noted.

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(3) the financial thresholds for Key Decisions be maintained at £75,000 (Revenue) and £150,000 (Capital).

(Monitoring Officer/Governance & Civic Manager)

CL14-24/25 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Council considered the Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2023/24, presented by Mrs Ruth Jaffray, Chair of Standards Committee.

The report highlighted the work undertaken by the Standards Committee during 2023/24 and included updating the Councillor Complaint Procedure, establishing a Sub-Committee to deal with Member complaints, reviewing the Council's Constitution, policy review work, review gifts and hospitality and attendance at Member training, as well as trying to increase the public awareness of role of Standards Committee and Councillor conduct.

Councillor Clive Moesby thanked Ruth Jaffray for presenting the report and for all the work undertaken in the role of Chair of the Standards Committee.

Moved by Councillor Clive Moesby and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor
RESOLVED that the Standards Committee Annual Report be noted.

CL15-24/25 CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair reported that this chosen charity for 2024/25 would be the Chesterfield Royal Hospital Trust Charity.

The meeting concluded at 10:48 hours.

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at 10:49 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Tom Munro in the Chair

Councillors Rita Turner (Vice-Chair), David Bennett, Anne Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Amanda Davis, Mary Dooley, Louise Fox, Steve Fritchley, Justin Gilbody, Duncan Haywood, Rob Hiney-Saunders, Cathy Jeffery, Lucy King, Tom Kirkham, Duncan McGregor, Clive Moesby, Sandra Peake, Lisa Powell, Jeanne Raspin, John Ritchie, Phil Smith, Emma Stevenson, Janet Tait, Ashley Taylor, Catherine Tite, Vicky Waplington, Deborah Watson, Jen Wilson, Carol Wood and Jane Yates.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Theresa Fletcher (Service Director Finance & Section 151 Officer), Jim Fieldsend (Service Director Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Pam Brown (Service Director Executive, Corporate Services and Partnerships), Victoria Dawson (Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement), Sarah Kay (Assistant Director of Planning and Planning Policy), Ken Eastwood (Assistant Director of Environmental Health), Louise Arnold (Legal Team Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer), Charmaine Terry (Environmental Health Team Manager (Licensing)), and Amy Bryan (Governance and Civic Manager).

CL16-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Will Fletcher, Donna Hales, Chris Kane and Sally Renshaw.

CL17-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

CL18-24/25 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair had no announcements to make.

CL19-24/25 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 8, Members of the Public were able to ask questions to an Executive Member about the Council's activities.

Question submitted to Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Fritchley by Andrew Joesbury

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Dear Councillors,

Bolsover district has been allocated £15 million from the Government Regeneration Fund.

This is from the 2019 district plan:

South Normanton

6.64 South Normanton is the most southerly of the four towns. It is also one of the poorest performing shopping areas, based on our 2017 Study. Only 1.2% of the whole of the study area's convenience expenditure takes place in South Normanton; the same as in Bolsover; but only a fifth of the spending that takes place in Clowne.

6.65 At 2.1%, the amount of comparison shopping seems strong. However, this includes the East Midlands Designer Outlet; a major out of town clothing and comparison shopping destination; which is likely to be the major part of this expenditure and is divorced from the town centre by around 1.5 miles, the M1 and the A38 dual carriageway.

6.66 Like Bolsover, the most concerning statistic is that South Normanton only retains around 20% of its immediate catchment zone's convenience expenditure. This shows that whilst the centre is not playing a role in attracting shoppers from a wider area, it retains very little of the food shopping expenditure from the centre of the town.

6.67 The Regeneration Framework, identifies 3 main village centre projects:

- a) Redesign and re-establish Market Place as the heart of the Village – High priority urban design project and delivery to improve pedestrian movement and experience in the village centre, including improved signage and replacement of the Market Place clock
- b) New and enhanced connections to greenways – Development of connections to the Blackwell Trail and upgrades along The Common and Alfreton Road to create a 'shared route'

Taken from the Vision Bolsover District 2

The Council's ambition for town centre development is to support and invest in the 4 town centres to make them more sustainable and thriving places for communities to live and enjoy.

To improve the physical appearance, provide flexible space to create shopping havens, cafe culture, community venues etc.

To work with our partners (parish councils) to develop the 4 town centres and continue to bid for funding.

Funding is normally not available unless the project is designed, planned, costed and had preliminary planning permission from the stakeholders, otherwise known as being 'shovel ready'.

Before the last election councillors from the south of the district were invited to the

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meeting of the Growth Committee.

The biggest complaint was that the majority of funding went to the north of the district.

After some debate the committee agreed that South Normanton should be used as a pilot scheme, with help from the council, to become shovel ready to allow for application for funding as soon as it was available.

As proof of the majority of funding going to the north of the district these next points are taken from the In Touch and Bolsover Vision 2.

South Normanton and the south of the district is hardly mentioned.

The mention of South Normanton is that '£600k has been invested for new or refurbished play equipment or improvements to the sports pitches in South Normanton, Bolsover, Tibshelf and Pleasley.'

The only thing that I know in South Normanton of is the drainage of the Boundary rugby field, which came out of section 106 funding.

Meanwhile, from the publications

- £1.5m invested in Go Active in Clowne

- Introduction of 2 growth plans for Shirebrook and Creswell.

- £9.6m for the crematorium in Shirebrook.

- Assisted with the building of the £3m Cresswell Heritage Centre and well being centre.

- £100k from Safer Streets fund towards a new skate park in Bolsover.

- Cresswell Crag discovery trail.

- Spent £1m on the Tangent extension in Shirebrook.

My questions are 'How are the councillors and leadership going to make the £15m is allocated fairly?

'The district plan of 2019 hasn't made any improvement to South Normanton in 5 years so when is the Bolsover district vision 2 going to improve the town centres?'

'Why wasn't the agreed Growth Committee motion of using South Normanton as a pilot scheme acted on?'

As only one question was permitted Andrew Joesbury confirmed that his question to the Leader of the Council was: How are the Councillors and leadership going to make sure the £15m is allocated fairly?

Councillor Steve Fritchley, Leader of the Council, responded firstly with the background to the £15m Regeneration Funding, which had been announced on 22nd November 2023.

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The funding criteria had been sent to the Council on 16th January 2024, which included that funding could be spent on one or multiple projects within any locality within the Council's jurisdiction. The Council had had 11 working days to draw up a programme of works that could be delivered by March 2026. The Council's proposal had been submitted on 31st January 2024. Mark Fletcher, MP for Bolsover had refused to support part of the programme that was outside Bolsover Town Centre. Councillor Fritchley stated that he had had a zoom meeting with Mark Fletcher MP, who had said he would not be swayed. Since then, a further meeting had been held with the MP and Jacob Young, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Levelling Up) on 25th April 2024. An amended submission was then drafted which removed the Blackwell site and added the purchase of the Co-op. The MP for Bolsover formally removed their objection by letter on 15th May and the Council was now waiting for formal approval from the Minister. Councillor Fritchley added that as far as he was aware the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was happy with the submission. Councillor Fritchley added that there was some funding included for public realm so there could still be work included within South Normanton.

Andrew Joesbury asked a supplementary question. South Normanton was the gateway to the District and had the highest footfall/biggest attraction of the area (McArthur Glen) and it would be good if some visitors went into South Normanton village, but it needed investment to make it more attractive and to encourage businesses into the empty shops. Andrew Joesbury stated that things always happened in the north of the District, for example in Bolsover and Shirebrook Market Place. He added that he wanted the leader to lead and to help parish councils to improve their areas so what would the Leader do to make that happen?

Councillor Steve Fritchley replied that if/when the Regeneration Funding had been approved, South Normanton would have the opportunity to work with the District Council to get something under the public realm element.

CL20-24/25 MOTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Councillors were able to submit Motions on Notice for consideration at meetings of Council.

a) The following motion was submitted for consideration by Councillor Donna Hales

MOTION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY TO COUNCIL: A FULLY FUNDED, PROPER PAY RISE FOR COUNCIL AND SCHOOL WORKERS

This council notes:

Since 2010, local government workers have lost an average of 25% from the value of their pay. Our staff are experiencing an ongoing cost of living crisis. Since 2010 the cost of living has risen by 60%, more and more local government workers have been pushed into debt, and their basic spending has overtaken their income, with 1 in 5 households having less than £100 to spare each month. This is a terrible situation for anyone to find themselves in.

At the same time, workers have experienced ever-increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, the local government workforce has fallen by 30% as a

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result of job cuts. This has had a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three-quarters of the local government workforce.

Local government continues to show how indispensable it is. But staff are increasingly leaving the sector for better paid jobs elsewhere, for example in retail, leaving local authorities with a massive skills gap, and vacancies in a range of key services, including in social care, education and youth services.

Local government finance is in an enormously difficult state, facing an estimated funding gap of more than £3.5 billion for 2024/25. Recent research shows that if the Government were to fully fund the unions' 2024 pay claim, around half of the money would be recouped thanks to increased tax revenue, reduced expenditure on benefits and tax credits, and increased consumer spending in the local economy.

This council believes:

Our workers are public service super-heroes. They keep our communities clean and safe, look after those in need and keep our, neighbourhoods, towns and cities running.

Without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services our residents rely on would not be deliverable.

Local government workers deserve a proper real-terms pay increase. The Government needs to take responsibility and fully fund this increase; it should not put the burden on local authorities whose funding has been cut to the bone.

This council resolves to:

Support the pay claim submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers, for an increase of £3,000 or 10%, whichever is the greater.

Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim, working with the unions to present a united front in defence of the local government workforce.

Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government.

Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and consider practical ways in which the council can support the campaign.

Encourage all local government workers to join a union.

Councillor Donna Hales was not present at the meeting so Councillor Anne Clarke moved the Motion and it was seconded by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders.

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the Council (1) support the pay claim submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers, for an increase of £3,000 or 10%, whichever is the greater.

(2) Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to

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central government to fund the NJC pay claim, working with the unions to present a united front in defence of the local government workforce.

(3) Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government.

(4) Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and consider practical ways in which the council can support the campaign.

(5) Encourage all local government workers to join a union.

CL21-24/25 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL - SCHEME OF COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCES

Council considered a report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The report set out the recommendations and reasons of the IRP, which in summary recommended no change to the level of allowances. Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was the current Members' Allowances Scheme and at Appendix 2 was the report of the IRP.

The recommendations of the IRP were:

Basic Allowance – Recommendation: no change to the level of Basic Allowance

Special Responsibility Allowance – Recommendation: no change to the level of Special Responsibility Allowance

Other Parts of the Allowance Scheme – Recommendation: no change

Next Review of Allowance Scheme – Recommendation: the Allowances Scheme be reviewed again in three years (unless there was a particular need to address something within that period.)

Moved by Councillor Steve Fritchley and seconded by Councillor David Bennett
RESOLVED that (1) the recommendations of the IRP be agreed in full;

(2) the Allowances Scheme be reviewed again in three years;

(3) the Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer be delegated authority to amend the Members Allowance Scheme in line with the Council's decision and to publish the new scheme as required.

(Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer)

CL22-24/25 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Council considered a report of the Chair of the Employment and Personnel Committee, which sought agreement for budget increases for the establishment of two posts that had been agreed at Employment and Personnel Committee on 17th April 2024.

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The proposals agreed at the Employment and Personnel Committee were to establish two new posts, one Land and Property Assistant and one Communications Officer. The Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer confirmed that the budget required for each post would be:

Land and Property Assistant (a full-time post at Grade 4 - £34,594 - £36,278 including on costs)

Communications Officer (a full-time post at Grade 6 - £38,810 - £41,892 including on costs).

The additional posts would require an increase to the Council's General Fund budget.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Deborah Watson
RESOLVED that the growth in salary budgets as recommended by the Employment and Personnel Committee on 17th April 2024 be approved.

(Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer)

CL23-24/25 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S POLICY UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Council considered a report which sought adoption of the revised Statement of Principles under the Licensing Act 2003.

The report explained that the Licensing Act 2003 imposed a statutory requirement upon the Council to prepare and publish a Statement of Principles every five years. The previous Statement of Principles had been published in 2019 and was now due for renewal.

The Joint Environmental Health Service had conducted an initial review of the Policy and had identified a number of amendments necessary to bring the Policy up to date. In summary, the proposed amendments aimed to achieve the following:

- Ensure the policy was consistent with legislation and statutory guidance
- Increase the clarity of the Policy
- Improve the standards of premises in the District through the recommendation of more robust management practices
- Provide clarity on delegations
- Update local demographics.

The draft policy had been considered by the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee and the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee, after which a six-week public consultation had run from 26th February 2024 to 7th April 2024. No responses had been received during the consultation period and a proposed final version of the Policy had been considered by the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee on 29th April 2024.

The revised Statement of Principles under the Licensing Act 2003 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Moved by Councillor Anne Clarke and seconded by Councillor Emma Stevenson
RESOLVED that, as recommended by the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee, the

COUNCIL

revised Statement of Principles under the Licensing Act 2003 be adopted and take effect immediately.

(Assistant Director of Environmental Health)

CL24-24/25 WEEKLY COLLECTION OF FOOD WASTE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Council considered a report which sought approval for the acceptance of new burdens capital grant funding for the introduction of weekly food waste collection arrangements and to approve capital funding for the purchase of vehicles and containers to meet the Council's new weekly food waste collection duty.

The report explained that from 1st April 2026, the Council had to undertake weekly collection of food waste from all domestic households. This had to be separate from waste collected in black (residual), burgundy (dry mixed recycling) and green (garden) bins.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had awarded new burdens funding to the Council, details on which were set out in the report. The Streetscene (Waste Services) Team did not consider the funding assumptions to be sufficient and had sent a funding review request to DEFRA.

Regardless of the DEFRA new burdens funding allocated, the capital cost to the Council of implementing weekly food waste collections was estimated to be £1,021,408. Therefore, to ensure the Council was able to implement the collections by 1st April 2026, Council was asked to approve a budget for the full cost of meeting the new duty consisting of £699,908 guaranteed funding awarded, leaving a funding shortfall of £321,500. The shortfall of £321,500 would potentially need to be funded by the Council should the funding review request submitted to DEFRA be unsuccessful.

Approval for budget to cover the potential shortfall in funding was being sought now to allow the procurement of vehicles and waste containers to ensure the new duty of weekly food waste collections could be met by the deadline.

Moved by Councillor Anne Clarke and seconded by Councillor David Bennett

RESOLVED that a budget be added to the capital programme of £1,021,408. This would be funded from an external grant of £699,908 as a minimum, with £321,500 funded by the Council from available capital resources, including prudential borrowing, if the outcome of the DEFRA review request was unfavourable.

(Strategic Director of Services/Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer)

CL25-24/25 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Moved by Councillor Rita Turner and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not

COUNCIL

in the public interest for that to be revealed.

[The category of exempt information is stated after each Minute].

CL26-24/25 STOCK CONDITION SURVEY

Council considered a report which sought approval to allocate budget from the Housing Revenue Account Development Reserve for a Stock Condition Survey of the Council's Housing Revenue Account Dwelling Stock.

The report stated that in line with best practice, and the updated Consumer Standards, a stock condition survey was needed, given that it was now ten years since the previous survey had been undertaken. The new survey would seek to provide a comprehensive and accurate stock condition dataset enabling the Council to effectively maintain and improve the housing stock, inform decisions about procurement and investment priorities, as well as ensuring that the Council met its statutory and regulatory landlord obligations.

The report set out details of the expected cost and recommended procurement route.

Moved by Councillor Sandra Peake and seconded by Councillor John Ritchie

RESOLVED that budget be allocated from the Housing Revenue Account Development Reserve for a Stock Condition Survey of the Council's Housing Revenue Account Dwelling Stock.

(Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer/Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement)

[Paragraph 3]

CL27-24/25 CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11:38 hours.

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of Council on 31st July 2024

Productivity Plan

Report of the Chief Executive

Classification	This report is public
Report By	Karen Hanson, Chief Executive Officer

PURPOSE / SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To provide Council with details of the Productivity Plan submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

REPORT DETAILS

1 Update

- 1.1 On 16th April 2024, Simon Hoare MP, and the *then* Minister for Local Government, wrote to all Councils requesting the submission of a Productivity Plan by 19th July 2024 (**see Appendix 1**). This request was received following the Local Government Finance Settlement.
- 1.2 His letter states, *'Local Government has already done a huge amount in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency. However, lockdown and post-lockdown has proved challenging, and you are looking for new ways to go further. These new plans will help us to understand what is already working well across the whole country, what the common themes are, whether there are any gaps and what more we need to do to unlock future opportunities.'*
- 1.3 The letter also stated the Government was not looking to impose 'excessive burdens' and would not be issuing a formal template. It requested a few pages of narrative from each council to set out what we have done in recent years, alongside our current plans to transform the organisation and services. The letter then provides 25 suggested questions under 4 main headings as a guide. These headings are:
 - How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.
 - How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.
 - Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.
 - The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

The full set of questions are contained within **Appendix 1**.

- 1.4 The Minister has been clear that “Individual plans will not be rated or scored”, and that the plans are being commissioned to provide an “understanding of what is happening across the sector”.
- 1.5 As with other Councils, Bolsover District Council uses a range of frameworks, to monitor and oversee our efficiency and effectiveness. These include our performance framework, our financial management and budget setting processes, and our overarching governance frameworks, several of which have been refreshed recently.
- 1.6 The Council’s Productivity Plan, attached at **Appendix 2**, was taken to a meeting of Cabinet and Junior Cabinet Members on 15th July 2024 for discussion and endorsement. It was then submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by the deadline of the 19th July, and uploaded to the Council’s website as required.
- 1.7 Following the General Election, the new Government have not yet confirmed whether they will require Productivity Plans in the future or whether a different mechanism for measuring productivity will be developed.

2 **Reasons for Recommendation**

To ensure all Councillors receive a copy of the Council’s Productivity Plan for information.

3 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

Member oversight of the Productivity Plan is a requirement set out in **Appendix 1**. Therefore, there is no alternative option.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the Council’s Productivity Plan.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – Finance

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Staffing: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report
On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Details: Portfolio Holder- Finance

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No.	Title
Appendix 1	Letter from Simon Hoare MP dated 16 th April 2024
Appendix 2	Bolsover District Council's Productivity Plan 2024



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Simon Hoare MP
Minister for Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

16 April 2024

Dear Chief Executive

Productivity in Local Government

As you know, the Government is reviewing productivity across all public services and local government is, of course, part of that exercise. The recent [Local Government Finance Settlement](#) announced that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans. This letter formally begins that process.

May I first thank you for your very helpful engagement with my officials. Your views and thoughts have been valuable in shaping this approach to make it as useful as possible for all of us.

Local government has already done a huge amount in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency. However, lockdown and post-lockdown has proved challenging, and you are looking for new ways to go further. These new plans will help us understand what is already working well across the whole country, what the common themes are, whether there are any gaps and what more we need to do to unlock future opportunities. We will share these important lessons across the sector.

Productivity is not one-dimensional, and I would encourage you to consider the various facets that encompass the drive for greater productivity. When developing your plans, please think broadly and include reference to not only how you run your organisation, but also how you run the public services you provide and how you provide place leadership. It is with this wide view that we can ensure we are providing value for money for residents.

I am not looking to impose excessive burdens. I am not issuing you with a formal template or a detailed list of criteria to meet. I expect your plans to be three to four pages in length, and to set out what you have done in recent years, alongside your current plans, to transform your organisation and services. I do not want to specify a list of metrics you must report, but I do want to understand how you will monitor and assess your plans to assure yourselves and your residents that they will be delivered.

The plans should consider the below themes and where appropriate, should reference the work your council undertakes alongside other public services, such as the NHS and police.

1. How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.

Questions to consider:

- how has the organisation changed in recent years to become more productive? You may wish to consider what you have done around staffing, structures, operating models etc;
- how do you measure productivity in your organisation?
- what changes have you made to improve services, and what effects have those had?
- what are your current plans for transformation over the next two years and how will you measure the effects of those changes?

- looking ahead, which service has greatest potential for savings if further productivity gains can be found? What do you estimate these savings to be?
- what role could capital spending play in transforming existing services or unlocking new opportunities? If you have already used capital spending to boost growth or improve services, we would be interested in learning more;
- what preventative approaches you have undertaken and can the value of these be quantified?
- are there wider locally-led reforms that could help deliver high quality public services and improve the sustainability and resilience of your authority?

2. How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

Questions to consider:

- what are your existing plans to improve the quality of the data you collect; how do you use it and how do you make it available to residents?
- are there particular barriers from legacy systems?
- how often do you share data with other organisations, and do you find this useful?
- Are there opportunities to use new technology to improve workflows and systems, such as predictive analytics and AI?

3. Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.

I know we will share the aim to reduce waste wherever we can and, while you have all made huge strides in recent years, no organisation is ever 100% efficient. You should set out your plans to reduce wasteful or “gold-plated” spend.

Questions to consider:

- how do you approach identifying and reducing waste in the organisation? How do you monitor progress?
- where have you followed invest to save and what was the result?
- how much time and money do you spend on staff EDI training (internal and external), networks, and other programmes? How many EDI Champions do you have as an organisation? How do you log and report the time and money spent on EDI related activity? How do you assess the effectiveness of that training?
- what percentage of total staff budget is spent on a) agency and b) consultants? How do you assess value for money on agency & consultancy spend and what are your plans to reduce use / costs? How many of those consultants or agency staff have been in place for over a year?
- what governance structures do you use to ensure accountability of spend?
- do you share office functions with other councils and if so, how useful do you find this?
- if you share external training costs with neighbouring councils, how do you factor out duplications of service between your council and your upper-tier council (if you have one)?

- if you have one, what is your assessment and experience of working with an elected mayor, combined authority, or devolution deal?
- what proportion of your paybill is spent on trade union facility time?

4. The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

There will be barriers preventing you from going as far or as fast as you would like to. I would like your plans to set those out, so that we can understand how government, or the market, can help you overcome these barriers to go even further.

Questions to consider:

- what are the barriers preventing you from improving productivity further within your organisation?
- what are the barriers preventing you from improving services further?
- are these barriers consistent across multiple services?
- what would you need to remove those barriers? What do you need from government, the market or elsewhere?

Your plans must be returned by 19 July 2024, by email to productivityplans@levellingup.gov.uk.

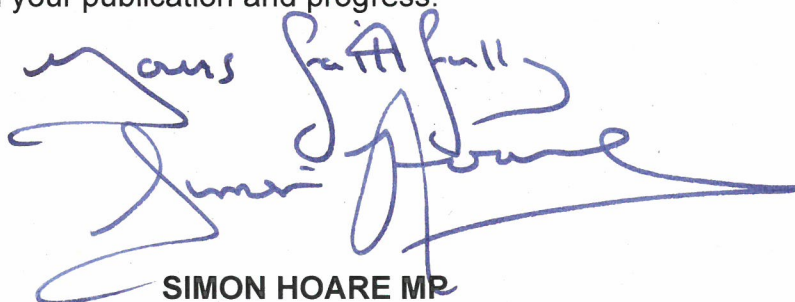
You must ensure that there is member oversight and endorsement of the plan before it is submitted, and the plan must also be uploaded to your website so that residents can see it. You should consider how you will update the plans and report on progress on a regular basis. The plans should also contain relevant metrics and key performance indicators to allow you and your residents to monitor progress.

Once received, we will review the plans to identify common themes and issues across the sector. We are keen to highlight best practice that others can learn from.

Individual plans will not be rated or scored, and we will not produce any kind of league tables. We are interested in understanding what is happening across the sector.

We are setting up a panel to consider the themes and evidence that comes from the plans. I will chair the panel and bring together experts from the sector and beyond, including Oflog and the LGA. They will consider the issues emerging from the plans, the implications for future national policy design, the role of government in supporting further change and the role of the sector in going further. The panel will advise national government and local government, and I believe this collaborative approach will ensure the most effective outcomes.

I look forward to updates on your publication and progress.



SIMON HOARE MP
Minister for Local Government

Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing,
Communities and Local Government,
2 Marsham Street,
London
SW1P 4DF

The Arc
High Street
Clowne
Derbyshire
S43 4JY

By e-mail to productivityplans@levellingup.gov.uk

17th July 2024

Dear Deputy Prime Minister,

Re: Productivity Plan for Bolsover District Council

Bolsover District Council was established in 1974 and over the last fifty years, officers and elected Members have worked together to operate a flexible, adaptable and efficient organisation with a keen focus on improving our services alongside developing our communities, enhancing our environment and delivering growth for both the business and visitor economy. This work means we are already a productive Council, but we are committed to achieving best value and continued improvement in everything we do.

Therefore, we are pleased to enclose a copy of the Council's Productivity Plan in response to the request made by the Minister for Local Government on 16 April 2024. Our Productivity Plan is also published on the Council's website alongside *The Council Plan - The Future 2024-2028 and Vision Bolsover District Part Two*, which are attached to the Productivity Plan to provide further details of what we have achieved over the last four years and our ambitions for the next four years.

We hope you will see that these documents and our Productivity Plan clearly illustrate how the Council is a forward-thinking, dynamic organisation that promotes and encourages innovation, has a positive approach to transformation and aspires to be a self-sustaining Council that delivers excellent services and is at the heart of a thriving and prosperous district. In addition, we hope you see how we are taking positive steps to work with our new regional Mayor and the East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority.

However, our Productivity Plan also sets out some of the barriers faced by the Council and the prospect of further collaborative work on sharing best practice and further discussion of how the Government could better support the sector is welcome. Naturally, we would be happy to contribute to that discussion and we would be delighted to input into this work if there were any further opportunities for us to do so.

Yours sincerely,



Karen Hanson
Chief Executive Officer



Councillor Steve Fritchley
Leader of the Council





Productivity Plan July 2024



1 How have you transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.

Bolsover District Council (BDC) is a Council which looks to the future with a commitment of looking after our communities and businesses as outlined in our recently refreshed Corporate Plan – The Future 2024-2028, and Vision Bolsover District Part Two (both attached). The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's aims over a four-year period under four strategic themes: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing. Vision Bolsover sets out the Council's ambitions for the future. These strategic aims and ambitions enable the Council to direct the use of resources and describe how services are structured and managed, how we embrace new technologies and constantly strive to improve services for residents and businesses.

Every year in preparation for the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is taken through Executive and Council. This sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and outlines the various factors and influences that may impact on the Council over the next five years. The MTFS links our Corporate Plan and priorities with forecasted resources and budgets. It is then used as a framework for the detailed budget setting process to ensure that resources are effectively managed and are able to deliver the Council's key objectives.

The Council has explored options and implemented efficiencies in respect of staffing and shared services. This includes internal departmental restructures including senior management and providing shared services using external partners, including other Councils. Additional efficiencies have been achieved through good management practices, for example, the reviewing and changing of structures or posts when they become vacant.

Having established successful joint working with neighbouring authorities over the years, we have shared services in place which have benefitted the council. These services include ICT, Procurement, Environmental Health, Health and Safety and Corporate Performance. This continues to contribute to a reduction in costs while improving services. The Joint ICT Service has been fundamental in supporting and enabling many services to work remotely and in an agile manner which intensified following the pandemic. A key benefit of this is for services to be more resilient, efficient, and adaptable.

The introduction of technology, including Microsoft 365 and TEAMS continues to develop and support collaborative working, information sharing and improves document management further.

We pride ourselves on the delivery of excellent services. These include the delivery of our ambitious council house building schemes, our innovative Bolsover TV channel, excellent waste collection services and health and wellbeing programmes.

Where it has been appropriate, services are delivered with other councils and partners in shared service arrangements. An example is the Police being located within Bolsover Contact Centre leading to many benefits and improved outcomes for residents.

Examples of effective joint working include supporting residents with the cost of living, developing practical approaches to supporting communities such as foodbank access, advice and community services to meet residents' needs.

In the past year the Council has established a wholly owned company as a vehicle to address the local housing needs, support economic growth and generate income. The business of the company aligns with the Council's ambitions and benefits our local communities. The intention is to work with other Councils to deliver build programmes in a cost-effective way. The company has just completed its first year of trading and has already achieved a number of successful projects both internally for BDC and externally.

Service plans and corporate targets, driven by the Corporate Plan, together with financial performance reports are presented quarterly to Executive, Scrutiny Committees and the Senior Leadership Team.

The Council shares benchmarking information and regularly reviews best practice in service delivery to enhance performance management. The authority subscribes to organisations such as APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) comparing our performance with other public bodies. In recent years, the Council has received Finalist Awards in 'Winner', 'Best Performer' and 'Most Improved Performer' categories in waste collection, street cleansing, grounds maintenance and fleet transport service functions and recently (2023/24) won the 'Most Improved Performer' in Street Cleansing. Our recent success in reaching the final of the MJ Awards for two categories: "Digital Transformation" and "Whole Team Approach to Tackling Health Inequalities", shows a culture of high performance and celebrating success.





The Council welcomes technological opportunities which offer greater use of computer systems, software and hardware to enhance delivery of services and widen public accessibility. Technology has assisted the streamlining of processes internally and enables opportunities for wider public engagement. There are good examples across many of our services. This means we are able to utilise staffing resources, increase accessibility, make administration and stationery cost savings, and continue to explore ways to improve. Examples include:

- Vast improvements to our Planning process using the Prop Tech Engagement Fund, increasing the efficiency of our service, and providing a better service to our residents and businesses.
- Issuing housing officers with mobile technology which links into the Housing Management System. This enables repairs to be logged and actions updated whilst in the district and removes the need to attend the office, resulting in a reduction in travel time and mileage costs.
- An online Housing application form and portal which has significantly reduced printing and postage costs as well as officer time. However, the ease of being able to apply online meant a significant increase in the number of applications received.
- A mobile app for booking leisure activities which has improved both the visitor experience in the facility and improved the service. In addition, we have constructed a 3G Artificial Turf Pitch, which in turn has increased income levels in football activities by circa £60k per annum.
- A Multichannel Telephony System and call back facility, meeting contact volume targets and demand.
- Online Revenues and Benefits application forms. This is more convenient for the applicant as they can make the application at a time that suits them and means the form is automatically entered into our document management system.
- Online transactions within the Environmental Health service have grown significantly being 5 times higher than six years ago within contact centres.
- Online Council meeting agendas to make savings in the use of paper and cost of printing.

In many services we have been able to gradually reduce administrative tasks and have upskilled staff to add more value to the Council and make efficiencies where possible.

The Council has also built a new energy efficient leisure facility. We achieved carbon efficiency in the construction such as LED lighting, heat recovery units and variable speed drives to motors to ensure the building was efficient. More recently we have installed pool covers to the swimming pool to reduce evaporation and retain heat within the water. We've also successfully bid into the Swimming Pool Support Fund and are in the process of installing a combined heat and power unit.

Further improvements within the Council's services include waste collection and recycling which has been brought back in-house. By doing so, the Council has reduced the number of vehicles required in preparation for the 'Simpler Recycling' arrangements.

The Council also has plans for future opportunities across several services including:

- An electronic tenancy agreement, which can be signed on mobile devices. This will save in officer time as well as paper copies.
- A tenant portal so that we can send regular information via the portal as opposed to post.
- Move from a paper-based tenant's newsletter to an electronic newsletter.
- Real-time satisfaction surveys across all contact channels with a view to roll out to all service areas, rather than an annual or biannual survey.
- Review payment/ cash facilities offered by the Council to reduce transaction handling costs.
- Implement changes required by the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government Social Care Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.





The ICT service have plans in place to make full use of the Microsoft 365 licencing, to improve security, make efficiencies and improve productivity, these include:

- Rollout of Defender and Microsoft windows updates for business for improved support and security. Effects will be measured by monitoring number of support calls for these incidents, reduced time to apply updates.
- Move to SharePoint and Exchange online, to provide additional resilience, improved agile working, internal and partnership collaboration.
- Use of Microsoft Autopilot to make efficiencies to device builds. Time to build devices will be measured against current build.
- Employment of a Microsoft 365 engagement post to encourage better use of tools which will help services be more efficient and productive.
- Enhanced cloud-based Geographic Information System (GIS) solution providing customers and internal users with direct feed to graphical and textual location data.
- Continue with the automation of manual and/or repetitive processes.
- Review current customer relationship management tools.

Through effective treasury management, we have saved over £3m in debt charges by not borrowing to fund our capital programme, by making use of historic reserves built up but not spent. We have been building up reserves over a number of years, ready to fund the losses we will incur from the business rate changes as consulted on a number of years ago.

The Council has good examples of where capital has been used for transformational income-generating projects including a new 3G pitch; to create one of the best used facilities in Derbyshire which generates additional income to reinvest in service delivery. We have invested and continue to invest in capital projects that will generate income over the longer term including business centres and a new crematorium which is currently under construction.

The Council recently made a capital purchase of IT software for our housing arrears team. This enables a more focussed approach to debt collection due to the algorithms it contains. We are already seeing benefits of this in reduced arrears figures.

The Council has made significant investment in housing stock to improve the lives of our most vulnerable residents and increase our rental income. We have the ability to borrow for capital purposes, however, interest rates and associated costs are making it increasingly difficult for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan to remain sustainable over the 30-year time frame. Reviews on capital assets are completed frequently such as vehicles, to maximise their period of utilisation, spreading its cost over the longest viable period. Land is also assessed to see if we can build on it to create more rental income or sell it to generate capital receipts to fund capital schemes, if beneficial.

We have planned maintenance arrangements in place across our Council housing stock resulting in good standards of housing, reflecting high customer satisfactions (11% above the UK average) and low levels of complaint.

The establishment the new East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority opens up the opportunity for more cross-boundary working and the potential to consider different geographies and work with different partners across the region, to improve the sustainability and resilience of the Council.





2 How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

In addition to the points already outlined:

- Live chat options across our contact centres.
- Encourage involvement in planning consultations through game playing to engage more young people in this process.
- The Council also has access to Local Insight allowing service areas to access data and analytics in a streamlined and accessible way.
- Most service areas highlight further opportunities with Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital automation. AI has significant potential in enhancing citizen interactions.
- We are commissioning a full housing stock condition survey. The data from this will be received electronically, be continually updated to ensure 'Decent Homes Standards' compliance and also allow us to make decisions on the future capital programme with confidence and ease.
- In addition, the Council would like to look at how technology can capture the tenant led Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). A tenant portal would allow us to provide regular updates as well as TSM data, and complaints data which we need to publish.
- The Council continues to subscribe and submit to benchmarking groups (eg. the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE)) in measuring our performance against other Councils. This assists in identifying best practice. The Council also regularly undertakes a survey using our citizen panel and to share the outcomes with residents via our website and panel groups.
- We have made enhancements in procurement with the recent Social Value Policy and have developed skills and experience within the Council to support the delivery of social value recording and reporting.

The Council submits information annually to APSE with the outcomes shared with other local authorities within the family groups. The information has been very useful in identifying best practice.

Information is also shared with other authorities throughout the year, such as providing financial information to the Derbyshire Chief Executives meeting or Finance Officers group, on specific topics.

The Council is also exploring the potential of Artificial Intelligence in grant making and data analysis to inform commissioning and possibly where services need to be targeted so there are opportunities here which are not yet fully realised.

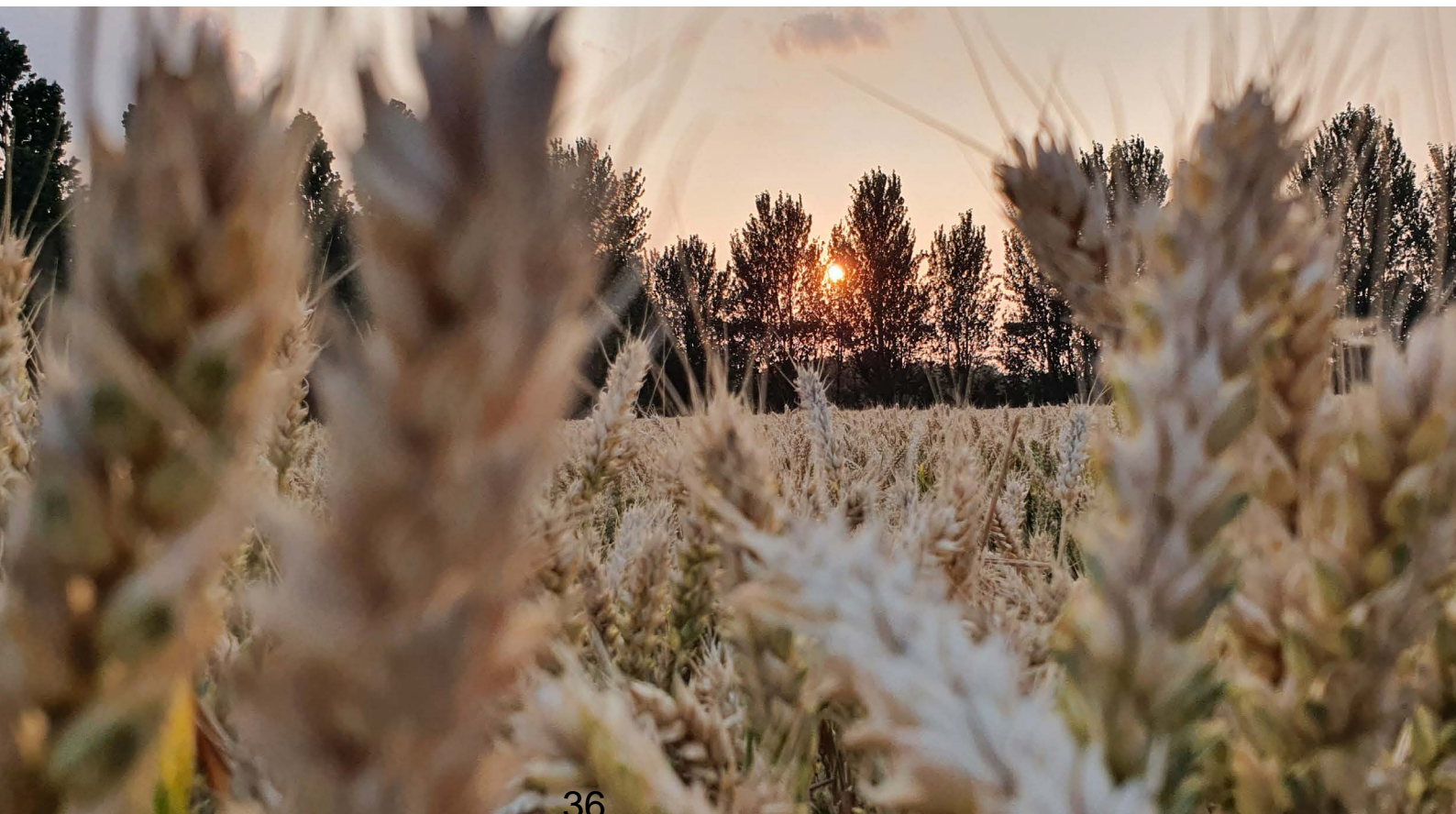
All departments continue to automate internal and external forms and processes wherever it is possible.

3 Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.

For almost 20 years the Council has used electronic purchasing as part of its financial management system, no manual orders are allowed. To pay an invoice an electronic order must be placed against a budget; commitment accounting means the budget is immediately reduced as the order is placed ensuring overspends are kept to a minimum.

As part of the annual budget process, the finance team meet with all departments and undertake a line-by-line review of the budgets to ensure they are still justified. All year-end underspends are considered for a potential reduction in future budgets as part of this process. Where new spend is required our default position is always to try to find it within existing resources.

Performance, efficiency and effectiveness is measured by a number of factors, including our financial position. We have an embedded culture within the whole Council to think before we spend. We are a small District Council, and we embrace effective but appropriate, robust financial controls.





Over the same number of years, the Council has taken steps across the organisation to ensure efficiency. The Council is now lean in terms of staffing which does present capacity challenges at times, and in some cases we are having to put extra resource back into the establishment.

As previously mentioned we used reserves to fund the capital programme instead of undertaking planned borrowing which saved us £3m over the lifetime of the assets. We have previously undertaken many invest to save projects using our Transformation Reserve. Examples include:

- Purchase of swimming pool covers to reduce cost – annual savings of £9k from 2018/19.
- Purchase of governance software – annual savings on printing, postage, and paper.
- Setting up a procurement unit to provide services to others – savings from economies of scale and income from other Councils.
- Made changes to buildings to allow others to share the space – income generated.
- Replaced lighting in Council buildings – cost saving.
- Purchased online templates for payslips, benefit forms etc. – cost savings.
- Office use rationalisation and improvement – income generated from unused space.
- Sought external VAT advice and opted to tax our sporting service – increased income.

During 2022/23 we created our wholly owned company Dragonfly to take advantage of the Localism Act and undertake work for other Councils to provide opportunities for income generation.

The Council takes a proportionate approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and incorporates this function within a small multi-disciplinary team. Part of a post (0.3 FTE) is used to provide in-house equalities training to staff and Members. The emphasis is on the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

All new employees and Members are required to attend a one-hour briefing session and thereafter a refresh every two years. The Council produces an Equality Plan every four years in which it sets equality objectives as required under the PSED. Recently a Microsoft Teams channel has been created which has departmental representation to share learning and to promote equalities. External training is procured from time to time based on organisational need e.g., Autism training for Customer Advisors.

The Council has deliberately taken steps to reduce expenditure on agency staff and consultants in order to keep their use to a minimum but there are times when it is necessary. When new burdens require us to make big changes, having a lean work force means we do not always have the capacity to undertake the work immediately. In addition, when vacant posts cannot be filled after a prolonged period, we may need interim agency support, but this is kept to a minimum.

Some examples of our alternative arrangements are:

- The Joint ICT service has not employed consultants or agency staff for several years. Instead, a trainee approach has been used to fill these fixed term, temporary positions to assist with project work streams, rather than pay for more expensive agency staff. This enables the authority to maintain a skilled workforce covering a range of ICT skills, minimising spend on costly consultancy and outsourcing.
- The Planning Team invest in the use of apprentices and graduates to maintain service delivery as there is currently a national shortage of planning officers. Where consultants have been appointed, these have been secured on the back of Planning Performance Agreements to buy in additional capacity for specialised circumstances rather than day-to-day service provision or through specific grant funded projects.
- The Finance Team also use apprentices as part of succession planning as suitable experienced/qualified staff aren't easily attracted to a small district.

Based on the staff budget for 2024/25 the expenditure on agency staff is estimated to be 0.16% (£28,500) and 1.46% (£252,485) for consultants. As mentioned above, we have grant funding for a number of consultant posts during this period in planning and this budget also includes professional services budgets for a number of contentious planning applications we are currently processing.





The Council has a Cabinet structure with four Scrutiny committees and an Audit Committee. An Independent Member is the vice-chair of Audit to ensure we have sufficient oversight over risk, governance, and financial management.

The Council shares accommodation with a number of organisations including; other Councils, the police, the NHS, and businesses. This provides additional income and savings to the public purse.

The shared Joint ICT service has a presence at each of the three Councils, this provides the ability to have shared disaster recovery and backup sites, reducing infrastructure costs for each authority.

The Council has its own corporate training budget; however, on occasion jointly procures and delivers training with other partners. Costs are shared on a pro-rata head count basis.

The Council is actively engaging with the new East Midlands Mayor to identify opportunities for joint working, inward investment, and opportunities to promote growth, improve employment and skills, and increase productivity within the District.

The percentage of the 2024/25 pay bill spent on trade union facility time is 0.22% or £37,850.

4 The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

The lack of multi-year funding settlements is a real barrier to long-term planning and investment opportunities due to uncertainty. The high level of uncertainty means that the level of reserves set aside to manage risks is at a higher level than they would necessarily be, with greater certainty (as mentioned above).

Greater flexibility to decide how to raise and spend money locally would be beneficial. Raising our council tax by 2.99%, when we have a small tax base does not raise much per year (£130k). This does not go anywhere near covering the annual increased costs from the pay award or inflation.

Staying abreast of all the legislative changes across the statutory planning function is challenging and these are a barrier to further / faster innovation.

The number and cost of funding bid-based schemes often focuses on a very narrow service area also mean that capacity is required to complete funding bids. The Council would ask these schemes move to a formula approach and for there to be an accessible way to be clear on the rationale behind the distribution of funding.

New and changing burdens need to be fully funded based on local need, rather than government assumption, for example, meeting the new burden of weekly food waste collections and increasing housing targets in meeting immigration. The Council asks that new burdens are fully funded to reflect local needs.

A pause on planning reform, or less ad hoc changes in favour of comprehensive reform that brings the service into the 21st Century and simplifies the scope of plan making, planning control and procedures that need to be followed.

This Council like many others, experiences acute pressures in areas like homelessness with costs increasing substantially.

The Council when compared to the private sector has uncompetitive pay levels. With fewer than ever candidates joining local government, having an ageing work force means recruitment and retention is an issue. Successive years of below inflation pay rises for local government staff has meant that retaining a fully resourced staffing structure is not easy. This is currently an issue across most of our professional posts.

Further areas where barriers currently exist are:

- Complicated, inconsistent, and misaligned processes for submitting data returns to central government. These add pressure on staff to meet deadlines that are often unrealistic.
- Numerous statutory requirements to place notices in newspapers or issue written copies of routine notices.
- The excessive amount of information that is required in the annual accounts or that has to be published under the transparency code.
- Statutory overrides such as the requirement to value assets for accounts every year.

There are a number of areas where we feel the government could assist by making changes to legislation quite easily:

- Closure of the loop hole that allows private landlords to set up, provide a 'support' service to their residents, charge them a very high rent and be able to claim it all back through the benefits system.
- Change the rules on Disabled Facilities Grants to allow expenditure on Council-owned properties as well as private. We struggle to spend the allocation on private sector enhancements but can't afford to carry out the work on our own stock.
- Unfreeze the cap on housing benefit subsidy for temporary accommodation to 90% of market rent.
- Support the Local Government Association (LGA) recommendations for councils to have greater power and flexibility to build more social homes and use receipt monies in a way that works best for their local areas.
- Allow Councils to make a charge for Freedom of Information Requests to stop the private sector using it for business purposes. The increases in the extra work required to meet these requests is becoming unmanageable.
- Allow the use of the apprenticeship levy to part fund the wages rather than just the training of the individual, and/or design a new government-funded apprenticeship scheme to help local government attract trainees.

Despite the above, and the ongoing pressures facing local government, we continue to be a flexible, positive and forward thinking, innovative Council, always looking to create growth through new developments, enabling skills and supporting local businesses.



VISION BOLSOVER DISTRICT

PART TWO

Bolsover
District Council



**We need to create a thriving
and prosperous district
that our children and their
children can be proud of.**



By Steve Fritchley, Council Leader



In 2021 we produced our Vision Bolsover document and I felt it was time to update you on what had worked, what had not and what our plans for the future are.

When I became Leader of the authority in 2019, I said that we needed to be flexible and

adaptable with our ambitions. We needed scope to change, to allow new projects to be delivered, to address uncertainties such as reductions in funding and income we receive, changes in legislation that affect our services or influences that affect you, our local communities and your way of life.

The pandemic and continued restrictions in funding proved this to be true.

I also said that for the authority and the district to prosper we needed to challenge the norm and think about the long-term not just the short-term benefits. We need to create a thriving and prosperous district that our children and their children can be proud of.

I do not believe in self congratulation and never say 'we always do a great job', because no-one ever 'always does a great job'. Yes, the majority of what we do is good, but there are times when we don't live up to the standards you expect from us and there are times when we simply cannot deliver and we must accept this. But it is how we put things right that matters. It is how we deliver

on our promises and it is how we look after our communities and build our economies that matter.

Since I was re-elected as Leader of the Council in May 2023, I have been working with my colleagues and council officers to provide you with an update and an ambitious plan of projects that will span my second term in office.

I always prefer to look to the future and there are many challenges ahead of us, none more so than 'Devolution' or 'Local Government Reform'. With significant powers in housing, transport, skills, regeneration and economic development being handed to a newly elected East Midlands Mayor (elected May 2024), we must be at the forefront to ensure we get the best possible deals for Bolsover District.

This is a challenge that we are prepared for, and we have put into place teams and structures that have those all important 'shovel ready' projects on the table and ready to go once we know what funding is available.

Over the coming pages I will guide you through the past couple of years on what we have done as well as what some of our key ambitions for Bolsover District are.



*Pictured: new council housing
on Market Close, Shirebrook*

HOUSING

In 2019, one of the first things we did was commit to expanding on the success of our council house-building scheme. The four-year scheme had seen 108 new properties built across the district from Bolsover to Pinxton and Creswell to Blackwell.

We have always vehemently protected our housing stock and whilst other authorities were selling off or farming out their housing stock to arms lengths companies, we agreed to spend £36million to build up to 400 council properties across the district.

We did this because we want to provide good quality, modern homes for local people to live in and not have to move miles away from friends and family.

Work on the Bolsover Homes project started in Whitwell and saw 37 new properties built, 24 in Whaley Thorns (the first Future Homes site in the district) and 28 in Shirebrook with more to follow in Langwith, Pinxton and Blackwell.

In September 2022, we received the news that our contractor for the Bolsover Homes project, was going into administration.

We had to act quickly and decisively to ensure our assets were protected and we could continue to deliver what we had set out to do. We agreed to take over the joint venture called Dragonfly Development Limited so that it would become a council-owned company that would not only help us continue to build our council properties but also provide us with an income stream and safeguard jobs, all in line with market needs.

This is an important element of the company and because the Council owns it, we will reap all the profits and savings to support our expenditure and services.

Over the past few years we have also invested over £10million into refurbishing and redeveloping our Independent Living Schemes. Victoria House in Creswell, Parkfields in Clowne and Ashbourne Court

in Shirebrook have, or are undergoing transformations to bring the accommodation up to 21st century living standards and provide residents with energy efficient homes.

We are also working on getting our empty or 'void' properties (as they are known) back into circulation quicker. The longer a property is left empty and waiting for repairs to take place, the longer families are left on our waiting list and it is costing us money through no rent and having to pay Council Tax ourselves.

AMBITIONS

Dragonfly Development Limited and new housing

What is abundantly clear is that we have a growing population that need housing, but there is a shortage of housing nationally. I am not just talking about private developments, but social housing. The government are not meeting their target to build 300,000 new homes overall every year by the mid-2020s. Add in the Right to Buy legislation where tenants of council properties can purchase their home for a discounted rate after living in it for three-years and the problems with landlords issuing Section 21 notices – we clearly have a problem not of our own doing!

There are over 1,800 people on our housing register and we regularly receive up to 80 bids on a property when they become available. So, demand far outweighs the current supply and something needs to be done.



DRAGONFLY
DEVELOPMENT

Through Dragonfly Development Limited we aim to build new council housing in areas of need. We know where this need is through our housing register, and we will identify suitable land in that area to build whatever properties are needed. It could be bungalows, flats or three/four-bedroom family homes. The key is to make sure local people can live or can continue to live in an area they grew up in or want to live in.

The limit of our ambition does not stop at new builds though, as we are also looking to purchase housing on private development sites so we can rent them or buy existing homes that are on the open market to rent out – all of which will contribute to providing good quality homes for local people and help us attract more income to reinvest in our services.

Independent living accommodation

Looking after older or vulnerable people in our society is a top priority for us. We do not believe it is fair that when someone has lived in a particular area all of their life that they should have to move elsewhere just because there is no accommodation that meets their needs, or an 'authority' deems the building to be unfit and closes it down.

So, we will continue with our ambition to refurbish all of our Independent Living Centres (or sheltered accommodation) and extend them where appropriate to create more space and more homes.

A prime example of this is Ashbourne Court in Shirebrook where we had a waiting list for people to move into the property. In an effort to address this problem we completely refurbished the accommodation and communal living areas and also extended the property with an additional 14 units, all of which are now fully let.

We are continuing this trend by investing £5million on refurbishing both Jubilee Court in Pinxton and Valley View in Hillstown, with the plan to also build two bungalows to the rear of the latter to offer more accommodation.

Our ambition continues with the £9million redevelopment of Woburn House and nearby bungalows in Blackwell. This will see the construction of a 20-flat independent living building that meets modern living standards together with 15 bungalows and eight houses.

And we won't stop there. If there is an identified need to build additional Independent Living Centres or bungalows for our older or vulnerable residents, then we will continue to do so for their benefit.

Reducing void property re-let times

As mentioned, in addition to building and purchasing properties we also aim to reduce the amount of time void (empty) properties are left stood empty.

Dragonfly Development Limited are now responsible for managing and maintaining our properties and we aim to reduce the



amount of time a property is left empty to 20 calendar days.

As part of this process, we will review the lettable standard and voids specification we use to determine whether a property is suitable for letting and we will constantly review these so we can let our properties as soon as possible.

To help get the property up to our high re-let standards we have agreed a contract with Sweet Aroma who will clean our empty properties over a four-year period, up to June 2027.

Pictured: (above) new council housing on Sandy Lane, Whitwell, (below) Ashbourne Court in Shirebrook.





CUSTOMERS

It has become common parlance to refer to everyone as customers, but I believe it is more involved than that.

Customers are often pigeonholed as people who just receive a service from us, but I feel it's more. It's about our communities as a whole.

Residents, businesses, visitors, partners... they are all encompassed under this heading and classed as our customers.

We pride ourselves on providing good quality services that meet our customers' needs. We know we don't get it right all the time, but who does? So, what we need to do is focus on the positives, as they far outweigh the negatives, whilst still developing and improving what we do.

Bolsover District is a great place to live. We have historic town centres, some wonderful countryside, great connectivity and most

of all, we have hard working and creative residents.

This is an area that we are particularly keen to develop, protect and promote as our communities - with the skills they possess and the groups that exist within them - are the heartbeat of the district.

Community groups are an integral part of our social fabric and provide young people with skills for later life, whilst also giving enjoyment and comfort to those reaching their twilight years.

During COVID and the lockdown periods many of these groups dwindled and I was afraid of our elderly residents developing agoraphobia.



So, over the past few years, we have provided promotional and marketing assistance to community groups to help them grow and attract new members.

We established our Bolsover District Community Lottery Scheme to help provide essential funding for groups. 42 organisations are registered on the scheme, raising a total of approximately £16,000 per year. This is a good start, but I know more can be done to help our groups.

We also decided to introduce an annual grants scheme where each of the 37 councillors receive £1,000 to share and donate amongst clubs and groups in their specific wards to help them survive, develop and provide new activities and services.

Providing people with the necessary skills to gain further education or employment is vital if we are to create a diverse and multi-skilled population. We know there is a strong appetite for learning in the district from the audit of skills and employment survey we carried out in 2022.

What I want to do now is address this need and provide our local communities with the means to undertake new qualifications, re-train and upskill that will help improve their lives.

We have already helped scores of people gain new skills through our Apprenticeship

Programme in fields such as business, horticulture, finance and plumbing, but we need to expand this further and create a dedicated base for them to learn and get the relevant experience and knowledge.

Raising the aspirations of our children, young people and those wanting a career or life change is key to their future success.

Local government is often criticised for the services it provides. But if you look closer at what we do, we perform better than most private companies. Housing, planning, leisure, waste and recycling are all services that we provide to a consistently high standard.

We are one of the few authorities across the country who are continuing to build more new council homes, our planning team regularly receive accolades and win awards for the service we provide, we invest in our leisure services to provide you with opportunities to take part in sport, leisure and recreational activities and we provide a waste and recycling service which is regarded as amongst one of the best in the country.

We want you to feel connected to the Council, be able to talk to a person rather than a computer and access the information you want. That's why we continue to invest in our front line services and contact centres, putting you at the heart of what we do.

Technology and Skills Centre

We aim to develop a Technology and Skills Centre that can produce the next breed of entrepreneurs or the next big invention.

The centre would provide both educational and practical learning in a range of fields including electronics, medicine and communications, providing students and work placements from businesses access to the latest technology required by the sector and help fill any skills gaps required by businesses.

We have already seen the impact on young people who have access to this type of training.

The aim is to embrace new technology so it will open up a whole new world to school leavers, young people and anyone wanting to learn new skills or change their career path.

Go Kart track

We have seen an increase in people using our roads as racing tracks, so we want to take them off the road and into a safe environment where they can satisfy their need for speed.

I enjoy my motor racing and Go Karting is the most popular form of motorsport in the UK, providing the essential starting point to progress further into the sport as well as being a great recreational and social day out for family and friends.

We have already seen young people from Creswell and Bolsover doing well in the sport as well as Ben Barnicoat from Palterton who is a Lexus Racing USA factory racing driver. But their success could be replicated by countless more if only we had a Go Kart track in the District.

We want to create an environment to help budding motorsport stars of the future as well as providing enjoyment for motorsport

enthusiasts. Utilising Dragonfly Development Ltd to build the facility, we can incorporate green technology by using electric karts and offer training opportunities at the facility. The venue could provide multiple uses from corporate to private parties and racing leagues to pay as you go sessions as well as a café to provide hot and cold refreshments.

The nearest tracks to Bolsover District are in Sheffield and Sutton-in-Ashfield, so the addition of this leisure facility will only increase the attractiveness of the area and improve the leisure options available to our residents, whilst bringing in more visitors.

Just a thought, but we could produce the F1 drivers of the future.

Customer service

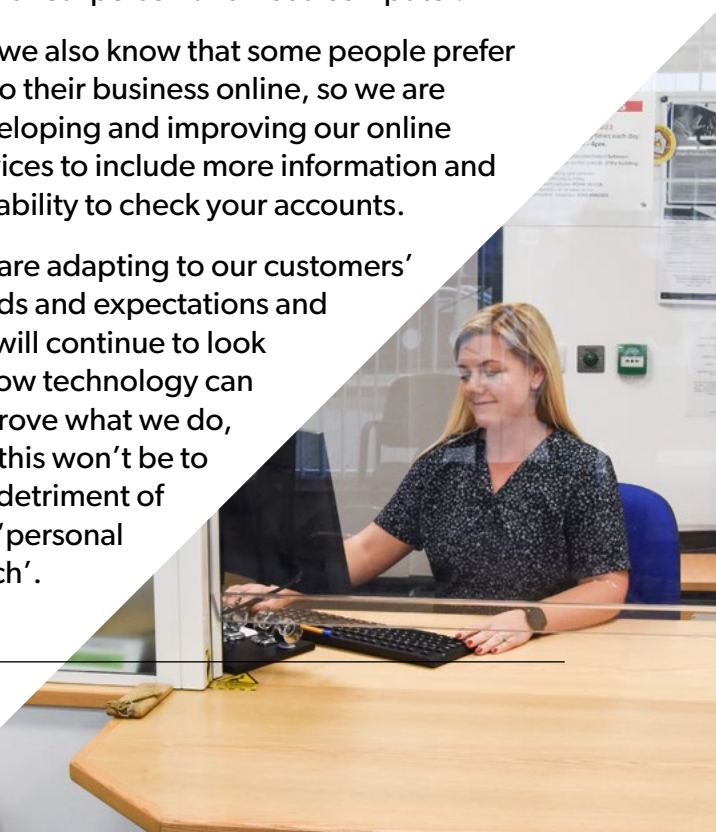
We know how important it is for us to be accessible, that's why we are continuing to invest in our four contact centres (based in Bolsover, Clowne, Shirebrook and South Normanton) and our customer services in general.

We want to make it easier for people to access council services and information rather than having to travel miles to do so.

We will continue to develop our four contact centres so our customers can report an issue, discuss their council business or pay a bill – all with a real person and not a computer.

But we also know that some people prefer to do their business online, so we are developing and improving our online services to include more information and the ability to check your accounts.

We are adapting to our customers' needs and expectations and we will continue to look at how technology can improve what we do, but this won't be to the detriment of the 'personal touch'.





*Pictured: Bolsover
Artisan Market*

ECONOMY

A strong, vibrant economy is key to making sure we have thriving town and village centres. But this cannot be done in isolation by just developing new premises or business accommodation, as it needs to have people with the relevant skills, new housing, community facilities and the infrastructure around it.

I want to make our town and village centres the focal points, the beating heart, and the places to go to for shopping, cultural experiences and socialising.

I believe we have one of the highest percentage of entrepreneurs in the country – a fact that I am very proud of and want to build upon.

The majority of our companies and businesses in our town and village centres are home-grown and we are continually seeing new businesses start-ups whether this is from people's homes or moving into commercial properties.

The pandemic did a lot of harm to many small and local businesses who struggled to survive. But the determination and creative thinking of our businesses to diversify or provide new ways of working, together with

the business support and grant funding we could offer, stood them in good stead.

I want to nurture this drive and enthusiasm. Our offer to support and promote local businesses stands as we will continue to provide free advertising and promotion to businesses located within Bolsover District, through our marketing channels.

Regeneration is a key area and we have seen various schemes drawn up for our four main town centres over the years but very few have been successful in securing external funding to get the projects off the ground. But I am determined to put this right.

One of the key obstacles to the delivery of recent regeneration schemes has been the absence of worked up and 'shovel ready' proposals. So, working with our partners, we will look at each area and see what projects



we can deliver that will bring physical, environmental and economic benefits, whilst delivering cultural and social experiences as well.

An area that will help bring about a better economy is developing our infrastructure. We are still looking at ways of how we can implement the Shirebrook Link Road and make improvements to the Treble Bob Roundabout in Barlborough. And we are looking to extend the Robin Hood Line to Ollerton and re-introducing a passenger line on the Maid Marion line in Pinxton.

One of the biggest ways to attract new people into our district and town centres is through tourism. We have three major tourist attractions located in our district (Bolsover Castle, Creswell Crags and Hardwick Hall) but we have never successfully managed to link them with visits to our town and village centres. That's why we recently employed a Tourism and Place Manager to encourage people to stay longer, visit our towns and villages and other attractions and provide them with a full experience of our district.

But it's not solely about town centres or high streets. Our track record in providing good quality, bespoke commercial accommodation is excellent. You only have to look at the very popular Tangent Business Hub in Shirebrook for that and the many commercial units we provide in Pleasley Vale, Pinxton, Bolsover, South Normanton and Creswell. I want to continue providing this type of accommodation to help start-up businesses, those wanting to expand

or relocate to our district and we will do this through both new-build and purchasing existing properties for re-let.

AMBITIONS

Town centre development

Our town centres are facing challenges of changing and evolving retail patterns. Every other month there seems to be announcements of large high street giants going into administration. What we have in our favour is that the majority of our town centres are made up of small independent businesses who have built up that trust and relationship with their customers.

We want to shift the reliance from online shopping to provide a more enjoyable and diverse physical shopping experience by supporting and investing in our town centres so that they can become more sustainable and thriving places for communities to live, work and enjoy.

We want to create town centres that offer unique shopping experiences. By improving the physical appearance of high streets, increasing connectivity through better public transport and providing flexible space, we hope to create shopping havens, a café culture, community venues and cultural and leisure experiences that local communities and visitors can enjoy.



We will continue to work with our partners to develop proposals for each of our four town centres and we will continue to bid for external funding to help us realise our ambitions.

Commercial properties

Creating an environment for businesses to thrive is essential for a healthy economy.

Evidence indicates that there is a demand for commercial properties, so by using both Council-owned and private land, our Dragonfly Development Ltd company will use their skills to match land to meet demand and build bespoke commercial developments.

These will help create job opportunities, nurture new and growing businesses and help improve the local economy through enhancing skills and diversifying our business base.

In addition to building new commercial developments, I want to invest in commercial and retail properties throughout Bolsover District.

Through purchasing properties, we can have direct impact on improving local town and village centres and be able to positively influence the look and feel of them by

bringing back into use empty properties and identifying gaps in the market to help local high streets come alive again.

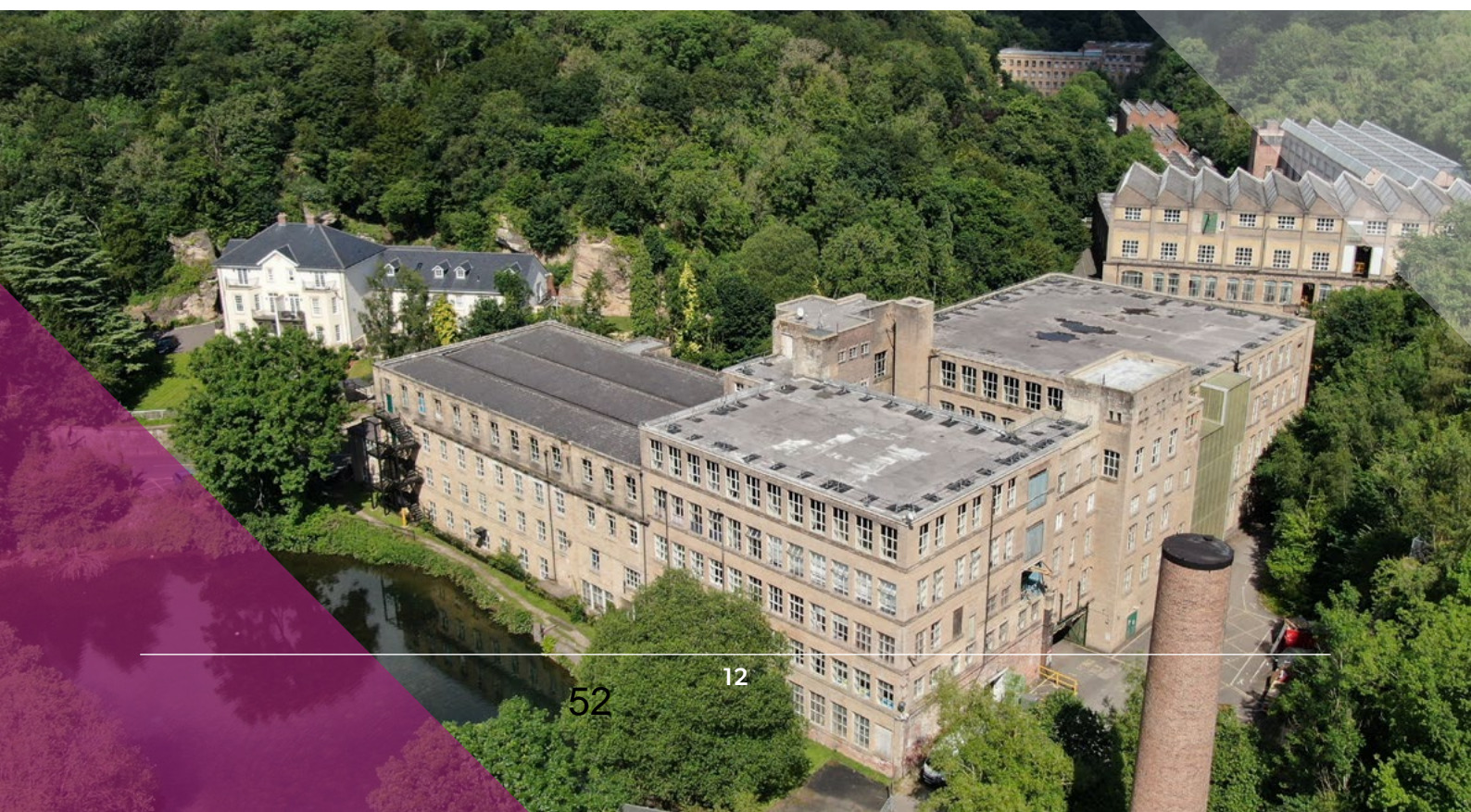
Pleasley Vale

I want to develop Pleasley Vale into a top quality venue that integrates business accommodation, leisure facilities, tourism experiences and accommodation, into one sustainable regeneration scheme.

The multi-million pound project would blend in seamlessly with its historic surroundings and natural environment to boast an unrivalled experience in the region.

The site is already home to numerous successful businesses and with careful planning we want to integrate this with the expansion of leisure facilities that utilise both the natural and built environment, the development of tourism facilities which showcase the history and heritage of the site and the potential to develop accommodation that will increase our visitor economy.

There are numerous regeneration options we are exploring, all of which will be assessed, finalising with a Masterplan that showcases the most viable and appropriate future for the site.





ENVIRONMENT

Improving our environment and what we are doing to tackle climate change is a key area for us.

Reducing our carbon emissions can be challenging, but by working together we can help create a district that is green, energy efficient and nurtures nature.

We know where the problems lie and what the potential solutions are and by working together, we can achieve much more.

The creation of open spaces, parks and woodlands. Protecting the flora and fauna. Encouraging nature and wildlife into our gardens and communities. These are all ways we can, and we have been helping improve our environment.

We have adjusted how we maintain and cut our grass verges and public open spaces to help allow for re-wilding and encouraging pollinators to do their work.

However, our maintenance regimes have to strike a balance between aesthetics, safety and the environment.

A big contributory factor in tackling climate change is trees. Trees are the ultimate carbon capture and storage machines. Like great carbon sinks, woods and forests

absorb atmospheric carbon and lock it up for centuries. That's why in 2020 we started our community woodland scheme where we aim to plant one million trees across the district.

This project is going well and has seen thousands of trees planted at Lark Rise Woods in Creswell as well as several community woodlands being created throughout the district. Not only does this contribute to tackling climate change but it provides welcoming and peaceful places for people to go and relax.

Reduce – Reuse – Recycle. We have all heard this phrase. Well, this is one area that we have continually improved over the years. Since bringing the collections of burgundy bins back in-house, (which saved 15 jobs) we have expanded the types of plastic you can recycle to include flexible plastics – a move which came five-years ahead of the government mandate to recycle this type of waste.

The flexible plastics include carrier bags, bubble wrap, confectionery wrappers and the film tops that come on products such

as grape and strawberry punnets. And in 2023, we made another improvement and asked residents to put their paper waste directly into the main body of the burgundy bin rather than segregate it into the caddy or hessian bag. Making it much easier for people to recycle.

The built environment is another area where we have been trying to make a difference. We have installed electric charging points in Clowne and Bolsover and made them as standard in our council properties at the Willows in Whaley Thorns and Shirebrook.

We are installing external wall insulation in council properties where other alternatives are not an option and where appropriate we are using air source heat pumps instead of using traditional heating methods.

We know we still have a lot to do in this area, but we are looking at using modern methods of construction on our new council house builds which will help reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.

We are surrounded by beautiful countryside and nature, and the pandemic proved how much we value this type of freedom.

We have several country parks (Poulter, Doe Hill, Pleasley, Carr Vale and Peter Fidler) that provide places to exercise, socialise with family and friends or just enjoy the tranquillity and sounds of nature.

We are continually looking at ways we can improve access to the countryside whether this is through new trails, dedicated walks, open spaces or the chance to hire a bike and go further afield to explore what is on offer.

To help us achieve these aims we have employed two dedicated officers – Carbon Reduction Officer and Community Woodlands Officer – both of whom will help assist in our ambition to reduce our carbon footprint and enhance our local environment through more nature-friendly habitats.

AMBITIONS

Recycling food waste

One of the biggest ways we can help the environment is by recycling or composting more of our waste. You will have already read about how we have increased waste streams into our recycling efforts, but we feel more can be done.

25% of your black bin contains food waste that can be put into your green bin and sent to be composted.

So, as we strive to increase our recycling rates to 65%, we aim to introduce separate weekly household collections of food waste within the next couple of years.

By introducing this new service, your food waste can be recycled, which will help reduce our impact on the environment and help to tackle climate change.

Everything collected will be sent for processing where it can be recycled to create energy to power our homes or fertiliser to grow crops. This new service will contribute to our objective of becoming a net zero district.





Pictured: (above) Poulter Country Park, and (below left) Blackwell Trail

Roseland Park & Crematorium

The loss of a family member or friend can be deeply upsetting and the last thing anyone wants as you prepare to pay your respects to them is to be held up in traffic or feel rushed. So, after consulting with our local funeral directors we made a commitment to build a new crematorium facility in the heart of the district.

Local people currently have to travel to Mansfield or Chesterfield to say goodbye to loved ones, so through our company, Dragonfly Development Ltd, we have started work on the new £9.6m Roseland Park & Crematorium in Shirebrook, with the aim of it being fully operational by 2025. This facility will not only be local and easy to access, but it will also give you the time and space to celebrate the lives of your loved ones.

The land for the new facility has been made available by Shirebrook Town Council and the crematorium will include a main building, wake facility which will provide wake receptions, florist kiosk and take away refreshments, car parking and both formal memorial gardens and informal parkland which will grow into a beautiful landscape to enhance the biodiversity of the site.

Green and pleasant land

Whilst there is a demand to build more homes for local people to live in, create employment opportunities and improve our local infrastructure, we have to balance this with improving and nurturing our environment.

In his poem "Jerusalem" (1804), William Blake wrote of "England's green and pleasant land". And it is these words that are our driving force in striving to enhance and improve our local environment.

We have already made progress on this through our ambition to plant one million trees across Bolsover District. Our community woodland scheme has seen nearly 3,000 saplings planted at Creswell, Whitwell, Whaley, Bolsover, South Normanton and Pinxton.

But we know more can be done. We want to create landscapes that work for both wildlife and humans. Planting trees for climate change is vital, but how we plant those trees can re-establish the biodiversity of our landscapes.

We also want to create colour in the district through rewilding areas where wildlife can flourish and pollinators can go about their work. We want you to enjoy the local environment through the development and expansion of the many trails and footpaths that wind through our district and bring an array of colour to our seasons.

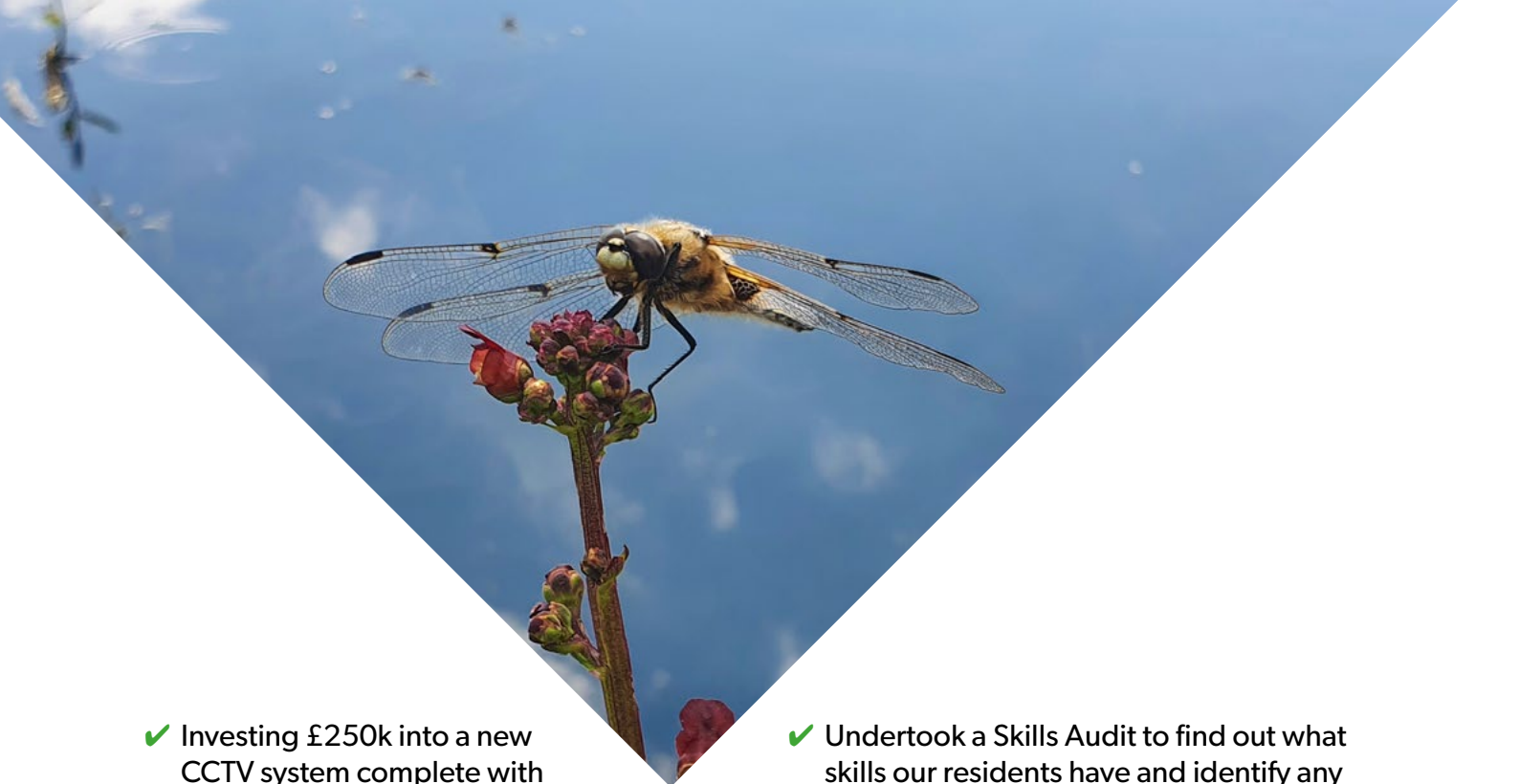
What we have achieved over the past four years

A global pandemic, continuous cuts in government funding, rising energy costs, dealing with what mother nature throws at us and increases in everyday household items.

The last four years have not been easy for anyone. But despite all these problems we have overcome them and continue to deliver services and projects on your behalf.

Here is a list of some of the larger schemes that I have not already talked about that we have achieved over the past four years.

- ✓ Launched Bolsover TV
- ✓ Led the way for Covid testing
- ✓ Provided energy efficient home improvement grants to households
- ✓ Spent £500k on the gym refurbishment at Go! Active in Clowne
- ✓ Received approval for the Bolsover District Local Plan
- ✓ Waste collection and street cleansing teams received regular awards from APSE
- ✓ Implemented a district wide Dog Public Spaces Protection Order
- ✓ Installed a new 3G pitch at Go! Active in Clowne
- ✓ Assisted with the building of the £3million Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Centre
- ✓ Introduced a district wide Nuisance Vehicle Public Spaces Protection Order
- ✓ Made £150k available to help local businesses through our Economic Loan Fund
- ✓ Invested £900k to provide external wall insulation to council properties
- ✓ Introduced two new Growth Plans for Creswell and Shirebrook to foster growth in the areas.
- ✓ Lobbied and assisted action groups to get the HS2 project stopped
- ✓ Received the RoSPA Gold Health and Safety Award
- ✓ Transformed the former Whitwell Co-op into five apartments for local people to live in
- ✓ Launched a new Wellness Hub in Clowne and Tibshelf and expanded the services available in Bolsover, Whitwell, Pinxton, Creswell and Shirebrook.
- ✓ Used funding from the Sport England and the National Lottery's This Girl Can Community Fund to stage events for females in Whitwell
- ✓ Implemented mandatory CCTVs to be used in licensed taxis and private hire vehicles
- ✓ Improved our online payment system and webchat service
- ✓ Launched two grant schemes to help local businesses grow, create jobs or purchase much-needed equipment
- ✓ Invited to submit schemes up to the allocated £15million from the Levelling Up fund
- ✓ Secured funding for investment in digital planning through the PropTech Engagement Fund
- ✓ Launched a £427k programme to help rural business flourish as part of a Rural Fund Grant Scheme
- ✓ Spent £60k to purchase a new overt CCTV van that patrols the district
- ✓ Used £100k from the Safer Streets Fund towards a skate park in Bolsover.
- ✓ Received £100k to boost the general well-being of young people in Bolsover District
- ✓ Received three accolades from The Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust Architecture Awards, for the work we undertook at New Bolsover Model Village



- ✓ Investing £250k into a new CCTV system complete with central monitoring suite to help keep our communities safe and secure.
- ✓ Launched an e-newsletter service to keep you informed on what is happening
- ✓ Launched a Learning Charter with Unison to support employee development
- ✓ Took action against a rogue landlord for the state of his properties on the WestLea Estate in Clowne and he received a 10-month prison sentence
- ✓ Agreed to spend £4million on a new roofing replacement contract for council properties
- ✓ Received £1.9m over three years from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- ✓ Launched and expanded the Shirebrook Shop Front Scheme
- ✓ Introduced the sign language interpretation service at our contact centres
- ✓ Secured public health funding for preventative health initiatives
- ✓ Invested over £600k in either new or refurbished play equipment or improvements to sports pitches across the district including South Normanton, Bolsover, Tibshelf and Pleasley
- ✓ Continuing to invest in leisure, social and community facilities as part of Section 106 agreements with private developers
- ✓ Undertook a Skills Audit to find out what skills our residents have and identify any gaps
- ✓ Provided sports and physical activity sessions for a range of ages and abilities across the district including social activity hubs, holiday programmes and targeted activities
- ✓ Implemented a new community enforcement team to help make the district safer and cleaner
- ✓ Launched the Creswell Craggs Rail Discovery Trail
- ✓ Installed Air Source Heat Pumps in council properties at Whaley Common
- ✓ Assisted communities with cost of living support
- ✓ Launched the PALS (Physical Activity and Lifestyle Support) scheme aimed at improving people's health and wellbeing
- ✓ Spent £1million on the extension of the popular Tangent Business Hub with seven new industrial units

These are just a sample of the many initiatives we have been involved in and there are many other examples of schemes and initiatives that we have undertaken for your benefit.



**This careful fiscal management
has stood us in good stead as
we continue to deliver and
improve our services.**



If the past four years have taught us anything it is to be flexible.

In February 2024, a report stated that we were in the top ten councils for the reduction in our government funding. But, despite this, we continue to manage our finances well and consistently receive a clean bill of health from the auditors. This careful fiscal management has stood us in good stead as we continue to deliver and improve our services.

This can be put down to a close working relationship with my colleagues in the Council Chamber as well as an excellent workforce who are creative, free thinking and have the best interests of the district and our communities at heart, whilst doing their jobs. Their resilience, character and knowledge have stood us in good stead and will continue to as we strive to make the area a better place to live, work and play.

But we cannot do all of this alone. As I mentioned earlier, by working collaboratively with both public and private sector partners and the community and voluntary sectors, we can make sure our projects and services are being delivered effectively and efficiently and provide value for money. Something we have been doing for the past 25-years to ensure Bolsover District receives the best possible services and investment it deserves.

Generating new ways to attract income is essential if we are to fund our services and ensure any increasing costs are not passed onto local residents. That's one of the reasons why we set up Dragonfly Development Ltd. As we are the only shareholder, we are the ones that see the profits. Profits that can be ploughed back into service provision.

An area I feel we have improved upon is how we communicate and provide information and news to you on what we are doing. I regularly receive compliments about our InTouch publication, our District/Parish Gazettes, the fact we provide a weekly news update through Bolsover TV and generally

about how well informed people are. But we can still do better and over the next few years we will be looking to increase the reach of Bolsover TV and provide more regular updates on what we are doing on your behalf.

One of people's bug bears with local authorities is the red tape and unnecessary bureaucracy that exists. As a government organisation we have procedures and policies to follow, but we have streamlined our management and political structures meaning decisions are made much quicker and therefore benefitting you. I have encouraged our staff to be creative and more 'free-thinking' in their roles as they are the ones that know the service the best.

Of course, this booklet contains our high-level ambitions that we are striving to achieve and does not take into account the work we do on a daily basis such as waste and recycling collections, council house management, providing leisure and cultural opportunities, dealing with benefit enquiries and making the district safe and secure for you all.

I feel as an authority we have been successful and achieved a huge amount across a wide range of areas, despite everything that has been thrown at us.

Thank you for reading this booklet and I hope it has given you a flavour of what we are doing at Bolsover District Council.



Steve Fritchley, Council Leader



Bolsover

District Council

If you would like any further information or clarification on any of the issues or projects raised in this booklet please contact us on 01246 242424 or email enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk

Designed by Bolsover District Council 24-1513

BOLSOVER DISTRICT
THE FUTURE

2024 – 2028





Our vision

Our vision is to maximise our influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to drive the continued delivery of excellent services, maximise local aspirations and drive economic prosperity for Bolsover District.

Welcome

from the Council Leader

Local authorities play a pivotal and significant role in society.

Everything we do can be experienced on a daily basis. From looking after the parks and recreation grounds your children play in, to building new homes for local families to live in. From administering benefits and financial support to help those in need, to regenerating our towns and villages.

When I was first elected as Council Leader in 2019, I said we needed to become a more flexible and adaptable authority. It is no good setting stringent and rigid targets when powers outside of our control, influence what we want to do.

Establishing a set of priorities that allow us to change how we approach things, with the recognition that if we need to change then we can, will stand us in good stead for the future.

So, we have developed this new plan with two fundamental objectives in our mind.

The first is you, our communities.

You are the heart of everything we do. From how we deliver our services to how we design them for the future. From protecting people's jobs to helping



Councillor Steve Fritchley

Leader of the Council

people gain new skills. From delivering value for money projects to providing improved access to our services.

The second, is building resilience.

We need to have the ability to adapt and recover from outside disruptions and influences, ensuring that we can continue to deliver services as well as thrive in the long term.

Finance in local government has long been a discussion for debate. But whichever way you look at it, it is abundantly clear that it is never going to reach the same levels it was decades ago. So, we have put in place mechanisms to ensure we can become self-sufficient to provide the services to meet your needs.

One such mechanism is the establishment of our own company Dragonfly Development Ltd who will help us achieve a fair percentage of our ambitions such as building new council homes, regenerating our high streets and delivering projects like the Roseland Park & Crematorium near Shirebrook that will see income generated for the authority.

We are always striving for improvement. We are looking to improve our town and village high streets, increase the amount of sporting and cultural opportunities, improve the district's biodiversity, provide options to recycle more and build more council homes.

So, as you read through this document, you will see that our priorities and aims are flexible and adaptable so we can adapt to any changes that come our way.

Challenge

The introduction of the East Midlands Combined County Authority and elected mayor will bring significant changes as the mayor will hold devolved powers in areas such as transport, regeneration, housing and skills.

Opportunity

We have put in place structures and mechanisms to ensure we have 'shovel ready' projects to implement as and when any funding becomes available from the East Midlands Combined County Authority to ensure Bolsover District gets the best possible deal.

Introducing the plan

I am proud to be introducing the strategic plan for the Bolsover District for the next four years. At a time when many local councils are struggling to deliver services with limited budgets, it is more important than ever that we remain focused on continuous improvement, value for money and delivery of excellent services for our residents, businesses and visitors.

In developing this plan, we have worked with elected members, residents and staff to shape and focus our ambitions for the next four years. Priorities that focus on not only improving our services, but developing our communities, enhancing our environment and delivering growth for both the business and visitor economy. To deliver these ambitions we need skilled resources, and at Bolsover District Council, we employ over 500 dedicated and professional members of staff. From our refuse collectors to our housing and homelessness teams, all our staff are well trained and highly motivated to ensure we deliver the best we can for our communities.

This plan cannot possibly cover every service we provide or every ambition we want to achieve.



Ambitions

This plan responds to issues like the housing crisis, protecting our natural environment and helping young people meet their potential. It will help us meet our sustainability targets, including our commitment to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2050 and increasing our recycling and composting rates.



Karen Hanson

Chief Executive Officer

Instead, it tells you how we will work, what we will focus on and what our priorities are.

It responds to the short, medium and longer-term issues, like the national housing pressures, while protecting our natural environment and helping young people meet their potential for the long-term. It will help us meet our sustainability targets, including our commitment to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2050 and increasing our recycling and composting rates.

These are challenging times, but by working together we will continue to deliver and support stronger, healthier and more vibrant towns and communities.

I am looking forward to working with elected members and staff in delivering the next part of the Bolsover District journey.

The future 2024 - 2028

We are proud of Bolsover District. And we want to create a future where our children can grow up and thrive, where there is good quality, highly paid jobs available, where there is cultural and social activities to enjoy, where urban meets rural and the built environment complements the natural environment.

To do this we have developed four main aims:

Values

And to help us continue to be a flexible, adaptable and an efficient organisation we have adopted the following values. We:

- will show respect, honesty, care, and compassion in everything we do
- will challenge ourselves and change for the better
- will be open and transparent
- are proud and passionate about what we do
- will continue to work as a team and with partners to provide quality services.



Customers

Providing excellent and accessible services.



Economy

Driving growth, promoting the district and being business and visitor friendly.



Environment

Protecting the quality of life for residents and businesses, meeting environmental challenges, and enhancing biodiversity.



Housing

Delivering social and private sector housing growth.



Priority

Customers

providing excellent and accessible services



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● Our priorities

We are committed to:

- Continuous improvement to service delivery through innovation, modernisation and listening to customers.
- Improving the customer



We will use technology to improve our services, where appropriate, but not to the detriment of customer service

experience and removing barriers to accessing information and services.

- Having an agile working, responsive, skilled, and engaged workforce.
- Continuing to work with partners from all sectors, ensuring priorities are aligned to benefit the residents of Bolsover District.
- Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and supporting and involving vulnerable and disadvantaged people.
- Improving health, wellbeing and increasing participation in sport, leisure, and social activities.

● Website

To help us improve the accessibility of our website we will talk to local organisations such as the Equalities Group to get their views and feedback.

● Sports participation

We will provide a more diverse range of activities, both in our leisure facilities and as part of our outreach programmes, to help increase participation in sport, leisure and social activities.



priorities and publish an annual progress and evaluation report in respect of cross cutting themes (skills, aspiration, health, and local rail offer).

Some of the initiatives that will help us achieve our priorities over the next four years include:

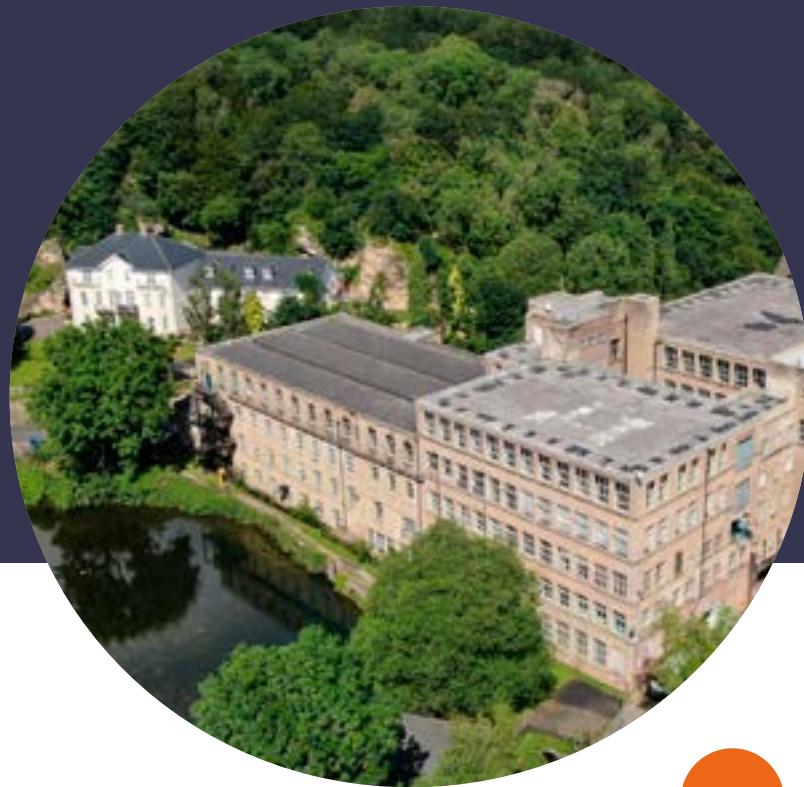
- Developing real time customer satisfaction measurement for services provided through our contact centres.
- Achieving a score of 90% or above based on user experience including accessibility for our website.
- Developing further our customer and resident insight work.
- Working with stakeholders, regional and local partnerships to deliver shared strategies and

- Monitoring progress against the Equality Plan and objectives for 2023–2027 and publishing information annually.
- Increasing participation in sport, leisure, and social activities, by 3,000 attendances per year.
- Delivering a health intervention programme which provides 500 adults per year with a personal exercise plan via the exercise referral scheme and aims to retain at least 50% into continued exercise after 12 weeks.
- Improving employee engagement and feedback to enable us to develop a fully inclusive People Strategy by March 2025.

Priority

Economy

Drive growth, promote the district and be business and visitor friendly



05

● Our priorities

We are committed to:

- Actively working with partners to support enterprise, innovation, jobs, and skills.
- Unlocking regeneration and development potential



It's important that we are flexible and adaptable to help meet our business goals and grow the local economy

of long-term vacant land and buildings, and stalled sites and deliver income-generating capital projects.

- Ensuring financial sustainability, increasing revenue streams, achieving best value, and making the best use of our assets.
- Promoting the district and working with partners to increase and support the creative, cultural and tourism sector.
- Maximising our influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to collectively ensure our citizens have the opportunity to develop key skills and access opportunities to work well, and help create a strong and sustainable local economy.



● Place narrative

To help us attract more visitors and inward investment to the area our focus for a new place narrative will centre around three priority areas: your visitor experience all packaged up; experience our great value living location; and we've made it our business to reach out.

● Pleasley Vale

We will work with existing businesses to develop the site into a unique business, leisure and visitor experience where the past meets the future and tradition meets innovation.



key heritage assets and grow the visitor economy, the number of tourists and the amount of tourism spending in the district by 2025.

- Working with partners to develop innovation and growth in our cultural and creative sectors through active support of an investment in a creative's network, cultural corridor, and maker's hub.
- Working with higher education and further education providers and other partners to develop post 16 provision within the district to enable and empower more of our local workforce to find better paid, skilled jobs.
- Securing investment in improvement of our existing business estate and delivery of new commercial space, including regeneration of Pleasley Mills, to meet the needs of local business, encourage inward investment and support growth throughout the local economy.
- Delivering a fully operational crematorium and managing this facility to generate income from 2025.
- Reviewing procurement rules to meet public procurement regulations and social value requirements.

Some of the initiatives that will help us achieve our priorities over the next four years include:

- Refreshing our Business Growth Strategy to enable and empower Dragonfly Development Ltd to support us in making the best use of our assets, support growth in the local economy, attract inward investment to the district and maximise the district's share of potential funding streams from the Government and the East Midlands Combined County Authority.
- Working with partners to develop a place-based narrative to encourage inward investment, increase engagement with our

Priority

Environment

Protect the quality of life for residents and businesses, meet environmental challenges and enhance biodiversity



Recycling

To help us achieve a better rate of recycling across the district, more targeted promotion will be undertaken to help educate people on the benefits of recycling.

Tree planting

We will continue with our tree planting schemes to help reduce the impact on the environment and increase the biodiversity of our district.

06

Our priorities

We are committed to:

- Maximising our influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to collectively lead the way in moving from fossil to fusion and play our part in

achieving our national ambition to achieve net zero by 2050.

- Reducing our carbon footprint whilst supporting and encouraging residents and businesses to do the same.
- Increasing recycling.
- Enhancing biodiversity across the district.
- Working with stakeholders, regional and local partnerships to deliver shared strategies and priorities that support the local environment.
- Ensuring all areas, neighbourhoods, and streets in the district, irrespective of housing tenure or type, are places where people want to live, feel safe, and are proud to live.



We have to find a way to make sure what we do complements how nature works and how people think

Some of the initiatives that will help us achieve our priorities over the next four years include:

- Updating our Carbon Reduction plan to deliver Net Zero 2050 and publish an annual progress and evaluation report.
- Increasing the combined recycling and composting rate to meet government's 65% target by 2035.
- Implementing Government Waste Consistency requirements for commercial waste by ending March 2025 and household waste by ending March 2026.
- Introducing separate weekly collection of food waste by March 2026.

- Carrying out 155 targeted proactive littering/dog fouling patrols per year (in 2023/24 and review number for 2024/25).
- Reducing fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people in Bolsover District over the plan period (baseline to be established and targets set each year).
- Achieving minimum quality standards of 60% for green spaces based on criteria and identified in the Local Plan for Bolsover District (baseline to be established and targets set each year).
- Annually monitoring the condition of Local Wildlife Sites across the district and take steps if required to enhance biodiversity and local nature recovery.
- Supporting developers and local organisations to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain across our urban and rural environments, realising future opportunities that support and deliver our Local Nature Recovery action plan.

Priority

Housing

Deliver social and private sector housing growth



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● Our priorities

We are committed to:

- Enabling housing growth by increasing the supply, quality, and range of housing to meet the needs of the growing population.



We are determined to solve the local housing crisis, one brick at a time

- Building more, good quality, affordable housing, and being a decent landlord.
- Preventing and responding to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions.
- Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all.
- Maximising our influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to create affordable, good quality housing options and to retrofit existing homes to be more environmentally sustainable.



● New council homes

We will continue with our Bolsover Homes programme by building new council properties where there is an identified demand, and it meets the needs of the local community.

● Private sector housing

We will adopt a new private sector housing strategy to help us work with landlords to improve the condition and quality of properties and develop good management practices, ultimately reducing homelessness.



Some of the initiatives that will help us achieve our priorities over the next four years include:

- Working towards compliance with the Social Housing Consumer Standards, ensuring tenants' voice is key when developing new council housing policies, procedures, and improvements.
- Commissioning and completing an appropriate council housing stock condition survey by April 2025, upon completion developing an improved rolling programme of stock inspections to inform future repairs and maintenance programme.
- Annually monitoring housing delivery in the district and taking steps if required to continue to meet the annual target of 272 new homes set out in the Local Plan for Bolsover District.
- Commissioning and completing local housing needs evidence by August 2024 to better understand the district's affordable housing needs.
- Working with partners to increase the supply, quality, and range of affordable housing to meet identified local needs.
- Developing strategies to support the private rented sector in supporting change to our duties.
- Delivering the actions within our Homelessness Strategy by December 2027.
- Preparing and adopting a new Housing Strategy by October 2024.
- Delivering 200 new homes through the Bolsover Homes Programme using Dragonfly Development Ltd by March 2028.
- Maintaining high levels of tenant satisfaction with council housing and associated services as assessed under the annual tenant satisfaction measures (TSM) with the aim to be above the national average.



Monitoring and review

We will carry out regular monitoring and reporting of our council plan progress.

We will ensure we are transparent with the key performance measures we put in place to measure outputs and outcomes. Each year we will undertake an annual review on our delivery of the plan and present a report for consideration by elected members.

Information will also be published on our



website and in our InTouch magazine for our residents and customers.

The plan will be monitored through our performance management framework in several ways:

CABINET MEMBERS

Cabinet members will oversee performance for their areas of responsibility.

SCRUTINY MEMBERS

Scrutiny members will review performance through quarterly reports including high level targets and key performance indicators.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Senior leadership team and service managers will oversee performance for their areas of responsibility and collectively through quarterly reporting, cabinet member briefings, appraisals, team meetings and one to one meetings.

AUDIT

Sample targets and performance indicators will be audited to ensure data quality.

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as **large print** or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone** - 01246 242424
- **Email** – enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call** – a three way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call the Council with **Sign Solutions** or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with **Relay UK** via textphone or app on **0800 500 888** - a free phone service.
- **Visiting** one of our **offices** at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton.





Bolsover District Council,
The Arc, High Street, Clowne,
Derbyshire S43 4JY.

For further information about this
plan or any of our services, please
telephone 01246 242424, email
enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk or visit
www.bolsover.gov.uk

Bolsover District Council

Council on 31st July 2024

Auditor's Annual Report – 2022/23

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Classification	This report is public.
Contact Officer	Theresa Fletcher Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

For Council to consider the Auditor's Annual Report in respect of 2022/23 at **Appendix 1**, which has been prepared by Mazars for consideration by Elected Members of the Council and other stakeholders.

REPORT DETAILS

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's External Auditor Mazars gave an unqualified opinion on the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 on the 28th of March 2024. This was the last working day of the financial year to which the accounts relate.
- 1.2 In March 2024, it was reported to Audit Committee about the local audit delays, the consultation on clearing the backlog of audits and the proposals for the future to ensure the timely audits for the sector.
- 1.3 The statement of accounts must be completed by the Council's finance team and be ready for sign off by the Section 151 Officer by the 31st of May each year under existing rules, and we have to be in a position to publish our audited accounts by the 30th of September.
- 1.4 The accounts were completed and signed off by the Section 151 Officer on the 19th of May 2023 and the audited accounts were published on the 2nd of April 2024 (after the Easter bank holiday weekend).
- 1.5 Although the auditors did not meet the statutory deadline for sign off for the 2022/23 accounts, providing the opinion before the start of the new financial year, meant we could rely on the 2023/24 opening balances not changing and save work in preparing the 2023/24 statement of accounts.
- 1.6 That Council consider **Appendix 1** from the Council's External Auditor, Mazars.

2 Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To ensure that Council is able to effectively consider the outcomes of the work undertaken by the Council's external auditors.

3 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 3.1 A copy of the Auditor's Annual Report is available on the Council's website and was considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 14th of June 2024. Together with inclusion on this Council agenda these measures should help ensure an appropriate level of consideration by Elected Members and other stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 That Council considers and notes **Appendix 1**, the report from the Council's External Auditor, Mazars.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS.

Finance and Risk: Yes ☐ No ☐

Details: There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: None arising directly from this report.

There are no Data Protection issues arising directly from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: Not applicable to this report

Staffing: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: None arising directly from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	None
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Portfolio Holder for Resources

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.

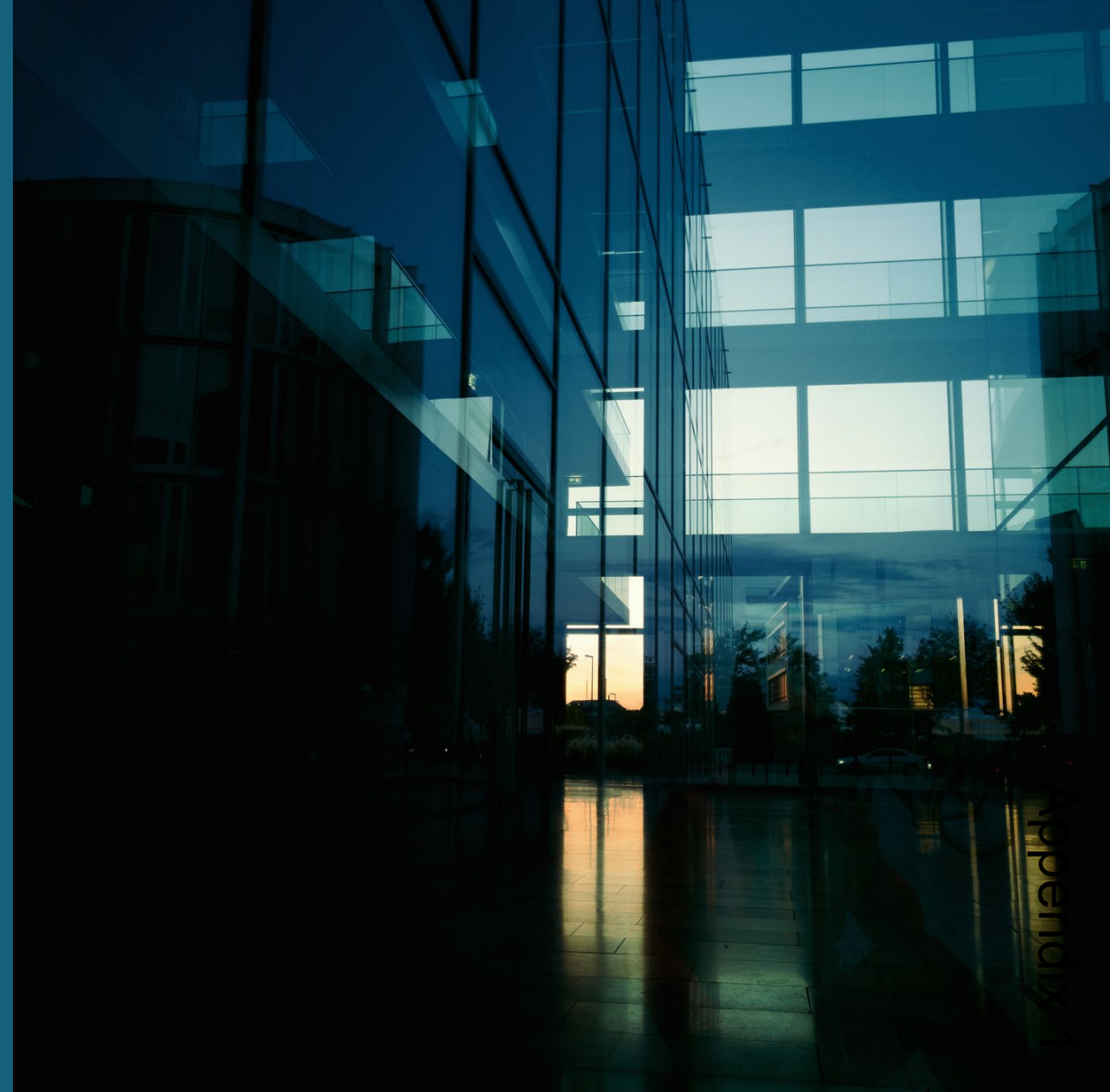
DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Auditor's Annual Report – year ended 31 March 2023

Background Papers <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
None

Auditor's Annual Report

Bolsover District Council – year ended
31 March 2023

March 2024



Contents

- 01 [Introduction](#)
- 02 [Audit of the financial statements](#)
- 03⁷⁴ [Commentary on VFM arrangements](#)
- 04 [Other reporting responsibilities](#)

[Appendix A: Further information on our audit of the financial statements](#)

Our reports are prepared in the context of the 'Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies' issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd. Reports and letters prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to members or officers are prepared for the sole use of the Council. No responsibility is accepted to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party.

Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an international advisory and accountancy group. Mazars LLP is registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

01

Section 01: **Introduction**

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Auditor’s Annual Report

Our Auditor’s Annual Report (AAR) summarises the work we have undertaken as the auditor for Bolsover District Council (‘the Council’) for the year ended 31 March 2023. Although this report is addressed to the Council, it is designed to be read by a wider audience including members of the public and other external stakeholders.

Our responsibilities are defined by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice (‘the Code’) issued by the National Audit Office (‘the NAO’). The remaining sections of the AAR outline how we have discharged these responsibilities and the findings from our work. These are summarised below.



Opinion on the financial statements

Our audit report, to be issued 28 March 2024 is expected to give an unqualified opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code, and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs).



Value for Money arrangements

In our audit report issued we reported that we had completed our work on the Council’s arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources and had not issued recommendations in relation to identified significant weaknesses in those arrangements. Section 3 provides our commentary on the Council’s arrangements



Wider reporting responsibilities

In line with group audit instructions issued by the NAO, on 27 September 2023 we completed our work on the Council’s Whole of Government Accounts return and reported to the group auditor in line with their instructions. The Group Instructions state that the NAO may request further work from auditors on a sample of WGA bodies at a later date. Until the NAO confirms that it does not require any further work from us on the Council’s WGA return, we are unable to complete the audit. When the NAO provides this confirmation we will issue our audit certificate for 2022/23.

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Section 02:

Audit of the financial statements

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2. Audit of the financial statements

The scope of our audit and the results of our opinion

Our audit was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code, and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). The purpose of our audit is to provide reasonable assurance to users that the financial statements are free from material error. We do this by expressing an opinion on whether the statements are prepared, in all material respects, in line with the financial reporting framework applicable to the Council and whether they give a true and fair view of the Council's financial position as at 31 March 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended. Our audit report, issued on 28 March 2024 gave an unqualified opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

A summary of the significant risks we identified when undertaking our audit of the financial statements and the conclusions we reached on each of these is outlined in Appendix A. In this appendix we also outline the uncorrected misstatements we identified and any internal control recommendations we made.

Qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Council's accounting policies and disclosures and concluded they comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets, published in November 2022,

Draft accounts were received from the Council on 30 May 2023 and were of a good quality.

Significant matters discussed with management

During our audit we communicated the following significant matters to management

Treatment of Works completed on behalf of Elmton with Cresswell Parish Council

We have had a discussions with management regarding disclosures in the accounts. One matter has resulted in a material adjustment on the accounts. This relates to the project undertaken by the Council on behalf of Elmton with Cresswell Parish Council in building the new Cresswell Leisure Centre. This which was recognised as revenue expenditure which qualifies as capital under statute (REFCUS) in the draft accounts. Following discussion and challenge of managements judgement on this treatment a material adjustment was made to the accounts. The adjustment can be seen in Appendix A of this report.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Safety concerns relating to the use of RAAC have been widely reported and local authorities have been required to assess their asset portfolio. We have considered the Council's response to the RAAC issue and considered its conclusion that there was no requirement for a provision or impairment in its 2022/23 accounts. We have considered the Council's assessment and consider it appropriate, based on the information provided by management.

Significant difficulties during the audit

During the course of the audit we did not encounter any significant difficulties and we have had the full co-operation of management.

Wider responsibilities

Our powers and responsibilities under the 2014 Act are broad and include the ability to:

- issue a report in the public interest;
- make statutory recommendations that must be considered and responded to publicly;
- apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law;
- make an application for judicial review; and
- issue an advisory notice under schedule 8 of the 2014 Act.

We have not exercised any of these powers as part of our 2022/23 audit. The 2014 Act also gives rights to local electors and other parties, such as the right to ask questions of the auditor and the right to make an objection to an item of account.

We received a statutory objection from a local elector. We considered the evidence provided by both the local elector and Council. We issued our Statement of Reasons in December 2023.

03

Section 03:

Commentary on VFM arrangements

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3. Commentary on VFM arrangements

Overall summary

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3. VFM arrangements – Overall summary

Approach to Value for Money arrangements work

We are required to consider whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out and sets out the reporting criteria that we are required to consider. The reporting criteria are:



Financial sustainability - How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services



Governance - How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks



Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness - How the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services

Our work is carried out in three main phases.

Phase 1 - Planning and risk assessment

At the planning stage of the audit, we undertake work so we can understand the arrangements that the Council has in place under each of the reporting criteria; as part of this work we may identify risks of significant weaknesses in those arrangements.

We obtain our understanding of arrangements for each of the specified reporting criteria using a variety of information sources which may include:

- NAO guidance and supporting information
- Information from internal and external sources including regulators
- Knowledge from previous audits and other audit work undertaken in the year
- Interviews and discussions with staff and directors

Although we describe this work as planning work, we keep our understanding of arrangements under review

and update our risk assessment throughout the audit to reflect emerging issues that may suggest there are further risks of significant weaknesses.

Phase 2 - Additional risk-based procedures and evaluation

Where we identify risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements, we design a programme of work to enable us to decide whether there are actual significant weaknesses in arrangements. We use our professional judgement and have regard to guidance issued by the NAO in determining the extent to which an identified weakness is significant.

Phase 3 - Reporting the outcomes of our work and our recommendations

We are required to provide a summary of the work we have undertaken and the judgments we have reached against each of the specified reporting criteria in this Auditor's Annual Report. We do this as part of our Commentary on VFM arrangements which we set out for each criteria later in this section.

We also make recommendations where we identify weaknesses in arrangements or other matters that require attention from the Council. We refer to two distinct types of recommendation through the remainder of this report:

- **Recommendations arising from significant weaknesses in arrangements**

We make these recommendations for improvement where we have identified a significant weakness in the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Where such significant weaknesses in arrangements are identified, we report these (and our associated recommendations) at any point during the course of the audit.

- **Other recommendations**

We make other recommendations when we identify areas for potential improvement or weaknesses in arrangements which we do not consider to be significant but which still require action to be taken

The table on the following page summarises the outcomes of our work against each reporting criteria, including whether we have identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements or made other recommendations.

3. VFM arrangements – Overall summary

Overall summary by reporting criteria

Reporting criteria	Commentary page reference	Identified risks of significant weakness?	Actual significant weaknesses identified?	Other recommendations made?
 Financial sustainability	11	No	No	To include the financial activities of Dragonfly Development Limited in the MTFP
 Governance	15	No	No	No
 Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness	19	No	No	No

3. Commentary on VFM arrangements

Financial Sustainability

How the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services



3. VFM arrangements – Financial Sustainability

Overall commentary on the Financial Sustainability reporting criteria

Significant weakness in 2021/22	Nil.
Significant weaknesses identified in 2022/23	Nil.

Position brought forward from 2021/22

As set out in the table above, there are no indications of a significant weakness in the Council’s arrangements for financial sustainability brought forward from 2021/22. The Council’s underlying arrangements in relation to financial sustainability are not significantly different in 2022/23.

Overall responsibilities for financial governance

We have reviewed the Council’s overall governance framework, including Council and committee reports, the Annual Governance Statement, and Statement of Accounts for 2022/23. These confirm the Council undertook its responsibility to define the strategic aims and objectives, approve budgets and monitor financial performance against budgets and plan to best meet the needs of the Council’s service users.

The Council’s financial planning and monitoring arrangements

Through our review of Council and committee reports, meetings with management and relevant work performed on the financial statements, we are satisfied that the Council’s arrangements for budget monitoring remain appropriate, including reporting to Members. On the 20th January 2022 the council presented the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which showed a balanced budget for 2022/23. In its MTFP the council projected deficits where this would be funded by contributions from reserves, below we have figures from the revised budget for 2022/23:

Year	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Total Spending Requirement	11.773	16.844	17.581	13.572	13.825
Total Funding	11.691	11.825	17.581	13.571	13.835
Funding Gap (Surplus)	0.082	0.018	0	0	0

2022/23 Budget Setting and the Medium-Term Financial Plan

In developing the financial projections, the Council made several assumptions. The major assumptions including, staffing budgets as an estimate for a pay award. Investment income as a result of treasury management decisions has been increased slightly (£0.020m) in all years of the MTFP as interest rates are expected to rise. Inflation specific budgets such as energy costs and fuel were amended to reflect anticipated price changes. With respect to planning fees, a base level for income had been included for all future years of £0.400m. Fees and charges service specific increases were as agreed by Members.

In 2022/23 the Council acquired interest in a subsidiary Dragonfly Development Limited (DDL) as an investment to improve the Council’s financial sustainability in the future whilst improving the provision of sustainable housing in the Bolsover district. A full business case was approved by Council in February 2022. Through review of the 2022/23 MTFP we noted that budget did not include any income and expenditure related to DDL. We have been informed that in 2022/23, the year we reviewed, there has been minimum activity in the subsidiary with the expectation that it will pick up in 2024/25. We understand from discussion with officer the budget/MTFP are being prepared to include DDL however the 23/24 MTFP did not reference DDL.(see recommendation below) . The Council has reviewed a detailed income and expenditure report which has been made available to the auditors. The subsidiary is to be included in future plans. Based on work completed for the year ended 31 March 2023 we have not identified any matters to indicate any significant weakness in arrangements. We will review the arrangements for DDL further in our work for the year ended 31 March 2024. This will include the financial planning and governance arrangements associated with DDL.

Other Recommendations Relating to Non-Significant Weaknesses

R1 - We recommend that the Council explicitly includes the MTFP income and expenditure that relates to Dragonfly Development Limited.

2022/23 Statement of Financial Position and Outturn Report

The purpose of the Council’s general fund reserve is to meet costs arising from any unplanned or emergency events. It also acts as a financial buffer to help mitigate against the financial risks the Council faces and can be used to a limited degree to ‘smooth’ expenditure on a one-off basis across years. Whereas earmarked reserves are set aside for specific purposes.

VFM arrangements – Financial Sustainability

2022/23 Statement of Financial Position and Outturn Report (Continued)

We carried out a high-level analysis of the financial statements subject to our audit, including the Movement in Reserves Statement and our work to date has not highlighted any risks of significant weakness in arrangements or indicators of a risk to the Council's financial sustainability.

The Council's usable reserves have increased by £0.599m from £48.6256 to £49.225m in 2022/23, with:

- General Fund & Earmarked Reserves of £25.519m, up from £24.662m in the prior year
- HRA Reserve of £8.811m, down from £13.886m in 2021/22
- Capital Reserves of £14.895m, up from £10.0078m in 2021/22.

We have further reviewed the Council's outturn reports as presented to the cabinet on the 27 June 2023. The variances were as follows:

Directorates	Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m
GF: Resources	5.431	4.748	(0.683)
GF: Strategy and Development	4.940	4.339	(0.601)
Net cost of Services	10.371	9.087	(1.284)
HRA: Resources	(14.539)	(14.438)	0.101
HRA: Strategy and Development	6.502	5.891	(0.611)
Net cost of services	(8.037)	(8.547)	(0.510)

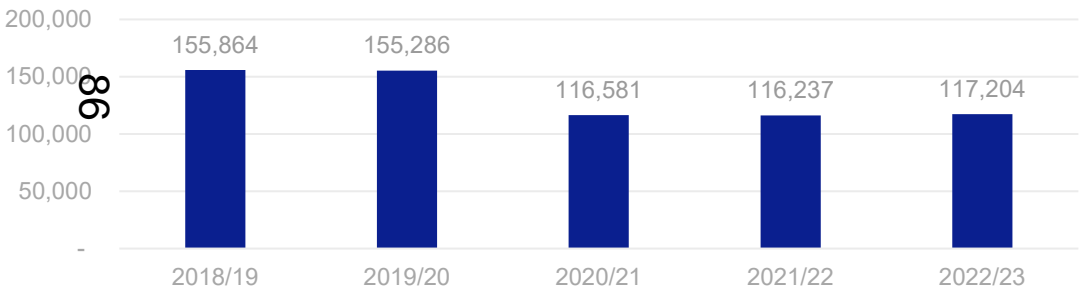
The main variances on net cost of Council expenditure was due to net debt charges and investment interest of £0.572m; £0.668m net underspend on staff related budgets; £0.070m increased planning fees; extra grants received of £0.064m. The balance was non-staff miscellaneous variances £0.572m. The variance on the HRA net cost of services mirrors that of the general fund where the main expenditure underspends were in relation to staff costs at £0.093m and utilities at sheltered dwellings of £0.075m. The income position was over-achieved by £0.236m due to better than anticipated property lettings and favourable miscellaneous income variances. The variances have been disclosed and explained in the narrative report on the 2022/23 Statement of accounts.

VFM arrangements – Financial Sustainability

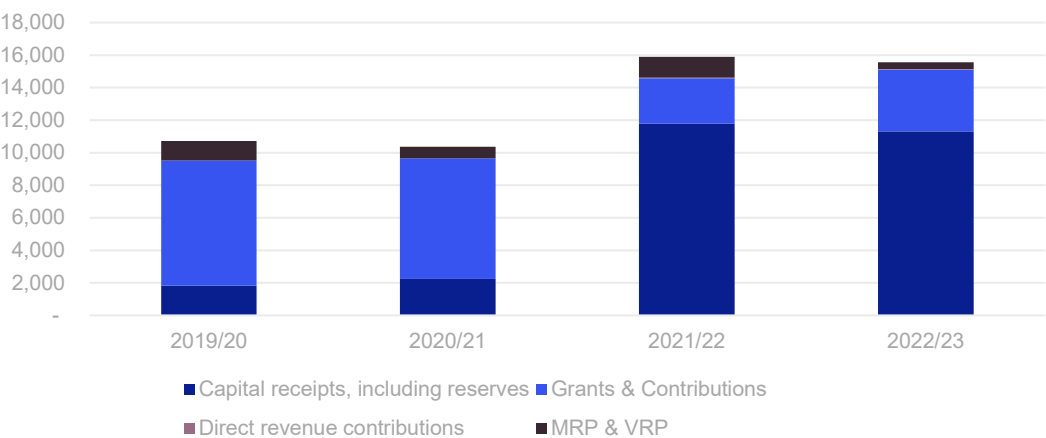
The Council's capital expenditure and financing

The Council's arrangements for setting and monitoring capital expenditure are consistent with the previous year and there is no evidence of a significant weakness in arrangements. We considered the Council's capital financing requirement as set out in Note 34 of the financial statements, which has reduced from £155.864m in 2018/19 to £117.204m in 2022/23. We also considered the sources of capital finance in the capital programme, which shows over the past four years capital spend has been mainly financed through grants and contributions.

Capital financing requirement



Sources of capital finance
£'000



In 2022/23, the Council spent £14m on capital additions and £1m of REFCUS (Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute). Our detailed testing of capital additions did not identify any material issues, however there was an error identified in REFCUS where expenditure of approximately £1m was incorrectly recognised as REFCUS, this was corrected by the Council and we are satisfied is no indicative of a weakness in arrangements impacting financial sustainability.

As part of paying down the capital financing requirement, the Council charged £0.560m to the general fund as a "Minimum Revenue Provision". The duty to make Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is an important component of the Prudential Framework to ensure capital expenditure and borrowing can be repaid. The importance and impact of the MRP is often poorly understood outside of finance teams and can lead to significant issues affecting the financial sustainability of a local authority. We reviewed the Council's Policy for 2022/23 and its supporting calculations as part of our work on the financial statements audit and have benchmarked the Council's charge against our database of other district Councils:

Minimum Revenue Provision as a % of the Capital Financing Requirement	2021/22	2022/23
District councils: average	3.2 %	3.4 %
District councils: bottom quartile	1.0 %	1.2 %
Bolsover District Council	11.6 %	7.1 %

The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) has shown a gradual decrease over the past couple of years with an increase of just under £1m in the current year. The Council MRP including Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP) has been consistent at approximately £0.700m in the past. In 2022/23 there was a reduction where the MRP was £0.400m. Despite the reduction, the Council's MRP charge is above the average charge amongst other district Councils.

It is important the Council consider the impact of it's arrangement with Dragonfly Development Limited on future CFR and in particular the capitalisation regulations. We will consider this as part of our work in future years. We are satisfied the Council's capital expenditure and capital financing does not give rise to a risk of significant weakness in arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Based on our work we are satisfied there is no evidence of a significant weakness in the Council's arrangements in relation to financial sustainability for the year ended 31 March 2023.

3. Commentary on VFM arrangements

Governance

How the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks

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3. VFM arrangements – Governance

Overall commentary on the Governance reporting criteria

Significant weakness in 2021/22	Nil.
Significant weaknesses identified in 2022/23	Nil.

Position brought forward from 2021/22

As set out in the table above, there are no indications of a significant weakness in the Council’s arrangements for financial sustainability brought forward from the previous year.

The Authority’s governance structure

The Council has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance which is consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) - the ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework’ 2016 edition. The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and for facilitating the effective exercise of its function. This governance arrangement is detailed in the Councils Constitution and the summary is included in the Annual Governance Statement. The Council’s governance prioritises as identified in the Framework and Constitution are:

- Customers,
- Economy; and
- Environment

We have attended the Council’s Audit Committee meetings; we have reviewed minutes from the different committees against our understanding of the Council as part of our audit. Our review of Council and Committee papers confirms that a template covering report is used for all reports, ensuring the purpose, strategic context, governance issues, and recommendations are clear. Minutes are published and reviewed by Committees to evidence the matters discussed, challenge and decisions made. Based on our work, we are satisfied there is no evidence of a weakness in the Council’s governance arrangements

Risk management and internal control

The Council has an established risk management framework and systems in place which are built into the governance structure of the organisation. The Council has embedded risk management by the establishment of a Risk Management Group which is led by Members and attended by senior officers, internal audit and health and safety officers. The group regularly reviews all risk registers, offering challenge to the assessment process. The group leads on the development and review of all risk related policies, plans and strategies across the Council. These are supported by a Risk Management Strategy which identifies and mitigates the Strategic and Operational risks. The Risk Management framework includes a quarterly reporting process to Audit Committee.

The Risk Management approach, both in the identification of risks and the action taken to address the risks, is flexible and has the ability to respond to change. National policies, service delivery arrangements, national and local circumstances, together with Council priorities have, and will continue, to change and evolve over time. The Council’s Risk Management focus and arrangements are designed to adjust to ensure that current threats and opportunities are effectively addressed and not stifled by inappropriate risk management arrangements.

We have reviewed the risk registers and noted that these are reviewed regularly, with each strategic risk identified being assigned a ‘risk owner’ in order for there to be ownership and accountability. The ‘risk owners’ would then review their allocated strategic risks at quarterly intervals. Additionally, the strategic risks are also communicated to the Audit for additional scrutiny.

The Council has an annual Internal Audit plan which is agreed with management at the start of the financial year and is reviewed by the Audit Committee prior to final approval.

The audit plan is based on an assessment of risks the Council faces and is designed to ensure there is assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s framework of governance, risk management and control. The planned work can be supplemented if necessary, by ad hoc reviews in respect of suspected irregularities and other work commissioned by Officers and Members of the Council where relevant to respond to emerging risks and issues. We have reviewed the Internal Audit plans for 2022/23 and confirmed they are consistent with the risk based approach.

Internal Audit progress reports are presented to each Audit Committee meeting including follow up reporting on recommendations from previous Internal Audit reports. From our attendance at meetings, we are satisfied this allows the Committee to effectively hold management to account. At the end of each financial year the Head of Internal Audit Consortium provides an opinion based on the work completed during the year. For 2022/23 the Head of Internal Audit report concluded that a reasonable level of assurance could be provided on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s framework for governance, risk management and control.

Throughout the year we have attended Audit Committee meetings. Through attendance at these meetings we have confirmed that the Committee receive regular updates on both internal audit progress and risk management in the form of risk registers. We have seen active member engagement from the Committee who challenge the papers and reports which they receive from officers, internal audit and external audit.

VFM arrangements – Governance

Overall commentary on the Governance reporting criteria

Governance structure for Dragonfly Development Limited

A full business case for Dragonfly Development Limited (DDL) was presented and approved by full Council in February 2023. The business case detailed the rationale for establishing DDL and a subsidiary management company. The Business case also detailed the proposed governance arrangements for DDL. We considered the business case and its approval and identified no evidence to indicate a significant weakness in arrangements.

We note a service level agreement was signed between the Council and the DDL post 31 March 2023. This details the review and monitoring processes for the Council and the company. Each body i.e. the Council and DDL is required to select a representative where frequent meetings would take place in order to monitor performance. The Director of Construction is thereafter required to provide a report to Local Growth Scrutiny on the performance of Dragonfly. We will consider further the performance of DDL and the operation of the governance arrangements specified in the business case and subsequent agreements as part of our future value for money work

Through review of minutes, we note the Council approved the business case, including oversight arrangements for monitoring the performance of Dragonfly Development Limited. As at the year ended 31 March 2023 we have identified no matters to indicate a significant weakness in arrangements.

Setting and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The Council's budget setting and medium-term financial planning follows a similar process and format to previous years and our review is supported by discussions with officers during the year and experience from prior year audits. We read the report to Council in January 2023, where a balanced budget was set. We are satisfied that the reports contain an adequate amount of detail regarding assumptions and that these are not unreasonable. The Council reflects on the limitations of medium-term financial planning through the one-year local government finance settlements.

The table below reproduces the MTFP table.

Year	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Total Spending Requirement	16.843	17.581	13.571
Total Funding	11.825	17.581	13.571
Funding Gap (Surplus)	0.018	0	0

We considered reasonableness of the 2023/24 Revised budget by reviewing the most recent report to Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee (January 2024) on financial performance. This sets out a potential £0.018m general fund budget variance, which agrees to the plan and therefore does not raise concern over financial sustainability.

Overall, we have not identified any indicators of a significant weakness in the Council's arrangements relating to the Governance criteria for the year ended 31 March 2023.

3. Commentary on VFM arrangements

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

How the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services



3. VFM arrangements – Improving Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness

Overall commentary on the Improving Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness reporting criteria

Significant weakness in 2021/22	Nil.
Significant weaknesses identified in 2022/23	Nil.

Position brought forward from 2021/22

As set out in the table above, there are no indications of a significant weakness in the Council's arrangements brought forward from the prior year and the Council's arrangements are not significantly changed since the prior year.

Council Plan and Performance Monitoring

The Council has in place 2020-2024 Ambition which encompasses its vision to become a dynamic, self-sufficient and flexible Council that delivers excellent services, whilst adapting to local aspirations and acting as the economic and environmental driver for Bolsover District. To achieve this, the Council has three aims designed to deliver this vision through priorities that cover the Council Ambition 2020-2024 and these related to Customers, Economy and the Environment.

The Council has identified the key performance indicators, and target levels of performance, in relation to these priorities. The performance targets are informed by national standards, local benchmarking and experience and subject to initial challenge and confirmation. The Council has in place a performance management framework which includes identified responsibilities of managers and processes for regular performance reporting and corrective action if required. Portfolio holders meet regularly with Assistant Directors and Directors to discuss, amongst other things, the performance of services against targets. There is quarterly reporting to the Audit and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee and the Executive. These quarterly reports take the form of a dashboard and identify whether the performance is achieved or on/off track. The quarterly reports include an appropriate commentary to explain any significant factors which are affecting performance and actions being taken to correct performance. Based on review of minutes there is evidence of appropriate scrutiny of these reports. We also note that there are no issues noted by the Head of internal Audit that would suggest performance issues.

On an annual basis, the Council's overall performance is summarised in the Narrative Report as part of the Statement of Accounts. This outlines the Council's progress against its ambitions, highlighting key successes

and risk areas. The Narrative Report also includes an agreed plan for subsequent years, including any areas for improvement. This provides the public with an overall assessment of the Council activities for the financial year

A sample of targets as reported in the Q4 report for 2022/23 have been reviewed and confirmed that this was in line with what has been reported in the narrative report which forms part of the annual financial statements. The quarterly reports demonstrate that performance has been managed throughout the 2022/23 year and any significant variances have been justified. Based on our work we are satisfied there is evidence to demonstrate arrangements are in place for performance monitoring and management at the Council.

Based on review we are satisfied the Council continues to have arrangements for standing financial instructions, purchase order controls and our work on the financial statements has not identified any significant internal control deficiencies regarding purchasing controls.

Overall, we have not identified any indicators of a significant weakness in the Council's arrangements relating to the Improving Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness criteria for the year ended 31 March 2023.

3. Commentary on VFM arrangements

Identified significant weaknesses in
arrangements and our recommendations

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3. Identified significant weaknesses and our recommendations

Identified significant weaknesses in arrangements and recommendations for improvement

As a result of our work we are satisfied there are no significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

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Section 04:

**Other reporting responsibilities and
our fees**

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4. Other reporting responsibilities and our fees

Matters we report by exception

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 provides auditors with specific powers where matters come to our attention that, in their judgement, require specific reporting action to be taken. Auditors have the power to:

- issue a report in the public interest;
- make statutory recommendations that must be considered and responded to publicly;
- apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to the law; and
- issue an advisory notice.

We have not exercised any of these statutory reporting powers.

The 2014 Act also gives rights to local electors and other parties, such as the right to ask questions of the auditor and the right to make an objection to an item of account. We did not receive any such objections or questions.

Reporting to the NAO in respect of Whole of Government Accounts consolidation data

The NAO, as group auditor, requires us to complete the WGA Assurance Statement in respect of its consolidation data. The Group Instructions state that the NAO may request further work from auditors on a sample of WGA bodies at a later date. Until the NAO confirms that it does not require any further work from us on the Council's WGA return, we are unable to complete the audit. When the NAO provides this confirmation we will issue our audit certificate for 2022/23.

4. Other reporting responsibilities and our fees

Fees for work as the Council's auditor

We reported our proposed fees for the delivery of our work under the Code of Audit Practice in our Audit Strategy Memorandum presented to the Audit Committee on 27th June 2023. Having completed our work for the 2022/23 financial year, we can confirm that our fees are as follows:

Area of work	2021/22 fees	2022/23 fees
Planned fee in respect of our work under the Code of Audit Practice	£38,056	£45,112
Additional fees in respect additional testing undertaken to comply with increased regulatory requirements relating to: IAS19 pension liabilities; valuation of land, buildings and investment properties	£9,500	Included in Scale Fee
Additional fees in respect of additional work from the introduction of new auditing standards (ISA 540 estimates)	£3,590	-
Additional fees in respect of additional work from the introduction of new auditing standards (ISA315 Planning and Risk Assessment)	-	£5,492
Technical Accounting Issues: REFCUS Finding	-	£3,668
Additional costs arising from the acquisition and treatment of Dragonfly Development Limited	-	£1,934
Additional fees in respect of the VFM Commentary	£7,500	£8,001
Total fees – For Audit Opinion	£58,636	£64,207
Fee arising from the objection work	-	£13,027

Fees for other work

We confirm that we have undertaken one assurance related service for the Council in the year: Assurance return on the pooling of housing capital receipts for £5,500. We are satisfied there are adequate safeguards in place regarding our independence and objectivity.



Appendix

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A. Further information on our audit of the financial statements

Significant risks and audit findings

As part of our audit, we identified significant risks to our audit opinion during our risk assessment. The table below summarises these risks, how we responded and our findings.

Risk	How we addressed the risk	Audit Conclusion
<p><u>Management Override of Controls</u></p> <p>In all entities, management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, we consider there to be a risk of material misstatement due to fraud and thus a significant risk on all audits.</p>	<p>We addressed this risk through performing audit work over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accounting estimates impacting amounts included in the financial statements • consideration of identified significant transactions outside the normal course of business • journals recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in preparation of the financial statements 	<p>Our work has provided the required assurance, and we have no matters to report.</p>
<p><u>Net defined benefit liability valuation</u></p> <p>The Council's accounts contain material liabilities relating to the local government pension scheme. The Council uses an actuary to provide an annual valuation of these liabilities in line with the requirements of IAS 19 Employee Benefits. Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with this valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.</p>	<p>We addressed this risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically assessing the competency, objectivity and independence of the Derbyshire Pension Fund's Actuary, Hymans Robertson LLP; • Liaising with the auditors of the Derbyshire Pension Fund to gain assurance that the controls in place at the Pension Fund are operating effectively. This includes the processes and controls in place to ensure data provided to the Actuary by the Pension Fund for the purposes of the IAS 19 valuation to complete and accurate; • Reviewing the appropriateness of the Pension Asset and Liability valuation methodologies applied by the Pension Fund Actuary, and the key assumptions included within the valuation. This includes comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information provided by PwC, the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office (NAO); and • Agreeing the data in the IAS 19 valuation report provided by the Fund Actuary for accounting purposes to the pension accounting entries and disclosures in the Council's financial statements. 	<p>Our work has provided the required assurance, and we have no matters to report.</p>

A. Further information on our audit of the financial statements

Significant risks and audit findings (continued)

Risk	How we addressed the risk	Audit Conclusion
<p><u>Valuation of Dwellings, Land & Buildings and Investment Property</u></p> <p>The Council's accounts contain material balances and disclosures relating to its holding of property, plant and equipment and assets held for sale, with the majority of land and building assets required to be carried at valuation. Due to high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with those held at valuation, we have determined there is significant risk in this area.</p>	<p>We addressed this risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critically assessing the Council's valuers scope of work, qualifications, objectivity and independence to carry out the required programme of revaluations considering whether the overall revaluation methodologies used by the Council's valuers are in line with industry practice, the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's accounting policies assessing whether valuation movements are in line with market expectations by using third party information provided by Montagu Evans to provide information on regional valuation trends critically assessing the approach that the Council adopts to ensure that assets not subject to revaluation in 2022/23 are materially correct, including considering the robustness of that approach in light of the valuation information reported by the Council's valuers 	<p>Our work has provided the required assurance, and we have no other matters to report.</p>

A. Further information on our audit of the financial statements

Enhanced risks and audit findings

Risk	How we addressed the risk	Audit Conclusion
<p><u>Acquisition of Dragonfly Development Limited</u></p> <p>In October 2022, the Council acquired a wholly owned subsidiary, Dragonfly Development Limited, which was previously held as a joint venture. The Council has not produced group accounts in 2023 as the subsidiary has been assessed as immaterial. Due to the complexity in accounting for acquisition of interest in companies or other entities, this transaction has been highlighted as an enhanced risk</p>	<p>We addressed this risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reviewed the transaction and accounting treatment made in reporting the acquisition; and• reviewed the judgements made by the Council in arriving at the conclusion not to produce group accounts for the 2022/23 financial year.	<p>Our work has provided the required assurance, and we have no matters to report.</p>

A. Further information on our audit of the financial statements

Summary of corrected misstatements

		Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)	Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)
101	1	Dr: General Fund		63	
		Cr: Capital Receipts Reserves			63
		Dr: PPE (AUC Additions)		63	
		Cr: CIES	63		
Assets Under Construction incorrectly classified as REFCUS					
	2	Dr: Revaluation Reserve	175		
		Cr: Property, Plant and Equipment (Other Land and Buildings)			175
		Adjustments due to overstatement in revaluation of property.			
	3	Dr: General Fund		1,272	
		Cr: Capital Receipt Reserves			1,272
		Dr: CIES – Grants and Capital contributions	1,272		
		Cr: CIES - Deferred charges	1,272		
Correction of the cost incorrectly recorded as REFCUS in relation to an agency arrangement with Elmton Creswell Parish Council in managing the building of a leisure centre.					
Total adjusted misstatements		1,272	1,335	1,573	1,510

A. Further information on our audit of the financial statements

Summary of uncorrected misstatements

We reported two unadjusted misstatements identified during the course of the audit. This misstatement was immaterial.

		Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Balance Sheet	
		Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)	Dr (£'000)	Cr (£'000)
1	Dr: Pension liability Cr: Unusable reserves			211	
					211
102	The pension fund auditor reported a 0.18% movement in the asset values in the pension fund between the date of submission of information to the actuary and the year end. This equates to £211k movement to the Council's share of pension fund assets. We report this as an unadjusted uncertainty.				
2	Dr: Property, Plant and Equipment			92	
	Cr. Revaluation Reserve				92
Total unadjusted misstatements				303	303

A. Further information on our audit of the financial statements

Summary of internal control recommendations

Disclosure of investment in subsidiary in separate accounts

Our audit reported an internal control recommendation. This was accepted by management.

Description of deficiency

The Council holds its investment in subsidiary at fair value through profit and loss in its single entity accounts. Through review of this area during the audit we noted that despite the Council's accounting policy the Council has not performed fair valuation of its investment in Dragonfly Development Ltd as at 31 March 2023. The investment has been disclosed at cost (£364k0. Based on our review and nature of the investment, we note that the value disclosed is not materially different to what would be considered the fair value of the subsidiary.

Potential effects

Non-compliance with the Council's accounting policy could lead to a material misstatement in the accounts.

Recommendation

The Council should ensure that the subsidiary is fairly valued at each reporting date. This assessment should be clearly documented, and the assumptions used should be readily available for audit.

Management response

The process of valuing Dragonfly Development Ltd at 31st March 2024, has been added to the financial services year-end timetable to ensure this oversight is not repeated for the financial year 2023/24.

James Collins

Mazars
The Corner
Newcastle
NE1 1DF

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*where permitted under applicable country laws.

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Bolsover District Council

Council on 31st July 2024

Neurodiversity Policy

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Peter Wilmot HR Business Partner

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the implementation of a Neurodiversity Policy for the Council. The Neurodiversity Policy aims to foster an inclusive environment that recognises and values the diverse strengths and perspectives of individuals with neurological differences.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Policy has previously been considered and supported by the Council's Senior Leadership Team and the Council's Union Employee Consultation Committee on 5th June 2024.
- 1.2 Neurodiversity refers to the natural variation in neurological functioning present in the population. It encompasses conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, and others. Research has shown that neurodiverse individuals bring unique skills and perspectives to the workplace, including enhanced problem-solving abilities, creativity, and attention to detail.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The implementation of a Neurodiversity Policy aligns with the Council's commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion. By embracing neurodiversity, we can tap into a wider talent pool, increase innovation and create a more dynamic and supportive work environment for all employees. Moreover, fostering an inclusive culture where neurodiverse individuals feel valued and supported can lead to higher employee satisfaction, retention and productivity. The policy helps create an environment where neurodiverse employees can thrive, contribute their unique perspectives and access necessary support and

accommodations to fully participate in society. It fosters a culture of acceptance, understanding, and equal opportunities for all members of the community.

3. Principles of the Neurodiversity Policy

- 3.1 All employees deserve opportunities, encouragement and support to realise their full potential.
- 3.2 A diversity of cognitive approaches is a source of great strength and value within a genuinely inclusive workplace.
- 3.3 All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that policies, practices and culture do not discriminate against neurodivergent people.
- 3.4 Employees must not be subject to unfavourable treatment if they choose to disclose a neurodivergent condition.
- 3.5 Each employee is unique and that there can be a high degree of overlap between neurodivergent conditions. Consequently, any support needs must be identified and implemented on the basis of personal evaluation and individual consultation – not assumptions or stereotypes.

4. Key Components of the Proposed Neurodiversity Policy

- 4.1 Awareness and Education: Raise awareness about neurodiversity and provide education on how to support neurodiverse individuals in the workplace.
- 4.2 Recruitment and Hiring Practices: Consider recruitment and hiring practices to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to neurodiverse candidates. This may include adjusting interview processes, providing alternative forms of assessment, and offering adaptations as needed.
- 4.3 Workplace Adjustments: Potential identify and implement workplace adjustments to support neurodiverse employees, such as flexible work arrangements where possible, sensory-friendly workspaces, and assistive technologies.
- 4.4 Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity: Ensure that policies and procedures are in place to prevent discrimination and promote inclusivity for neurodiverse individuals at all levels of the Council.
- 4.5 In conclusion, the adoption of a Neurodiversity Policy is important for creating an inclusive and supportive workplace where all employees can thrive.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To demonstrate the Council's commitment to being an excellent and fully inclusive employer and to improve awareness amongst employees and members.

6. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 Not to implement the policy and rely on the Council's existing employment policies.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Approve the Neurodiversity Policy.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes ☒ No ☐

Details: The cost of launching the Policy, information, publicity and arranging awareness sessions.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☒ No ☐

Details: Ensuring compliance with equality legislation.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes ☐ No ☒

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

Staffing: Yes ☒ No ☐

Details: Creating a more inclusive working environment.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

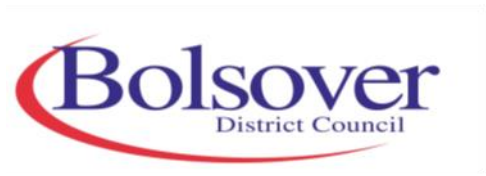
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	(please state which wards or state All if all wards are affected)
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Details: Trade Unions and Union Employment Consultation Committee

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Neurodiversity Policy

Background Papers <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
None



Bolsover District Council

Neurodiversity Policy

June 2024

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246 242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

CONTROL SHEET FOR NEURODIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Details	Comments / Confirmation (To be updated as the document progresses)
Policy title	Neurodiversity Policy
Current status – i.e. first draft, version 2 or final version	
Policy author (post title only)	HR Business Partner
Location of policy (whilst in development)	
Relevant Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Councillor C Moesby
Equality Impact Assessment approval date	TBA
Partnership involvement (if applicable)	
Final policy approval route i.e. Executive/ Council	UECC and Council
Date policy approved	
Date policy due for review (maximum three years)	
Date policy forwarded to Performance & Communications teams (to include on ERIC, and website if applicable to the public)	

Contents

1. Introduction 5

2. What Is Neurodiversity? 5

3. The Legal Framework 5

4. Principles of this policy 6

5. Neurodiverse Identification 6

6. Supporting our Employees 7

7. Reasonable adjustments 6

8. Further Support 8

Neurodiversity Policy

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to outline Bolsover District Council's (the Council's) commitment to promoting equality and fairness, whilst recognising and celebrating the diversity that exists among our local communities. It will also outline the duties we must uphold and the corporate framework within which we operate.

This policy applies to workers, and potential workers, who are neurodivergent, or who believe that they may be neurodivergent. It is also a document to give guidance to managers of neurodiverse staff.

The scope of this policy covers conditions including, but not limited to: autism spectrum conditions, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, dyspraxia, and dyscalculia.

2. What Is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people naturally think about things differently, and how everyone differs in their areas of strength and weakness. Most people are "Neurotypical", meaning that the brain functions and processes information in such a way that the person thinks, perceives, and behaves in ways that are considered to be "normal" by the general population. Many day to day tasks are designed in a 'neurotypical' way and therefore these may have an impact on someone who is 'neurodiverse'.

According to the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) it is estimated that around 1 in 7 people (more than 15% of people in the UK) are Neurodivergent, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently. Neurodivergence includes a range of different neurological conditions, including but not limited to:

- ☐ Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD, ADHD)
- ☐ Autism
- ☐ Dyslexia
- ☐ Dyspraxia
- ☐ Dyscalculia
- ☐ Dysgraphia
- ☐ Tourette's syndrome

3. The Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) consolidated over 100 pieces of equality and anti-discriminatory legislation which seeks to develop a common approach to dealing with unfair treatment and discrimination.

The Act put in place nine 'Protected Characteristics' in order to prevent discrimination. According to the Transport Salaried Staffs Association (TSSA) trade union, currently no Neurodiverse condition is defined as a disability under the Equality Act 2010, but many people may be able to prove that their condition is defined as a disability as a consequence of it significantly impairing their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

Normally, evidence is required from a diagnostic assessment to support this. An employee may be recognised as having a “hidden disability” and their employment rights are protected by the Equality Act 2010. The Council has a separate policy which covers Disability and Equality in greater depth which can be found on the Intranet.

4. Principles of this policy

- ☐ All Employees deserve opportunities, encouragement and support to realise their full potential
- ☐ A diversity of cognitive approaches is a source of great strength and value within a genuinely inclusive workplace
- ☐ All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that policies, practices and culture do not discriminate against neurodivergent people
- ☐ Employees must not be subject to unfavourable treatment if they choose to disclose a neurodivergent condition
- ☐ Each employee is unique and that there can be a high degree of overlap between neurodivergent conditions. Consequently, any support needs must be identified and implemented on the basis of personal evaluation and individual consultation – not assumptions or stereotypes.

5. Neurodiverse Identification

The Council agrees to consider all requests for support for the purpose of obtaining a diagnosis within a timely fashion. Such support may be in the form of time off work to attend appointments, the provision of information, and funding for assessments by appropriately qualified persons.

It may be appropriate to explore on an informal basis first, using any free tools such as preliminary online screening before implementing a formal process. Funding for accessing a diagnosis or assessment, and reasonable adjustments, where provided, will continue throughout any formal Council processes.

As a Disability Confident Employer, the Council encourages applicants and employees to disclose neurodivergent conditions. It is also recognised that employees are under no legal or professional obligation to disclose a neurodivergent condition. However, appropriate support can only be offered if the Council is made aware of the condition by the employee.

As neurodivergent conditions are lifelong, the Council will accept previous assessments undertaken by appropriately qualified persons as sufficient evidence that an employee is neurodivergent. However, the Council may wish to gain a more recent diagnosis in order to support the employee, and their specific needs relating to the Council's workplace. Such assessments may include reports by specialist consultants, educational psychologists' reports, specialist Statements of Special Educational Need ('Statements'), and Education, Health and Care Plans ('EHCPs').

Access to Work and Workplace Needs Assessments

The Council will take reasonable steps to assist employees with applications for Access to Work support and to facilitate Workplace Needs Assessments which may be conducted by Access to Work or independent consultants. It may also be recommended that the employee has a consultation with the Council's Occupational Health Provider to identify reasonable adjustments and support.

6. Supporting our Employees

According to ACAS, due to social stigma and discrimination, many Neurodiverse employees do not disclose their condition to their employer. This can be a difficulty if a manager is unaware of the employee's diagnosis and assumes there is a capability or health issue. Therefore, any known Neurological condition should be made known to Human Resources upon commencement of employment or at the earliest opportunity, to ensure reasonable adjustments and support can be made.

If an employee feels that they may have a learning difficulty such as dyslexia or dyscalculia, then HR should be contacted where a screening test can be arranged. Any contact made with HR will be treated with sensitivity.

An initial short screening test can be accessed via the British Dyslexia Organisation and this may help to provide some initial indication that an employee could have the condition.

Further comprehensive screening can also be undertaken with the employee's consent, after which, any recommendations, equipment or reasonable adjustments will then be reviewed by the Council and implemented wherever possible to support the employee within their specific workplace environment.

Neurodivergent applicants who apply for roles at the Council will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against. Applicants meeting the essential criteria will be invited to attend for interview and appropriate support will be offered to assist them through the process.

7. Reasonable adjustments

The Council recognises Neurodiverse applicants and employees may require extra support in relation to their employment. The Council is committed to upholding its values on transparency, equality and innovation, and valuing its employees. Therefore, where reasonable adjustments are necessary, and can be accommodated, the Council will support these. Reasonable adjustments will be made on a case by case basis and will be agreed with line managers in relation to the employee's job role. These may include specific work related equipment, differently presented documents, documents in a larger font size or other recommended adjustments.

Guidance for Managers

Managers will be expected to:

- ☐ Support employees to obtain a diagnosis or assessment
- ☐ Encourage early disclosure within a genuinely supportive and inclusive environment

- ☐ Work to eliminate barriers (including prejudice) that neurodivergent people can face in the workplace
- ☐ Take reasonable steps to ensure that internal communications, training programmes, and testing requirements (such as to complete training courses) are accessible for neurodivergent Employees
- ☐ Raise awareness of neurodiversity in the workplace
- ☐ Where practical, make documents available in a format suitable for the employee within corporate style guidance
- ☐ Ensure any paperwork for meetings is provided to the employee within suitable timescales
- ☐ Ensure that all staff members with a learning disability/identified as Neurodivergent are informed of the 'Access to Work' Scheme.

Managers will not be expected to micro-manage neurodiverse employees and it should be recognised that they will also have other employees to manage across their teams. Managers will receive direct support from HR throughout the process and will ensure that the Manager is given clear guidance on Council Policy, reasonable adjustments and legislation.

HR may also arrange training where appropriate. The Council will endeavour to make adjustments where reasonable and practical.

Employees who are neurodivergent will be encouraged to:

- ☐ Make their Manager or HR aware should they think they may be neurodiverse – at the earliest opportunity.
- ☐ Use the mechanisms and processes available to identify suitable practical adjustments such as background colour for their PC – some people are affected by different colours so changing the background colour of the computer can help ease tired eyes and headaches
- ☐ Plan your work – to save time and reduce stress, plan and map your tasks for your working day
- ☐ Ask their Manager to verbally relay any important information should they have a learning difficulty.
- ☐ Make their Manager aware of potential triggers that may cause a difficulty in order for these to be addressed.
- ☐ Use text-to-speech software – most office based employees work on computers; if it helps use text-to-speech software allowing you access to an email or message and have it read to them.
- ☐ Be accountable and responsible for engaging with the process and support offered to them by their Manager and the Council. This includes utilising any reasonable adjustments, specialist software or equipment, coaching, training or Counselling provided.

8. Further Support

The following organisations can also be contacted for further support on Neurodiversity:

- ☐ Additional Neurodiversity conditions - The British Dyslexia Association is committed to raising awareness and understanding of Neurodiversity conditions by

offering a wide range of information to help families, professionals and Neurodiverse individuals.

- Dyslexia Association –The Dyslexia Association helps to raise awareness and provides support and services for dyslexic children and adults of all ages.

- Remploy – Remploy is the UK's leading provider of disability employment services. Remploy provides tools and guidance to individuals with disabilities getting and staying in a job.

- Dyscalculia – As well as dyslexia, Dyslexia Action UK also provides support and information to help remove the barriers facing individuals who have dyscalculia.

- Dyspraxia - The Dyspraxia Foundation is a UK wide charity supporting and helping individuals with dyspraxia and providing them with a variety of tools to help themselves.

- Autism - The National Autistic Society is a UK charity that provides information, guidance and support to people with Autism.

- Access to Work - is a publicly funded employment support programme that aims to help more disabled people start or stay in work.

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of Council on 31st July 2024

Recommendations of the Employment and Personnel Committee

Chair of the Employment and Personnel Committee

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Amy Bryan, Governance and Civic Manager

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

For Council to consider a budget increase for proposals made and agreed at the Employment and Personnel Committee on 3rd July 2024 regarding changes to the Procurement Service.

Council's role is to agree the budget implications following full scrutiny of the proposals put to the Employment and Personnel Committee.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background and details of the proposal

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 3rd July 2024, the Employment and Personnel Committee considered a proposal for changes to the Council's establishment.
- 1.2 The remit of the Committee is to consider and deal with issues relating to the Council's establishment structure and employees, and to recommend to Council in relation to any growth in the establishment resulting in budgetary increase.
- 1.3 A review of the Procurement Service led to the Employment and Personnel Committee agreeing to end the shared service arrangements for procurement with North East Derbyshire District Council and to create a small Bolsover focussed team. The current Procurement Assistant (0.5 FTE) would remain with the Council and a Procurement Manager (1 FTE) would need to be recruited. The proposal was considered in detail at the Employment and Personnel Committee meeting and now Council needs to consider the budgetary increase to fund the new structure. An increased budget of £54,684 is required to fund 1 FTE Grade 10 post and a 0.5 FTE Grade 5 post.
- 1.4 The reports and Minutes of the Employment and Personnel Committee meeting are not appended to this report but are available to Members through the Mod.gov app or on request from the Governance Team.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The proposals have been fully considered by the Employment and Personnel Committee who agreed with the reasons and rationale for changes to the service and therefore recommend to Council an increase in the Council's General Fund budget to fund the new structure.

3 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 3.1 Council are to consider the financial implications only. Council may choose to approve all, some, or none of the requests for growth to the establishment.
-

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council approve the growth in salary budgets (General Fund) as set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report as recommended by the Employment and Personnel Committee on 3rd July 2024.

Approved by Employment and Personnel Committee on 3rd July 2024

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes ☒ No ☐

Details: An increased budget of £54,684 is required to fund the new Bolsover only structure, consisting of 1 FTE Grade 10 post and a 0.5 FTE Grade 5 post.

There is potential in the future for the unit to generate an income by carrying out work for other organisations such as parish councils, as capacity allows. Any income for this work would reduce the extra cost sought.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☒ No ☐

Details: Procurement requirements can be complex and so it is important that the Council employs qualified and competent procurement professionals.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There will be no environmental impact arising from this post.

Staffing: Yes ☒ No ☐

Details: The Council's policies and procedures will be followed for recruitment these posts.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	None
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Employment and Personnel Committee

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title

Background Papers <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>

Bolsover District Council

Council on 31st July 2024

Member Development Annual Report 2023/24

Report of the Chair of Member Development Working Group

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Amy Bryan Governance and Civic Manager

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To enable Council to consider the Member Development work that was undertaken during the 2023/24.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 An annual report of Member Development is considered by Council annually.
- 1.2 The annual report sets out the member development activities that took place during 2023/24, opportunities that were made available to Members and information on the evaluation of member development activities that took place.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The Annual Report of the Member Development Working Group is attached at **Appendix 1**.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 To enable the Council to consider the Annual Report on Member Development during 2023/24.

4. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Council could determine to no longer receive a Member Development Annual Report however this option is not recommended as the Annual Report publicises to all Members the activities that have been undertaken and provides an opportunity for them to consider any future issues that may arise that they would like to see included in future programmes.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Member Development Annual Report 2023/24 be noted.

Approved by the Chair of the Member Development Working Group – Cllr
Sandra Peake

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no financial or risk implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no legal or data protection issues arising from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes ☐ No ☒

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment. Please speak to the Climate Change lead officer for further advice.

Details: There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Staffing: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no human resource issues implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

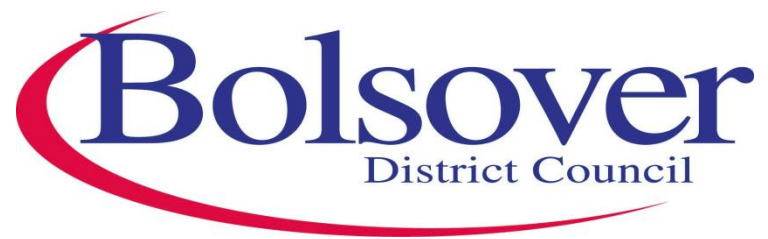
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No

District Wards Significantly Affected	None directly
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Member Development Working Group

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing.
Member development activities are designed to support the learning and development of Members so that they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and confidence to carry out their various roles and represent the public they were elected to serve.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Member Development Annual Report

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
None



**Member Development
Annual Report 2023/24**

Member Development Annual Report 2023/24

Foreword from the Chair of the Member Development Working Group

I am pleased to present this annual report on Member Development for 2023/24. The Council is dedicated to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional growth among our Councillors, recognising that their development is crucial to the effective governance and representation of the community.

The report highlights the various training sessions that have been conducted throughout the year, which for this year included a comprehensive induction programme following the District Council elections in May 2023.

The Member Development Working Group regularly considers feedback from training sessions and reviews the training opportunities available.

I would like to thank all those involved in delivering the Councillor training programme for 2023/24.

Councillor Sandra Peake

Chair of Member Development Working Group

1. Introduction

The purpose of this annual report is to provide a summary of member development work undertaken in the municipal year 2023/24.

Member development activities are designed to support the learning and development of Members so that they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and confidence to carry out their various roles and represent the public they were elected to serve.

The Annual Report covers the following subjects:

- Member Development Working Group
- Member Development Sessions
- Committee Specific Training and Other Training and Development Events
- Other Member Development Opportunities
- Member Induction Programme Development

Part of the Members' Roles and Responsibilities includes that Members 'be responsible for continuous personal development, engaging in available opportunities for training and development to build on understanding and knowledge, and to develop relevant skills.'

2. Member Development Working Group

The Council has a cross-party working group to oversee, monitor and make recommendations on member development. The Group is committed to supporting the development of Councillors and to enable them to engage effectively in the modernisation of local government and to deliver the Council's statutory functions and corporate objectives, and to represent the people of Bolsover District.

The Working Group was chaired by Cllr Sandra Peake and its membership in 2023/24 was as follows:

Councillor Rowan Clarke
Councillor Mary Dooley
Councillor Louise Fox
Councillor Tom Munro
Councillor Sandra Peake
Councillor Rita Turner
Councillor Deborah Watson

3. Member Learning, Development and Information Sessions

The purpose of the Member Learning, Development and Information Sessions is to provide a framework to support the achievement of members' objectives.

The sessions offer an opportunity for Members and officers to discuss the latest developments in local government in terms of policy, legislation and initiatives from Government and to undertake development work in an informal environment which supports learning.

The sessions held during 2023/24 are listed in the table below. The sessions largely comprised of Member Inductions Sessions following the May 2023 elections.

Date of Session	Topics	Attendance
20 May 2023	First Induction Session	28
17 May 2023	Induction Session – How the Council Works	25
17 May 2023	Induction Session – Risk Management	23
19 May 2023	Induction Session - Data Protection & FOI	16
19 May 2023	Induction Session - Safeguarding	15
23 May 2023	Induction Session – Equalities and Diversity	25
23 May 2023	Induction Session – Code of Conduct	24
23 May 2023	Induction Session – Health & Safety and Lone Working	22
31 May 2023	Induction Session - Planning Committees	18
6 June 2023	Induction Session - Corporate Priorities, Performance and Partnerships	23
6 June 2023	Induction Session - Dragonfly	20
8 June 2023	Induction Session – Licensing Committees	10
12 June 2023	Induction Session – Fraud Awareness and Local Government Finance	23
12 June 2023	Induction Session – Environmental Health	23
6 July 2023	Licensing Committees	6

Date of Session	Topics	Attendance
4 September 2023	Planning Committee Training (Planning Advisory Service - LGA)	-
6 September 2023	Prevent (Counter Terrorism) Training	5
15 January 2024	Safeguarding – catch up session	11
5 February 2024	FOI and Data Protection – catch up session	11
14 May 2024	Cyber Crime (Derbyshire Police)	19

External courses by the Local Government Association, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and East Midlands Councils were also advertised to Councillors and places were booked as requested by individual Councillors. External courses advertised included Finance without the numbers – an introduction to local government finance, scoping and managing scrutiny reviews, national and local implications of the Government’s levelling up agenda, scrutiny questioning skills, data and managing council performance.

The attendance at many of the training sessions was low and participation and take up of training events remains an issue. Training is particularly important for certain subjects and there are a number of sessions that are set out as mandatory training sessions in the Members’ Code of Conduct. Training for members of particular committees such as Planning and Licensing are vital due to the nature of the decisions the committees take and it is essential that Members are trained prior to sitting on such committees. This is set out in Appendix A to the Members’ Code of Conduct.

The Member Development Working Group regularly considers the attendance of Councillors at training sessions.

4. Member Development Evaluation

The Working Group receives reports on a regular basis detailing evaluation, together with Members’ comments, on training and development events. All training events in 23/24 received largely positive feedback.

5. Member Development Programme Development

An email asking for Councillors to feedback any training needs was sent out in February and March 2024. The responses were considered by the Member Development Working Group which used them to develop a programme for 2024/25 following on from the Induction Programme in 2023.

Bolsover District Council

Council on 31st July 2024

Member Champions 2024/25

Report of the Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Jim Fieldsend Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To appoint Member Champions for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Member Champions are Councillors who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business and activities. The main responsibility of each Member Champion is to encourage communications and positive action over the issue they represent.
- 1.2 All Member Champions must act reasonably in their role and recognise and work within the political management and working arrangements adopted by the Council. As such the Member Champion must work, and communicate regularly, with the relevant Portfolio Holders.
- 1.3 A Member Champion cannot make decisions and must not commit the Council in any way or in a manner that could be interpreted as being contrary to established policy and practice. They may however confirm a position as stated in a published policy.
- 1.4 The role of a Member Champion is to:
 - represent their area of interest both within and outside the Council in line with Council policy.
 - contribute to the review and development of policies pertaining to their area of interest.
 - challenge and question the Council, the Leader and the Portfolio Holders on issues relevant to their area of responsibility.
 - act as a catalyst for change and improvement in service delivery.

- monitor the forward plan and seek information from the Leader, Committee Chairs and officers about forthcoming business and exert influence on behalf of the interest.
- keep Councillors of all parties up to date with activities in relevant areas of interest.
- network with Member Champions from other local authorities with the same interest to keep up to date with current developments.
- provide positive support and on occasions constructive challenge to officers in driving forward the Council agenda on relevant issues.
- act as the Council's representative on relevant external bodies where appointed to by the Council.

1.5 The Leader and Portfolio Holders will:

- acknowledge the right of Member Champions to be consulted on matters relating to their area of interest.
- take full account of any views offered by the Member Champions prior to making decisions relating to their area of interest.
- co-operate with Member Champions in the formulation of action plans they have developed with lead officers.
- consider nominating Champions to represent the Council at relevant conferences/seminars on the subject matter of the Member's interest.

2. **Details of Proposal or Information**

2.1 The proposed Member Champions for 2024/25 Municipal Year are set out in **Appendix 1**.

3. **Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 To appoint Member Champions to advocate for their areas of interest.

4 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 None.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the appointments of Member Champions as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed.

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no financial or risk implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no legal or data protection issues arising from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes ☐ No ☒

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Staffing: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details: There are no human resource issues implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision?

A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:

Revenue - £75,000 ☐ Capital - £150,000 ☐

☒ Please indicate which threshold applies

No

Is the decision subject to Call-In?

(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)

No

District Wards Significantly Affected

None directly

Consultation:

Leader / Deputy Leader ☒ Executive ☐
SLT ☐ Relevant Service Manager ☐
Members ☐ Public ☐ Other ☐

Details:

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Appointments of Member Champions for 2024/25

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
None

MEMBER CHAMPIONS

2024/25

MEMBER CHAMPION	NAME
Armed Forces Champion(s)	Councillors David Bennett and Tom Munro
Member Development Champion	Councillor Sandra Peake
Local Nature Recovery Champion	Councillor Anne Clarke