

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday, 28 January 2026 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Duncan Haywood in the Chair

Councillors David Bennett, Anne Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Amanda Davis, Mary Dooley, Will Fletcher, Louise Fox, Justin Gilbody, Donna Hales, Tom Munro, Rob Hiney-Saunders, Mark Hinman, Cathy Jeffery, Chris Kane, Lucy King, Tom Kirkham, Clive Moesby, Sandra Peake, Lisa Powell, John Ritchie, Phil Smith, Emma Stevenson, Janet Tait, Ashley Taylor, Catherine Tite, Rita Turner, Ross Walker, Vicky Waplington, Deborah Watson, Carol Wood and Jane Yates.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Theresa Fletcher (Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer), Jim Fieldsend (Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Sarah Kay (Interim Director of Planning, Devolution & Corporate Policy), Angelika Kaufhold (Governance and Civic Manager), Coby Bunyan (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

CL64-25/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fritchley, McGregor, Raspin, Renshaw, Smith and Wilson.

CL65-25/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer reminded Council that any Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on or which might affect budget calculations and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applied to them. A failure to comply with these requirements was a criminal offence under Section 106 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992.

The Monitoring Officer added that any Members who were tenants of a Council property should declare an interest for any budget setting item, but these Members had an automatic dispensation to remain in the room to speak and vote on the items in question.

The Monitoring Officer also reminded Members that voting on budget and Council Tax setting items would be done by recorded vote as required by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Minute Number	Member	Interest
CL71-25/26	Councillor David Bennett	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Council Tenant)
CL71-25/26	Councillor Mary Dooley	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Council Tenant)

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CL71-25/25	Councillor Clive Moesby	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Council Tenant)
CL77-25/26	Councillor Lucy King	Disclosable Personal Interest

CL66-25/26 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CHEQUE PRESENTATION

The Chair welcomed Noah Smith, Thomas Deltorro, Mandy Smith and Paul Hawkins to the meeting. It was reported that both Noah and Thomas had been actively fund raising for Ashgate Hospice and they had been invited along with Paul Hawkins from Ashgate Hospice to be presented with a cheque for the sum of £653.42 raised at Bolsover District Council at Christmas.

Councillor Peake stated that it was a pleasure to see young people raising money for such a worthy cause.

CL67-25/26 MINUTES OF COUNCIL HELD ON 3RD DECEMBER 2025

Moved by Councillor Haywood and seconded by Councillor Munro

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of Council held on 3rd December 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

CL68-25/26 MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16TH DECEMBER 2025

Moved by Councillor Haywood and seconded by Councillor Munro

RESOLVED that the minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 16th December 2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

CL69-25/26 ELECTRONIC VOTING CHANGE TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

Council considered a report presented by the Monitoring Officer proposing an amendment to the Council Procedure Rules to include the use of the Council's electronic voting system. The following amendment was proposed:

14.3 Show of Hands/Electronic Voting

Unless a recorded vote is demanded (under rule 14.4) the Chair of the Council will take the vote by a show of hands **or by way of the electronic voting system**, or if there is no dissent by the affirmation of the meeting.

The proposals would not change the rules relating to recorded votes which would continue to be taken by roll-call.

Moved by Councillor Hales and seconded by Councillor Munro

RESOLVED that the changes to the Council Procedure rules as detailed in 2.2

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of the report be approved.

CL70-25/26 DEPUTATION

The Chair confirmed that a deputation had been received and invited Mr N Clarke to address Council.

Mr Clarke presented the following deputation to Council:

“Good morning councillors on behalf of the Deputation I am their spokesperson. We are aware that the Council is currently formulating its budget and will soon also set the level of council tax to be paid for the forthcoming year. We feel that it is a pertinent time to remind the council that it is our best interests those of the people of this district that should always be at the forefront of the Council’s financial planning. With Local Government Reform looming we believe that this council should be concentrating solely on what is best for the people of Bolsover namely protecting, improving and safeguarding our assets along with ensuring that the money paid to this authority via our council tax are used for the benefit of the people of Bolsover and not gift wrapped for a newly created authority at which point we will have much less local representation. We understand that this Council is preparing a budget which will protect its financial position until 2030 by which point it will no longer in fact exist. It is therefore absolutely impossible to comprehend why the Council is proposing to increase Council Tax rates and charges by the maximum amount Government allows and furthermore why the Council is proposing to increase Council House tenants rents bills by an amount way in excess of inflation when their household budgets are being ever squeezed and there is no comparative increase in the services they receive.

Just before Christmas the audited accounts of Dragonfly Development, the Council’s own company which was building fabulous, high quality homes for the people of this District were published on Companies House. The accounts show that the company made post tax profits of just under £3m in its three years of operation. We believe that these profits should now be used for the Council’s budget and to offset any increase in the Council Tax charged by BDC therefore keeping to a minimum the financial impact on the council tax payers of this District.

Had the Council not taken the decision to disestablish Dragonfly Development which in our opinion was based on deliberately misleading information presented to the council members and public designed to deceive those in attendance in July last year they may have been looking at profits well in excess of the aforementioned £3m that they did achieve money which could have been utilised to benefit the people of Bolsover. I have a quote here from another resident of Bolsover Mrs Godfrey, a former business woman who herself says, ‘I cannot understand the reasoning for the disestablishment any income that reduces the reliance on the Council Tax must surely be welcomed by the residents of Bolsover District.’ As this authority will cease to exist in just over 2 years due to the upcoming Local Government Reforms it would be sensible to insure that the reserves held by Bolsover District Council should be used for the benefit of the public in either implementing improvements to local facilities throughout the district or to offset any potential increase in the level of council tax rather than allow those reserves to be subsumed in to a replacement unitary authority with the risk that that money would not be used for the people of Bolsover District. It is their money,

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paid by them through their council tax during the existence of this authority over the last 50 plus years.” The role of the responsible authority is to ensure that residents of this District are provided with accessible services and facilities and that council tenants are provided high quality housing and where possible protected from the financial burdens of the current cost of living crisis and not to add to those costs by unnecessarily increasing housing costs through unjustified increased rents and an increase in the council tax by the maximum amount allowed by Government legislation.

We would like to ask the Leader of the Council what action she has taken to ensure that the people of this District their assets and their money is protected prior to Local Government Reform?”

A number of comments were made relating to the accuracy of the information provided and considered at the meeting where the decision to disestablish the Dragonfly Companies had been taken, to which Mr Clarke added his opinions.

Councillor Moesby Portfolio Holder for Resources thanked Mr Clarke and residents for submitting the deputation stating that it was reassuring that members and members of the public were trying to seek an understanding of the financial implications faced by this Council.

He confirmed that it was a balancing act between what needs to be done and to ensure that the Council has sufficient finances to deliver its services to the public that all Members were elected to represent. This Council has been financially stable over the years and been a leading light locally with regards to managing its finances and delivering its services. The Council had an excellent S151 Officer and Finance team who were the cornerstone of bringing the financial stability and delivery of services to residents.

To some extent, due to its financial stability, the Council was able to control its own destiny but as mentioned there was some unknowns due to Local Government Reorganisation and waiting for this year’s Government settlement to be confirmed.

The Council had a duty to produce a plan as normal until otherwise advised and under the obligation set by Government to ensure that the reserves were not wasted. There would be financial issues to be faced in the future which meant the Council had to be sensible and prudent with the Council’s funds and finances.

Councillor Bennett arrived at the meeting at 10.25 am and declared an interest in the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30 as a council tenant.

CL71-25/26 MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2025/26 TO 2029/30

The Portfolio Holder for Resources Councillor Clive Moesby presented a report relating to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2025/26, the proposed budget 2026/27 for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme as part of the Council’s MTFP covering the years 2025/26 to 2029/30.

The report included the following appendices:

- Appendices 1 and 2 - General Fund;

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- Appendices 3 and 4 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA); and
- Appendix 5 – Capital Programme.

The financial projections included:

- 2025/26 revised current budget position which took account of changes during the financial year due to end on 31st March 2026.
- 2026/27 original budget for next financial year starting 1st April 2026 on which the Council Tax would be based on.
- 2027/28 to 2029/30 – Financial Plan which included the financial projections for the next three financial years.

The report had been considered by Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on 22nd January 2026 and by Executive on 26th January 2026.

The figures for 2026/27 – 2029/30 had been produced on the basis of the successful transition of Dragonfly staff and services back to the Council by 31st March 2026.

The Council's main uncommitted Financial Reserves was the General Fund Working Balance of £2.001m, the uncommitted element of the Transformation Reserve was £0.700m and the NNDR Growth Protection Reserve had a balance of £16.9m.

The Council's main uncommitted Financial Reserves for the Housing Revenue Account Working Balance was £2.006m. In addition to the Working Balance there were further reserves for the HRA used to fund the Council's HRA capital programme including the Major Repairs Reserve, New Build Reserve, Vehicle Repair and Renewal Reserve and the Development Reserve.

The following comments were made by Members:

- Councillor Watson stated that whilst she understood the obligation to produce a balanced budget for a number of years her duty was to represent the people who had elected her. Local Government Reform was being inflicted on councils but they did not have to blindly follow. She questioned again how the reserves would be used and stated that they would not benefit Bolsover residents.
- Councillor Tait sought clarity on the large reduction in the NNDR business rates and whether the figures detailed in the report included the payback to Government.
 - The S151 Officer confirmed that the NNDR figures quoted were solely BDC's share net after payments to Government.
- Councillor Stevenson asked how funding could be accessed for South Normanton and neighbouring parishes.
 - The S151 Officer confirmed that the Capital Programme detailed in Appendix 5 of the report included emerging projects, identified areas of need for housing, emergency works and findings of the Council's Asset Management Group.

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- Councillor Fletcher congratulated the S151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Resources on building up the Council's reserves and that the Government settlement had been better than expected. This meant that there would be £16.9m left in the growth reserve and for this reason he would be voting against the recommendations as the public should not be expected to pay an increased level of council tax.

Councillor Peake left the meeting at 10.52 am and returned at 10.58 am.

Councillor Hinman left the meeting at 11.15 am and returned 11.18 am.

- Councillor Taylor commented that the Council had to have robust finances and that inflation was running this year at 3.2% and resulted in an actual cut in funding.

A recorded vote was taken in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

For the motion - 18

(Councillors Bennett, Davis, Dooley, Hales, Haywood, Hiney-Saunders, Hinman, Jeffery, Kirkham, Moesby, Munro, Powell, Ritchie, Taylor, Tite, Walker, Waplington and Yates)

Against the motion - 12

(Councillors A Clarke, R Clarke, Fletcher, Fox, Gilbody, Kane, King, Peake, Stevenson, Turner, Watson and Wood)

Abstained – 1

(Councillor Tait)

Moved by Councillor Moesby and seconded by Councillor Ritchie

RESOLVED (1) to accept that in the view of the Section 151 Officer, the estimates included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2029/30 were robust and that the level of financial reserves whilst at minimum levels were adequate.

(2) that officers report back to the Executive and the Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis regarding the overall position in respect of the Council's budgets.

GENERAL FUND

(3) that a Council Tax increase of £6.25 be levied in respect of a notional Band D property (2.99%).

(4) that the MTFP in respect of the General Fund as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved as the Revised Budget 2025/26, as the Original Budget in respect of 2026/27, and the financial projection in respect of 2027/28 to 2029/30.

(5) that any further underspend in respect of 2025/26 be transferred to the Council's General Fund Reserves.

(6) on the basis that income from Planning Fees may exceed £0.500m in 2025/26, the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Leader be granted delegated

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powers to authorise such additional resources as necessary to effectively manage the resultant increase in workload.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

(7) that rent levels be increased by 4.8% to apply from 1st April 2026.

(8) that increases in respect of other charges as outlined in Appendix 4 Table 1 be implemented with effect from 1st April 2026.

(9) the MTFP in respect of the Housing Revenue Account as set in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report be approved as the Revised Budget in respect of 2025/26, as the Original Budget in respect of 2026/27, and the financial projection in respect of 2027/28 to 2029/30.

(10) that any underspends in respect of 2025/26 to 2029/30 be transferred to the HRA Development Reserve.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

(11) that the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 5 of the report be approved as the Revised Budget in respect of 2025/26, and as the Approved Programme for 2026/27 to 2029/30.

Councillors A Clarke, Davis, Munro and Walker left the meeting at 11.28 am.

CL72-25/26 TREASURY STRATEGY REPORTS 2026/27 - 2029/30

Council considered a report presented by Councillor Moesby Portfolio Holder for Resources which sought approval for the Authority's proposed suite of Treasury Strategies for the period 2026/27 to 2029/30 which included:

- The Treasury Management Strategy which provided the framework for managing the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments for the period. The Prudential indicators aimed at monitoring risk also included at Appendix 1.
- The Capital Strategy, which was intended to provide a high level, concise overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of the Authority's services. This included information relating to minimum revenue provision, capital financing requirements and prudential indicators aimed at monitoring risk in Appendix 2.
- The Corporate Investment Strategy focused on investments made for service purposes and commercial reasons, rather than those made for treasury management. Investments covered by this strategy included earning investment income through commercial investments or by supporting local services by lending to or buying shares in, other organisations as shown in Appendix 3.

These provided an approved framework within which the officers undertake the day-to-day capital and treasury activities.

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Moved by Councillor Moesby and seconded by Councillor Hiney-Saunders
RESOLVED (1) that Council approved the Treasury Management Strategy at Appendix 1 in particular:

- (a) The Borrowing Strategy.
- (b) The Treasury Management Investment Strategy.
- (c) The use of the external treasury management advisors Counterparty Weekly List, or similar, to determine the latest assessment of the counterparties that met the Authority's Criteria before any investment was undertaken.
- (d) The Prudential Indicators.

(2) that the Capital Strategy as set out in Appendix 2 be approved, in particular:

- (a) The Capital Financing Requirement.
- (b) The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2026/27.
- (c) The Prudential Indicators for 2026/27 detailed in the Capital Strategy, in particular:

Authorised Borrowing Limit	£155.738m
Operational Boundary	£150.738m
Capital Financing Requirement	£145.738m

(3) The Corporate Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix 3 be approved.

Councillor Davis returned to the meeting at 11.30 am.

CL73-25/26 RENT CONVERGENCE

Prior to consideration of this item Councillor Yates moved and Councillor Hales seconded the motion to defer this report to a future meeting
RESOLVED that the report be deferred.

CL74-25/26 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION - UPDATE

Council considered a presentation which included updates on the progress of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Councillor Ritchie Portfolio Holder for Devolution introduced the item and the presentation was delivered jointly by the Chief Executive and the Interim Director of Planning, Devolution & Corporate Policy. In summary, the information provided included:

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- The Statutory consultation on the proposals had commenced and would run for 7 weeks and hosted online by Citizen Space.
- The Statutory Consultees included:
 - Bolsover District Council amongst the other Derbyshire authorities as well as neighbouring authorities.
 - Public/health and education bodies.
 - Umbrella business and community/voluntary sector bodies.
 - Government departments and trade unions etc.
- Whilst it was not a public consultation any input from residents and businesses would be welcomed by Government.

The next steps included:

Ongoing weekly meetings by the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) Group and the Co-ordination Group to reflect on lessons learned and continuing the project planning activities. A report was expected to be presented to the Derbyshire Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) on 24th February 2026 recommending future governance arrangements and programmes of work to be undertaken.

The CEO's Away Day took place on 23rd January 2026 and DCC had appointed a new CEO Neil Crittenden.

The proposed Programme Governance Framework was shared and included the Programme Boards from the Derby & Derbyshire Strategic Leadership Board through to the Enabling Services Workstreams.

The anticipated timeline was:

- Minister of State LGR Decision between June to August 2026.
- The Structural Change Order in Autumn 2026.
- The elections for the Shadow Authority in May 2027.
- Vesting day for the new Unitary Authority May 2028.

During discussion the following comments and responses to questions were made:

- Councillor Watson asked why the Council was not taking a stand and saying no to LGR as it wasn't right for the District.
- Councillor Yates confirmed that it was likely LGR would happen and that Bolsover had to have representatives sat at the table to have their say.
- It was confirmed that Council would be provided an update once the Programme Director had been appointed and their areas of work.
- In response to a question relating to the impact on staff of LGR it was stated that once the Joint Committee had been established for the new Shadow Authority then a Chief Executive and Statutory Officers would be recruited. Then the HR streams would be required to establish the number of posts needed for the new Unitary Authority. The initial posts affected would be CEO's and Statutory Officers

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and it was likely that staffing below this would initially remain unchanged to ensure no gaps in the provision of statutory services when the new authority came into existence in May 2028.

CL75-25/26 CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair confirmed that this was the end of the public part of the Council meeting.

CL76-25/26 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Moved by Councillor Haywood and seconded by Councillor Hales

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 item 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 was not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

CL77-25/26 COUNCILLOR DISPENSATION

Council considered a report presented by the Monitoring Officer which informed of the temporary dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer for a Member's non-attendance.

Moved by Councillor Hales and seconded by Councillor Ritchie

RESOLVED that the granting of the temporary dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12:15 hours.