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11 November 2020

To: All Councillors

As a Member or Substitute of the **Governance & Resources Committee**, please treat this as your summons to attend a meeting on **Thursday, 19 November 2020 at 6.00pm** via the Zoom application. (Joining details will be provided separately).

**Under Regulations made under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the meeting will be held virtually. As a member of the public you can view the virtual meeting via the District Council’s website at [www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk](http://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk) or via our YouTube channel.**

Yours sincerely

James McLaughlin  
Director of Corporate Services

## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES**

Please advise the Committee Team on 01629 761133 or e-mail [committee@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:committee@derbyshiredales.gov.uk) of any apologies for absence and substitute arrangements.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

20 August 2020 and 22 October 2020 (Special)

### **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

As the Council cannot hold meetings at the Town Hall, Public Participation can only take place using the Zoom application or by written representations. Members of the public are able to comment or ask questions on the items listed in the agenda and must give notice before 12 noon on the day preceding the meeting by:

**Web-form:** [Make your submission here](#)

**Email:** [committee@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:committee@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

**Post:** Democratic Services, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Town Hall, Matlock DE4 3NN

The Committee Team will assist any member of the public without access to electronic means by capturing their concerns over the telephone.

**Phone:** 01629 761133 (working days only 9am – 5pm)

Written representations, received by the deadline will be read out at the meeting, verbal contributors will be given instructions on how to join the meeting after giving notice.

All meeting proceedings open to the public will be streamed live on our YouTube channel when all non-exempt items are being considered. Recordings of the meeting will also be available after the event on the District Council's website.

#### **4. INTERESTS**

Members are required to declare the existence and nature of any interests they may have in subsequent agenda items in accordance with the District Council's Code of Conduct. Those interests are matters that relate to money or that which can be valued in money, affecting the Member her/his partner, extended family and close friends.

Interests that become apparent at a later stage in the proceedings may be declared at that time.

#### **5. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO RULE OF PROCEDURE NUMBER 15.**

To answer questions from Members who have given the appropriate notice.

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| <b>6. EXTERNAL AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020</b>   | <b>04 - 33</b> |
| To note the External Auditor's "Audit completion Report for the year end 31 March 2020."  |                |
| <b>7. LETTER OF REPRESENTATION 2019/20</b>  | <b>34 - 40</b> |
| To consider endorsement for signature of the draft Letter of Representation.  |                |
| <b>8. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20</b>   | <b>41 - 46</b> |
| To consider approval of the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20.  |                |
| <b>9. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS CONCLUDED UNDER THE 2019/2020 AND 2020/2021 OPERATIONAL AUDIT PLAN</b>   | <b>47 - 92</b> |
| To note a report on the progress made in respect of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Internal Audit Plans and the impact of COVID-19 and the redeployment of the Senior Internal Auditor on the ability to complete the 2020/21 Audit Plan. Also to consider approval to defer the audit areas to subsequent years as recommend in Appendix 3. |                |
| <b>10. DDDC TENANTS – PROPOSED RENT FREE PERIODS</b>  | <b>93 - 95</b> |
| To consider approval for the provision of further rent free periods to District Council commercial tenants, unable to trade under current national regulations due to COVID-19, at an estimated cost of £7,694.   |                |

- 11. ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – MID-YEAR 2020/21** **96 - 101**
- To note a summary report on performance against the District Council's 12 Key Performance Indicators for Quarter 1 and 2 of 2020/21 (excluding Corporate Plan Targets).
- 12 RESIDENTS ONLINE PANEL SURVEY RESULTS** **102 - 143**
- To note a report on the results of the Derbyshire Dales residents' surveys, undertaken in October 2019 and October 2020, using the Council's Online Panel and also the areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Also to consider approval for the Online Panel Satisfaction Survey to be carried forward in September 2021 and to include additional qualitative questions to enable respondents to set out the reasoning for their answers.
- 13 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGY** **144 - 164**
- To note a report on the strategic framework of the current Communications and Marketing Strategy and consider approval of the Action Plan for 2021.

Members of the Committee - Councillors Jacqueline Allison, Robert Archer, Sue Bull (Chair), Neil Buttle, David Chapman (Vice Chair), Paul Cruise, Tom Donnelly, Graham Elliott, Steve Flitter, Alyson Hill, Susan Hobson, Michele Morley, Garry Purdy, Mike Ratcliffe, Claire Raw, Peter Slack and Alasdair Sutton

Substitutes – Councillors Jason Atkin, Richard Bright, Mathew Buckler, Richard FitzHerbert, Helen Froggatt, Chris Furness, David Hughes, Peter O'Brien, Joyce Pawley, , and Steve Wain.

Governance and Resources Committee

19 November 2020

Report of Director of Resources

## **EXTERNAL AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report summarises the key findings arising from:

- The external auditor’s work in relation to the Authority’s 2019/20 financial statements; and
- The work to support the external auditor’s 2019/20 conclusion on the Authority’s arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (‘Value For Money conclusion’).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the External Auditor’s “Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2020” is noted.

### **WARDS AFFECTED**

None

### **STRATEGIC LINK**

None

## **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Members are requested to note the report of the external auditors prior to approving the Council’s Statement of Accounts.
- 1.2 The usual deadline for the completion of audit is 31<sup>st</sup> July; for the 2019/20 financial statements the deadline has been extended to 30 November due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

## **2 REPORT**

- 2.1 The Council’s external auditors, Mazars, have issued their Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2019 covering the 2018/19 accounts and Value for Money (VFM) conclusion. A copy of the report is shown at Appendix 1; the external auditor has requested that it be brought to Members’ attention. As there is a statutory deadline of 31 July, and the audit has only recently been concluded, this report is

presented to full Council, rather than the Governance and Resources Committee as was customary.

2.2 The key issues in the audit completion report are:

- subject to the satisfactory completion of the outstanding work the external auditors anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion, without modification, on the Authority's financial statements;
- The auditors anticipate concluding that the Council had proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources;
- No questions or objections have been received from electors;
- There will be “emphasis of matter” paragraphs in the auditors’ report relating to the material uncertainties in the valuation of property plant and equipment and pension assets caused by Covid-19. (Officer comment – this is the case for the majority of local authorities);
- The external auditor reports that no new risks have been identified since they issued their Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- There may be a delay in issuing the audit certificate, due to a delay in the National Audit office issuing instructions for Whole of Government Accounts. However, the audit and opinion and value for money conclusion will be issued by the deadline of 30 November.

2.3 The external auditor anticipates issuing an unqualified value for money conclusion and has not identified any matters that would require the issue of a public interest report.

2.4 The report contains three Internal Control Recommendations, which have been accepted by management. There are two low priority and one high priority recommendations.

2.5 The high priority recommendation has been brought forward from the 2018/19 report (and was highlighted by KPMG in the 2017/18 report) but has not yet been satisfactorily addressed. This recommendation relates to the arrangements for Members to make declarations of related party transactions. The 2018/19 testing of declaration of interests identified 4 instances where declarations of interests were not received by the Council after several reminders to the Members. The 2019/20 testing of declaration of interests identified 5 instances where declarations of interests were not received by the Council after several reminders to the Members. There is a potential risk that a conflict of interest was not appropriately declared.

### **3 RISK ASSESSMENT**

#### **3.1 Legal**

There are no legal risks arising from this report.

## 3.2 Financial

There are no financial risks arising from this report.

## 4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

## 5 CONTACT INFORMATION

Karen Henriksen, Head of Resources  
Telephone: 01629 761284  
e-mail: [karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

Paul Frith, Financial Services Manager  
Telephone: 01629 761214  
Email: [paul.frith@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:paul.frith@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

## 6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 None

## 7 ATTACHMENTS

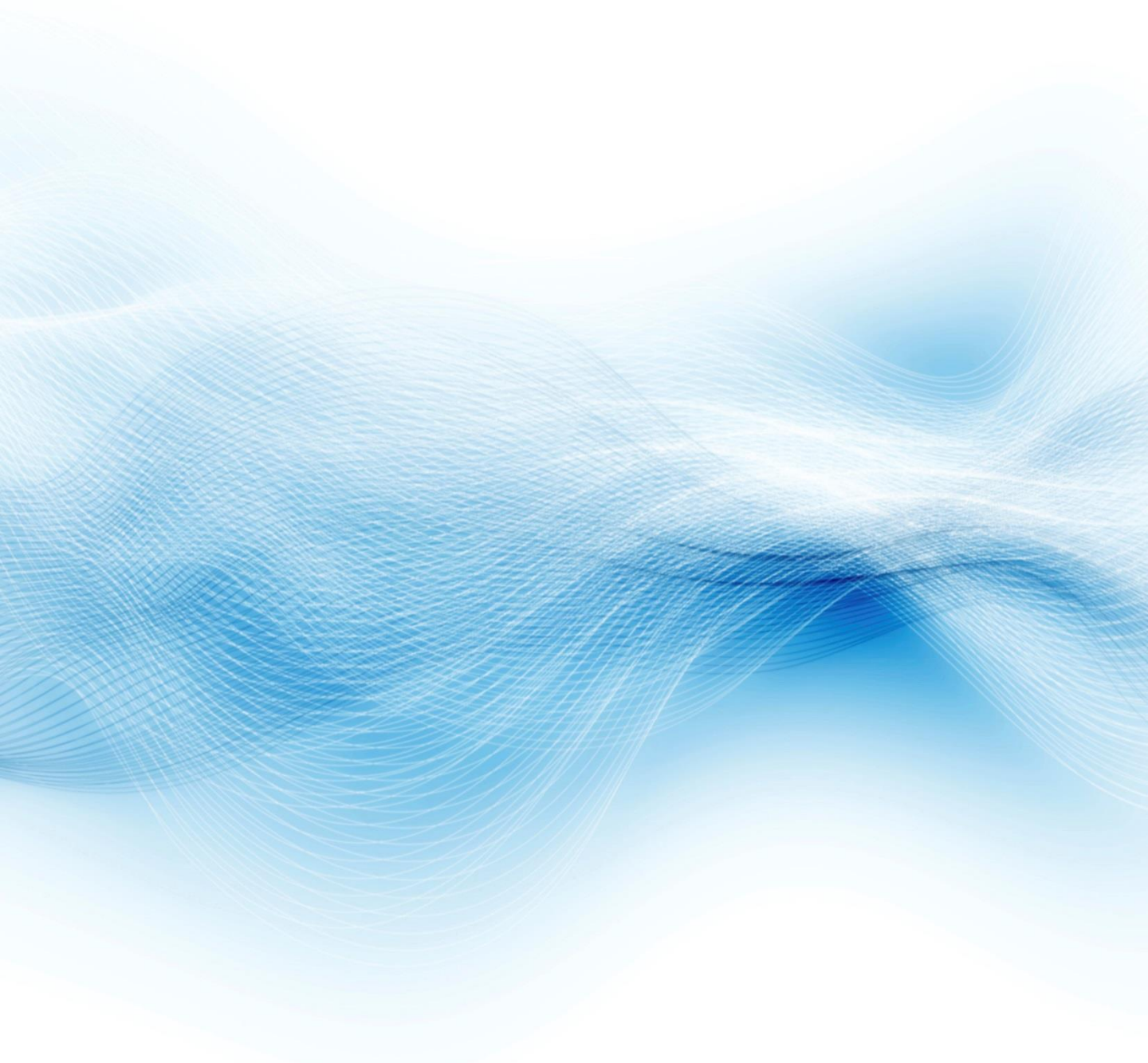
Appendix 1 – “Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2020” from Mazars



# Audit Completion Report

Derbyshire Dales District Council

Year ended 31 March 2020



# CONTENTS

1. Executive summary
2. Significant findings
3. Internal control recommendations
4. Summary of misstatements
5. Value for Money conclusion

Appendix A – Draft management representation letter

Appendix B – Draft auditor’s report

Appendix C – Independence

Our reports are prepared in the context of the ‘Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies’ and the ‘Appointing Person Terms of Appointment’ issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited.

Reports and letters prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to the Council are prepared for the sole use of the Council and we take no responsibility to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party.

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Members of the Governance and Resources Committee  
Derbyshire Dales District Council  
Town Hall  
Bank Road  
Matlock  
Derbyshire  
DE4 3NN

9 November 2020

Dear Members

### **Audit Completion Report – Year ended 31 March 2020**

We are pleased to present our Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2020. The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit conclusions.

The scope of our work, including identified significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement, was outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum which we presented on 9 January 2020. Since we issued our Audit Strategy Memorandum the UK has been subject to the challenges and restrictions of COVID-19. We have reviewed our Audit Strategy Memorandum and concluded that the original significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement remain appropriate.

One implication of COVID-19 for the Council was that the deadlines for submission of the draft and audited financial statements were pushed back to 31 August and 30 November respectively. Despite the revised deadlines we acknowledge the difficulties encountered by your team during accounts preparation and audit, and would like to express our thanks for the assistance of your team during our audit.

If you would like to discuss any matters in more detail then please do not hesitate to contact me on 0191 383 6300.

Yours faithfully

*Gavin Barker*

Gavin Barker  
Mazars LLP

Mazars LLP - Salvus House, Aykley Heads, Durham DH1 5TS  
Tel: 0191 383 6300 – [www.mazars.co.uk](http://www.mazars.co.uk)

Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an integrated international advisory and accountancy organisation. Mazars LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC308299 and with its registered office at Tower Bridge House, St Katharine's Way, London E1W 1DD.

We are registered to carry on audit work in the UK and Ireland by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Details about our audit registration can be viewed at [www.auditregister.org.uk](http://www.auditregister.org.uk) under reference number C001139861.  
VAT number: 839 8356 73

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Purpose of this report and principal conclusions

The Audit Completion Report sets out the findings from our audit of Derbyshire Dales District Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2020, and forms the basis for discussion at the Governance and Resources Committee meeting on 19 November 2020.

The detailed scope of our work as your appointed auditor for 2019/20 is set out in the National Audit Office's (NAO) Code of Audit Practice. Our responsibilities and powers are derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and, as outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, our audit has been conducted in accordance with International Standards of Auditing (UK) and means we focus on audit risks that we have assessed as resulting in a higher risk of material misstatement.

Sections 2 and 5 of this report outline the detailed findings from our work on the financial statements and our conclusion on the Council's arrangements to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Section 2 also includes our conclusions on the audit risks and areas of management judgement in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, which include:

- Management override of control;
- Valuation of property, plant and equipment and assets held for sale; and
- Valuation of net pensions liability.

## Status of our work

As we outline on the following page, our work is substantially complete. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the outstanding work, at the time of issuing this report we have the following conclusions:

### Opinion on the financial statements

We anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion, without modification, on the financial statements. Our proposed audit opinion is included in the draft auditor's report in Appendix B.

### Value for Money conclusion

We anticipate concluding that the Council had proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Our draft auditor's report, including proposed conclusion, is provided in Appendix B.

### Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

The NAO has not yet issued its Group Instructions regarding the audit work required and its timetable for audit reporting. The Council is expected to again be below the threshold requiring a detailed review of your WGA submission, and we would expect to be able to provide the information required by NAO by the confirmed deadline.

### Wider powers

The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and to consider any objection made to the accounts. We have received no such objections or questions. Further details on the exercise of our wider powers are provided in section 2.

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

## Status of our audit work

We have substantially completed our work on the financial statements and Value for Money conclusion for the year ended 31 March 2020. At the time of preparing this report the following matters remain outstanding:

Audit area	Status	Description of outstanding matters
Property, plant and equipment	●	<p>We are awaiting evidence from management (plans/drawings) to support certain calculations used by the Council's internal valuation expert within the detailed valuations for a number of items that we have selected for sample testing.</p> <p>We are consulting on the form of wording that should be used within our auditor's report against the backdrop of COVID-19. We currently expect that the disclosed 'material uncertainty' in property valuations caused by COVID-19 will lead to an emphasis of matter paragraph in the auditor's report. We provide more information on this matter at page 7.</p>
Defined benefit liability valuation	●	<p>The Council has received a triennial valuation from the Pension Fund actuary that reflects the impact of the McCloud judgement and GMP equalisation in relation to the valuation of the Council's pensions liability. In this regard we liaise with the auditor of the Derbyshire Pension Fund to obtain a letter of assurance regarding the valuation detailed. We are yet to receive this assurance letter as work on the audit of the Derbyshire Pension Fund is still ongoing. In this regard it is worth noting that a 'material uncertainty' in pension asset valuations caused by COVID-19 will lead to an emphasis of matter paragraph in the auditor's report. We provide more information on this matter at page 8.</p>
Audit Quality Control and Completion Procedures	●	<p>Our audit work is undergoing final stages of review by the Engagement Lead. In addition, there are residual procedures to complete, including agreeing the expected amendments to the final Statement of Accounts, updating post balance sheet event considerations to the point of issuing the opinion, reviewing management's going concern assertion and obtaining management representations and responses to our enquiries.</p>
Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)	●	<p>NAO Group Instructions for local authority 2019/20 audits are not yet available and WGA returns and audit certificates cannot be issued at the present time. We provide more information on this matter at page 10.</p>
Direct confirmation of bank and investment balances	●	<p>We are awaiting the direct confirmation of certain bank and investment balances at the year-end.</p>

## Status

- Likely to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements
- Potential to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements
- Not considered likely to result in material adjustment or change to disclosures within the financial statements



# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

## **Our audit approach**

We provided details of our intended audit approach in our Audit Strategy Memorandum in December 2019. We have not made any changes to our audit approach since we presented our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

## **Materiality**

We set materiality at the planning stage of the audit at £705,000 using a benchmark of 2% of Gross Operating Expenditure. Our final assessment of materiality, based on the final financial statements and qualitative factors is £675,000 using the same benchmark. We set our trivial threshold (the level under which individual errors are not communicated to the Council), at £20,000 based on 3% of overall materiality. Performance materiality is the amount or amounts set by the auditor at less than materiality for the financial statements as a whole to reduce, to an appropriately low level, the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds materiality for the financial statements as a whole. In setting performance materiality we have taken into account our view that there is relatively low inherent risk. We have therefore set our performance materiality at 75% of our overall materiality being £506,000.

## **Misstatements and internal control recommendations**

Section 3 sets out the internal control recommendations that we make, together with an update on any prior year recommendations.

Section 4 outlines the misstatements noted as part of our audit as at the time of issuing this report. If any additional misstatements are noted on completion of the outstanding work, these will be reported to the Council.



## 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Set out below are the significant findings from our audit. These findings include:

- our audit conclusions regarding significant risks and key areas of management judgement outlined in the Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- our comments in respect of the accounting policies and disclosures that you have adopted in the financial statements. On page 9 we have concluded whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework and commented on any significant accounting policy changes that have been made during the year;
- any further significant matters discussed with management; and
- any significant difficulties we experienced during the audit.

### Significant risks and key areas of management judgement

As part of our planning procedures we considered the risks of material misstatement in the Council's financial statements that required special audit consideration. Although we report the identified significant risks at the planning stage of the audit in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, our risk assessment is a continuous process and we regularly consider whether new significant risks have arisen and how we intend to respond to these risks. No new risks have been identified since we issued our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

#### Significant risk

#### Description of the risk

1) Management override of controls

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.

#### How we addressed this risk

We addressed this risk through performing audit work including:

- documenting our understanding of the processes and controls in place to mitigate the risks identified, and walking through those processes and controls to confirm our understanding;
- testing the appropriateness of journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements;
- reviewing the calculation of management's material accruals, estimates and provisions for evidence of management bias;
- evaluating the business rationale for any significant unusual transactions;
- understanding the oversight given by those charged with governance of the management processes over fraud;
- sampling accruals and provisions based on established testing thresholds; and
- reviewing material aspects of capital expenditure on property plant and equipment to check it meets the relevant accounting requirements to be capitalised.

#### Audit conclusion

Our audit procedures have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements, or other matters that we wish to bring to Members' attention in relation to management override of controls.

## 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

### Significant risk

2) Valuation of property, plant and equipment, investment properties and assets held for sale

### Description of the risk

The financial statements contain material entries on the Balance Sheet as well as material disclosure notes in relation to the Council's holding of property, plant and equipment. Although the Council uses a valuation expert to provide information on valuations, there remains a high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with the revaluation of property, plant and equipment due to the significant judgements and number of variables involved in providing revaluations. We have therefore identified the valuation of property, plant and equipment to be an area of significant risk.

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### How we addressed this risk

In relation to the valuation of property, plant and equipment, investment properties and assets held for sale we:

- critically assessed the Council's valuer's scope of work, qualifications, objectivity and independence to carry out the required programme of revaluations;
- considered whether the overall revaluation methodologies used by the Council's valuer are in line with industry practice, the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's accounting policies;
- assessed whether valuation movements are in line with market expectations by using the third party indices provided by Gerald Eve to provide information on regional valuation trends;
- critically assessed the treatment of the upward and downward revaluations in the Council's financial statements with regards to the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice; and
- critically assessed the approach that the Council adopts to ensure that assets not subject to revaluation in 2019/20 are materially correct, including considering the robustness of that approach in light of the valuation information reported by the Council's valuer.

We also considered the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's asset valuations and the adequacy of the disclosures in the financial statements, specifically those relating to the material uncertainty applied by your valuer to the valuations.

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### Findings to date

As set out on page 4, we are finalising our sample testing of valuations and completing our testing in relation to the significant audit risk identified.

At the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak, an expectation was raised that valuers were likely to conclude that a "material uncertainty" over the valuation of land and buildings existed at the balance sheet date. The Council's valuer has followed guidance issued by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and as expected their valuation report concluded that, due the impact of COVID-19 on the property market, there is "material uncertainty" over the valuation of land and buildings and investment properties at the balance sheet date. This has been properly disclosed in the notes to the Statement of Accounts. We expect, in line with normal practice, to include reference to this disclosure as an 'emphasis of matter' in our audit report and are currently consulting on the form of wording for this. Our draft Auditor's Report at Appendix B includes the 'emphasis of matter' paragraph we expect to include.

The procedures we have undertaken to date have not identified any material errors or uncertainties in the financial statements, or other matters that we wish to bring to Members' attention.

## Significant risk

3) Valuation of net defined benefit liability

## Description of the risk

The financial statements contain material pension entries in respect of retirement benefits. The calculation of these pension figures, both assets and liabilities, can be subject to significant volatility and includes estimates based upon a complex interaction of actuarial assumptions. This results in an increased risk of material misstatement.

## How we addressed this risk

In relation to the valuation of the Council's defined benefit pension liability we:

- reviewed 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 included comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information provided by PwC, the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office;
- agreed 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;
- critically assessed the competency, objectivity and independence of the Derbyshire Pension Fund's Actuary, Hymans LLP;
- liaised with the auditors of the Pension Fund to gain assurance that the controls in place at the Pension Fund are operating effectively. This included 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 is complete and accurate; and
- performed a walkthrough of payroll transactions at the Council to understand how pension contributions are deducted and paid to the Pension Fund by the Council.

## Findings to date

The procedures we have undertaken to date have not identified any material errors in the financial statements.

Part of our assurance over the net pensions liability is derived from specified procedures commissioned from the external auditors of the Derbyshire Pension Fund. We are yet to receive their report for our consideration. Given the impact of COVID-19 it may have proved difficult to value any property investments and unquoted investments held by the Derbyshire Pension Fund. In this regard it is worth noting that a 'material uncertainty' in pension asset valuations caused by COVID-19 will lead to an emphasis of matter paragraph in the auditor's report. Our draft Auditor's Report at Appendix B includes the 'emphasis of matter' paragraph we envisage including.

In July 2019, MHCLG consulted on the proposed remedy for the 'McCloud' and 'Sargeant' cases. This indicated that the approach adopted for 2018/19 and 2019/20 was likely to have led to an overstatement of the pension fund liability as at 31 March 2020.

A second emerging issue was the Goodwin case that was brought against the Secretary of State for Education earlier this year regarding discrimination owing to sexual orientation in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. MHCLG have commissioned the Government Actuary Department to undertake a review of the potential impact and at a local level, there is an additional risk to evaluate as to whether the scheme is misstated.

Management has considered these matters and has concluded, based on the best information currently available, that they do not have a material impact on the financial statements.

We will update the Governance and Resources Committee if any significant reporting issues emerge from remaining work in these areas.

## 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

### Qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Council's accounting policies and disclosures and concluded they comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (the Code), appropriately tailored to the Council's circumstances.

Draft accounts were received from the Council on 27 August in advance of the 31 August deadline and were of good quality. These were supported by working papers of an appropriate standard and this represents a significant achievement by the finance team.

### Significant matters discussed with management

Significant matters discussed with management during our audit and which had implications for our audit testing and reporting included:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the Council's business, including any potential impact on risks of material misstatement. This included the disclosures required regarding the key sources of estimation uncertainty that management has made in preparing the Statement of Accounts. The Council's valuers have followed RICS guidance and as expected their valuation reports conclude that, due to the impact of COVID-19 on the property market, there is "material uncertainty" over the valuation of land and buildings and investment properties at the balance sheet date. This has been disclosed in the notes to the Statement of Accounts.
- In addition, a similar disclosure of material valuation uncertainty was made in relation to the Council's share of certain Pension Fund assets.
- The Council's adoption of the 'going concern' principle in preparing the Statement of Accounts. The 'going concern' status is confirmed through the 2019/20 local government accounting code, and must also follow International Accounting Standard (IAS) 1: Presentation of Financial Statements. We must comply with a revised ISA (UK) 570 Going Concern, effective for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2019. The above, combined with the impact of COVID-19, means an additional level of scrutiny is required over the going concern assertion in 2019/20. In particular management's explicit considerations of whether the financial statement disclosure for going concern should more explicitly describe the impact of COVID-19.
- The Council's response to relevant legal cases which impact on the valuation of certain pension liabilities. These included:
  - the proposed remedy for the 'McCloud' case (which emerged initially in 2018/19 and was reported on in our previous Audit Completion Report); and
  - the 'Goodwin' case brought against the Secretary of State for Education earlier this year regarding discrimination owing to sexual orientation in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. The factors underpinning this case are likely to apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme and employers are being asked to determine whether there is a risk that their liabilities are materially misstated.

Management has considered these matters and has concluded that they do not have a material impact on the financial statements.

- Work required by our regulators and other risks emerging during the year. As a result of independent quality reviews, in particular by the Financial Reporting Council, of our audit work and that of other audit suppliers we have needed to increase the level of work we do on defined benefit pension schemes and valuation of property, plant and equipment. This and other issues emerging during the year have had an impact on the fee required to complete the audit and we will discuss any fee variation request with management on completion of our audit work and update the Governance and Resources Committee. All fee variation requests are subject to approval from the PSAA.

### Significant difficulties during the audit

During the course of the audit we have had the co-operation of management. Officers have been helpful in addressing our audit queries. The changes to the Council's and Mazars' working arrangements' in response to COVID-19 and other pressures across the sector has led to a number of challenges during the year-end accounts closedown and audit process. There have understandably been some difficulties in carrying out our normal audit procedures and obtaining the audit evidence required, but with the assistance of officers and strong remote working arrangements these have been resolved.





## 2. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS (CONTINUED)

### 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; and
- issue an advisory notice under schedule 8 of the 2014 Act.

We have not exercised any of these powers as part of our 2019/20 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 have not received any questions or objections.

### Possible delay in issuing the Audit certificate

The issue of the Audit Certificate confirms that we have discharged all of our audit responsibilities and that the audit is formally 'closed'. The Audit Certificate would normally be published in our Auditor's Report on the Statement of Accounts alongside the accounts opinion and value for money conclusion. The NAO has not yet issued its Group Instructions for local authority audits. If it looks that these Instructions are to be significantly delayed then we will agree with management to issue the Auditor's Report, but without the Audit Certificate, shortly after the audited Statement of Accounts has been approved by the Governance and Resources Committee. We would then issue the Audit Certificate separately as soon as we are able to do so. We will update the Governance and Resources Committee when more information is known but at this stage the draft Auditor's Report at Appendix B assumes that we will not be able to issue the Audit Certificate alongside the accounts audit opinion and value for money conclusion.



### 3. INTERNAL CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of our audit is to express an opinion on the financial statements. As part of our audit we have considered the internal controls in place relevant to the preparation of the financial statements. We do this in order to design audit procedures to allow us to express an opinion on the financial statements and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control, nor to identify any significant deficiencies in their design or operation.

The matters reported are limited to those deficiencies and other control recommendations that we have identified during our normal audit procedures and that we consider to be of sufficient importance to merit being reported. If we had performed more extensive procedures on internal control we might have identified more deficiencies to be reported or concluded that some of the reported deficiencies need not in fact have been reported. Our comments should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all deficiencies that may exist or improvements that could be made.

Our findings and recommendations are set out below. We have assigned priority rankings to each of them to reflect the importance that we consider each poses to your organisation and, hence, our recommendation in terms of the urgency of required action. In summary, the matters arising fall into the following categories:

Priority ranking	Description	2019/20 issues identified	2018/19 issues outstanding
<b>1 (high)</b>	In our view, there is potential for financial loss, damage to reputation or loss of information. This may have implications for the achievement of business strategic objectives. The recommendation should be taken into consideration by management immediately.	0	1
<b>2 (medium)</b>	In our view, there is a need to strengthen internal control or enhance business efficiency. The recommendations should be actioned in the near future.	0	0
<b>3 (low)</b>	In our view, internal control should be strengthened in these additional areas when practicable.	2	0

### 3. INTERNAL CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

#### Current year recommendations on internal control – Level 3

##### Controls in place in regard to the accuracy of remuneration information

During our testing we identified that a car lump sum allowance was shown as a 'benefit in kind' and not in 'Salary, fees and allowances'.

##### Potential effects

Risk of error in relation to the disclosure made.

##### Recommendation

Management should review and strengthen its controls relating to the preparation of the remuneration note.

##### Management response

Accepted.

##### Controls in place in regard to the preparation of the leases note

During our testing we concluded there was some residual prior year information left in the spreadsheet used to calculate the leases note in error, this required a £634k reduction to the leases note which management has actioned.

##### Potential effects

Risk of error in relation to the disclosure made.

##### Recommendation

Management should review and strengthen its controls relating to the preparation of the leases note.

##### Management response

Accepted.

### 3. INTERNAL CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

#### Follow up of a previous internal control point – Level 1

We set out below an update on one internal control points raised in the prior year.

#### Controls in place in regard to the declaration of interests

KPMG's 2017/18 testing of declaration of interests compared the declarations made by councillors to the records on Companies House and noted that 3 councillors had not declared all interests. Moreover, no declaration form had been completed by 4 councillors for the year 2017/18.

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#### Potential effects

There was a potential risk that a conflict of interest was not appropriately declared.

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#### 2018/19 and 2019/20 updates

Our 2018/19 testing of declaration of interests identified 4 instances where declarations of interests were not received by the Council after several reminders to the Members. Our 2019/20 testing of declaration of interests identified 5 instances where declarations of interests were not received by the Council after several reminders to the Members.

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#### Management response

Accepted.

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## 4. SUMMARY OF MISSTATEMENTS

We report any misstatements identified for adjustment during the course of the audit, above the level of our trivial threshold of £20,000.

Subject to completion procedures there are no unadjusted items and there were no adjusted or unadjusted misstatements identified during the course of our audit which impacted on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement or Balance Sheet.

### Disclosure amendments

During our review of the financial statements we identified some minor amendments to disclosures. These disclosure issues were corrected by the Council in the final version of its financial statements for 2019/20.

- 1 The Council has restated its 2018/19 pension liability comparative figures as the 2018/19 figures for staff employed by Freedom Leisure were shown on a 'bulk transfer' basis and not a 'pass through basis'.
- 2 We reviewed the proposed disclosure for operating leases and this was found to include some residual prior year information left in the spreadsheet used to calculate the leases note in error, this required a £634k reduction to the leases note which management has actioned.
- 3 We identified that a car lump sum allowance was shown as a 'benefit in kind' and not in 'Salary, fees and allowances'. Management has corrected this discrepancy.

## 5. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION

### Our approach to Value for Money

We are required to form a conclusion as to 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 in order to form our conclusion, and sets out the criterion and sub-criteria that we are required to consider.

The overall criterion is that, 'in all significant respects, the Council had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.' To assist auditors in reaching a conclusion on this overall criterion, the following sub-criteria are set out by the NAO:

- Informed decision making
- Sustainable resource deployment
- Working with partners and other third parties

Commentary against each of the sub-criteria, and an indication of whether arrangements are in place, is provided below.

Sub-criteria	Commentary	Arrangements in place?
Informed decision making	<p>We reviewed financial, performance and risk management reports throughout the year and attended meetings of the Governance and Resources Committee. We did not identify any concerns regarding data quality or the decision-making process.</p> <p>We considered the following aspects of proper arrangements specified by the National Audit Office as part of our risk assessment, and, based on our risk-based approach, we did not identify any significant issues or exceptions in the Council's arrangements:</p> <p>a) Acting in the public interest, through demonstrating and applying the principles and values of sound governance;</p> <p>b) Understanding and using appropriate and reliable financial and performance information to support informed decision making and performance management;</p> <p>c) Reliable and timely financial reporting that supports the delivery of strategic priorities; and</p> <p>d) Managing risks effectively and maintaining a sound system of internal control.</p>	Yes

## 5. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION (CONTINUED)

Sub-criteria	Commentary	Arrangements in place?
Sustainable resource deployment	<p>Financial and performance reports demonstrate a history of achieving cost reductions without adversely affecting services and a balanced medium term financial strategy is in place up to 2024/25 provided recurrent savings of £0.5m can be achieved.</p> <p>We considered the following aspects of proper arrangements specified by the National Audit Office as part of our risk assessment, and, based on our risk-based approach, we did not identify any significant issues or exceptions in the Council's arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Planning finances effectively to support the sustainable delivery of strategic priorities and maintain statutory functions;</li> <li>b) Managing and utilising assets effectively to support the delivery of strategic priorities; and</li> <li>c) Planning, organising and developing the workforce effectively to deliver strategic priorities.</li> </ul>	Yes
Working with partners and other third parties	<p>The Council has consulted with local people with a view to establishing a joint venture with a private company to further its corporate aims for affordable housing, employment and regeneration. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to increase collaboration and build partnership arrangements to achieve improvements</p> <p>We considered the following aspects of proper arrangements specified by the National Audit Office as part of our risk assessment, and, based on our risk-based approach, we did not identify any significant issues or exceptions in the Council's arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Working with third parties effectively to deliver strategic priorities;</li> <li>b) Commissioning services effectively to support the delivery of strategic priorities; and</li> <li>c) Procuring supplies and services effectively to support the delivery of strategic priorities.</li> </ul>	Yes

# 5. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION (CONTINUED)

## Significant VFM risks

Our overall approach is set out in our Audit Strategy Memorandum and involves a detailed risk assessment at the planning stage to identify whether or not a Value for Money (VFM) exists. Risk, in the context of our VFM work, is the risk that we come to an incorrect conclusion rather than the risk of the arrangements in place at the Council being inadequate. As set out in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, for the 2019/20 financial year, we identified one significant risk to our VFM conclusion:

Risk	Work undertaken	Conclusion
<p><b>Achievement of savings and income generation targets</b> – At the planning stage of our audit we recognised that the continual pressures on Local Government finances are well documented and led to another challenging budget setting process for 2019/20. During 2018/19 several reviews were undertaken generating savings for the Council. The savings identified were removed from the 2018/19 base budget to produce the 2019/20 budget. The Council approved a balanced 2019/20 budget. The budget included the required S.151 Officer assurances relating to the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the level of reserves, but acknowledged the risks around the delivery and timing of savings initiatives and the need to address medium term budget shortfalls from 2020/21 onwards.</p> <p>The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) currently outlines a requirement to identify further ongoing savings (or additional income) of £0.5m by 2024/25, but the Council has recognised that this is likely to be adversely impacted by cost pressures associated with Covid-19. In mitigation the Council is holding reserves to allow a strategic response to emerging budgetary shortfalls such as those associated with the implications of Covid-19 which remain uncertain.</p> <p>There will be significant changes in local government finances over the next few years, which will culminate in a major change in the way local government is financed from 2021/22 onwards. These include the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review, the Fair Funding Review and the introduction a new system for business rates.</p> <p>Delays in the delivery of these initiatives have made it difficult for the Council to plan over the medium term. As a result, the need for savings (or income generation), as well as the need to contain cost pressures such as those associated with Covid-19, will continue to have a significant impact on the Council’s financial resilience, and a prudent approach will be needed until the medium term funding position is clarified.</p> <p>We need to consider the progress made against the budget and plans and update our assessment of this risk area before forming our final VFM conclusion.</p>	<p>The outturn position for 2019/20 shows that the General Fund balance reduced by £161K from £2.161m to £2m and earmarked reserves increased from £13.985m to £17.664m, the combined affect is an increase of £3.5m in the Council’s reserves. These reserves will help the council to manage the cost pressures associated with Covid-19. We have assessed whether any matters have come to our attention through the course of our audit that lead us to conclude that a risk to our 2019/20 VFM conclusion does indeed exist. We addressed this requirement by reviewing the Council’s arrangements for developing and delivering its MTFP and for working in partnership.</p>	<p>We obtained sufficient assurance to conclude that the Council continues to have appropriate arrangements in place.</p>





# 5. VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION (CONTINUED)

## The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

During March 2020, the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic began to have far reaching implications for us all, including an impact on the Council. In particular, following the lockdown from 26 March 2020, the service needed to respond to the impact of the pandemic on its communities and also needed to adapt to new ways of working.

Our 2019/20 value for money conclusion is focused on the arrangements in place during the 2019/20 financial year. Given the timing of the major impact of the pandemic one week before the end of the financial year, we did not identify an additional significant risk relating to the COVID-19 pandemic in our 2019/20 value for money conclusion work.

The Authority's response to the pandemic will be a major focus of our 2020/21 audit. With this in mind, we have continued to liaise with officers and gain an understanding of the arrangements that have been put in place in the new financial year.

## Matters kept under review

Before drawing our conclusion, we have:

- updated our risk assessment for any new or emerging issues through discussions with management and updating our review of Council reports;
- reviewed the Council's Annual Governance Statement for any significant issues; and
- considered the Council's financial outturn position as presented in the financial statements.

From the work performed, no new significant VFM risks were identified and we have no matters to report.

## Our overall Value for Money conclusion

We have completed our procedures and, as set out in our draft auditor's report included at Appendix B, we intend to issue an unqualified Value for Money conclusion for the 2019/20 financial year.



# APPENDIX A

## DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

Mazars LLP  
Salvus House  
Aykley Heads  
Durham  
DH1 5TS

**The Council's management representation letter should be provided to us on client headed note paper.**

[Date]

Dear Siirs

### **Derbyshire Dales District Council - audit for year ended 31 March 2020**

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Derbyshire Dales District Council for the year ended 31 March 2020 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 (the Code) and applicable law.

I confirm that the following representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy ourselves that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

#### **My responsibility for the financial statements and accounting information**

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

#### **My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information**

I have provided you with:

- access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other material;
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

I confirm as Director of Resources that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information.

As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

#### **Accounting records**

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and committee meetings, have been made available to you.

#### **Accounting policies**

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with Code and International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council and Group's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

#### **Accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value**

I confirm that any significant assumptions used by the Council in making accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are reasonable.

I confirm that I am satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme liabilities for IAS19 disclosures are consistent with my knowledge. I confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. I confirm that all significant retirement benefits have been identified and properly accounted for (including any arrangements that are statutory, contractual or implicit in the employer's actions, that arise in the UK or overseas, that are funded or unfunded).

# APPENDIX A

## DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER (CONTINUED)

### Material Valuation Uncertainty

The outbreak of COVID-19, has impacted global financial markets and as such identified that less weight can be attached to the previous market evidence for comparison purposes and to inform opinions of value. The current response to COVID-19 has resulted in an unprecedented set of circumstances on which to base judgement, resulting in the valuations recognised within the Statement of Accounts being reported on the basis of 'material valuation uncertainty' as per VPS 3 and VPGA 10 of the RICS Red Book Global. Given the unknown future impact that COVID-19 might have on the real estate market. I am satisfied that sufficient and appropriate disclosures have been made in the Statement of Accounts to reflect the impact of 'material valuation uncertainty' on the Council's assets.

### Contingencies

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
- the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

### Laws and regulations

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

### Fraud and error

I acknowledge my responsibility as Director of Resources for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

I have disclosed to you:

- all the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- all knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
  - management and those charged with governance;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
  - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

### Related party transactions

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances, have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the to you the requirements of the Code and applicable law.

I have disclosed the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

### Impairment review

To the best of my knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there is a permanent reduction in the recoverable amount of the property, plant and equipment and intangible assets below their carrying value at the balance sheet date. I have considered the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's properties. An impairment review is therefore not considered necessary.

# APPENDIX A

## DRAFT MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER (CONTINUED)

### Charges on assets

All the Council's assets are free from any charges exercisable by third parties except as disclosed within the financial statements.

### Future commitments

I am not aware of any plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

### Subsequent events

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code and applicable law, require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly.

### COVID-19

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of the COVID-19 Virus pandemic on the Council, including the impact of mitigation measures and uncertainties, and that the disclosure in the Statement of Accounts fairly reflects that assessment.

### Brexit

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, including the potential outcomes at the end of the Implementation Period, and that the disclosure in the Statement of Accounts fairly reflects that assessment.

### Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council will not continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the accounts.

I have updated our going concern assessment in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. I continue to believe that the Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the Council's needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

### Annual Governance Statement

I am satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and I confirm that I am not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

### Narrative report

The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect my understanding of the Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

### Unadjusted misstatements (remove this paragraph if not required)

I confirm that the effects of the uncorrected misstatements identified at the appendix to this letter are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Director of Resources

# APPENDIX B

## DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Independent auditor's report to the members of Derbyshire Dales District Council

#### Report on the financial statements

##### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Derbyshire Dales District Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2020, which comprise the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Movement in Reserves Statement, Balance Sheet, and Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Derbyshire Dales District Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.

##### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities section of our report. We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

##### Emphasis of Matter – Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the valuation of land, buildings and pension fund assets

We draw attention to note 3 of the financial statements, which describes the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the valuation of the Council's land and buildings and the valuation of the Council's share of Derbyshire Pension Fund's property assets. As disclosed in note 3 of the financial statements, the Council's and Pension Fund's valuers included a 'material valuation uncertainty' declaration in relation to their reports as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic creating a shortage of relevant market evidence upon which to base their judgements. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

##### Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Director of Resources' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Director of Resources has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Council's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

##### Other information

The Director of Resources is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

# APPENDIX B

## DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

### Responsibilities of the Director of Resources for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Section 151 Officer's Responsibilities, the Director of Resources is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Director of Resources is also responsible for such internal control as the Director of Resources determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Director of Resources is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, unless the Council is informed of the intention for dissolution without transfer of services or function to another entity. The Director of Resources is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

### Conclusion on Derbyshire Dales District Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

#### Conclusion

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in April 2020, we are satisfied that, in all significant respects Derbyshire Dales District Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2020.

#### Basis for conclusion

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued in April 2020, as to whether the Council had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider in satisfying ourselves whether the Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2020.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

### Responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

# APPENDIX B

## DRAFT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

### Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We are required under section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code of Audit Practice requires us to report to you our conclusion relating to proper arrangements. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

### Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of Derbyshire Dales District Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 44 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed the work necessary to issue our assurance statement in respect of the Council's Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack. We are satisfied that these matters do not have a material effect on the financial statements or on our conclusion on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

### Gavin Barker

For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

Mazars LLP  
Salvus House  
Aykley Heads  
Durham  
DH1 5TS

XX November 2020

# APPENDIX C INDEPENDENCE

As part of our ongoing risk assessment we monitor our relationships with you to identify any new actual or perceived threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We can confirm that no new threats to independence have been identified since issuing the Audit Strategy Memorandum and therefore we remain independent.





## CONTACT

### **Gavin Barker**

Director

Phone: +44 (0)789 668 4771

Email: [gavin.barker@mazars.co.uk](mailto:gavin.barker@mazars.co.uk)

### **John Pressley**

Manager

Phone: +44 (0)790 998 0880

Email: [john.pressley@mazars.co.uk](mailto:john.pressley@mazars.co.uk)

Governance and Resources Committee

19 November 2020

Report of Director of Resources

## **LETTER OF REPRESENTATION 2019/20**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report requests that Members consider the draft Letter of Representation as part of their responsibility for approving the financial statements.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the draft Letter of Representation be endorsed for signature.

### **WARDS AFFECTED**

None

### **STRATEGIC LINK**

The Letter of Representation is an important aspect of the Council's corporate governance arrangements. As such, it contributes towards the achievement of all the Council's aims, priorities and targets.

## **1 REPORT**

- 1.1 The International Standard on Auditing (U.K. & Ireland) 580 (ISA 580) requires the external auditor to obtain evidence that the Council's management acknowledges its responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework, and has approved the financial statements. The auditor can obtain evidence of management's acknowledgement of such responsibility by obtaining a written representation from management and a signed copy of the financial statements.
- 1.2 ISA 580 gives guidance on matters which might be included in a management "Letter of Representation". The Director of Resources' Letter of Representation has been prepared in accordance with that guidance and is given in Appendix 1. In preparing the letter, the Director of Resources has consulted with members of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, and has discussed the draft contents with the External Auditor. The letter contains no matters of concern which need to be brought to the attention of Members.
- 1.3 In addition, ISA 580 requires the external auditor to obtain evidence that those charged with governance acknowledge their collective responsibility for the preparation of, and have approved, the financial statements. Consideration of the

Letter of Representation by the Council alongside the external auditor's Audit Completion Report, prior to the approval of the Statement of Accounts, contributes to that evidence.

## **2 RISK ASSESSMENT**

### 2.1 Legal

There are no legal risks arising from this report.

### 2.2 Financial

There are no financial risks arising from this report.

## **3 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

## **4 CONTACT INFORMATION**

Karen Henriksen, Head of Resources  
Telephone: 01629 761284  
e-mail: [karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

Paul Frith, Financial Services Manager  
Telephone: 01629 761214  
Email: [paul.frith@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:paul.frith@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

## **5 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 5.1 None

## **6 ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 – Letter of Representation 2019/20.



Mazars LLP  
 Salvus House  
 Aykley Heads  
 Durham  
 DH1 5TS

Please ask for: Karen Henriksen  
 Direct Dial No: 01629 761284  
 Your Ref.  
 My Ref. CE/KH  
 E-mail: karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

19 November 2020

Dear Sirs,

Derbyshire Dales District Council - Audit for the year ended 31 March 2020

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Derbyshire Dales District Council for the year ended 31 March 2020 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the statement of accounts gives a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 (the Code) and applicable law.

I confirm that the following representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy ourselves that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

**My responsibility for the statement of accounts and accounting information**

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

**My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information**

I have provided you with:

- access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other material;
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

Continued.....

I confirm as Director of Resources (Chief Financial Officer) that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information.

As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

### **Accounting records**

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and Committee meetings, have been made available to you.

### **Accounting policies**

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with the Code and International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council and Group's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

### **Accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value**

I confirm that any significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

I confirm that I am satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme liabilities for IAS19 disclosures are consistent with my knowledge. I confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. I confirm that all significant retirement benefits have been identified and properly accounted for (including any arrangements that are statutory, contractual or implicit in the employer's actions, that arise in the UK or overseas, that are funded or unfunded).

### **Material Valuation Uncertainty**

The outbreak of COVID-19 has impacted global financial markets and as such identified that less weight can be attached to the previous market evidence for comparison purposes and to inform opinions of value. The current response to COVID-19 has resulted in an unprecedented set of circumstances on which to base judgement, resulting in the valuations recognised within the Statement of Accounts being reported on the basis of 'material valuation uncertainty' as per VPS3 and VPGA10 of the RICS Red Book Global. Given the unknown future impact that COVID-19 might have on the real estate market. I am satisfied that sufficient and appropriate disclosures have been made in the Statement of Accounts to reflect the impact of 'material valuation uncertainty' on the Council's assets.

Continued.....

### **Contingencies**

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
- the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with Code and applicable law.

### **Laws and regulations**

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

### **Fraud and error**

I acknowledge my responsibility as Director of Resources for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

I have disclosed to you:

- all the results of my assessment of the risk that the statement of accounts may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- all knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
  - management and those charged with governance;
  - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
  - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Continued.....

### **Related party transactions**

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed to you in accordance with the requirements of the Code and applicable law. I have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

### **Impairment review**

To the best of my knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there is a permanent reduction in the recoverable amount of the property, plant and equipment below their carrying value at the balance sheet date. I have considered the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's properties. An impairment review is therefore not considered necessary.

### **Charges on assets**

All the Council's assets are free from any charges exercisable by third parties except as disclosed within the financial statements.

### **Future commitments**

I am not aware of any plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

### **Subsequent events**

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code and applicable law require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly.

### **COVID-19**

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of the COVID-19 Virus pandemic on the Council, including the impact of mitigation measures and uncertainties, and that the disclosure in the Statement of Accounts fairly reflects that assessment.

### **Brexit**

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the potential impact of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, including the potential outcomes at the end of the Implementation Period, and that the disclosure in the Statement of Accounts fairly reflects that assessment.

### **Going concern**

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council will cease to continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the accounts.

Continued.....

I have updated our going concern assessment in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. I continue to believe that the Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the Council's needs. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

**Annual Governance Statement**

I am satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and I confirm that I am not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

**Narrative report**

The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect my understanding of the Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

This letter was endorsed at the meeting of the Governance and Resources Committee on 19 November 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Henriksen  
Director of Resources



Governance and Resources Committee

19<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Report of Director of Resources

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides interpretation of the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 and highlights the key issues. The report also requests approval of the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 is approved.

### WARDS AFFECTED

All.

See also the  
Statement of Accounts 2019/20  
published separately **(to follow)**

### STRATEGIC LINK

The Council's financial position is taken into account in determining all the priorities in the Corporate Plan.

## 1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Under the Account and Audit Regulations 2015 the District Council must:

- consider either by way of a Committee or by the Members meeting as a whole the Statement of Accounts;
- following that consideration, approve the Statement of Accounts by a resolution of that Committee or meeting;
- following approval, ensure that the Statement of Accounts is signed and dated by the person presiding at the Committee or meeting at which that approval was given; and
- publish (which must include publication on the Council's website), the Statement of Accounts together with any certificate, opinion, or report issued, given or made by the auditor.

## 2 REPORT

- 2.1 The Statement of Accounts 2019/20, distributed with this report, has been audited by the Council's External Auditors, Mazars LLP. The external auditor has also reviewed the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20.
- 2.2 The audit of the accounts has identified some minor amendments which were necessary in order to address issues arising during the audit. However, the overall financial position as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 remains the same as that included within the Draft Statement of Accounts. Further points to note:
- There was a significant restatement of the comparator 2018/19 Balance Sheet position due to incorrect treatment of the Pensions Liability arising following the transfer of Leisure Centre staff to Freedom leisure in August 2018. However this had no impact on the 2019/20 Balance Sheet for which the Pensions disclosures were produced as required.
  - Significant uncertainty of Asset valuations relating to Derbyshire Dales District Councils Property portfolio and also the Property and Equity Investments held within the Councils share of the Derbyshire LGPS, have resulted in "Material Estimation Uncertainty" of the Balance Sheet as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. This has affected the vast majority of Councils across the country and places a requirement on the External Auditor to modify the Audit Opinion due to this "emphasis of matter". However, taking regard to this, the Audit Opinion remains an unqualified opinion.
- 2.3 The Audit Opinion will be issued after the Council has approved the Statement of Accounts and Letter of Representation. As part of corporate governance, the External Auditor is required to report relevant matters relating to the audit to Council (or a relevant committee). As a result of Covid-19 the normal statutory deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> July has been extended to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 for the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts, and as the audit has only recently been concluded, this report is presented to this committee. The External Audit ISA260 Report 2019/20 from Mazars is included elsewhere on the Agenda of this meeting, and this report highlights the findings of the Audit.
- 2.4 The Accounts and Audit Regulations state that the accounts must be prepared in accordance with "proper practices". The Local Government Act 2003 defines proper practices as those:
- Which the authority is required to follow by virtue of any enactment, or
  - Which are contained in a code of practice or other document which is identified by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has determined that the following document is relevant:
    - The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19 (the Code), published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA);
- 2.5 The Council's accounts have been prepared to comply with proper practices, as demonstrated by the satisfactory completion of the external audit of the accounts.

Compliance can also be checked by reviewing the Statement of Accounts against the Audit Commission's Aide Memoire, which is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

### **3 RISK ASSESSMENT**

#### **3.1 Legal**

This report has been compiled in compliance with the Account and Audit Regulations 2015. The legal risk is therefore low

#### **3.2 Financial**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with proper practices, and have been audited. There is therefore no financial risk arising from this report.

### **4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

### **5 CONTACT INFORMATION**

For further information contact:

Karen Henriksen, Head of Resources

Telephone: 01629 761284

E-mail: [karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

Paul Frith, Financial Services Manager

Telephone: 01629 761214

E-mail: [paul.frith@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:paul.frith@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

### **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

### **7 ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 – Statement of Accounts 2019/20 – Aide Memoire

Appendix 2 – Statement of Accounts 2019/20 – Published Separately **(to follow)**

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20 - AIDE MEMOIRE FOR MEMBERS

The purpose of the questions below is to help establish and provide evidence of a robust review of the accounts by the S151 officer and Members.

No.	Issue	Comment and evidence
1	Was the closedown plan (which allows the statement of accounts to be approved by 30 November 2020) achieved?	The accounts were signed by the S151 Officer on 09/11/2020 and sent to Members prior to the Governance and Resources meeting on 19th November.
2	Have the auditors received regular updates on the plan and been warned of potential problems?	<p>The auditors received a copy of the plan in advance and again at the commencement of the Audit.</p> <p>During the closure process discussions have been held with the auditors regarding various areas of accounting.</p> <p>The auditors were given a copy of the completed disclosure checklist, copies of working papers and draft accounts at the commencement of the audit – the disclosure checklist helps them to identify potential problem areas.</p>
3	Have staff preparing the accounts attended CIPFA/Mazars workshops and are they aware of the key issues and changes in the CIPFA Code of Practice 2019/20?	Yes. The Principal Accountant and Senior Accountant attended suitable Workshops. The Financial Services Manager did not commence employment until after those events, but has been involved in regular dialogue with the Audit team and the Accountancy team throughout the closedown process and throughout the Audit.
4	Do staff preparing the accounts have up to date CIPFA guidance notes for practitioners?	Yes.
5	Have the accounts been checked for casting errors, internal inconsistency and cross referencing? (All numbers which are expected to agree do agree).	Yes. Extensive use of Excel is incorporated into the document to reduce the risk of casting errors and to check internal consistency. Internal consistency and cross referencing is also checked thoroughly by senior accounting staff.
6	<p>Does the narrative statement set out the results for the year and comparison to budget, commenting on the significant items?</p> <p>Do the figures quoted reconcile to the main statements?</p>	<p>Yes – see pages 3 to 9 of the Statement of Accounts.</p> <p>Yes.</p>

7	<p>Has the audit of the accounts been advertised and accounts made available for public inspection?</p> <p>Have members of the public raised any objections? (If so, what are they?)</p>	<p>The Draft Statement of Accounts 2019/20 and notice of public rights was placed on the Council's website on the 27<sup>th</sup> August and the accounts were available for public inspection from 28<sup>th</sup> August to 9<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>No objections were received.</p>
8	<p>Has a bank reconciliation been completed as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 with no unexplained entries?</p>	<p>Yes. The bank reconciliation for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 was completed. There were no unexplained entries.</p>
9	<p>Have all year-end control accounts been reconciled?</p> <p>How have you maintained control when staff are involved in budget preparations Nov – Feb time?</p> <p>Any significant slippages in reconciling suspense accounts e.g. cash suspense?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>There were sufficient adequately trained staff in the Financial Services Section to undertake control account reconciliations, which was possible as tasks are completed by different staff members to those significantly involved in the Budget preparations. However there is little resilience in the team and any staff turnover would result in increased risk. There is also some reliance on assistance from more senior members of the Section (see risk register).</p> <p>It became challenging to undertake all reconciliations and to clear control accounts when Covid19 restricted staff access in April and May. Had the Accounts timetable not been delayed it may not have been possible to achieve the original closedown timetable to 30<sup>th</sup> May.</p>
10	<p>Are there any significant unexplained budget variances?</p>	<p>There are no unexplained variances.</p>
11	<p>Have working papers been completed in accordance with the auditor's "Prepared By Client" list? Were they ready for the start of the audit?</p>	<p>Working papers were completed in accordance with the auditor's "Prepared By Client" list, as well as a working paper for each note to the accounts. The majority of working papers were ready for the start of the audit, with a small number produced during the audit.</p>
12	<p>Is there a sufficient basket of evidence gathered to allow the S151 officer and members to conclude on the effectiveness of Internal Audit, in relation to the Annual Governance Statement? E.g. Self-assessment by Internal Audit Manager, External Auditor's view of Internal Audit,</p>	<p>The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20, which identifies the Governance Framework and includes a review of its effectiveness, was approved by the Governance &amp; Resources Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020.</p> <p>The Internal Audit Annual Report for 2019/20 was also considered at the meeting of the Governance &amp; Resources Committee on 20<sup>th</sup></p>

	Heads of Service view of Internal Audit.	<p>August 2020. This report includes an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's control environment including any qualifications to that opinion;</p> <p>The Internal Audit section is subject to regular inspection by the Council's external auditors, who place reliance on the work undertaken by the section.</p>
13	Has the action plan from the previous year's Annual Governance Statement been complied with? Are there any remaining control risks that undermine the content of the Annual Governance Statement or the Accounts?	<p>Progress on the action plan for the 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement is shown in the 2019/20 Statement, on page 35 of the Statement of Accounts. There were two recommendations relating to <i>Internal Controls for the Accounting Treatment of Fixed Assets</i> which were considered and implemented during the preparation of financial statements for 2019/20.</p>

Governance and Resources Committee

19th November 2020

Report of the Director of Resources

## **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS CONCLUDED UNDER THE 2019/2020 AND 2020/2021 OPERATIONAL AUDIT PLAN**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To present for members' information, progress made in respect of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Internal Audit Plans. The report includes a summary of internal audit reports issued since the last meeting of this committee, an update on the implementation of internal audit recommendations and an appendix detailing the 2020/21 internal audit plan, progress to date and suggested amendments.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the impact of COVID-19 and the redeployment of the Senior Internal Auditor on the ability to complete the 2020/21 audit plan be noted.
3. That the audit areas recommended for deferral to subsequent years as identified in Appendix 3 be agreed.

### **WARDS AFFECTED**

None

### **STRATEGIC LINK**

Internal Audit's service aims and objectives are the provision of an independent service, which objectively examines, evaluates and reports to the Council and its management on the adequacy of the control environment. This contributes to the Council's core values of being open and transparent when making decisions and using public resources ethically and responsibly.

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## **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The 2019/20 Operational Audit Plan was approved by the Governance and Resources Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and the 2020/21 plan on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The plans provide a framework by which service functions are reviewed to test and report on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management systems and the internal control environment within the Council. This report details the results of the internal audit reviews undertaken during the year and a review of the implementation of

internal audit recommendations. The effects of COVID-19 on the completion of the 2020/21 internal audit plan are also highlighted.

## 2 REPORT

### SUMMARY OF REPORTS ISSUED

- 2.1 Attached, as Appendix 1, is a summary of reports issued from the middle of December 2019 to the middle of October 2020. This includes the remaining reports in respect of 2019/20 and the first few reports for 2020/21.
- 2.2 Reports are issued as Drafts with five working days being allowed for the submission of any factual changes, after which time the report is designated as a Final Report. Fifteen working days are allowed for the return of the Implementation Plan.
- 2.3 The Appendix shows for each report a summary of the level of assurance that can be given in respect of the audit area examined and the number of recommendations made / agreed where a full response has been received.
- 2.4 The assurance provided column in Appendix 1 gives an overall assessment of the assurance that can be given in terms of the controls in place and the system’s ability to meet its objectives and manage risk in accordance with the following classifications:

<b>Assurance Level</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a sound system of controls in place, designed to achieve the system objectives. Controls are being consistently applied and risks well managed.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The majority of controls are in place and operating effectively, although some control improvements are required. The system should achieve its objectives. Risks are generally well managed.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	Certain important controls are either not in place or not operating effectively. There is a risk that the system may not achieve its objectives. Some key risks were not well managed.
<b>Inadequate Assurance</b>	There are fundamental control weaknesses, leaving the system/service open to material errors or abuse and exposes the Council to significant risk. There is little assurance of achieving the desired objectives.

- 2.6 Eight reports have been issued, 2 with a conclusion of “Substantial” Assurance, 4 with a conclusion of “Reasonable” Assurance and 2 with “Limited” Assurance. 30 recommendations have been made and these are in the process of being implemented by management.



- 2.7 As has been previously agreed, full copies of the 2 reports with a “Limited” assurance opinion (Asset Management and Data Protection) have been provided at Appendices 3 and 4. A summary of the main issues arising from these 2 reports is at Appendix 2.
- 2.8 In respect of the audits being reported no fraud was identified.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.9 Attached at Appendix 5 is the current position at the end of October 2020 of internal audit recommendations made as a consequence of audit reviews 17 recommendations have been satisfactorily implemented since the last report, 8 recommendations are in the process of being implemented, 12 recommendations are overdue and 13 recommendations have not passed their implementation date. Appendix 5 gives a commentary next to each recommendation describing the progress made.

#### PROGRESS ON THE 2020/21 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

- 2.10 Due to COVID-19 DDDC’s senior internal auditor has largely been redeployed to aid management implement the processes and procedures for the payment of small business grants and discretionary business grants. This has also involved completing fraud risk assessments and investigating any potential frauds.
- 2.11 As a result of this little progress has been made on the 2020/21 internal audit plan with only 2 reports being issued in the first 6 months of the year. Appendix 6 illustrates the audits completed, those in progress, those recommended for deferral and ongoing areas.
- 2.12 It is hoped that for the remaining 6 months the Senior Auditor will be able to concentrate on completing the high and medium risk areas identified within the plan. If the senior internal auditor continues to be redeployed this will have an impact on the level of assurance that can be given at the end of the year and this will need to be reflected in the annual audit opinion that is included within the Annual Governance statement.

### **3 RISK ASSESSMENT**

#### 3.1 Legal

There are no legal considerations arising from the report

#### 3.2 Financial

There are no financial considerations arising from the report.

### **4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

## **5 CONTACT INFORMATION**

Karen Henriksen, Director of Resources

Telephone: 01629 761284; Email: [karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

Jenny Williams, Internal Audit Consortium Manager

Telephone: 01246 959770; Email: [Jenny.williams@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:Jenny.williams@chesterfield.gov.uk)

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **7 ATTACHMENTS**

- Appendix 1 - Summary of Internal Audit Reports Issued 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020
- Appendix 2 – Summary of points arising in respect of the 2 “Limited” Assurance Reports
- Appendix 3 – Internal Audit Asset Management Report
- Appendix 4 – Internal Audit Data Protection Report
- Appendix 5 – Implementation of Internal Audit Recommendations
- Appendix 6 – Progress on the 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan

## DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Internal Audit Consortium - Report to Governance and Resources Committee

#### Summary of Internal Audit Reports Issued 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Report Ref	Report Title	Scope and Objectives	Overall Opinion	Date		Number of Recommendations	
				Report Issued	Response Due	Made	Accepted
	<b>2019/20 Audits</b>						
D014	Housing Benefits	To ensure that benefits are paid promptly and accurately	Substantial	19/12/2019	27/2/2020	2 (1M 1L)	2
D015	Payroll	To ensure that staff are paid promptly and accurately	Reasonable	6/2/2020	27/2/2020	2 (1H 1M)	2
D016	Network Security & Policies	To review and assess network security and the processes and procedures in place	Substantial	12/2/2020	4/3/2020	0	0
D017	Choice Based Lettings	To ensure that the approved strategy is adhered to	Reasonable	25/2/2020	17/3/2020	4 (1H 1M 2L)	Note 1

Report Ref	Report Title	Scope and Objectives	Overall Opinion	Date		Number of Recommendations	
				Report Issued	Response Due	Made	Accepted
D018	Safeguarding	To ensure that a policy has been adopted, is being implemented and that suitable staff training has taken place	Reasonable	12/3/2020	2/4/2020	4 (3M 1L)	4
D019	Asset Management	To ensure that there is a strategy and action plan in place that are being adhered to.	Limited	8/6/2020	29/6/2020	4 (3M 1L)	4
	<b>2020/21 Reports</b>						
D001	Planning Fees	To ensure that all planning fees are collected and banked promptly and accurately.	Reasonable	13/5/2020	3/6/2020	2 (1H 1M)	2
D002	Data Protection	To ensure that there are adequate policies and procedures in place and that all staff are appropriately trained.	Limited	7/9/2020	28/9/2020	11 (1H 6M 4L)	11

Note 1 Response not received at time of writing report

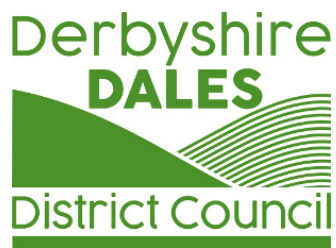
## Summary of the main reasons for Limited Assurance

### Asset Management

- The Corporate Property Group had not met on a regular basis and no minutes had been taken of the meetings held. The risk is that decisions are not made in a timely fashion or are not made by the group. Without minutes there is no formal record of the decisions made.
- There is significant slippage on achieving the objectives within the asset management plan. A delay in procuring condition surveys could have a financial impact on the medium term financial plan depending on the results. Other consequences of delayed actions may be inaccurate records, lack of up to date protocols for the sale and acquisition of assets.
- The financial asset management system has not been reconciled to the Uniform system.

### Data Protection

- Staff training was not up to date. If a breach does occur and the ICO investigate then one of the first areas they will review is staff training and if this is found to be inadequate there is the potential for large fines to be levied.
- The redaction training recommended by the ICO following a breach has not yet been provided.
- Data protection impact assessments are being completed by the DP Officer rather than managers which could lead to a lack of ownership of systems and the data held in them.
- Not all paper and electronic forms hold the necessary privacy notices – data should only be used in ways specified
- The ICO have recommended data mapping to help identify the personal information held but this has not yet taken place (there are registers in place).
- Not all staff are aware of the requirements in terms of destroying paper and electronic records or the data retention policy. Information may be kept too long.
- The council is not PCI-DSS compliant. Achievement of the payment card industry standard is not a legal requirement however fines can be made if there was a breach of card data.



## Derbyshire Dales District Council

### Internal Audit Report

<b>Authority:</b>	<b>Derbyshire Dales District Council</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Asset Management</b>
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> June 2020</b>
<b>Level of Assurance:</b>	<b>Limited Assurance</b>

<b>Report Distribution:</b>	<b>Chief Executive Director of Regulatory Services Director of Resources</b>
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# INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 In accordance with the 2019/20 Operational Internal Audit Plan a review of the Councils Asset Management Plan has been undertaken.

### 2.0 Scope and Objectives

2.1 The scope and objectives of the audit were to ensure that there is an asset management plan in place, that it is reviewed regularly and that objectives highlighted as part of the plan are implemented.

2.2 Areas reviewed as part of the audit included: -

- Current asset management plan
- Adequacy of the asset management plan
- Overall responsibility of the asset management plan
- Implementation of the plans objectives
- Adequacy of the asset database
- Maintenance of the Council's assets
- Capital investment
- Partnership and community working

### 3.0 Conclusion

3.1 The overall conclusion of the audit, based on the controls examined, was that the reliability of the internal key controls operating was assessed as **limited assurance** (Certain important controls are either not in place or not operating effectively. There is a risk that the system may not achieve its objectives. Some key risks were not well managed). See appendix A for definitions.

3.2 It is acknowledged that the involvement of the Estates and Facilities Manager in key Council project such as the waste contract and other capital works has had a detrimental impact on the implementation and completion of the Asset Management Plan objectives.

### 4.0 Previous audit Recommendations

4.1 Two recommendations were made as part of the previous audit undertaken in June 2016. They were:

R1: *The Asset Management Plan should be reviewed and revised as soon as practicable.*

It was verified that Asset Management Plan was reviewed and revised

R2: *A target date be agreed for the reconciliation of the CIPFA Property Asset Manager and Uniform Asset Database System*

Discussions with the Estates and Facilities Manager and the Principle Accountant revealed that no reconciliation has been undertaken.

## Findings and Recommendations

### 5.0 Asset Management Plan

- 5.1 The latest Asset Management Plan (AMP) covering the period 2019 to 2023 was approved by Council on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019.
- 5.2 The AMP is a document that is intended to set out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its land and property and to provide a framework within which property asset decisions can be made in support of the Council's aims and objectives.
- 5.3 The AMP is a strategic document that links to other Council's policies and strategies including; the corporate plan, capital strategy, commercial investment strategy, economic plan and visitor economy plan.
- 5.4 Within the AMP it covers the use of Council owned land and property, the condition of properties and plans for effective maintenance, acquisition, disposal and retention of land and property, cost of ownership, review and monitoring of property condition and the repairs and maintenance.

### 6.0 Lead Officer Responsibilities of the Asset Management Plan

- 6.1 The AMP states that the Estates and Facilities Managers acts as the Corporate Property Officer with defined roles and responsibilities. The Estates and Facilities Manager is able to grant leases and other property rights for less than 7 years and deal with disposals of property with a value of £25,000 or less.
- 6.2 The current AMP proposed that a Corporate Property Group was to be established to support the Corporate Property Officer and to coordinate the implementation of the Asset Management Action Plan. The members of the CPG covers all services areas including legal and finance. The AMP states that the CPG should meet on a quarterly basis but due to illness of a member of the group they have only met on two occasions in the past 12 months. The next meeting was scheduled for the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020 but it is understood this meeting did not take place due to COVID-19 and the Town Hall being closed. No official minutes detailing the items discussed or actions agreed are recorded.

	<u>Recommendation</u>
<b>R1</b>	The Corporate Property Group should meet every quarter. Minutes of these meetings should also be produced to ensure that all decisions and actions are noted <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>

### 7.0 Implementation and monitoring of the AMP

- 7.1 An action plan forms part of the AMP. Following the principles set out in the AMP it includes a list of objectives for the period 2019 to 2023 with target completion dates.



- 7.2. It was established that out of the 10 objectives 5 had been partially implemented and 5 had not been implemented.
- 7.3 The slippage in the implementation of the AMP objectives could potentially have an impact of the medium term financial plan and the capital strategy. Prolonged delays could have implications on the finances of the Council, for example; decision making on buying/selling properties, the production of a costed maintenance programme and having the available budget to undertake repairs.
- 7.4 The implementation of the AMP objectives have been affected due to a period of illness within the department, delays in the recruitment and staff resource within the Estates Department.
- 7.5 The Estates and Facilities Manager confirmed that the Service Plan has now been updated to take into account the revised implementation dates. A revised AMP will also be reported to Members in autumn including the revised dates.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R2</b>	Given the slippage on the asset management plan objective dates, it is essential that monitoring of progress on the objectives within the AMP is undertaken regularly by the Corporate Property Group. The Corporate Leadership Team and Members should be made aware of any significant delays and consider remedial action where appropriate <b><i>(Priority: Medium)</i></b>

## **8.0 Performance Indicators**

- 8.1 Performance targets are specified in the service plan for Estates and Facilities 2019/20. Performance is independently monitored by the Planning Policy department and reported to CLT. Results are published in reports to Committee and quarterly reviews of performance are undertaken.

## **9.0 Asset Management Database**

- 9.1 The asset register is CIPFA Property's Asset Manager.NET which is a fully integrated finance and asset management package for both capital accounting and asset management which was designed specifically for the public sector. This system holds the financial details and is used for the preparation of the accounts.
- 9.2 The Uniform Asset Database records land and building details and their location along with map reference.
- 9.3 From discussions with the Principal Accountant and the Senior Estates Surveyor it was identified that no reconciliation between the two systems has been undertaken. Currently there is no common reference to easily facilitate a reconciliation. A sample of 50 assets listed in the UNIFORM system were reviewed and the corresponding asset was attempted to be located on the Asset Manager system. A number of assets could not be located. This could be due to the description of the land of property not being the same.

	<b><u>Recommendations</u></b>
<b>R3</b>	In conjunction with Accountancy a reconciliation of the Financial Asset Management System to the UNIFORM system should be undertaken <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>
<b>R4</b>	To strengthen controls the unique property reference within the UNIFORM system should be detailed within the CIPFA Asset System to assist with the reconciliation process <b>(Priority: Low)</b>

9.4. It was verified that property revaluations are undertaken in accordance with CIPFA guidance by the Estates and Facilities Manager and Senior Surveyor who are chartered surveyors. Reports are produced for both PPE properties and investment properties.

## **10.0 Maintenance of Assets**

10.1 The Council undertakes property condition surveys on a 5 yearly cycle. The latest asset management action plan stated that stock condition surveys would be procured for all buildings with an asset value of £10,000 and above with a target completion date of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019. The Estates and Facilities Manager confirmed during the audit that a revised target date for stock condition surveys has been moved to September 2020. Discussions with the Principal Accountant highlighted that the budget for the stock condition surveys has now been moved to 2020/21. A full survey was undertaken of the Leisure Centres in 2018 as part of the Leisure Transfer to Freedom Leisure. The Public Conveniences review also delayed the completion of the stock condition surveys.

10.2 The last survey was completed in 2013 with only 13 of the council's premises being categorised as being of band D condition (bad, life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure) from a total of 72 properties. This 13 included one small sewage works and 12 surplus properties.

## **11.0 Capital Investments**

11.1 The Council's Capital Programme for 2019/20 to 2023/24 was approved by Council on 24 November 2019. The Capital Programme is aligned with the Corporate Plan and its priorities. The report highlighted that much of the capital programme is spent on enhancing and replacing existing assets and that existing funds will be depleted by 2023/24. The medium term financial plan has identified that annual contributions from the revenue to capital reserves are required.

11.2 A number of earmarked schemes are detailed as part of the Capital Programme which will assist in the achievement of the Asset Management Plans objectives.

## **12.0 Partnership and Community Working**

12.1 The Council has a statutory duty under s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 not to dispose of land for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained. Under the Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 general consent is given to local authorities to dispose of land where and where the local authority considers that the purpose for which the land is to be disposed is likely to contribute to the achievement of any one or more of the following

objects in respect of the whole or any part of its area, or of all or any persons resident or present in its area;

- i) The promotion or improvement of economic well-being;
- ii) The promotion or improvement of social well-being;
- iii) The promotion or improvement of environmental well-being;

12.2 Evidence of collaboration relating to asset management is reported to CLT and Committee. Examples were identified in reports to Council in January 2020 regarding the disposal of a freehold interest at land at Station Car Park, Matlock Bath.

### **13.0 Acknowledgement**

13.1 The Auditor would like to thank the Estates and Facilities Managers and the Senior Surveyor for their helpful assistance during the audit.

## Internal Audit Consortium Opinion Definitions

<b>Assurance Level</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a sound system of controls in place, designed to achieve the system objectives. Controls are being consistently applied and risks well managed.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The majority of controls are in place and operating effectively, although some control improvements are required. The system should achieve its objectives. Risks are generally well managed.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	Certain important controls are either not in place or not operating effectively. There is a risk that the system may not achieve its objectives. Some key risks were not well managed.
<b>Inadequate Assurance</b>	There are fundamental control weaknesses, leaving the system/service open to material errors or abuse and exposes the Council to significant risk. There is little assurance of achieving the desired objectives.


### Internal Audit Report – Implementation Schedule

<b>Report Title:</b>	Asset Management	<b>Report Date:</b>	8th June 2020
		<b>Response Due By Date:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> June 2020

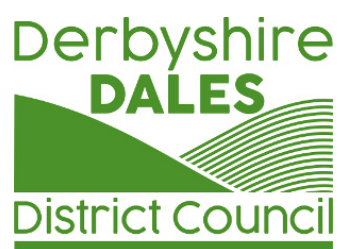
	Recommendations	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Agreed	To be Implemented By:		Disagreed	Further Discussion Required	Comments
				Officer	Date			
<b>R1</b>	The Corporate Property Group should meet every quarter. Minutes of these meetings should also be produced to ensure that all decisions and actions are noted	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>MG</b>	<b>01/10/20</b>			<b>Minutes to be recorded in Partnerships and Projects folder</b>
<b>R2</b>	Given the slippage on the asset management plan objective dates, it is essential that monitoring of progress on the objectives within the AMP is undertaken regularly by the Corporate Property Group. The Corporate Leadership Team and Members should be made aware of any significant delays and consider remedial action where appropriate	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>MG</b>	<b>01/11/20</b>			<b>Quarterly monitoring of AMP dates with any concerns flagged to CLT. Annual report to appropriate Policy Ctte. proposed</b>
<b>R3</b>	In conjunction with Accountancy a reconciliation of the Financial Asset Management System to the UNIFORM system should be undertaken	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>MG/ Paul Frith?</b>	<b>To be discussed and date set at next CPG meeting</b>		<b>To be discussed at next CPG meeting</b>	<b>This requires further discussion and input from Accountancy</b>
<b>R4</b>	To strengthen controls the unique property reference within the	<b>Low</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>MG/</b>	<b>To be discussed</b>		<b>To be discussed</b>	<b>This requires further</b>

Recommendations	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Agreed	To be Implemented By:		Disagreed	Further Discussion Required	Comments
			Officer	Date			
UNIFORM system should be detailed within the CIPFA Asset System to assist with the reconciliation process			Paul Frith?	and date set at next CPG meeting		and date set at next CPG meeting	discussion and input from Accountancy

Please tick the appropriate response (✓) and give comments for all recommendations not agreed.

Signed Head of Service:		Date:	30 July 2020
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**Note: In respect of any High priority recommendations please forward evidence of their implementation to internal audit as soon as possible.**



## Derbyshire Dales District Council

### Internal Audit Report

<b>Authority:</b>	<b>Derbyshire Dales District Council</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Data Protection</b>
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>
<b>Level of Assurance:</b>	<b>Limited Assurance</b>

<b>Report Distribution:</b>	<b>Chief Executive Director of Resources Legal Services Manager</b>
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# INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

## DATA PROTECTION

### 2.0 Introduction

2.1 In accordance with the 2020/21 Operational Internal Audit Plan a routine audit has recently been completed to review the Council's policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act, EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

### 2.0 Scope and Objectives

2.1 The scope and objectives of the audit were to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls in operation in respect of Data Protection.

2.2 Areas reviewed as part of the audit included: -

- Previously agreed recommendations have been actioned
- Clearly documented policies exist
- Responsibilities are clearly defined
- Staff awareness and training are adequate
- Data Protection issues are usually considered in respect of projects, new systems, application forms etc.
- There is a data retention/destruction policy
- Appropriate back-up processes are in place to protect data
- Breaches are reported and appropriate action taken

### 3.0 Conclusion

3.1 The overall conclusion of the audit, based on the controls examined, was that the reliability of the internal key controls operating was assessed as **Limited** assurance (Certain important controls are either not in place or not operating effectively. There is a risk that the system may not achieve its objectives. Some key risks were not well managed). See appendix A for definitions.

### 4.0 Previous audit Recommendations

4.1 During the previous audit 16 recommendations were made. A review of these established the following:

Previous Audit Recommendations	
Completed	11
In Progress	1
Not Completed	4

4.2 Incomplete recommendations have been reiterated as part of this audit.



## Findings and Recommendations

### 5.0 Polices

- 5.1 It was confirmed that DDDC have a clearly documented Data Protection Policy that respects the interests of Data Subjects. The Data Protection Policy was written in February 2018 to take into account the new Data Protection Act 2018 and the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations. The policy is reviewed every two years with the most recent one being concluded on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020.
- 5.2 The Data Protection Policy is available for members of the public to read on the external DDDC website. The policy is available on SIDD however it could not be located easily and was found to be saved within the Policy section. Discussions with the Information Governance Officer during the audit confirmed that the Data Protection Policy would be better placed within a specific folder on SIDD intranet page.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R1</b>	To ensure the Data Protection Policy is easily accessible to employees a dedicate Data Protection should be established on the SIDD intranet site and this policy be included ( <b>Priority: Low</b> )

### 6.0 Responsibilities

- 6.1 The Data Protection Policy includes details of who is responsible/accountable for data protection. It also defines who is responsible for the implementation of the policy.
- 6.2 As per Article 38 of the GDPR *“the data protection officer shall directly report to the highest management level”*. The current Data Protection Officer reports to the Corporate Leadership Team and Chief Executive.
- 6.3 Under Accountability and Governance section of the Guide to GDPR it states “As well as drafting data protection policies, you should also be able to show that you have implemented and adhered to them. This includes awareness raising, training, monitoring and audits”. Currently there is no audit plan in place for monitoring or information audits to be undertaken, this is due to the lack of resource.
- 6.4 The Council has an Information Governance Board (IGB) which monitors and implements data protection compliance. It was confirmed that the IGB meets on a quarterly basis.
- 6.5 The Data Protection Policy states that the Corporate Leadership Team are responsible for implementing the policy and legislation covering Data Protection. It also discharges responsibility to Managers to ensure that employees for whom they are responsible for are aware and adhere to the policy.
- 6.6 It was confirmed that all job descriptions and letters of employment contain specific requirements of employees for them to have an understanding of the Data Protection Act and handle all personal data in accordance with it.
- 6.7 It was noted that both the job description template and the contract of employment refer to the Data Protection Act 1998 not the current 2018 Act.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R2</b>	Contracts of employment and job descriptions should be updated to reflect the current Data Protection Act 2018, not Data Protection 1998 ( <b>Priority: Low</b> )

## 7.0 Training

7.1 The data protection policy states:

“The Council has a duty to ensure that all employees that come into contact with personal data have been adequately trained. This will involve training as part of the induction process and throughout the course of their employment. All employees will receive basic data protection and information security training which will be in proportion to the job role undertaken. Refresher training will be mandatory every 2 years for office based employees”

7.2 A mandatory Data Protection Essentials (GDPR) training course is available on LOLA. This training should be completed by all employees.

7.3 A report was run from the LOLA training system on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020. It identified that only 60 employees had completed the mandatory training (just 27% of employees).

7.4 The Data Protection Officer has added DP training to the Corporate Leadership Team timeline for training to be commenced in June 2020 and employees given 6 to 8 weeks to complete the training; however due to Coronavirus pandemic this has not been achieved.

7.5 Discussions with The Information Governance Officer confirmed that training for employees at the Depot will be undertaken in person with a preliminary set of questions to be asked to establish awareness. It is envisaged that refresher training will be undertaken every 2 years.

7.6 On 5<sup>th</sup> August 2020 all employees were instructed by email to complete two mandatory training courses (Data Protection (Foundation) and Data Protection (Security)). The instruction to the employees was that the training modules are required to be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

7.7 The data protection policy highlights that elected members will receive regular training on data protection and information security. It could also not be verified that data protection training had taken place for elected members following the local election on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

7.8 Following a data breach that was reportable to the Information Commissioners Office it was recommended by the ICO that redaction training should be given to employees. Quotations for training have been obtained (cost of approximately £5,000). One quote has been provided from Derby City Council of £3,000 has also been received; however this issues has not been progressed.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
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<b>R3</b>	Completion of the mandatory data protection training should be monitored to ensure that the training is completed by all employees and elected members. Consideration be given to removing computer access to those employees that have not completed the training by the target date. <b>(Priority: High)</b>
<b>R4</b>	As recommended by the ICO redaction training for employees should be provided <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>

## 8.0 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)

- 8.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is a process which enables an organisation to identify and address data protection and other privacy implications within the design, development and implementation of a new system, process or other project. DPIAs became a requirement under the new 2018 data protection legislation.
- 8.2 The Council has recently introduced a Customer Relationship Management System. The system went live on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and streamlines a number of services to enable members of the public to interact with the Council via the website.
- 8.3 It was confirmed that data protection has been considered during the implementation of this new system and that a Data Protection Impact Assessment has been completed by the Information Governance Officer and signed off by the Data Protection Officer.
- 8.4 Discussions with the IGO during the audit and with a review of guidance issued from the ICO it was identified that the completion of DPIA's should preferably be done by the project/service manager with just advice given by the IGO as part of the process prior to review and sign off by the IGO/DPO.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R5</b>	To ensure all the data processing functions within a new system are fully documented/captured and reviewed adequately the DPIA must be completed by the project/service manager. The IGO should only provide advice regarding compliance and not be actively involved in the completion of the DPIA. <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>
<b>R6</b>	Training should be provided to designated officers to raise awareness of the requirement to complete a DPIA and to ensure that that the process captures and addresses data protection and privacy implications <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>

## 9.0 Application Forms and Privacy Notices

- 9.1 Article 13 of the EU GDPR states that a Data Controller should provide specific information to data subjects when collecting personal data, at DDDC this is done through 'privacy notices' of which the application form will reference
- 9.2 A sample 5 applications forms were examined and all were found to contain relevant privacy notices and directed users to the DDDC website to inform them of how their data will be processed.
- 9.3 During the previous audit the following recommendation was made;
- All forms used to collect personal data be reviewed to ensure that they include a corporately approved fair processing notice and a consent clause including forms used by external service providers who collect data on behalf of the Council e.g. Arvato – benefit forms, council tax applications for discounts and exemptions etc.
- 9.4 Discussions with the IGO during the audit identified that there is no evidence to support that this recommendation was implemented. It was also identified that some hard copy forms do not appear to have been updated following the GDPR and DPA legislation coming in to force in May 2018 e.g. fixed penalty notices still include reference to the DPA 1998.
- 9.5 The IGO has informed the IBG (May 2020) regarding layered privacy notices on forms/applications. There is a requirement to review and amend forms with a simpler statement and this has been added to the IGB Action plan. Resource issues and the challenge of COVID-19 is likely to have a significant impact on the capacity to undertake this piece of work. There is also a responsibility for DDDC to take reasonable steps to ensure that an individual knows about the changes to privacy notices, especially if the changes affect how personal data is processed e.g. changed to a cloud based solution with a third party provider.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R7</b>	Paper and electronic forms used by the Council which include personal information should be reviewed as soon as practically possible and amended to include a simpler statement on how their personal data will be dealt with and where they can find further information. To comply with Article 13 of GDPR a full more in-depth statement should be written and made available to individuals at the time we obtain their data <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>

## 10.0 Asset Registers

- 10.1 To ensure there is adherence to Data Protection Principles it must be ensured that all categories of personal data that are being processed are identified and documented.
- 10.2 The Information Governance Officer confirmed that there is an asset register in place that records categories of personal data collected by each process/system however the asset register is not up to date and some systems/processors are missing. The ICO have also recently issued guidance on data mapping and provided a template to be used. ICO best practice is to undertake information audits or data mapping exercises to help identify what personal information is held

and how it is used. The issue of data mapping has been raised to the IGB however is it currently not classed as a priority due to resource issues.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R8</b>	The current asset register should be reviewed and updated to ensure that all personal data collected and processed by the authority can be recorded and mapped <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>

## 11.0 Document/Data Retention & Disposal

11.1 It was verified that there is a written policy covering document retention, however this does not appear to have been reviewed since 2015 and may not be out of date due to GDPR legislation and DPA 2018 coming in to effect. This document does also not cover retention periods for electronic data as this should be documented in the system asset register.

11.2 The document retention policy and asset registers detail how long the data should be held for.

11.3 Included within the document retention policy is a disposal form which should be completed when documents/files are destroyed.

11.4 Discussions with some officers identified that they were unaware of this form and the requirement to complete it.

11.5 Guidance from the ICO which links to the National Archives states: -

“It is important to keep an audit trail of what was deleted and when. Some digital systems will do this automatically for you. For others you will have to keep a record of what has been deleted separately. A schedule of the type described under Stage 2 Find out what information you have, will help to demonstrate that the intention was to dispose of information at a certain point, even if it doesn’t prove exactly when the information was disposed of.”

11.6 It is the responsibility of the Information Asset Owner to ensure that data is only kept for the specified period. The IGO has raised the requirement for specific Information Asset Owner training with the IGB.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R9</b>	Information Asset Owners and all employees must be reminded of the need to destroy paper records and delete electronic files in accordance with the data retention policy <b>(Priority: Low)</b>
<b>R10</b>	In accordance with the Document Retention Policy and to ensure that it can be evidenced that records containing personal information have been destroyed the requirement to complete the disposal certificate must be brought to the attention of all employees <b>(Priority: Medium)</b>

11.7 It was confirmed that card data in the form of individual card receipts are destroyed in accordance with the document retention policy and are stored securely.

11.8 The DPO confirmed that the Authority is currently not PCI-DSS compliant due to phone lines used for payments not meeting the required security standard and the

administrative arrangements for processing card payments over the telephone. The new CRM system which enables customer interaction and on-line payments uses Pay.net (360) and Capita to process the payments so no card data is held within this system

- 11.9 Achievement of the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard is not a legal requirement however fines can be made if there was to be a breach of card data.

	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
<b>R11</b>	The Council should continue its efforts to work towards achieving the PCI-DSS standard ( <b><i>Priority: Low</i></b> )

## **12.0 Data Breaches**

- 12.1 The IGO maintains a compliance spreadsheet which records incidents, breaches and near misses. Statistics from the compliance spreadsheet are reported to the IGB on a periodic basis.
- 12.2 From a review of the compliance spreadsheet it was identified that there have been no reportable breaches to the ICO since April 2019 and that the number of incidents/near misses are low.
- 12.3 It was evidenced that all incidents and near misses are comprehensively investigated and documented by the IGO with actions taken to mitigate the risk of the re-occurring

## **12.0 Acknowledgement**

- 12.1 The Auditor would like to thank the IGO for their helpful assistance during the audit.

Appendix A

## **Internal Audit Consortium Opinion Definitions**

<b>Assurance Level</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a sound system of controls in place, designed to achieve the system objectives. Controls are being consistently applied and risks well managed.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The majority of controls are in place and operating effectively, although some control improvements are required. The system should achieve its objectives. Risks are generally well managed.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	Certain important controls are either not in place or not operating effectively. There is a risk that the system may not achieve its objectives. Some key risks were not well managed.
<b>Inadequate Assurance</b>	There are fundamental control weaknesses, leaving the system/service open to material errors or abuse and exposes the Council to significant risk. There is little assurance of achieving the desired objectives.

## Internal Audit Report – Implementation Schedule

<b>Report Title:</b>	Data Protection	<b>Report Date:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
		<b>Response Due By Date:</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2020

Recommendations	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Agreed	To be Implemented By:		Dis-agreed	Further Discussion Required	Comments	
			Officer	Date				
<b>R1</b>	To ensure the Data Protection Policy is easily accessible to employees a dedicated Information Governance section should be established on the SIDD intranet site and this policy be included	<b>Low</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster	30/11/20			<p>New policy approved but needs to be updated for accessibility before can be posted on website and SIDD.</p> <p>New section for Data Protection will be created on SIDD when new SIDD is ready.</p>
<b>R2</b>	Contracts of employment and job descriptions should be updated to reflect the current Data Protection Act 2018, not Data Protection 1998	<b>Low</b>	Yes	HR & Payroll Manager	24/09/2020			D Unwin confirmed that all new contracts will include reference to the Data Protection Act 2018.
<b>R3</b>	Completion of the mandatory data protection training should be monitored to ensure that the training is completed by office-based employees. Training requirements for non-office based employees should be developed along with a process for recording who has received training. Consideration be given to removing computer access to those employees that have not	<b>High</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster	30/09/20  05/11/20			<p>LOLA training for office-based employees currently underway (deadline 30 Sept); completion being monitored by D Webster.</p> <p>Dates set for member training (12 Oct &amp; 5 Nov)</p>



Recommendations		Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Agreed	To be Implemented By:		Dis- agreed	Further Discussion Required	Comments
				Officer	Date			
	completed the training by the target date.				31/12/20			Dates for training for non-office based staff to be agreed.  The DPO will consider if denial of access or disciplinary measures are appropriate for failure to complete the training (after discussions with HR and the service director), if not completed by 31 December.
<b>R4</b>	As recommended by the ICO redaction training for employees should be provided	<b>Medium</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster	31/01/21			Dawn to undertake the training first then train others where required.
<b>R5</b>	To ensure all the data processing functions within a new system are fully documented/captured and reviewed adequately the DPIA must be completed by the project/service manager. The IGO should only provide advice regarding compliance and not be actively involved in the completion of the DPIA	<b>Medium</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster to develop processes hold a workshop and explain roles.  Senior Managers then take ownership	31/01/21			Senior managers are accountable and are able to nominate someone to complete the DPIA screening questions.  Work in progress.

Recommendations		Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Agreed	To be Implemented By:		Dis- agreed	Further Discussion Required	Comments
				Officer	Date			
<b>R6</b>	Training should be provided to designated officers to raise awareness of the requirement to complete a DPIA and to ensure that that the process captures and addresses data protection and privacy implications	<b>Medium</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster	31/01/21			DPIA will be included in R5 above
<b>R7</b>	Paper and electronic forms used by the Council which include personal information should be reviewed as soon as practically possible and amended to include a simpler statement on how their personal data will be dealt with and where they can find further information. To comply with Article 13 of GDPR a full more in-depth statement should be written and made available to individuals at the time we obtain their data.	<b>Medium</b>	Yes	Karen Henriksen with support from Dawn Webster	Briefing paper by 30/11/20 to include timescale for project for approval by CLT.			Major project that will require training & support from all departments.  First step is to produce briefing paper for CLT.
<b>R8</b>	The current asset register should be reviewed and updated to ensure that all personal data collected and processed by the authority can be recorded and mapped	<b>Medium</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster to develop processes hold a workshop and explain roles (see R5)	31 January 2021			If less than 250 employees, asset register only needs to include routine processing. Therefore, we need to establish which processing is routine.  First step is to produce briefing paper for CLT re

Recommendations	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Agreed	To be Implemented By:		Dis-agreed	Further Discussion Required	Comments
			Officer	Date			
				Senior Managers then take ownership			"living" register to be on X drive for managers to maintain.
<b>R9</b>	Information Asset Owners and all employees must be reminded of the need to destroy paper records and delete electronic files in accordance with the data retention policy	<b>Low</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster to remind Information asset Owners	31 October 2020		
<b>R10</b>	In accordance with the Document Retention Policy and to ensure that it can be evidenced that records containing personal information have been destroyed the requirement to complete the disposal certificate must be brought to the attention of all employees	<b>Medium</b>	Yes	Dawn Webster to remind Information asset Owners	31 October 2020		Will complete along with R9
<b>R11</b>	The Council should continue its efforts to work towards achieving the PCI-DSS standard	<b>Low</b>	Yes	Karen Henriksen	Ongoing		On hold pending new telephony solution

Please tick the appropriate response (✓) and give comments for all recommendations not agreed.

Signed Head of Service:	Karen Henriksen	Date:	25/09/2020
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**Note: In respect of any High priority recommendations please forward evidence of their implementation to internal audit as soon as possible.**

## REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS AT 17th SEPTEMBER 2020

Green	Recommendation satisfactorily implemented
Yellow	Target date not reached
Amber	Work In Progress but recommendation not yet fully implemented
Red	Recommendation remains outstanding

SERVICE	RECOMMENDATIONS	COMMENT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE	STATUS
<b>National Non Domestic Rates January 19</b>	Management should review the void inspection process and procedures to ensure that properties requiring inspection are being visited/reviewed on a periodic cycle. It should be verified that there is adequate documentation/system notes to support inspections made. <b>(Medium)</b>	As at March 2020 – It is intended to restart the cycle of inspections of NNDR properties that are empty and exempt from empty charges. The Inspection Officers replacement has only recently started and is being trained by Chesterfield inspectors. The Chesterfield inspectors have been carrying out inspections in Derbyshire Dales but until now they have had to prioritise visiting the cases that the previous inspector didn't, or where we had found problems; and also getting up to date with New Build visits for Council Tax and NNDR from Planning	30/06/2019 As at November 2020 recommendation still remains outstanding.	Red

		Reports and Building Control reports. Priority was to give these cases because of the tax base estimate in December and the NNDR1 estimate in January.		
	To strengthen controls a periodic check of adjustments and changes input from Valuation Office schedules should be undertaken to confirm the accuracy of amendments made to the Academy system <b>(Low)</b>	Although the recommendation was agreed in principal due to the additional work involved in re-checking the input of the Valuation Schedules data and the minimal times that this issues has occurred this recommendation has not been progressed. It was agreed with Head of Revenues that this recommendation would be re-assessed during the next full NNDR audit.	30/06/2019 To be reviewed at next during 20/21	Yellow
<b>Procurement March 19</b>	A Service Level Agreement with Derbyshire County Council must be formalised as soon as possible to ensure that access to specialist procurement advice is available and continuous <b>(High)</b>	The SLA has been finalised, however this is still awaiting Signature, currently with DCC. This has been chased several times with DCC but due to annual leave and sickness at DCC there have been constant delays.	31/07/2019 As at 04/11/20 still waiting to be signed by DCC	Amber
<b>Garage Inventory and Procurement April 19</b>	The inventory should be checked and verified on an annual basis by an independent person with any discrepancies being investigated <b>(Medium)</b>		31/03/2020	Red

<b>Debtors June 19</b>	An annual report should be prepared by the Miscellaneous Income Officer and reported to the Head of Resources showing customer balances greater than £500 that are over 12 months overdue. The report should detail recovery action taken to date and the originating department that raised the invoice <b>(Low)</b>	No report required as total aged debt was only £577.11. Agreed to be done on a six monthly basis should there be balanced on individual accounts of more than £500.00	30/04/2020	Green
<b>VAT July 19</b>	Consideration be given to producing a VAT manual which provides guidance for departments when raising invoices/credit notes to ensure VAT is treated consistently and correctly. When complete the manual should be placed on SIDD <b>(Medium)</b>	Implementation delay due to other work priorities, revised completion date of Dec 2021.	31/03/2020 Revised date Dec 2021	Red
<b>Budgetary Control August 19</b>	The budget timetable should be reinstated to ensure the preparation of budgets can be completed in and advance and progress monitored <b>(Medium)</b>	A copy of the last Budget timetable will form the basis for the 2021/22 budget cycle when that process begins	August 2020 Revised date (Sept – Dec 2021)	Red
	To strengthen the budget monitoring process the possibility of producing seasonal profiled budgets for service areas where there are seasonal trends/fluctuations should be considered (e.g. Car Parking Income) <b>(Low)</b>	To be done, due to Financial Services Manager position being vacant this had been delay. To be completed end of November 2020.	November 2020 Revised date Delayed until 2022/23 budget cycle (Sept – Dec 2021)	Red
	To assist budget holders with budget monitoring consideration be given to producing a summary report to highlight significant variances	Delayed due Financial Services Manager post being vacant. Implementation date amended	August 2020 Delay until 2021	Red

	against budget. For example a variance greater than £2,000 or 10% of budget <b>(Low)</b>	from January 2020 to August 2020		
<b>Main Accounting September 19</b>	The current user list of Agresso should be reviewed and any leavers removed from the system. System access should be removed upon receipt of leavers notifications from Payroll <b>(Low)</b>		30/11/2019 Delay until 2021	Red
	User access levels should be reviewed to ensure only Accountancy employees can initiate journals entries within the general ledger <b>(Medium)</b>	Financial Services Manager confirmed that access to input journals has now been restricted to Accountancy employees only.	30/11/2019	Green
	To strengthen controls the ability to create and delete general ledger codes should be restricted to Accountancy staff <b>(Medium)</b>	Completed	30/11/2019	Green
<b>Members Allowances September 2019</b>	When a review is next completed by the Independent Remuneration Panel and to ensure that the requirements of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 are met the details of the Independent Remunerations Panels report and recommendations should be published in a local newspaper (For example Dales Matters) <b>(Low)</b>	In the absence of a single newspaper circulating in the area, a link to the Scheme will be published in the March edition of Dals Matters.	March 2020	Green
	As part of the annual Council meeting when the attendance to outside bodies is reviewed clarity should be sought regarding the eligibility to reclaim travel and		May 2020	Green

	subsistence for attending meetings <b>(Medium)</b>			
<b>Leisure Centre Management November 2019</b>	Advice should be sought from the Legal Services Manager regarding the performance bond acquired by Freedom Leisure to determine if it is the Councils interests to request a new performance bond. It must be ensured that the bond remains effective until 31st July 2033 <b>(Medium)</b>	Awaiting advice from the Legal Services Manager regarding the performance bond. Sent to legal on 09/12/19 and chased again on 11/12/19	31/03/20	Red
	Management should determine if the annual surplus/deficit figures provided by Freedom are to be accepted as correct in light of the figures not being independently verified. If not then Freedom should be requested in accordance with Schedule 19 of the contract to produce a calculation of the operating surplus/deficit completed in the format specified by the contract and signed by their auditors. <b>(Medium)</b>	As this was for year 1 of the contract and regular meetings and communications have taken place we are accepting the accounts as correct. In the coming years of the contract we will be requesting for independently verified accounts	31/7/20	Red
<b>Health and Safety November 2019</b>	The Health and Safety policy should be placed on SiDD to ensure it is readily available and accessible for employees. <b>(Low)</b>	This is included in the ongoing review of SiDD – the Policy has been added to the document library	31/03/20	Green
	Additional more in depth training e.g. IOSH to Service Managers and Supervisors in high risk areas should be given to ensure there is sufficient knowledge and understanding in managing health and safety within	IOSH for 6 included in the corporate training budget.	August 2020	Amber



	the workplace and the consequences of not doing so. <b>(High)</b>			
	To improve performance measurement of Health and Safety it is recommended that a comparison of accidents and incidents for current and previous periods should be reported to Safety Committee. This should include an analysis of accident type for example, musculoskeletal, slips/trips, other, near misses and the number of RIDDOR reportable accidents in the period. It would also be beneficial to report the number of days lost due to each accident/incident. <b>(Low)</b>	Report submitted to most recent Safety Committee	30/06/20	Green
	Consideration be given to the production of an annual report to members detailing the Health and Safety performance of the Authority. <b>(Low)</b>	Considered, but not yet done – will form part of new Committee programme	30/06/20	Red
	To ensure compliance with reportable accidents the number of days away from work following an accident should be recorded to ensure they can be monitored and reported. <b>(High)</b>	New recording procedure implemented by HR and is working	31/03/20	Green
	New, amended or revised risk assessments should be reviewed by the safety committee to ensure all risks have been identified and adequate controls have been	See Safety Committee from 18 March and 29 June 2020	30/03/20	Green

	implemented to reduce the risk to employees/public. <b>(Low)</b>			
	Risk Assessments should be retained in the central X:Drive Partnerships and Projects folder to ensure they are available to all employees <b>(Low)</b>	This is included in the ongoing review of SiDD	30/03/20	Red
	To ensure there is a robust system of control regarding Health and Safety consideration be given to procuring an external periodic review of the arrangements to verify employees are being adequately protected in the workplace and that the Authority is compliant with all relative legislation and regulations. <b>(Medium)</b>	Initial meeting programmed for 20/12/19  Prices were obtained but this has been paused due to Covid.	30/03/20	Red
<b>Housing Benefits/Council Tax Support December 2019</b>	It must be ensured that evidence of bank account balances and ISA/savings are obtained when a claim is processed to ensure the amount of benefit paid is correct. Diary dates must be used to monitor the level of capital used as part of the claim calculation <b>(Medium)</b>	Nationally (post VF), It is standard practice not to verify capital where the level is below £6k. Diary dates now being used in appropriate cases to review claim entitlement, where any capital change would materially impact on entitlement.	30 April 2020	Green
	To strengthen controls a monthly reconciliation should be introduced to ensure payment totals as per the HB6820 report agree to the total of private tenant rent allowance payments as per the Agresso financial management system (account code 395 6003) <b>(Low)</b>	Reconciliations commenced for both council tax and rent allowances.	30 April 2020	Green

<b>Payroll February 2020</b>	It must be ensured that a completed leavers form is returned for each employee and signed by an authorised officer <b>(Medium)</b>		Immediate and ongoing	Green
	The monthly net pay comparison report should be reviewed at each pay cycle. A sample of variances should be reviewed with the report being annotated with the reason for the variance to ensure that no under or over payments have occurred. If errors are identified then additional checks should be undertaken. <b>(High)</b>	As suggested, Payroll Manager is now adding reasons to the report	Immediate and ongoing	Green
<b>Choice Based Lettings February 2020</b>	Any declarations of interest identified during the verification process should be recorded on the Council's Register of Interests form and referred to the Head of Housing and Monitoring Officer (Head of Corporate Services) for retention. Management should review the process to ensure that where a declaration is made as part of the application process that the correct procedures are being followed. <b>(Low)</b>	Staff trained. Added to validation checklist	01/04/2020	Green
	The validation checklist should be reintroduced for all applications with the completed form being retained within the journal of the application <b>(Low)</b>	Implemented 01/09/20	01/04/2020	Green

	Checks should be introduced to verify that the housing allocations policy has been followed by organisations of the Home-Options Partnership. Where the property has not been let to the first applicant with the highest priority it must be ensured that reasons are adequately recorded and document within the individuals account to ensure compliance with the policy <b>(Medium)</b>	Monitoring has now commenced	21/02/2020	Green
	The actions identified on the personal asset data register that were identified by the DP Consultant in June 2017 should be addressed as a priority in particular:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A data sharing agreement should be formulated and signed by all members of the Home-Options partnership</li> <li>• Locata's GDPR compliance statement should be obtained</li> </ul> <b>(High)</b>	Waiting on DDDC Legal to finalise  Copy provided to Internal Audit	TBC  25/09/2020	Amber
<b>Safeguarding March 2020</b>	Awareness of the new policy and the details of the Key Contact and substitute should be brought to the attention of employees. Consideration should be given to including Safeguarding as part of the Core Briefings <b>(Medium)</b>	Posters identifying key internal and external contacts and their details have been placed on notices boards throughout the building  There was also an update given at Core Briefing	Completed	Green

	To raise awareness and to ensure that the policy is adhered to arrangements should be made to provide safeguarding training as part of tool box talks to employees based at the depot. Employees should sign a record to evidence that they have received the training and this should be forwarded to HR to enable them to update employee training records. Evidence of training slides used should also be provided to HR and the Head of Community and Environment to ensure that the training was adequate <b>(Medium)</b>	The Clean & Green Supervisors have converted the training documents into Tool Box Talks, but due to COVID-19 situation the completion of the training has been delayed. This will be completed by the end of October 2020.	October 2020	Yellow
	Employees should periodically revisit the Safeguarding Mandatory training courses within LOLA to ensure that they remain confident and competent in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns <b>(Low)</b>	This training is mandatory, as part of the inductions process for new employees.  Senior managers are to determine which staff require more frequent training (every 2 years) and those with little to no interaction with children or vulnerable adults (every 5 years)	Mandatory training for new employees is now in place.  SMT to identify appropriate employees for renewal training by end of October 2020	Amber
	Further training sessions must be held for Members to ensure that mandatory training is provided to all Members as recommended and agreed at Governance and Resources Committee on 11 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 <b>(Medium)</b>	A second opportunity to attend the training has been included in the Members Training Programme for 18:00 on the 18 November 2020.	November 2020	Amber

<b>Asset Management June 2020</b>	The Corporate Property Group should meet every quarter. Minutes of these meetings should also be produced to ensure that all decisions and actions are noted <b>(Medium)</b>	Minutes to be recorded in Partnerships and Projects folder	01/10/20	Yellow
	Given the slippage on the asset management plan objective dates, it is essential that monitoring of progress on the objectives within the AMP is undertaken regularly by the Corporate Property Group. The Corporate Leadership Team and Members should be made aware of any significant delays and consider remedial action where appropriate <b>(Medium)</b>	Quarterly monitoring of AMP dates with any concerns flagged to CLT. Annual report to appropriate Policy Cttee. proposed	01/11/20	Yellow
	In conjunction with Accountancy a reconciliation of the Financial Asset Management System to the UNIFORM system should be undertaken <b>(Medium)</b>	To be discussed and date set at next CPG meeting. MG confirmed CPG to meet 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020 and will update with progress	No date set	Amber
	To strengthen controls the unique property reference within the UNIFORM system should be detailed within the CIPFA Asset System to assist with the reconciliation process <b>(Low)</b>	To be discussed and date set at next CPG meeting	To be discussed and date set at next CPG meeting	Amber

<b>Planning Fee Income April 2020</b>	A method of completing a reconciliation should be introduced to confirm planning applications submitted and paid by the planning portal can be verified as being received into the Council's bank account. <b>(High)</b>	Will start discussions with Finance	31 December 2020	Yellow
	A report from the Uniform system should be created to enable a simple reconciliation to be undertaken to provide assurance that all planning application fees processed through the Uniform system have a payment receipted within the Financial Management System. <b>(Low)</b>	Jon Bradbury to discuss with Suzanne Norton	31 December 2020	Yellow
<b>Data Protection September 2020</b>	To ensure the Data Protection Policy is easily accessible to employees a dedicated Information Governance section should be established on the SIDD intranet site and this policy be included <b>(Low)</b>	New policy approved but needs to be updated for accessibility before can be posted on website and SIDD.  New section for Data Protection will be created on SIDD when new SIDD is ready.	30 November 2020	Yellow
	Contracts of employment and job descriptions should be updated to reflect the current Data Protection Act 2018, not Data Protection 1998 <b>(Low)</b>	HR & Payroll Manager		Yellow

	<p>Completion of the mandatory data protection training should be monitored to ensure that the training is completed by all employees and elected members. Consideration be given to removing computer access to those employees that have not completed the training by the target date. <b>(High)</b></p>	<p>LOLA training for office-based employees currently underway (deadline 30 Sept); completion being monitored by HR.</p> <p>Dates set for member training (12 Oct &amp; 5 Nov)</p> <p>Dates for training for non-office based staff to be agreed.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to denial of access or disciplinary measures, if not completed by 31 December.</p>	<p>30/09/2020</p> <p>05/11/2020</p> <p>31/12/2020</p> <p>31/12/2020</p>	Amber
	<p>As recommended by the ICO redaction training for employees should be provided <b>(Medium)</b></p>	<p>Dawn to undertake the training first then train others where required</p>	<p>31/01/21</p>	Yellow
	<p>To ensure all the data processing functions within a new system are fully documented/captured and reviewed adequately the DPIA must be completed by the project/service manager. The IGO should only provide advice regarding compliance and not be actively involved in the completion of the DPIA <b>(Medium)</b></p>	<p>Dawn Webster to develop processes, hold a workshop and explain roles.</p> <p>Senior Managers then take ownership</p>	<p>31/01/21</p>	Yellow



	Training should be provided to designated officers to raise awareness of the requirement to complete a DPIA and to ensure that that the process captures and addresses data protection and privacy implications	Dawn Webster to develop processes, hold a workshop and explain roles	31/01/21	Yellow
	Paper and electronic forms used by the Council which include personal information should be reviewed as soon as practically possible and amended to include a simpler statement on how their personal data will be dealt with and where they can find further information. To comply with Article 13 of GDPR a full more in-depth statement should be written and made available to individuals at the time we obtain their data.	Major project that will require training & support from all departments.  First step is to produce briefing paper for CLT.	Briefing paper by 30/11/20 to include timescale for project for approval by CLT	Yellow
	The current asset register should be reviewed and updated to ensure that all personal data collected and processed by the authority can be recorded and mapped	Dawn Webster to develop processes, hold a workshop and explain roles (see R5) If less than 250 employees, asset register only needs to include routine processing. Therefore, we need to establish which processing is routine.  First step is to produce briefing paper for CLT re "living" register	31/01/2021	Yellow

		to be on X drive for managers to maintain.		

## Derbyshire Dales District Council 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan – Revised due to COVID-19

Completed
In Progress
Ongoing
To do
To be deferred

	Priority	2020/21 Days	Comment
<b>Main Financial Systems</b>			
CIPFA Code of Financial Management	M	10	Requirement to comply with delayed
Treasury Management	M	10	
Cash and Banking/Petty Cash/Post Opening	M	8	
Council Tax	M	15	Reduce to key controls only
National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)	H	10	Concentrate on reliefs
Housing and Council Tax Benefits	H	20	Key controls only and additional CTS payments
<b>Total Main Financial Systems</b>		<b>73</b>	
<b>Other Operational Audits</b>		<b>2020/21</b>	
Expenses and Allowances	L	8	
Refuse Collection Contract	H	8	New contract
Illuminations	L	2	Cancelled
Bakewell Agricultural Centre – rents/livestock	L	6	
Markets	L	6	
Car Parks	H	4	Large income
Planning Fees/Building Control	L	10	
Improvement Grants	L	8	
<b>Total Other Operational Audits</b>		<b>52</b>	
<b>Corporate/Cross Cutting</b>		<b>2020/21</b>	
Corporate Targets	M	3	CLT agreed defer – move budget to CRM system
CRM / Garden Waste	H	4 + 3	New system
Data Protection	M	8	

Ethics and Culture	M	10	Better to assess when a new normal emerges
Freedom of Information	L	6	
Climate Change	H	5	High on the political agenda
Follow up Implementation of Recommendations	H	4	Ongoing
<b>Total Corporate/Cross Cutting</b>		<b>40</b>	
<b>IT Systems</b>		<b>2020/21</b>	
Cyber security / Network Security	H	3	
<b>Total IT Systems</b>		<b>3</b>	
<b>Fraud and Corruption</b>		<b>2020/21</b>	
National Fraud Initiative	M	4	Ongoing
Recruitment and Selection	L	8	
<b>Total Fraud and Corruption</b>		<b>12</b>	
<b>Other</b>		<b>2020/21</b>	
Election Duties	L	1	Non taking place
Contingency	N/A	15	
Financial Advice	N/A	10	
<b>Total Other</b>		<b>26</b>	
<b>Management Time (IA Consortium Manager)</b>		<b>30</b>	
IT Audits by Consortium	H	5	Cyber / Network security
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>241</b>	

Governance & Resource Committee

19 November 2020

Report of Director of Regulatory Services

## **DDDC TENANTS – PROPOSED RENT FREE PERIODS**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the provision of further rent free periods to District Council commercial tenants unable to trade under current national regulations due to Covid 19 at an estimated cost of £7,694.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That approval is given to the grant of a 1 month rent free period to the operator of Hall Leys Park Cafe to reflect the current lockdown period;
2. That approval is given to the grant of a further 1 month rent free period to the operators of the Hall Leys Park boating lake and train and the boating rights on the River Derwent in line with other Council tenants;
3. That approval is given to the grant of a 2 month rent free period to the ABC kiosk tenants and café to reflect the current lockdown period and to cover the extra month closure during the previous lockdown period.

### **WARDS AFFECTED**

Matlock St Giles; Masson; Bakewell

### **STRATEGIC LINK**

Prosperity is highlighted in the Corporate Plan 2020-24 as a District Council priority due to low local wages and high local house prices. With regard to the recommendations in this report, the District Council specifically aims to: Support businesses to encourage productivity, growth, and higher wage jobs in rural and urban locations. The recommendations in this report would support local businesses during the Coronavirus pandemic.

## **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The District Council has a number of small commercial tenants who have been unable to trade or have been adversely affected by lockdown arrangements. These fall into 2

categories namely businesses associated with our Parks and Pleasure Grounds and businesses related to the Livestock Market at the Agricultural Business Centre.

- 1.2 Some of these businesses did not have their own rateable values and so were unable to access some of the available Government support grants as a result.
- 1.3 At the time this matter was last considered in July this year, it was resolved to offer these tenants a 4 month rent free period. This was gratefully accepted and has helped these tenants to maintain their businesses over the times in the last lockdown when they were unable to trade. One of the tenants at the ABC, the National Farmers Union has declined the offer of the rent free period as their policy is to support landlords through the lockdown period.

## **2 REPORT**

- 2.1 Since the last lockdown, the operators of the Hall Leys Park Café and the Matlock Bath Boating Rights have been able to trade over the summer and early autumn period. The operator of the boating lake and train in Hall Leys Park decided with regret that they would not be able to open this year due to not being able to make this operation Covid secure.
- 2.2 Whilst the Livestock Market at the ABC has been able to continue trading throughout the various lockdown periods, compliance with DEFRA regulations has meant that the retail kiosks which service the market were unable to trade for a 5 month period. Whilst the ABC café was able to open after 4 months, trade was very restricted.
- 2.3 The current lockdown period which commenced on 5<sup>th</sup> November has required the closure of the Hall Leys Park Café and it is therefore recommended that a further 1 month rent free period be granted at a cost of £792.
- 2.4 Whilst the operators of the Hall Leys Park boating lake and train and the boating rights on the River Derwent would not usually be trading during the period of the current lockdown, their annual costs have been spread over a much shorter trading period so it is considered that they should also be granted a further 1 month rent free period in line with our other tenants at a cost of £466.
- 2.5 The current lockdown period has required the closure of the ABC retail kiosks and Café and it is considered that they should be granted a 2 month rent free period to cover the remaining month of the last lockdown when they were unable to trade together with the period of the current lockdown. This 2 month rent free period would have a cost of £6436

## **3 RISK ASSESSMENT**

### Legal

- 3.1 The current operators have a legal lease with the Council to pay rents due, as the beneficiary of any payments under the lease the Council can waive a requirement under the lease. As long as it is made clear to the businesses that this is a 1 month rent free period then the legal risk is low.

### Financial

- 3.2 The offer of rent free periods to assist businesses with recovery will result in additional lost income for the Council of around £7,694
- 3.3 There is no provision in the 2020/21 revenue budget for the estimated lost income. Currently the Council has received 4 tranches of Covid-19 Emergency Local Government Funding totaling £937,877, which is fully utilised against income losses and additional expenditure incurred to date. It is possible that further funding will be made to the Authority in due course, but it is uncertain if this would be sufficient to offset all additional pressures during 2020/21. If the grant is insufficient to meet all additional pressures, the additional rent free period would be financed from the General Reserve. The financial risk to the Council is assessed as low.

#### **4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

#### **5 CONTACT INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Mike Galsworthy, Estates and Facilities Manager.
- 5.2 Email [mike.galsworthy@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:mike.galsworthy@derbyshiredales.gov.uk) Tel: 01629 761207

#### **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 None

#### **7 ATTACHMENTS**

- 7.1 None

Report of the Director of Regeneration and Policy

## **ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – MID-YEAR 2020/21**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report summarises performance against the District Council's 12 Key Performance Indicators for the first half of 2020/21 (excluding Corporate Plan Targets). The report highlights where the organisation is performing strongly and where improvements are to be made.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Quarter 1 and 2 performance against the Key Performance Indicators for 2020/21 is noted.

### **WARDS AFFECTED**

All

### **STRATEGIC LINK**

Service Plans, policies and strategies supplement the Corporate Plan. Within individual Service Plans there are a twelve Key Performance Indicators, which set out key targets for achievement. The District Council monitors progress against these Key Performance Indicators and identifies improvements.



## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Key Performance Indicators (or KPIs) measure how well we are maintaining basic service standards. They indicate the overall organisational health of the District Council. Within individual Service Plans there a small number of key targets for achievement within those service areas that are monitored corporately – these are the District Council’s KPIs.
- 1.2 For 2020/21, there are 12 Key Performance Indicators, covering services such as determining planning applications in good time, paying bills on time, collecting Council Tax efficiently, and paying benefits claims promptly. These are reported to Members at Council meetings twice a year. The purpose is to highlight progress, demonstrate good performance where it occurs, and address areas for improvement that emerge during the year.
- 1.3 The District Council’s Performance Management process is the means by which we understand how well our services are performing. It demonstrates whether or not we are on target, and highlights good performance. Where improvements are required, it helps achieve this by setting out and monitoring actions required. Performance management is good management.
- 1.4 By doing so, the District Council demonstrates that it knows:
  - what its priorities are
  - what it is aiming for
  - what it must do to achieve these aims
  - how it measures progress, and
  - when it is appropriate to take action to address underperformance.
- 1.5 The District Council’s [Performance Management Handbook](#) sets out how progress against Key Performance Indicators is measured and continually reviewed using a ‘traffic light’ system, where the following classification and interpretation is used:
  - **Annual improvement trend** i.e. is performance improving, stable or worsening compared to the previous year?
  - **Performance relative to the target** i.e. is it on track to achieve target or at risk of not achieving target?
    - Green** = If an indicator is on track to achieve the current year’s target.
    - Amber** = If achievement of the current year’s target is uncertain.
    - Red** = If an indicator is at risk of not achieving the current year’s target.

## 2. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 Table 1 below sets out a summary of the District Council’s organisational health to the mid-year point of 2019/20, as at the end of September 2021:

Service Area	No. Targets	Green	Amber	Red	Not available
Corporate (Council overall)	3	2			1
Housing	1	1			
Planning	4	4			
Revenues and Benefits	4	2	1	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 1 - KPI Data Q1/Q2 2020-2021

- 2.2 The figures indicates that 9 out of the 12 targets for which data is available (66.6%) are on track to be achieved during 2020/21. The data for household waste and recycling rates is not yet available and is due towards end of November 2020. The detailed position for each of the other key performance indicators at the end of Quarter 2 in 2020/21 is set out in **APPENDIX 1**. If household waste and recycling data becomes available in time for this meeting, Members of the Committee will be advised verbally on the evening.
- 2.3 Key Performance Indicators that are performing particularly strongly include:
- Invoices paid on time – currently running at 99.28%. Only 11 invoices have been paid late so far this financial year. In the year to date, the District Council has on average paid invoices 7.09 days from receipt, with 80% of all invoices paid within 10 days. As Members will be aware prompt payment helps small businesses.
  - Major planning applications determined on time – whilst there were no applications in Q1 this was 100% in Q2.
  - Minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks is 95.4%, currently 20% points better than the year target. It is also 10% higher than last year. Improvement in performance in respect of this indicator has in essence come about because of a reduction in the overall number of planning applications received since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and the more targeted use of extensions of time.
  - Speed of processing new claims remains just about the same as last year at 14 days against a target of 24 days. This performance is against a backdrop of an increase in the number and complexity of cases as a result of Covid-19.
- 2.4 The only indicator which is currently under-performing relates to the collection of Non-Domestic Rates which has been significantly impacted by the two Covid-19 lockdowns. It is anticipated that there is likely to be significant shortfall in the amount of Non-Domestic rates collected by the end of the financial year. The Government is, however, aware of this and is proposing to allow the District Council to spread the cost of shortfalls over the next three financial years.

### **3. RISK ASSESSMENT**

#### **3.1 Legal**

The Corporate Plan and relevant Service Plans are compliant with relevant legislation. The legal risk is assessed as being low.

#### **3.2 Financial**

There are no financial considerations arising from the performance management report. Where KPI improvement actions have resource implications, these have been accounted for in existing budgets.

#### **3.3 Corporate**

There is a risk that Key Performance Indicators may not be achieved, with possible service and reputational consequences for the District Council. To mitigate this, progress is monitored quarterly by Service Heads and by Corporate Leadership Team.

### **4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: the current Covid-19 pandemic, prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

### **5. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Elizabeth Wilson, Policy Officer (Performance Management, Consultation & Equalities)

Tel: 01629 761240 E-mail: [elizabeth.wilson@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.wilson@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 – Performance Table

Service Area / CMT Lead	Ref	Description	Lead	2020/21 Target	Q1	Q2	Supporting Notes
Organisational Health	BV8 (AE 15)	% of undisputed invoices paid on time	David Kay	99.00%	99.52%	99.28%	We had a very good start in Apr/May, as invoice nos dipped due to lockdown. We had a bad August but are on track to make the target. Only 11 out of 1807 invoices late during the first half of 2020/21. The average time to pay an invoice was 7.09 days with 80.3% of all invoices paid within 10 days.
	NI 192	% of household waste which has been sent for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion	Samantha Grisman/ Claire Orford	58.5%	56.30%	Figures not available until mid to end Nov 20	% has decreased from Q1 last year. Residual waste tonnage increased due to Covid-19 and people being at home more due to lockdown. Recycling also increased for the same reason but garden and food waste decreased as food waste collections took place fortnightly instead of weekly through this quarter and garden waste collections were suspended throughout April and May. Therefore overall the recycling and composting tonnage decreased.
	HRKP1/ Quarterly LGInform Metric 4	Average no. working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee-quarterly*	Deborah Unwin/ Chrissie Symons	9	1.43	2.09	Cumulative sickness absence for Q1 & Q2 is 3.52 days. If Q1 & Q2 sickness levels continue throughout the rest of the financial year, we will be achieve the year-end target.  It is very important to note that all Covid-19 related absence data has been recorded separately from the main sickness absence data. As a result Covid-19 related sickness absence is not included in any of the reported District Council's sickness absences statistics in the period from April to September 2020.
Housing	Revised BV 213	The percentage of homeless households seeking assistance from the Council for whom this intervention helped resolve their situation	External organisations via Rob Cogings	75%	80%	80%	Despite seeing a national freeze on social and private rental evictions over Covid19 numbers of homelessness presentations have remained constant. Government initiatives "Everyone in" and "Keep Everyone In" have also kept the service busy.
Planning	NI 157i	% of Major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	Tim Braund/ Jonathan Bradbury	>75%	0/0 = no return	4/4=100% Combined Q1 and Q2 = 4/4 = 100%	NI 157(i) is performing very well throughout. NI 157(iii) was affected by a period of staff absence in Q2 but should be fine going forward.
	NI 157ii	% of Minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	Tim Braund/ Jonathan Bradbury	>77%	48/48=100%	36/40=90% Combined Q1 and Q2 =84/88 = 95.4%	NI 157 (ii) is performing very well throughout. NI
	NI 157 iii	% of Other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	Tim Braund/ Jonathan Bradbury	>90%	56/57=98.2%	49/56=87.5% Combined Q1 and Q2 =105/113= 92.9%	NI 157(iii) was affected by a period of staff absence in Q2 but should be fine going forward.

Service Area / CMT Lead	Ref	Description	Lead	2020/21 Target	Q1	Q2	Supporting Notes
	BV 204	% of appeals allowed against LA's decision to refuse planning application	Tim Braund/ Jonathan Bradbury	<30%	0/4=0%	3/7=42.8% Combined Q1 and Q2 =3/11=27.2%	BV204 is very variable as it depends on an outside body, the planning inspectorate, agreeing with our judgement, so the dip in Q2 is not really a matter of any great concern.
<b>Revenues &amp; Benefits</b>	BV 9 (ARB 1)	% of Council Tax collected within the year	Karen Henriksen	98.40%	31.80%	60.6% (Cumulative Figure)	The current forecast for Council Tax collections will be slightly under target by the end of the financial year. This is a result of Covid-19 where we have allowed residents to defer payments to later in the financial year.
	BV 10 (ARB 2)	% of Non Domestic rates collected within the year	Karen Henriksen	97.30%	18.50%	57.50%	The impact of two lockdowns because of Covid-19 is likely to have a significant impact upon the collection of NNDR. It is anticipated that there is likely to be significant shortfall by the end of the financial year. The Government is aware of this and is proposing to allow us to spread the cost of shortfalls over the next three financial years.
	BV 78a (ARB 3)	Speed of processing new claims (days)	Karen Henriksen/ Paul Radcliffe	24 days	14.72	13.76	COVID-19 has resulted in employed people claiming CTS where they have been laid off or furloughed. The volumes of work has increased and complexity of verifying individuals circumstances has been considerable. Also, we have the COVID-19 CTS Hardship Fund and more recently Test & Trace Support Payments Scheme to administer as special projects – this has impacted throughput of 'normal work'.
	BV 78b (ARB 4)	Speed of processing: notifications of changes in circumstances (days)	Karen Henriksen/ Paul Radcliffe	8 days	8.15	6.13	See previous comments – in addition: HB Cases have migrated to Universal Credit increasing the volumes of Changes of Circumstances – again increased volumes of work adversely impacted and the complexity of verifying changes in absence of face to face contact has complicated delivering services.

GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
19 NOVEMBER 2020

Report of Director of Regeneration and Policy

## RESIDENTS ONLINE PANEL SURVEY RESULTS

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the results of the Derbyshire Dales residents' surveys undertaken in October 2019 and October 2020 using the Council's Online Panel. It sets out implications for the District Council's service and financial planning.

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction highlighted by the Online Panel Survey are noted.
2. That the Online Panel Satisfaction Survey to be carried in September 2021 include additional qualitative questions to enable respondents to set out the reasoning for their answers.

### WARDS AFFECTED

All

### STRATEGIC LINK

Finding out how satisfied residents are with the District Council, its services and the quality of life in the Derbyshire Dales underpins the aims of the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024. By listening to residents the District Council helps fulfil the values set out in its Corporate Plan. The survey provides important feedback on the performance of services and suggests areas for improvement, which supports service planning

### 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Derbyshire Dales Online Panel was introduced in Autumn 2016 and replaced the former Citizens Panel. It now comprises 885 residents who have opted to receive periodic surveys from the District Council by email.
- 1.2 The Online Panel is a self-selecting sample so is not fully representative of the District's population as a whole. It provides only a snapshot in time of the views of a limited number of residents, and the Online Panel alone does not constitute comprehensive consultation. For larger service or policy changes, the Online Panel is only one of a number of consultation methods used by the District Council to seek views.

Nevertheless, as a rapid and insightful means of gathering and tracking opinions, the Online Panel is a valuable tool.

- 1.3 This report uses the findings from the Local Government Association’s (LGA) national survey, *Resident satisfaction with Councils*, for benchmarking the District Council’s performance. The LGA’s survey uses six key indicators to measure how satisfied residents are with their local area and council.

## 2 ONLINE PANEL SATISFACTION SURVEY 2019 AND 2020 - RESULTS

- 2.1 Table 1 below sets out the year on year data for each of the past five Online Panel surveys. This indicates that the Online Panel survey consistently achieves a high response rate. Efforts to recruit additional residents to join the Online Panel over the past 12 months have met with some success in terms of the number of respondents. A total of with 354 responses were received in 2016, with this now growing to 421 in 2020. Notwithstanding this increase in the overall response rate, the Online Panel is not fully representative of the population of the District Council.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Online Panel	714	724	705	776	885
No. of respondents	354	321	336	392	421
Response rate	50%	44%	49%	51%	48%

Table 1- Online Panel Survey Response Rates 2016-2020

- 2.2 The 2019 and 2020 surveys comprised questions previously prescribed by the Government in the former Place Survey plus some additional questions about the District Council’s customer services. The surveys included both ‘satisfaction’ and ‘quality of life’ questions, with a particular focus on residents’ perceptions of their local area and their satisfaction with services provided by the District Council.
- 2.3 In addition, the 2020 survey included questions about communications by the District Council during the Covid-19 pandemic. The LGA survey was carried out during national lockdown in June 2020 whereas the District Council Online Panel survey was carried out post-lockdown in autumn 2020. As a consequence any differences in the results may reflect that.
- 2.4 The Online Panel Survey does not include residents’ perceptions of services provided by other organisations, so these results are in the main only relevant to Derbyshire Dales District Council.

### 2.5 Derbyshire Dales as a Place to Live

- 2.6 Residents were asked how satisfied they were with the local area within a 15 - 20 minutes walking distance from their homes. In the Derbyshire Dales, residents’ overall satisfaction with their local area in 2019 remained very high at 91%, particularly when compared to a national overall satisfaction rate in 2019 of 80%. In 2020, this fell to 88% while the national rate increased to 87%.

PI	Question / Indicator	LGA					DDDC				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
NI 5	% who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live	86%	82%	78%	80%	87%	93%	93%	94%	91%	88%

## 2.7 Satisfaction with the District Council Overall

2.8 Residents were asked whether they were satisfied with the services that the District Council provides. This is the key satisfaction measure for any local authority. A satisfaction rating of 72% from Derbyshire Dales residents in 2019 was higher than the national rate of 63%, and an increase of 4% since 2018. This rating fell, however by 10% to 62% in 2020.

PI	Question / Indicator	LGA					DDDC				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
POL 9	% who are satisfied with the services Derbyshire Dales District Council provides	68%	65%	61%	63%	75%	76%	74%	68%	72%	62%

## 2.9 Value for Money

2.10 In 2020, Council Tax costs the average household in Derbyshire Dales approximately 59p per day. When provided with this figure, 62% of respondents agreed that the District Council provides value for money. Whilst this declined from 2019 where the rate was 72%, and the average cost was 57p per day, it is still higher than the national rate of 57%.



PI	Question / Indicator	LGA					DDDC				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
POL 8	% who agree that the District Council provides value for money	68%	65%	61%	63%	57%	76%	74%	68%	72%	62%

## 2.11 Keeping Residents Informed

2.12 Residents were asked if they felt well informed about the services and benefits the District Council provides. 63% of respondents in 2020 felt well informed about the services and benefits the District Council provides.

PI	Question / Indicator	LGA					DDDC				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	% who feel well informed about services and benefits the District Council provides	66%	63%	58%	59%	69%	72%	83%	82%	66%	63%

## 2.13 Identity

2.14 Respondents were asked which of a range of areas they identified with most closely. The majority of respondents identified most closely with their immediate locality and district, with over a third of respondents (37%) in 2018 identifying most closely with their town or village, increasing to 43% in 2020. Just over a quarter (26%) identified most with the Derbyshire Dales and 17% identified most closely with the Peak District.

Which of these do you feel you identify with most closely?	2018	2020
Derbyshire Dales	26%	26%
Your town / village	37%	43%
Peak District	20%	17%
Derbyshire	11%	9%
East Midlands	2%	1%
England or UK	2%	2%
Other	2%	2%

## 2.15 Community Safety

2.16 Residents were asked if they felt safe when outside in their local area during the day and after dark. Derbyshire Dales is very strongly perceived as a safe place, with 84% of respondents feeling safe when outside in their local area after dark and 94% feeling safe when outside during the day.

PI	Question / Indicator	LGA					DDDC				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	% who feel feeling safe when outside in their local area during the day	94%	95%	93%	94%	96%	97%	99%	97%	96%	94%
	% who feel feeling safe when outside in their local area after dark	79%	76%	76%	76%	82%	81%	90%	84%	85%	84%

## 2.17 Satisfaction with District Council Services

2.18 Residents were asked how satisfied they were with the District Council's sports and leisure facilities, parks/open spaces, highway verge litter and waste and recycling collections:

PI	Question / Indicator	LGA					DDDC				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Sport and leisure facilities	63%	62%	59%	56%	64%	57%	63%	51%	52%	40%
	Parks and open spaces	-	-	-	-	85%	80%	83%	78%	77%	69%
	Keeping areas including highways free from litter	71%	69%	65%	70%	71%	65%	62%	57%	56%	51%
	Waste & recycling collections	79%	78%	76%	74%	81%	82%	82%	80%	85%	76%

2.20 Satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities has declined to 40%. However, 32% of respondents to this question were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with facilities and a further 15% responded 'don't know' – both perhaps reflecting the fact that the District Council's sport and leisure facilities are not used by every resident. Whilst satisfaction with the District Council sports and leisure has fallen, dissatisfaction with sport and leisure facilities remains low, at around 13%. The low level of satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities does however contrast with data collected by Freedom Leisure using the Net Promoter Score that suggests that all four of the Derbyshire Dales Leisure Centres ranks within the top half nationally of all their sites.

2.21 Just over half of respondents were satisfied with the District Council's performance at keeping areas including highways free from litter (51%). This has also fallen over the past two years and is significantly lower than national score.

2.22 Whilst the evidence indicates that generally residents are happy with Derbyshire Dales as a place to live, this score would suggest that there are likely to be concentrated areas across the Derbyshire Dales where highway and other forms of litter are considered to have a detrimental impact upon the quality of the local environment. This correlates with data collected for the Corporate Plan in 2019 that suggested that there were indeed some "grot spots" where the quality of the environment was adversely affected by litter. Members should also note that the District Council shares responsibility with the County Council for picking highway litter and as such not all the hotspots may not be those which lie within our responsibility. Finally the current

pandemic has resulted in the litter teams being kept extremely busy by the amount of litter and bins filling faster than normal especially during the summer months.

2.23 As Members will be aware the District Council has sought throughout Spring and Summer 2020 to address concerns about problematic litter with the use of the “Respect and Protect our Community” Campaign and the “Don’t be a Tosser” – Bin it Campaign. Future initiatives such as the introduction of wild flower verges may have a positive impact on satisfaction levels going forward.

2.24 Satisfaction levels remain high with for both parks and open spaces (69%) and for waste and recycling collections (76%). The award of the Green Flag for Halls Leys Park is recognition of the high standard that this park is maintained to, and which contributes to ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction. In respect of waste and recycling this high level of satisfaction marries with the high level of customer satisfaction that have consistently been measured by Serco in their twice yearly customer satisfaction surveys.

2.25 The delivery of the services included in the survey have in some way been affected during the Covid-19 pandemic, either directly (such as the closure of leisure centres and children’s play areas in parks) or indirectly (increased volume of littering in parks and open spaces). It is also considered that the introduction of a subscription scheme for garden waste collection is likely to have had an impact upon satisfaction with the District Council’s Services and Value for Money.

## 2.26 Customer Services

2.27 The Online Panel survey includes a question on residents’ satisfaction with key customer services. The District Council’s customer service standards were included as part of this question:

We aim to -

- Treat you fairly and equally
- Provide a pleasant and courteous service at all times
- Be helpful and responsive
- Provide you with good quality information about our services.

2.28 In 2020, satisfaction levels were high for ease of contact with the Council (69%) and the quality of the Council’s website (62%). 64% of respondents were satisfied with ease of payment methods and 58% were satisfied with the Council’s responsiveness to their enquiries. For all three areas the level of satisfaction has generally stayed around the same level over the past three years.

Question / Indicator	2018	2019	2020
Ease of contact with the Council	76%	66%	69%
Quality of the Council website	73%	65%	62%
Ease of payment methods	66%	63%	64%
Our responsiveness to your enquiries	59%	50%	58%

## 2.29 Provision of Information by the District Council during the Covid-19 Pandemic

2.30 Respondents found information about the District Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic via key channels such as the Corporate Website (48%), Facebook Page (12%), e-newsletters (30%) and Dales Matters (27%). About 10% of all respondents were provided with relevant information from their District Councillor.

Did you find information about the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic from any of the following?	2020
Contact with the District Council by phone	3%
Contact with the District Council by email	12%
District Council website	48%
District Council Facebook page	12%
District Council Twitter	4%
District Council e-newsletter	30%
Dales Matters	27%
District Council YouTube channel – Council & committee meetings	5%
Your local District Councillor(s)	10%

## 2.31 Conclusions

2.32 Overall the results of the Online Panel Satisfaction surveys suggest that there aspects of the Derbyshire Dales that continue to consistently have a high degree of satisfaction such as place to live and community safety. The results of these surveys do however suggest that there may be some room for improvement such as satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities.

2.33 The results of the Online Panel Satisfaction survey, do however, only show the extent to which residents are satisfied/dissatisfied with the various aspects of the Derbyshire Dales. As such, without any additional qualitative data it is difficult to ascertain any deeper understanding of the reasoning behind the ratings that are presented. The commentary in the report above has sought to identify some of the possible reasons why the ratings have come out as they have, especially when compared to previous year's results.

2.34 Given the extent of the results of these survey it is recommended that in order to have a more in depth understanding of the reasoning's behind the results that additional qualitative questions are included within the next Online Panel Satisfaction survey to be undertaken in September 2021.

## 3 RISK ASSESSMENT

### 3.1 Legal

The Online Panel survey was carried out in accordance with good consultation practice. The legal risk is assessed as being low.

### 3.2 Financial

There are no financial risks arising directly as a result of this report.

## **4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

## **5 CONTACT INFORMATION**

Mike Hase, Policy Manager

Email: [mike.hase@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:mike.hase@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

Tel No. 01629 761251

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 LGA Resident Satisfaction Survey, June 2019

<https://www.local.gov.uk/polling-resident-satisfaction-councils-june-2019>

- 6.2 LGA Resident Satisfaction Survey, June 2020

<https://www.local.gov.uk/polling-resident-satisfaction-councils-june-2020>

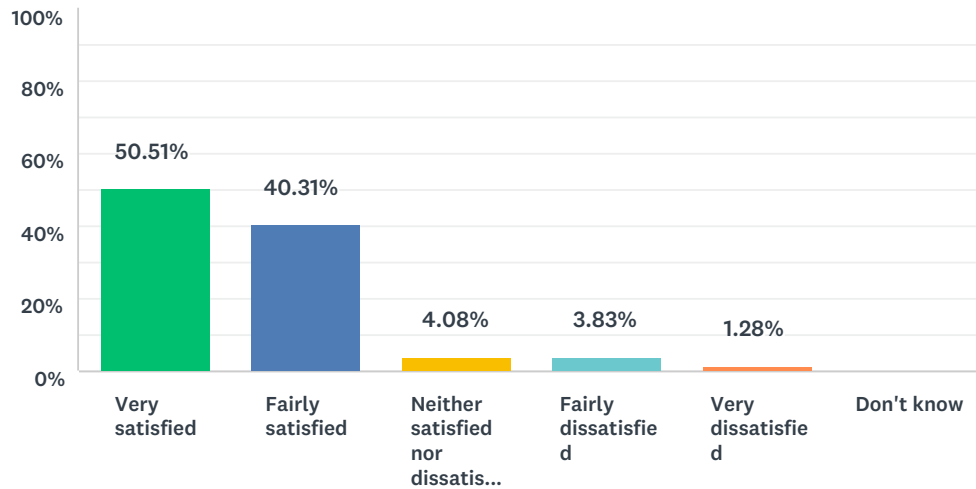
## **7 ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 – Results of 2019 Online Satisfaction Survey

Appendix 2 – Results of 2020 Online Satisfaction Survey

**Q1 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home**

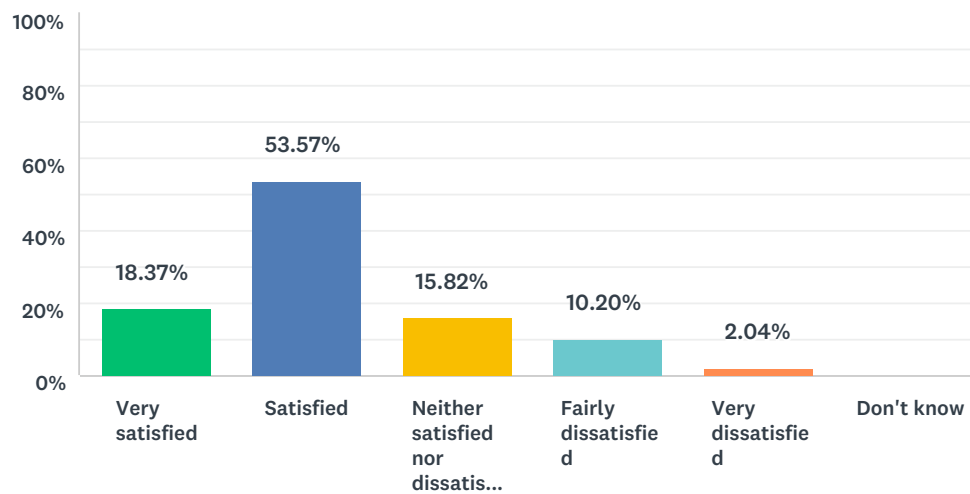
Answered: 392 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	50.51%	198
Fairly satisfied	40.31%	158
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4.08%	16
Fairly dissatisfied	3.83%	15
Very dissatisfied	1.28%	5
Don't know	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>392</b>

Q2 Your local area receives services from two councils, Derbyshire Dales District Council and Derbyshire County Council. This survey asks about Derbyshire Dales District Council which is responsible for services such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning (excluding Peak District National Park area), housing, leisure facilities, environmental health, parks and gardens. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services Derbyshire Dales District Council provides?

Answered: 392 Skipped: 0



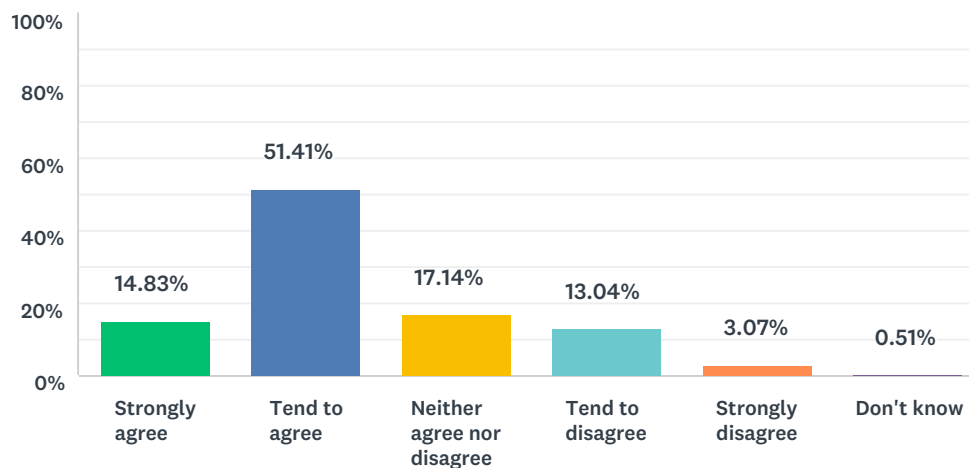
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	18.37%	72
Satisfied	53.57%	210
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15.82%	62
Fairly dissatisfied	10.20%	40
Very dissatisfied	2.04%	8
Don't know	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>392</b>



Q3 In considering the next question, please think about the range of services Derbyshire Dales District Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services the council provides to the community.

We would like your general opinion. Council tax costs the average household in the Dales approximately 57p per day. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local council provides value for money?

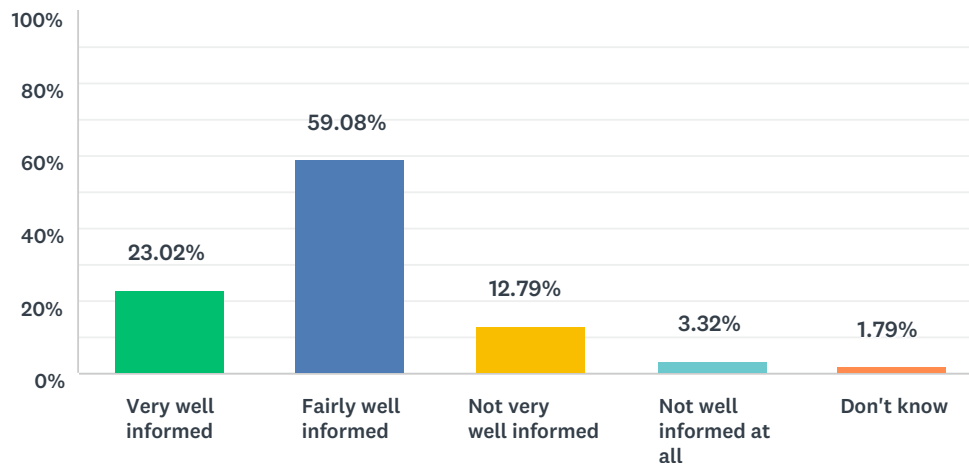
Answered: 391 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	14.83%	58
Tend to agree	51.41%	201
Neither agree nor disagree	17.14%	67
Tend to disagree	13.04%	51
Strongly disagree	3.07%	12
Don't know	0.51%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>391</b>

**Q4 We keep you informed using a range of methods, such as our website, Dales Matters, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, Area Forums, live streaming Council meetings, e-newsletters. Overall, how well informed do you think Derbyshire Dales District Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**

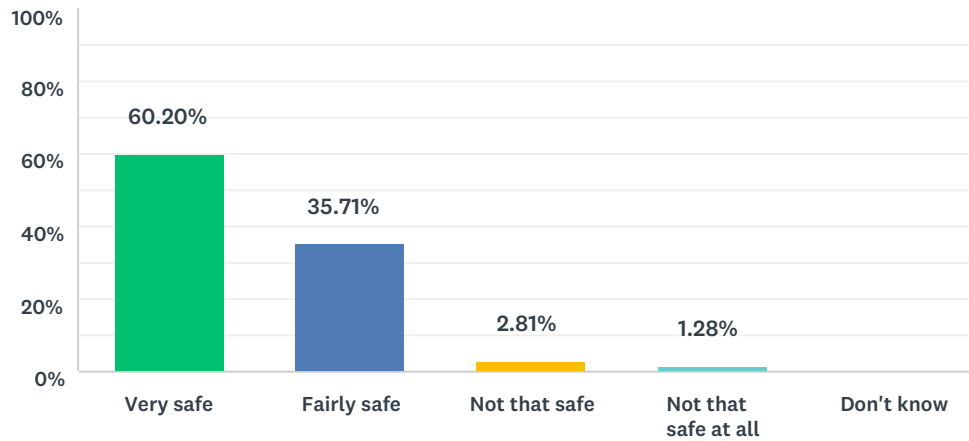
Answered: 391 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very well informed	23.02%	90
Fairly well informed	59.08%	231
Not very well informed	12.79%	50
Not well informed at all	3.32%	13
Don't know	1.79%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>391</b>

**Q5 Derbyshire Dales Community Safety team works to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the District. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day? Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home**

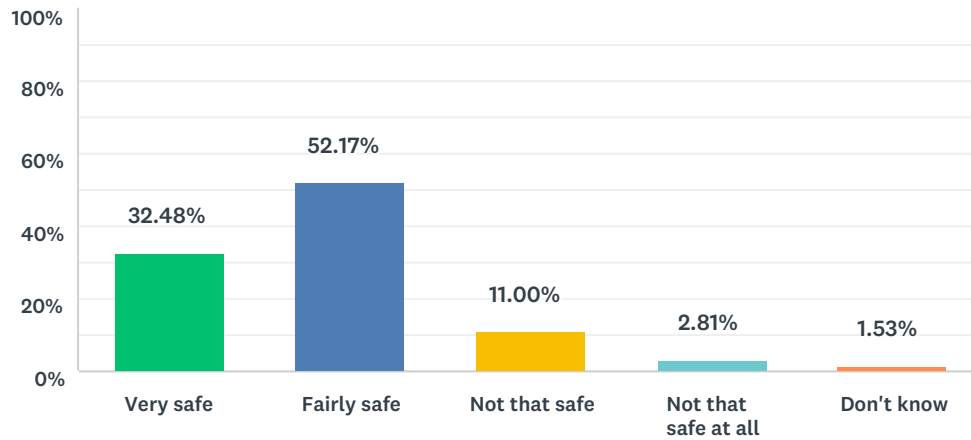
Answered: 392 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very safe	60.20%	236
Fairly safe	35.71%	140
Not that safe	2.81%	11
Not that safe at all	1.28%	5
Don't know	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>392</b>

**Q6 How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark? Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home**

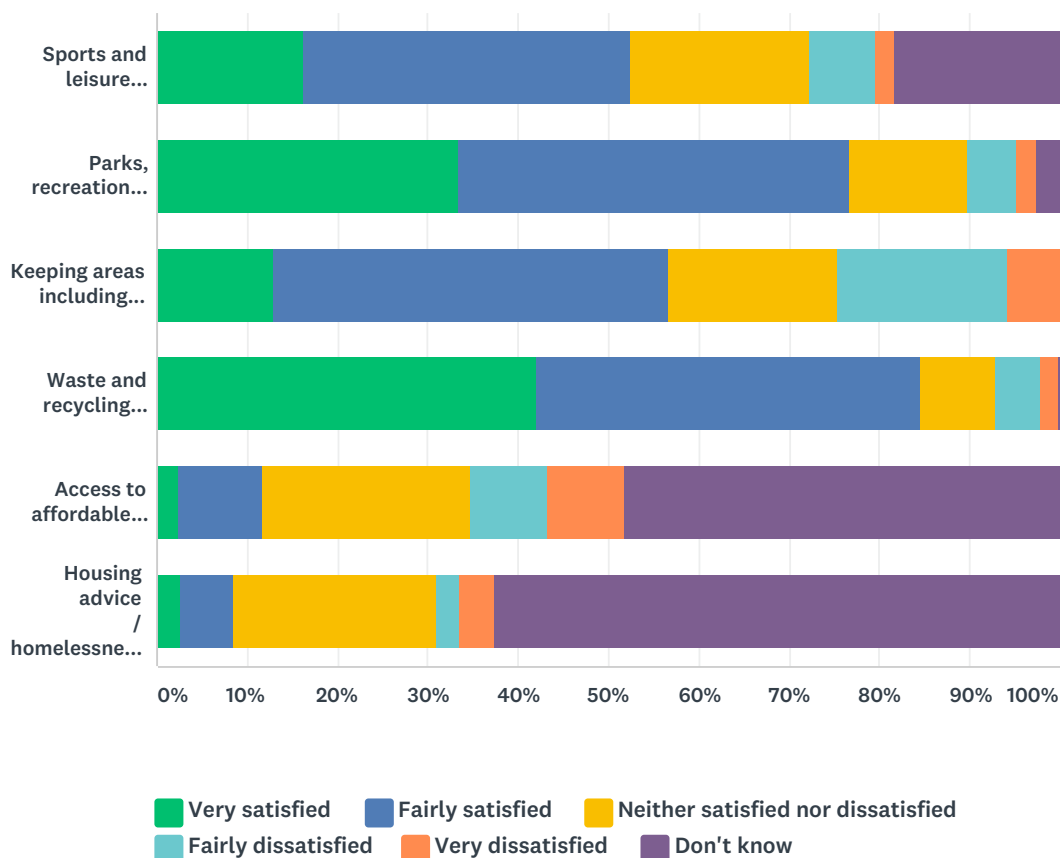
Answered: 391 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very safe	32.48%	127
Fairly safe	52.17%	204
Not that safe	11.00%	43
Not that safe at all	2.81%	11
Don't know	1.53%	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>391</b>

## Q7 How satisfied are you with the following services provided by Derbyshire Dales District Council?

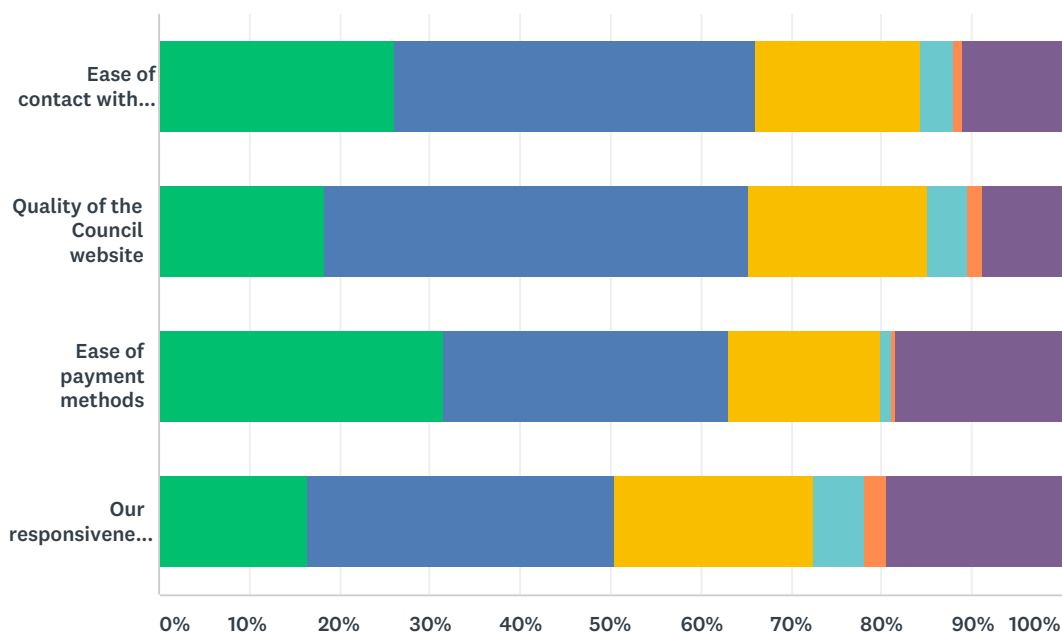
Answered: 392 Skipped: 0



	VERY SATISFIED	FAIRLY SATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	FAIRLY DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Sports and leisure facilities	16.22% 61	36.17% 136	19.95% 75	7.18% 27	2.13% 8	18.35% 69	376
Parks, recreation grounds and open spaces	33.25% 130	43.48% 170	13.04% 51	5.37% 21	2.30% 9	2.56% 10	391
Keeping areas including highways free from litter	12.85% 50	43.70% 170	18.77% 73	18.77% 73	5.91% 23	0.00% 0	389
Waste and recycling collections	42.05% 164	42.56% 166	8.21% 32	4.87% 19	2.05% 8	0.26% 1	390
Access to affordable housing	2.33% 9	9.33% 36	23.06% 89	8.55% 33	8.55% 33	48.19% 186	386
Housing advice / homelessness services	2.56% 10	5.88% 23	22.51% 88	2.56% 10	3.84% 15	62.66% 245	391

**Q8 Derbyshire Dales District Council offers a range of ways to contact us, find out information or pay bills. We aim to: Treat you fairly and equally Provide a pleasant and courteous service at all times Be helpful and responsive Provide you with good quality information about our services. How satisfied are you with ... ?**

Answered: 392 Skipped: 0

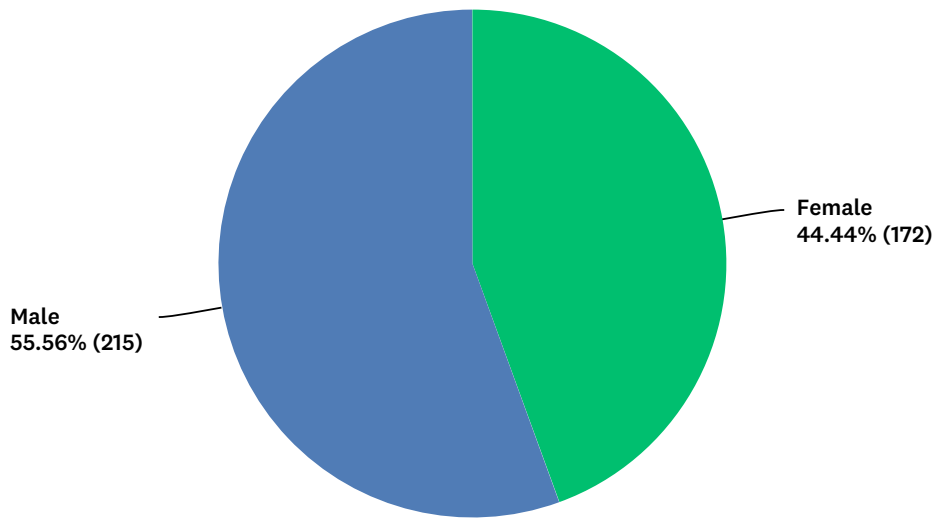


Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Don't know

	VERY SATISFIED	FAIRLY SATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	FAIRLY DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Ease of contact with the Council	26.15% 102	40.00% 156	18.21% 71	3.59% 14	1.03% 4	11.03% 43	390
Quality of the Council website	18.37% 72	46.94% 184	19.90% 78	4.34% 17	1.53% 6	8.93% 35	392
Ease of payment methods	31.54% 123	31.54% 123	16.92% 66	1.03% 4	0.51% 2	18.46% 72	390
Our responsiveness to your enquiries	16.45% 64	33.93% 132	22.11% 86	5.66% 22	2.31% 9	19.54% 76	389

### Q9 Are you ... ?

Answered: 387 Skipped: 5



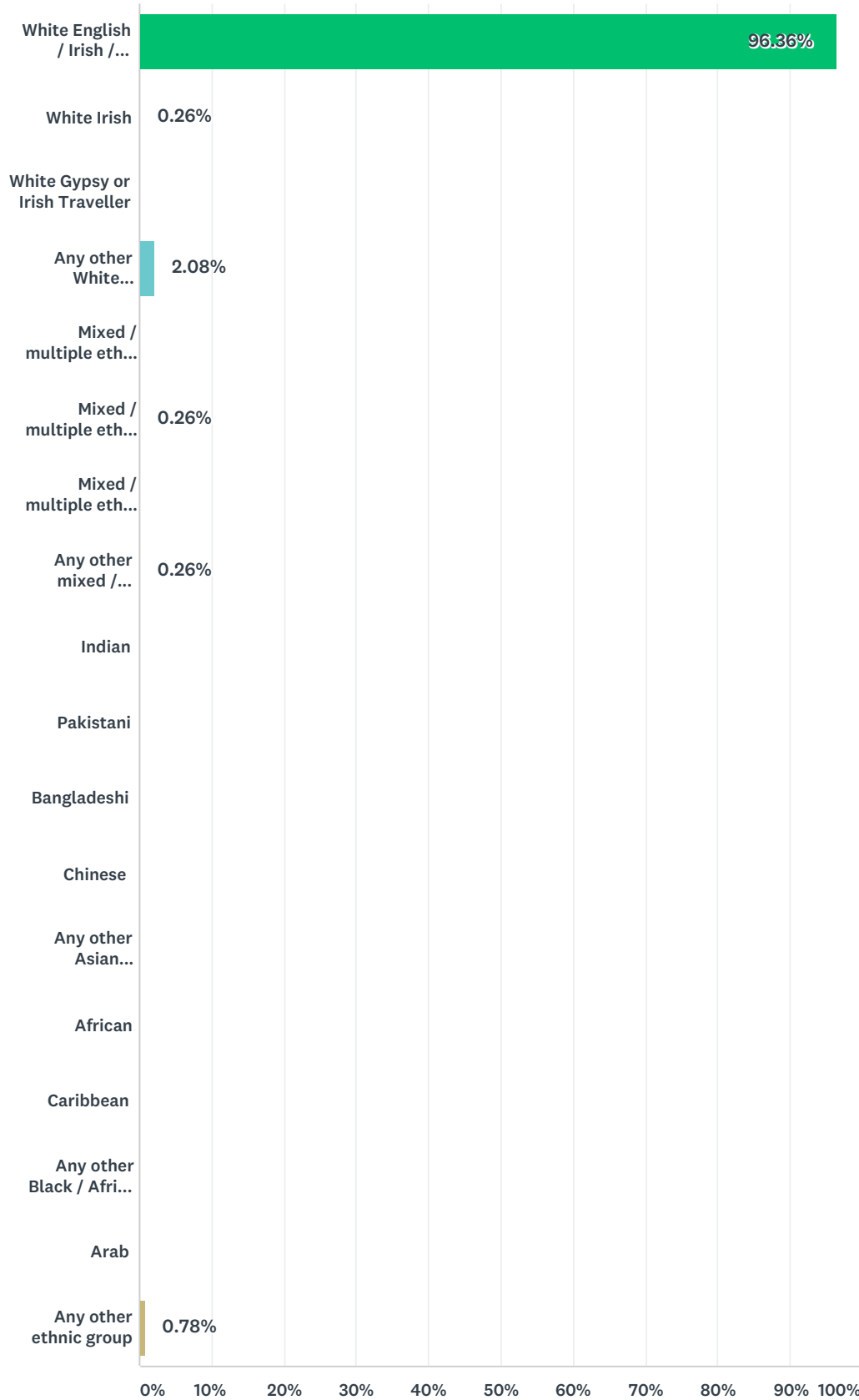
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	44.44%	172
Male	55.56%	215
TOTAL		387

## Q10 How would you describe your ethnic background?

Answered: 385 Skipped: 7



Derbyshire Dales District Council - Online Panel Survey 2019



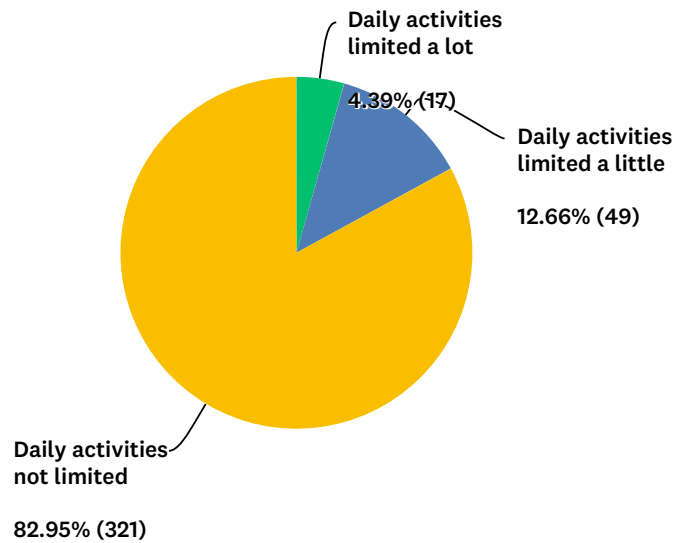
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
White English / Irish / Scottish / Welsh / British	96.36% 371

Derbyshire Dales District Council - Online Panel Survey 2019

White Irish	0.26%	1
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0
Any other White background	2.08%	8
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - White & Black Caribbean	0.00%	0
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - Black African	0.26%	1
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - Asian	0.00%	0
Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background	0.26%	1
Indian	0.00%	0
Pakistani	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
Any other Asian background	0.00%	0
African	0.00%	0
Caribbean	0.00%	0
Any other Black / African / Caribbean / Black British background	0.00%	0
Arab	0.00%	0
Any other ethnic group	0.78%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>385</b>

Q11 The definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010 is: “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

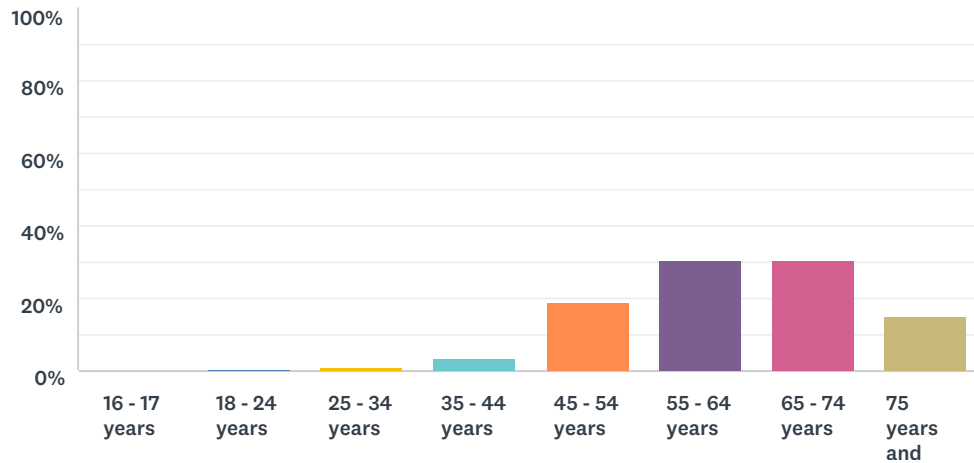
Answered: 387 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily activities limited a lot	4.39%	17
Daily activities limited a little	12.66%	49
Daily activities not limited	82.95%	321
TOTAL		387

## Q12 What is your age?

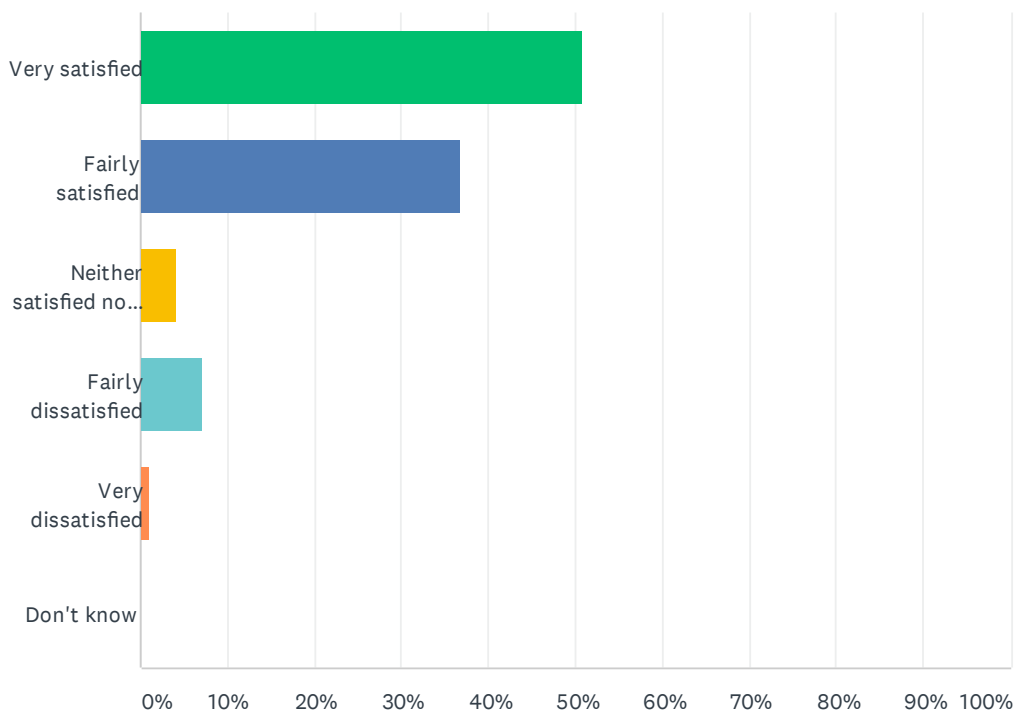
Answered: 390 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
16 - 17 years	0.00%	0
18 - 24 years	0.26%	1
25 - 34 years	1.03%	4
35 - 44 years	3.59%	14
45 - 54 years	19.23%	75
55 - 64 years	30.51%	119
65 - 74 years	30.51%	119
75 years and over	14.87%	58
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>390</b>

**Q1 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home**

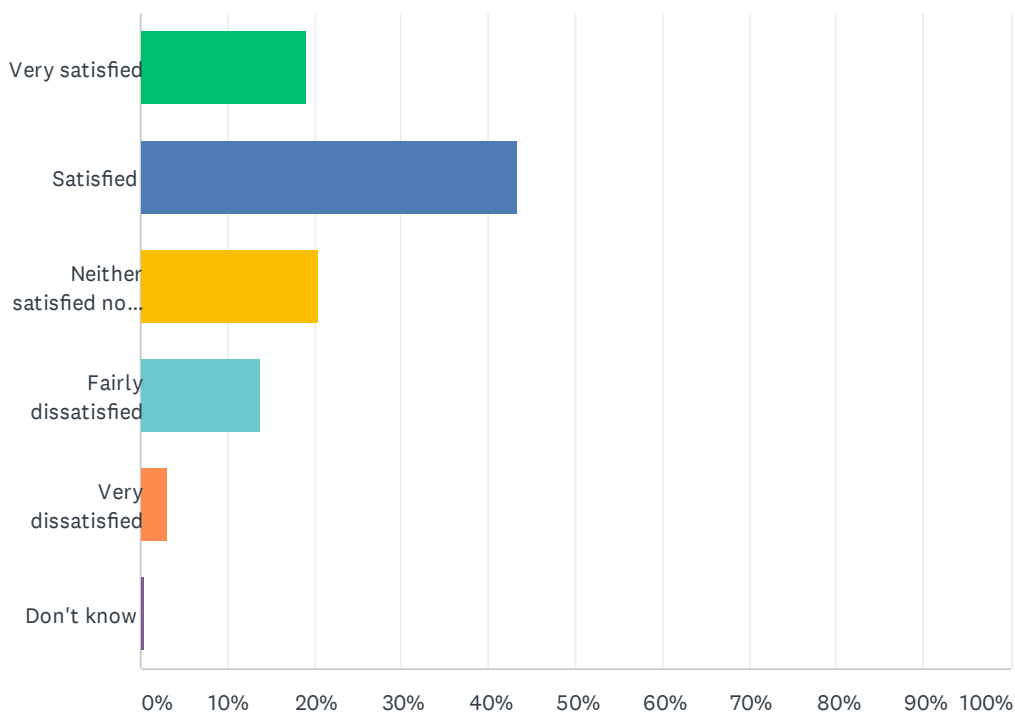
Answered: 421 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	50.83%	214
Fairly satisfied	36.82%	155
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4.28%	18
Fairly dissatisfied	7.13%	30
Very dissatisfied	0.95%	4
Don't know	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>421</b>

Q2 Your local area receives services from two councils, Derbyshire Dales District Council and Derbyshire County Council. This survey asks about Derbyshire Dales District Council which is responsible for services such as refuse collection, street cleaning , planning (excluding Peak District National Park area), housing, leisure facilities, environmental health, parks and gardens. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services Derbyshire Dales District Council provides?

Answered: 421 Skipped: 0

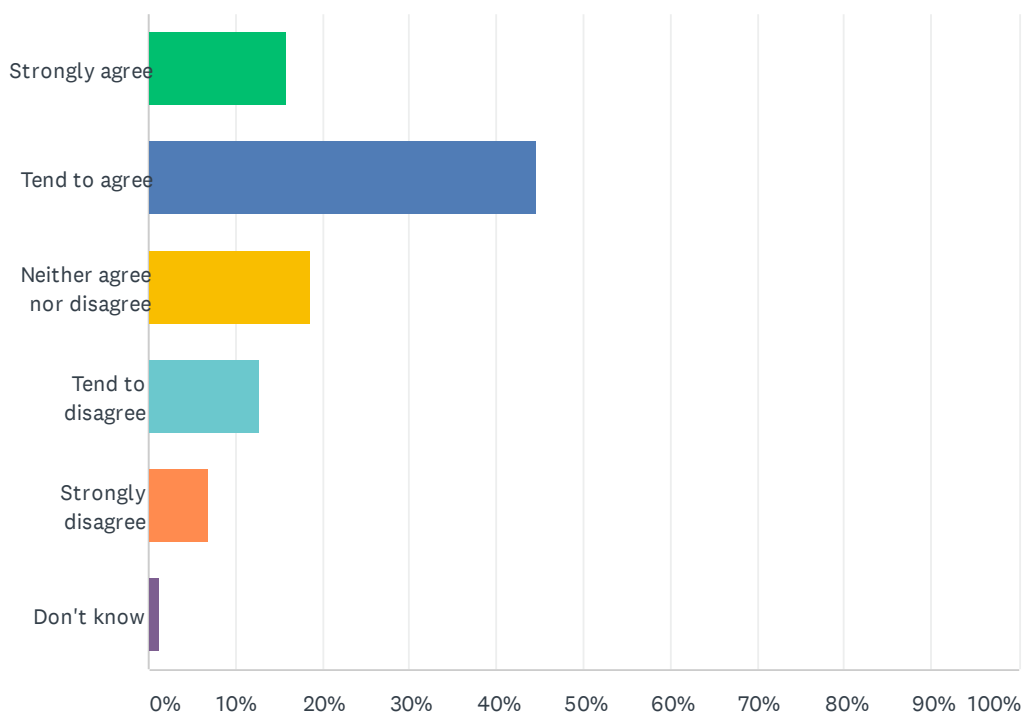


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	19.00%	80
Satisfied	43.23%	182
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	20.43%	86
Fairly dissatisfied	13.78%	58
Very dissatisfied	3.09%	13
Don't know	0.48%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>421</b>

Q3 In considering the next question, please think about the range of services Derbyshire Dales District Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services the council provides to the community.

We would like your general opinion. Council tax costs the average household in the Dales approximately 59p per day. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Derbyshire Dales District Council provides value for money?

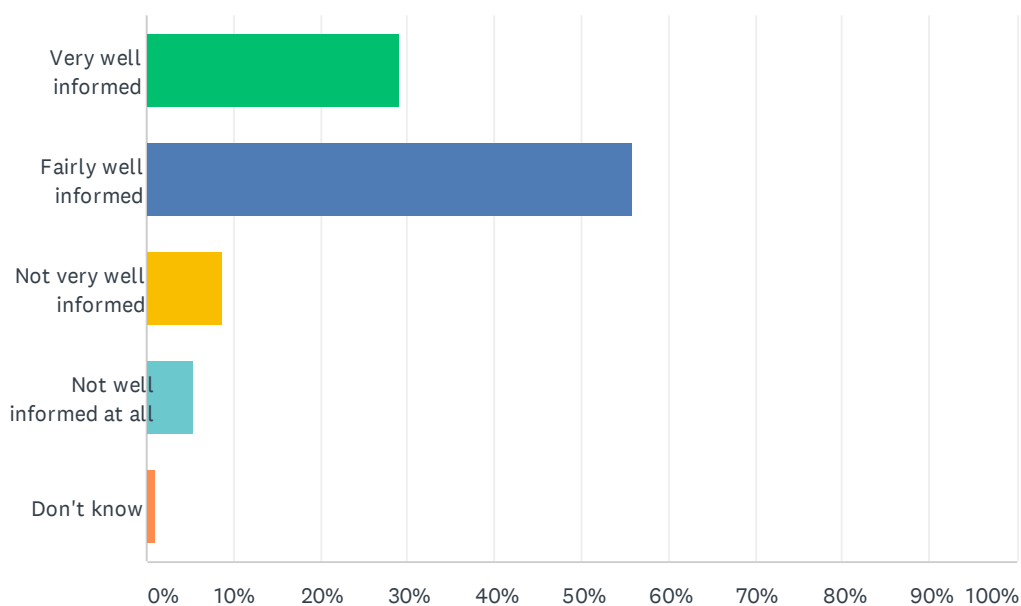
Answered: 421 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	15.91%	67
Tend to agree	44.66%	188
Neither agree nor disagree	18.53%	78
Tend to disagree	12.83%	54
Strongly disagree	6.89%	29
Don't know	1.19%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>421</b>

Q4 We keep you informed using a range of methods, such as our website, Dales Matters, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, Area Forums, live streaming Council meetings, e-newsletters. Overall, how well informed do you think Derbyshire Dales District Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?

Answered: 421 Skipped: 0

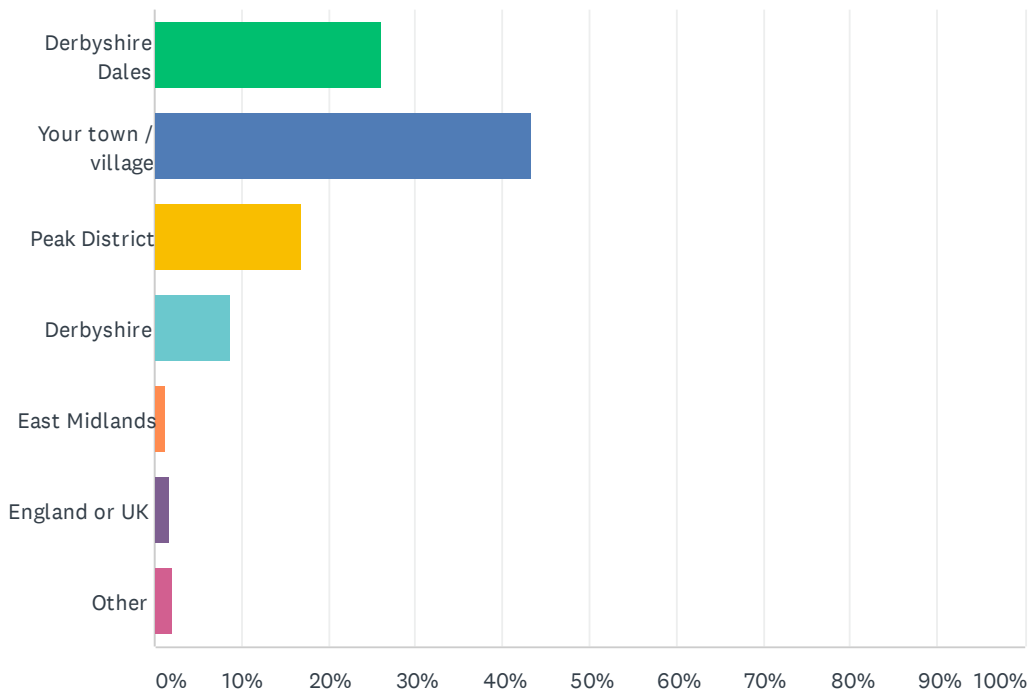


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very well informed	28.98%	122
Fairly well informed	55.82%	235
Not very well informed	8.79%	37
Not well informed at all	5.46%	23
Don't know	0.95%	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>421</b>



## Q5 Which of these do you feel you identify with most closely?

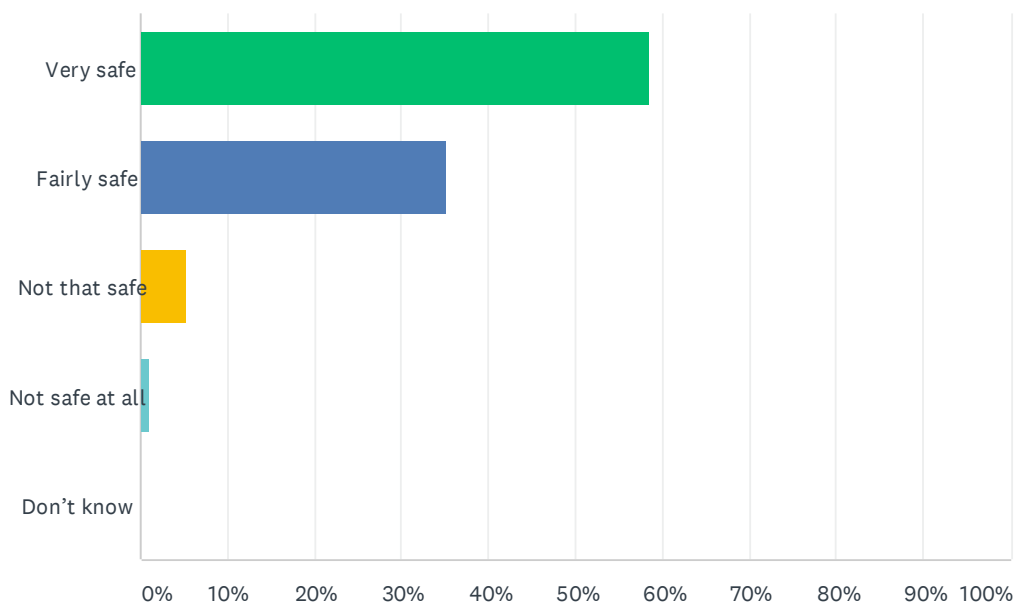
Answered: 421 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Derbyshire Dales	26.13%	110
Your town / village	43.23%	182
Peak District	16.86%	71
Derbyshire	8.79%	37
East Midlands	1.19%	5
England or UK	1.66%	7
Other	2.14%	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>421</b>

**Q6 Derbyshire Dales Community Safety team works to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the District. Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?**

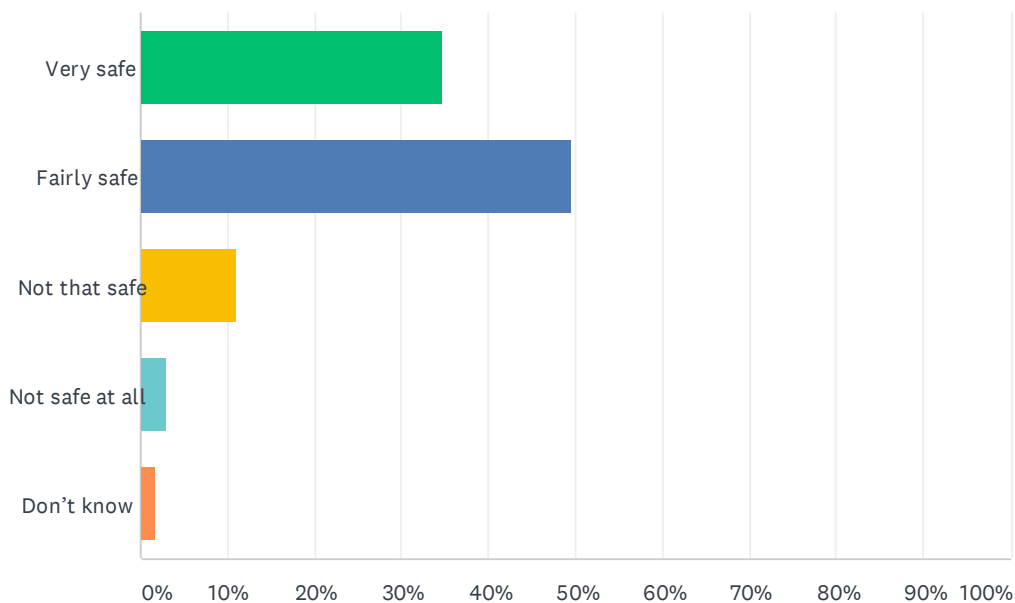
Answered: 421 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very safe	58.67% 247
Fairly safe	35.15% 148
Not that safe	5.23% 22
Not safe at all	0.95% 4
Don't know	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>421</b>

**Q7 Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?**

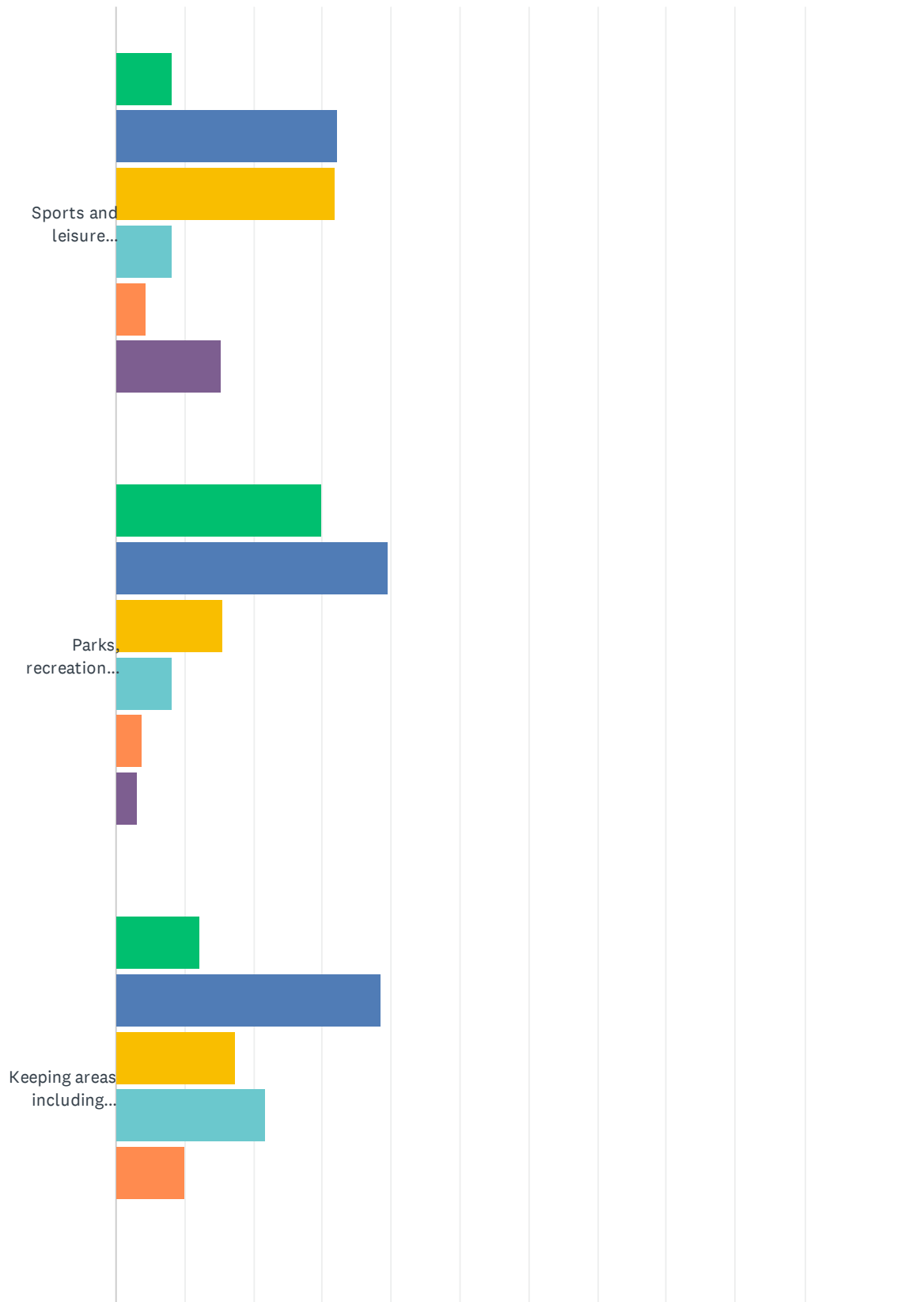
Answered: 420 Skipped: 1



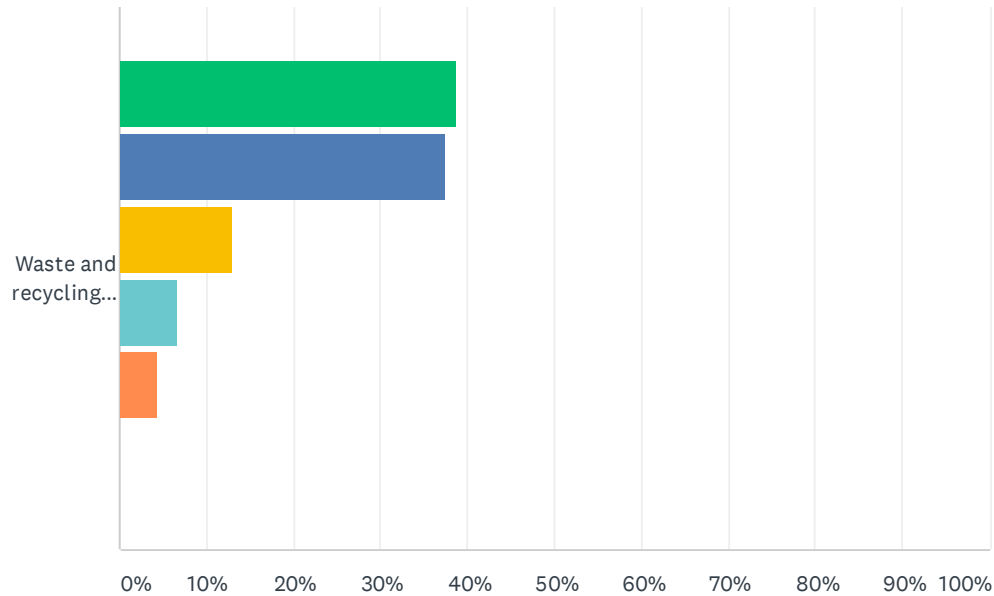
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very safe	34.76%	146
Fairly safe	49.52%	208
Not that safe	11.19%	47
Not safe at all	2.86%	12
Don't know	1.67%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>420</b>

## Q8 How satisfied are you with the following services provided by Derbyshire Dales District Council?

Answered: 420 Skipped: 1



## Derbyshire Dales District Council - Online Panel Survey 2020

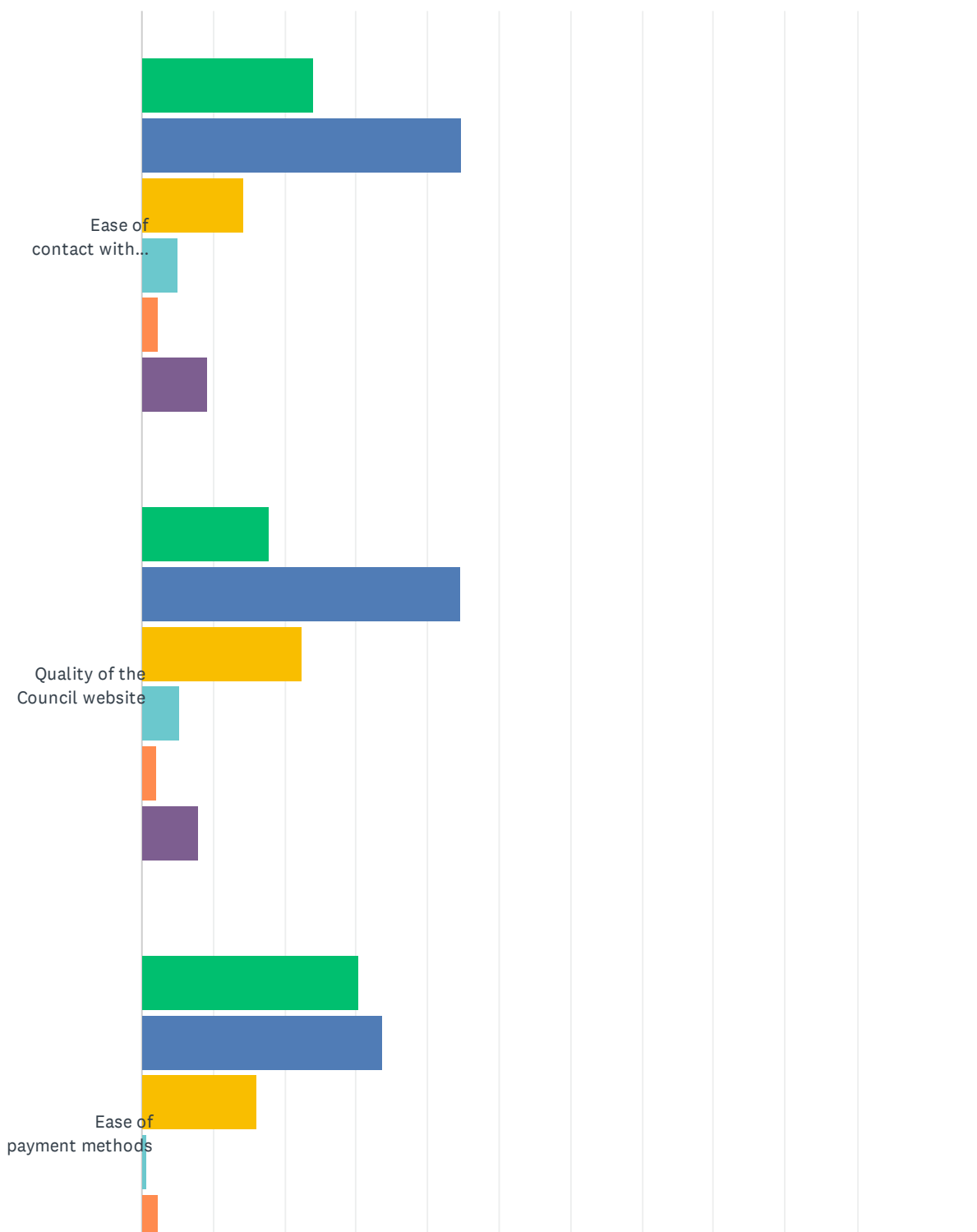


■ Very satisfied   
 ■ Fairly satisfied   
 ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
■ Fairly dissatisfied   
 ■ Very dissatisfied   
 ■ Don't know

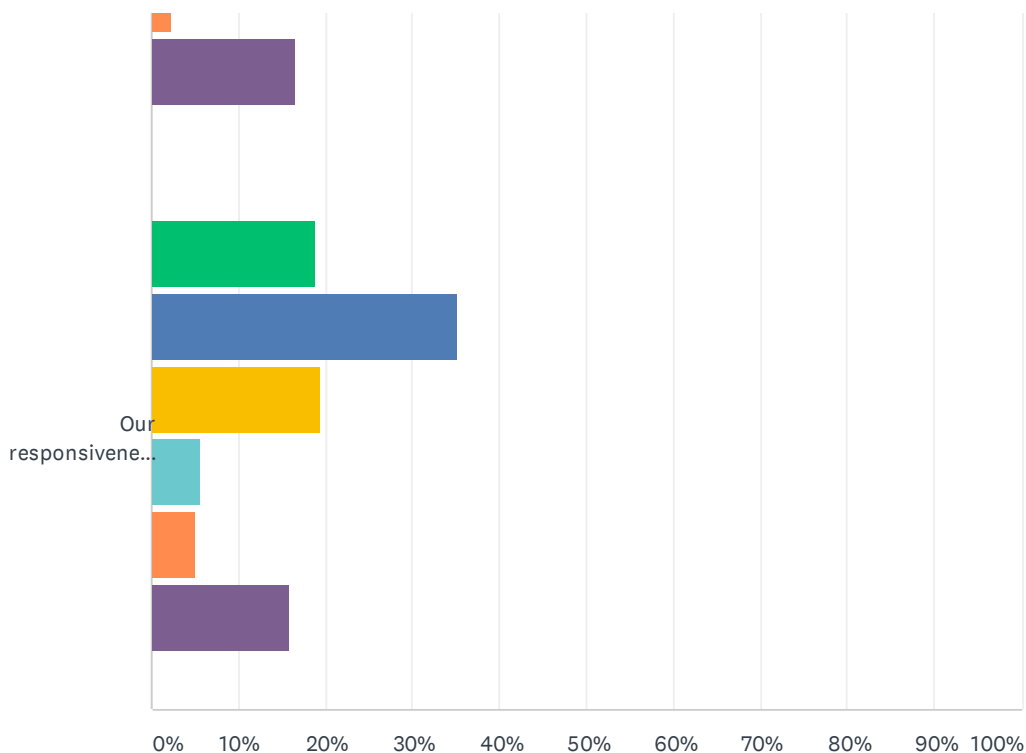
	VERY SATISFIED	FAIRLY SATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	FAIRLY DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Sports and leisure facilities	8.21% 34	32.13% 133	31.88% 132	8.21% 34	4.35% 18	15.22% 63	414
Parks, recreation grounds and open spaces	29.90% 125	39.47% 165	15.55% 65	8.13% 34	3.83% 16	3.11% 13	418
Keeping areas including highways free from litter	12.20% 51	38.52% 161	17.46% 73	21.77% 91	10.05% 42	0.00% 0	418
Waste and recycling collections	38.66% 162	37.47% 157	12.89% 54	6.68% 28	4.30% 18	0.00% 0	419

Q9 Derbyshire Dales District Council offers a range of ways to contact us, find out information or pay bills. We aim to: Treat you fairly and equally  
 Provide a pleasant and courteous service at all times Be helpful and responsive Provide you with good quality information about our services.  
 How satisfied are you with ... ?

Answered: 421 Skipped: 0



Derbyshire Dales District Council - Online Panel Survey 2020

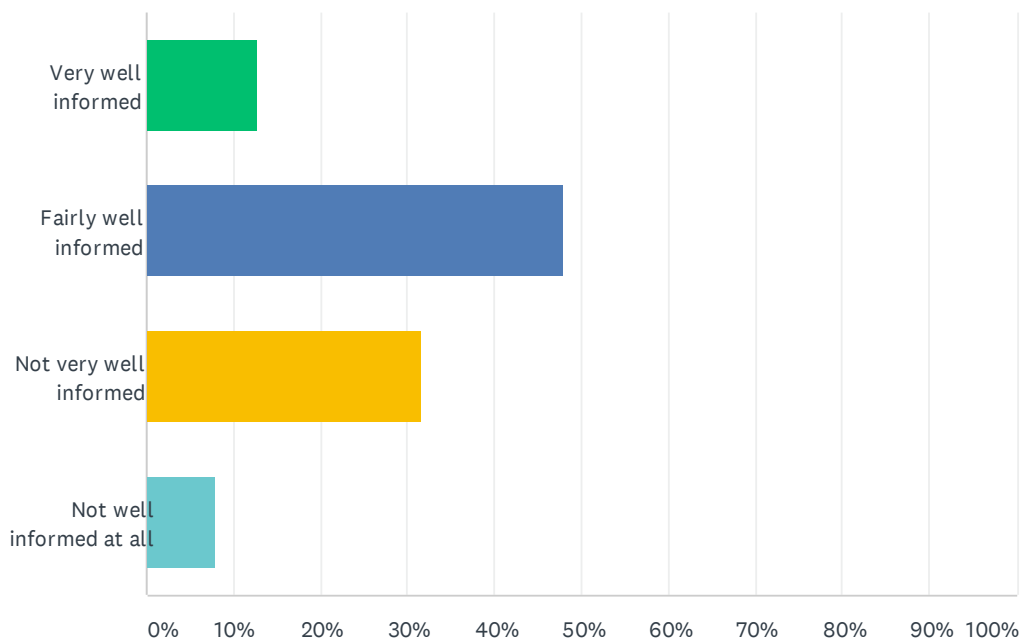


■ Very satisfied   
 ■ Fairly satisfied   
 ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
■ Fairly dissatisfied   
 ■ Very dissatisfied   
 ■ Don't know

	VERY SATISFIED	FAIRLY SATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	FAIRLY DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Ease of contact with the Council	24.11% 101	44.87% 188	14.32% 60	5.01% 21	2.39% 10	9.31% 39	419
Quality of the Council website	17.70% 74	44.50% 186	22.49% 94	5.26% 22	2.15% 9	7.89% 33	418
Ease of payment methods	30.40% 128	33.73% 142	16.15% 68	0.71% 3	2.38% 10	16.63% 70	421
Our responsiveness to your enquiries	18.76% 79	35.15% 148	19.48% 82	5.70% 24	4.99% 21	15.91% 67	421

## Q10 How well informed or not do you think Derbyshire Dales District Council is keeping you about the coronavirus pandemic?

Answered: 418 Skipped: 3

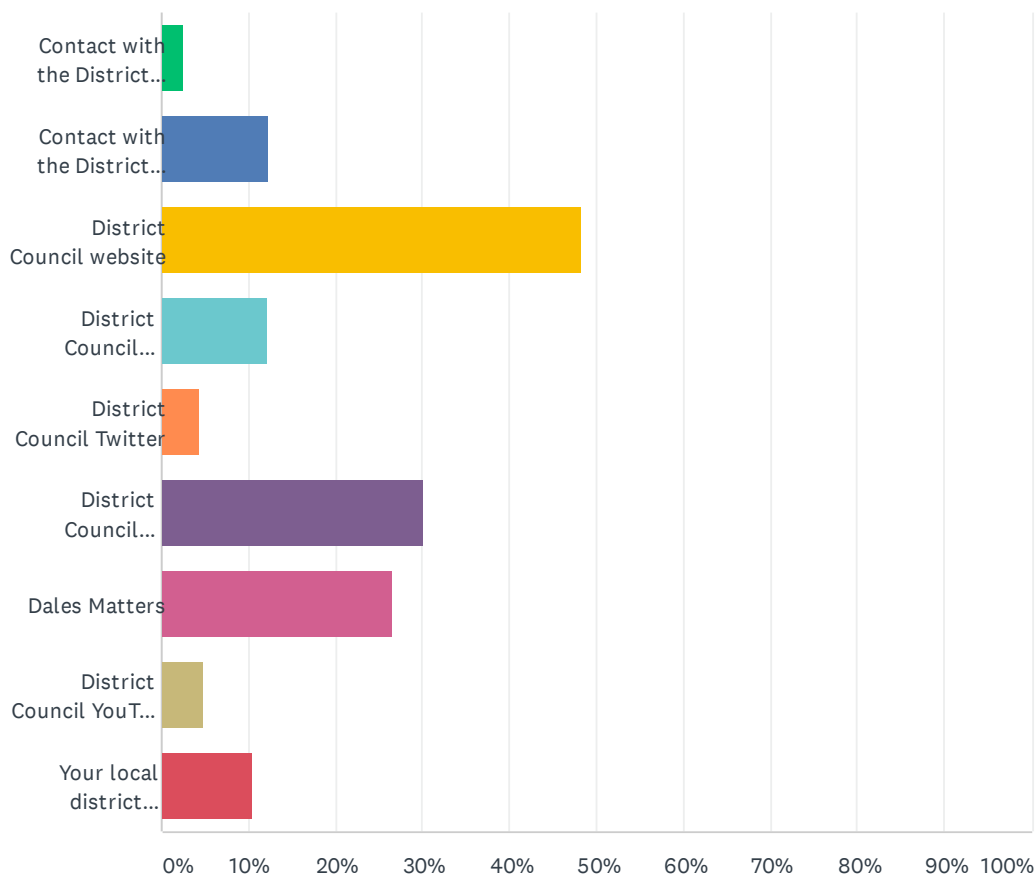


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very well informed	12.68%	53
Fairly well informed	47.85%	200
Not very well informed	31.58%	132
Not well informed at all	7.89%	33
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>418</b>



## Q11 Did you find information about the Council’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic from any of the following:

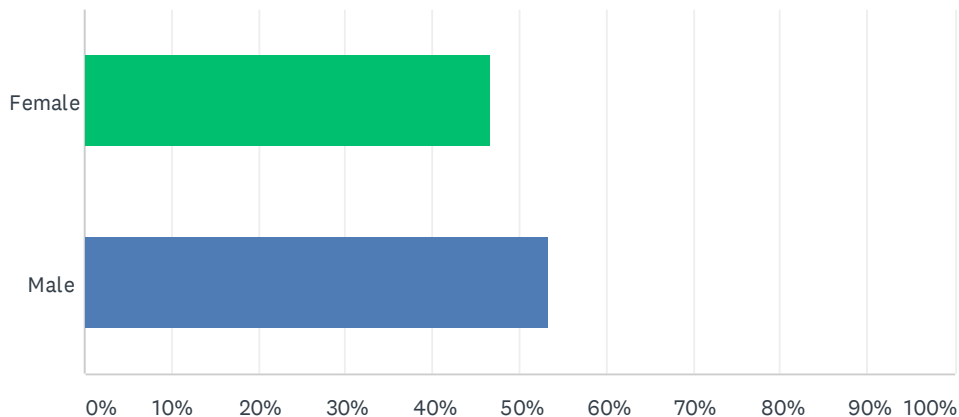
Answered: 346 Skipped: 75



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Contact with the District Council by phone	2.60% 9
Contact with the District Council by email	12.43% 43
District Council website	48.27% 167
District Council Facebook page	12.14% 42
District Council Twitter	4.34% 15
District Council e-newsletter	30.06% 104
Dales Matters	26.59% 92
District Council YouTube channel – Council & committee meetings	4.91% 17
Your local district councillor(s)	10.40% 36
<b>Total Respondents: 346</b>	

## Q12 Are you ... ?

Answered: 414 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	46.62%	193
Male	53.38%	221
TOTAL		414

## Q13 How would you describe your ethnic background?

Answered: 414 Skipped: 7

Derbyshire Dales District Council - Online Panel Survey 2020

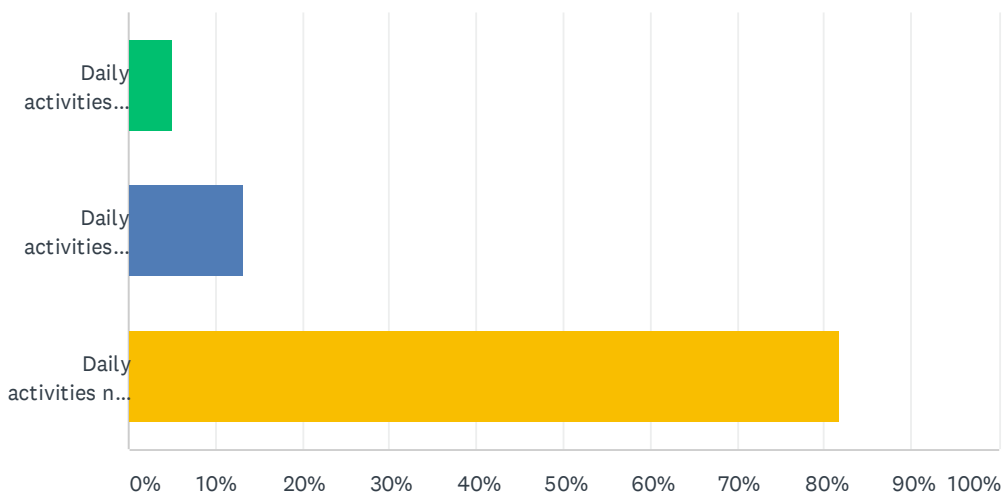


Derbyshire Dales District Council - Online Panel Survey 2020

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White English / Irish / Scottish / Welsh / British	95.17%	394
White Irish	0.97%	4
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.24%	1
Any other White background	2.42%	10
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - White & Black Caribbean	0.00%	0
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - Black African	0.24%	1
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - Asian	0.00%	0
Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background	0.24%	1
Indian	0.00%	0
Pakistani	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
Any other Asian background	0.00%	0
African	0.00%	0
Caribbean	0.00%	0
Any other Black / African / Caribbean / Black British background	0.00%	0
Arab	0.24%	1
Any other ethnic group	0.48%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>414</b>

Q14 The definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010 is: “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

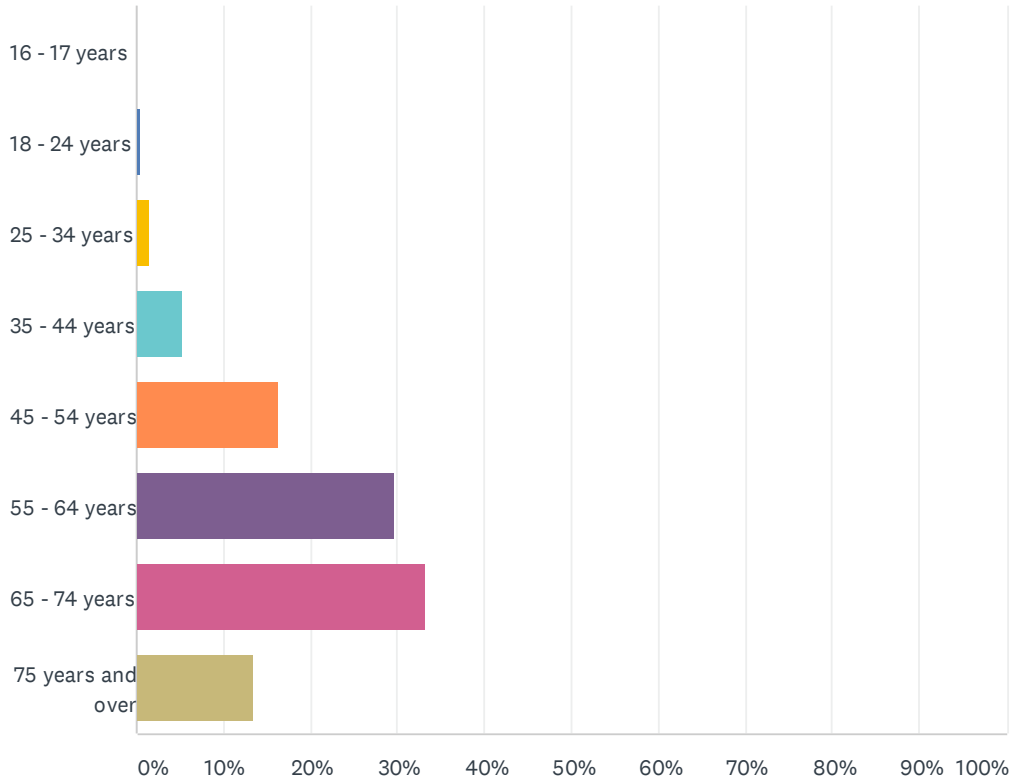
Answered: 410 Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily activities limited a lot	5.12%	21
Daily activities limited a little	13.17%	54
Daily activities not limited	81.71%	335
TOTAL		410

## Q15 What is your age?

Answered: 416 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
16 - 17 years	0.00%	0
18 - 24 years	0.48%	2
25 - 34 years	1.44%	6
35 - 44 years	5.29%	22
45 - 54 years	16.35%	68
55 - 64 years	29.81%	124
65 - 74 years	33.17%	138
75 years and over	13.46%	56
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>416</b>

**GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

19 November 2020

Report of the Director of Corporate and Customer Services

**COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGY**

**SUMMARY**

The Communication and Marketing Strategy sets out how residents, employees and service users are kept informed about what the District Council is doing, how it is spending public money, and the District Council services they can access.

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the strategic framework of the current Communications and Marketing Strategy is noted.
2. That the Action Plan for 2021 is approved.

**WARDS AFFECTED**

All

**STRATEGIC LINK**

Good communications with residents, employees and service users is key to all the District Council's corporate priorities and pivotal to providing excellent services.

---

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The District Council adopted its current Communications and Marketing Strategy in September 2014, reflecting the development of technology and the needs both of the public and the District Council, which had evolved dramatically since the previous strategy's adoption in 2011. This sixth annual update sets ambitious yet realistic targets to support the Council's Corporate Objectives and core values.
- 1.2 The aim of the Strategy is to ensure our communications help to promote a positive image of the Council, and, in marketing terms, help us to meet the needs and wants of our customers in a fast moving digital world.
- 1.3 The adopted Strategy sets out a multi-channel approach to reach a wide variety of customers and stakeholders, underlining traditional forms of communication while embracing more modern approaches.
- 1.4 Communicating well is the responsibility of everyone and the Strategy is designed to be a useful tool for the corporate leadership team, heads of services and all employees and elected members. It sets a framework for communications and gives direction to all media, online, internal, marketing, publications and public relations communications actively undertake on behalf of the district council.



1.5 The Communications and Marketing Strategy sets out ways to:

- Make the Council easy to understand and talk to
- Co-ordinate and direct communications
- Ensure that everyone understands our targets and what the outcomes will be
- Ensure that staff and partners understand their contribution
- Make sure people know the outcome of the changes the District Council makes
- Ensure openness and transparency
- Make people feel better informed, proud to live in Derbyshire Dales, proud to work for the Council and proud to work with it.

1.6 The Strategy (attached as Appendix 1) is without a timeframe. This is deliberate and seeks to set a strategic framework with a more dynamic approach to actions which can be measured by way of an Annual Action Plan, monitored by a Communications & Marketing Hub, comprising officers from all Council service areas.

## **2. REVIEW OF 2020 ACTION PLAN**

2.1 **ACTION:** New Government guidelines mean our website is required to have an accurate and qualified Accessibility Statement in the next year. We will therefore develop a toolkit to allow non-technical staff to accurately determine the accessibility of their websites templates, individual pages and digital media, notably PDFs and video, and develop practical guidance for non-technical staff to ensure all future content is accessible and, where possible, to make inaccessible content accessible.

**PROGRESS:** An accessibility expert was contracted to review the website and we have subsequently published an Accessibility Statement that lists some issues that still require addressing. Training programmes have been created for web editors and staff are currently working through - and correcting - inaccessible PDFs.

2.2 **ACTION:** Review and improve the staff intranet (SIDDD) to make it fit for purpose.

**PROGRESS:** Work, directed by the Hub and led by the Digital Communications Officer, has been carried out by our own ICT web development team and a brand new intranet launched on schedule on 5 November.

2.3 **ACTION:** Take measures to improve the quality of live video broadcasts by improving the live stream infrastructure, including the sound system in the Council Chamber.

**PROGRESS:** Covid-19 and the introduction of virtual meetings mean this work is currently on hold. However, a new related target features in the 2021 Action Plan.

2.4 **ACTION:** Continue to generate sponsorship to support the Action Plan, focusing on welcome signs, parks signs, Big Belly Bins and advertising in our paid-for public toilets.

**PROGRESS:** Advertising in our paid-for toilets has continued, despite closure of these facilities early in the coronavirus lockdown. All initial two-year sponsorships of

our welcome signs have now expired. The original companies have been offered extensions and this work continues. We had an agreement for an extension on two of the signs, subsequently cancelled by the sponsors due to Covid-19. There is some interest in parks signs sponsorships, but no confirmation to date. Work is currently taking place to buy in poster frames for our Big Belly bins, initially to create a promotional tool for coronavirus awareness messages, but ultimately with a commercial aim.

2.5 ACTION: Improve access to the current Members' Portal.

PROGRESS: We await guidance on this from the Member Development Group.

2.6 ACTION: Support members and managers with new presentational and social media training.

PROGRESS: Handling the Media workshops were organised in June and July last year. Members will be offered further social media workshops in 2021.

2.7 ACTION: Ensure all leases and licences include District Council branding by condition to enhance the authority's reputation, linking to a new Events Strategy.

PROGRESS: This continues.

2.8 ACTION: Utilise our online panel to gauge the overall level of satisfaction in the District Council.

PROGRESS: This continues. Our Policy Officer has access via Survey Monkey to around 880 people who have signed up to our online panel. An annual satisfaction survey is facilitated, and the Communications Department also continues to create ongoing satisfaction surveys for individual service areas.

2.9 ACTION: Continue to measure the success of large event promotions and marketing (eg Matlock Bath Illuminations) via social media engagement tools, post-event surveys and takings/visitor numbers.

PROGRESS: Sadly, due to the pandemic, Matlock Bath Illuminations and the Cow Shed Beer Festival were both cancelled in 2020. However, analysis of the Garden Waste Subscriptions Project is showing some interesting results. While the Illuminations (which mainly plays to an audience outside the Dales) has benefited in recent years from an online-led promotions strategy, chiefly through a Facebook page we operate with 31,000 followers, analysis to date of garden waste promotions has shown that 81% of sign-ups in the first two months of the project were in response to a physical leaflet delivered to all homes in the Derbyshire Dales. Only 5% said they were responding to promotions on the Derbyshire Dales website, 3% to promotions on Facebook and 1% to council emails. This underlines the importance of a multi-channel approach to everything we do.

2.10 ACTION: The Hub will take the lead on important corporate communications issues, including actions from the waste procurement process.

**PROGRESS:** Communications have played an important role throughout the pandemic to date, utilising every available channel to ensure as many of our residents as possible are kept informed on guidance and developments. Communications has also had a leading role to play in the promotion of the new garden waste scheme, designing leaflets, banners and organising website and social media promotions, together with local newspaper advertising, email sign-offs and creating information for the 6,000 residents who are signed up to our email database.

### **3. NEW ACTION PLAN, 2020**

- 3.1 Install new signage in our three larger parks in Ashbourne, Bakewell and Matlock to create awareness of the Council's responsibility for those facilities, make the public aware of and abide by Public Space Protection Orders and replace the proliferation of smaller "official" signs (there are more than 100 of these in Hall Leys Park alone). Ward members will be consulted on final designs when these are available. This is the final (lapsed) part of a successful signage project launched by the Communications & Marketing Hub in 2018, where £10,000 sponsorship income was generated in replacing, at a cost of £3,000, dilapidated boundary welcome signs. A second phase of the signage project saw signs installed in our 30 smaller parks and gardens and at the Town Hall. Funding for the larger parks signage is set aside in the communications budget, in part comprising unused sponsorship income.
- 3.2 Promote the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) review early in 2021 and amend existing parks signage where applicable after current PSPOs expire on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021.
- 3.3 Work with partners to create signage and promotional messages to discourage the use of disposable barbecues and open fires in the Derbyshire Dales.
- 3.4 Promote the Derbyshire Dales as a business destination by facilitating on behalf of the District Council's Economic Development Team a microsite, including case study video content.
- 3.5 Improve the quality of live video broadcasts by upgrading the live stream infrastructure, including the sound system in the Council Chamber, and work with the Committee Team to plan the facilitation of "blended" meetings (where some Members and officers might potentially attend in person and others via Zoom) in anticipation of coronavirus restrictions easing sometime in 2021.
- 3.6 Ensure all leases and licences include District Council branding by condition to enhance the authority's reputation, linking to the Events Strategy.
- 3.7 Continue to utilise our online panel to gauge the overall level of satisfaction in the District Council.
- 3.8 Continue to generate sponsorship to support the Action Plan, focusing on welcome signs, parks signs and Big Belly Bins, introducing poster frames to the Big Belly Bins and additional commercial income from advertising in our paid-for public toilets and the Dales Matters publication.

- 3.9 Continue to measure the success of large event promotions and marketing (eg Matlock Bath Illuminations and the Garden Waste Scheme) via social media engagement tools, webform analytics, post-event surveys and takings/visitor numbers.
- 3.10 The Hub will take the lead on important corporate communications issues, including actions from the waste procurement process.

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1 Legal**

An effective communications strategy helps to reinforce the District Council's ambition and raises proper accountability. The Strategy has been framed within the legislative framework regarding publicity. The legal risk is therefore low.

### **4.2 Financial**

The Communications Strategy can be delivered within existing budgets and, therefore, the financial risk arising from this report is low.

## **5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

## **6. CONTACT INFORMATION**

- 6.1 James McLaughlin, Director of Corporate and Customer Services,  
Tel: 01629 761281  
Email [james.mclaughlin@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:james.mclaughlin@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)
- 6.2 Jim Fearn, Communications & Marketing Manager  
Tel: 01629 761195  
Email [jim.fearn@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:jim.fearn@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

## **7. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

None

## **8. APPENDICES**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Communications & Marketing Strategy





# COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING STRATEGY

September 2019



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# Derbyshire Dales District Council

## Communications & Marketing Strategy

(Adopted, Corporate Committee, 18 September 2014)

(Latest action plan approved by Governance & Resources Committee, 5 September 2019)

### Introduction

Communication plays an important role in everything we do at Derbyshire Dales District Council.

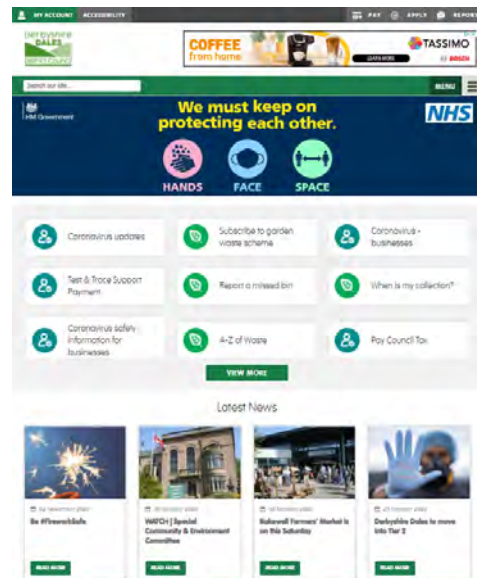
Communicating **well** is the responsibility of everyone at the District Council, not just the communications team. This strategy is designed to be a useful tool for the corporate leadership team, heads of services, all employees and council members.

It sets a framework for district council communications and gives direction to all media, online, internal, marketing, publications and public relations communications activity undertaken on behalf of the district council.

Our commitment is to use a **multi-channel approach** to reach the wide variety of customers and stakeholders we serve, including residents, employees, businesses, community partners, visitors to the district and all levels of government.

Externally, a key focus is to promote the district council's services to give us a competitive edge, supporting and enhancing regular activities.

Internal communications will involve all staff in shaping services as the district council continues to go through major changes.





We will seek to provide communications services on the most cost-effective basis, for example by accelerating our shift towards digital communications and taking a “digital first” position on crisis management

We will commit to continuing improvement of the usefulness of our website and keep content fresh and updated as we move a greater share of our communications activity online, utilising free social media channels.

Communication works best when it is a two-way process (we need to listen as well as talk) and when messages are clear and easy to understand. Our social media channels (particularly Facebook and Twitter) provide a voice for local people to air their views and discuss issues with the council.

The challenge for an organisation with more than 100,000 customers and a large range of services is how it communicates clearly and simply in a complex and constantly changing environment, with ever increasing financial pressures. This strategy seeks to address that challenge.

Research shows that communication with residents is a key driver to overall satisfaction with council performance. It is also at the heart of good customer service and effective, meaningful consultation – and critical to delivery of the council's role in the community.

This strategy sets out the framework within which we can respond to this challenge.





## Aims, Vision and Objectives

### Aims

The ultimate aim of our communications is that all staff, residents, partners and everyone who deals with the council will have a clear understanding and a positive perception of our vision, aims, values, services and achievements, leading to higher levels of satisfaction and engagement.

### Vision

*What are we trying to do?*

To make its vision come alive, the district council must be able to communicate with (and influence) a wide range of organisations, individuals and partners.

*We therefore need to ...*

- make the council easy to understand and talk to
- coordinate and direct communications so that all parts of the district council are working towards shared objectives, in support of council strategy
- ensure that everyone understands our targets, and what the outcomes will be – showing people what success looks like
- ensure staff and partners understand their contribution through clear objectives, milestones and deadlines
- make sure people know the outcome of the changes the district council makes
- ensure openness and transparency
- make people feel better informed, proud to live in Derbyshire Dales, proud to work for the council, and proud to work with it.

In other words, we need to continue to build the district council as *a brand*.



The visual element of this brand – our corporate identity – is generally understood by staff and customers. Our brand is an important communications tool, *made up of these components...*

- Our overall purpose – what are we here for?
- Our values – what drives us to do the things we do?
- Our key messages – what are we saying about what we offer?
- Our service delivery – what do we provide, compared with what we promise?
- Our behaviour – how do we treat our customers and our staff?

It is important we bring these elements together in a unified approach across all communications channels, so that we are consistent in tone, look and feel. People need to understand who we are and what we stand for.

### **Objectives**

- To secure and strengthen the reputation of the council in the community and an effective and efficient provider of high quality outcomes - focused on our values and priorities
- To build and maintain a professional corporate identity for consistent and co-ordinated use throughout the organisation
- To promote the image of the council as an effective, efficient and listening organisation focused on the public and their needs
- To ensure that communications are consistent and co-ordinated across all channels to give maximum support to the council's strategic priorities
- To ensure all staff understand the priorities of the council and feel valued and able to contribute to major changes affecting services they provide
- To ensure that our communications activities reflect the full diversity of the community and help ensure equality of access to all our services.

It is important also that the district council increases its efforts to understand what local communities are saying.

This strategy will dovetail with our Consultation & Engagement Strategy in sharing information gained through consultation programmes such as citizens' panel consultation, channel shift initiatives and increasing use of new technology devices to generate instant feedback on topical issues.

## Delivering our objectives

The district council's reputation is based on perceptions – how people see us. Managing our reputation means first of all understanding what those perceptions are, deciding how we want to be seen, and planning how to get there.

We will tackle this by focusing internal capacity on the district council's key messages and ensuring that the most appropriate level of resource is available for our key priorities and activities.

### Our communications platforms can be broken down into three:

- Traditional Media, Publications, Campaigns and PR
- Digital Media
- Internal Communications

### TRADITIONAL MEDIA, PUBLICATIONS, CAMPAIGNS AND PR

We will seek to maintain and further improve positive media coverage and develop our media relations service to promote and defend the council, recognising the proven link between the public's sense of feeling informed and feeling satisfied. Our target is to issue two positive **media releases** every week of the year, alongside, where possible, engaging photography (chiefly taken in-house).



It will also be the responsibility of the communications team to handle a communications problem or bundle of problems by identifying:

- the nature of the problem or challenge
- the key considerations in addressing it
- the key drivers of those decisions (crucially, insight into audiences)
- the resources required
- the stages to go through

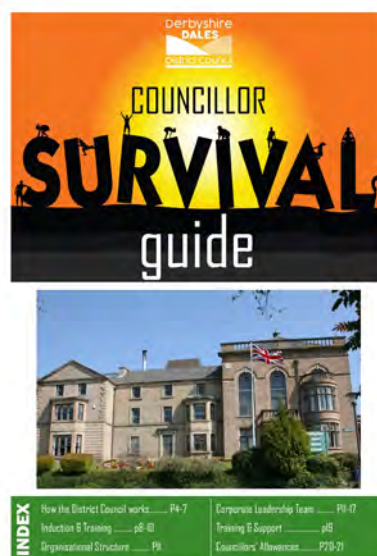
We will issue reactive statements to media on request after gaining advice and approval first from the head of service (corporate management team member) and/or council leaders.

Despite our increasing focus on e-communications channels, the twice-yearly **Dales Matters** newsletter, delivered to all 34,000 homes in the district, remains an important communications tool. 90% of our citizens' panel (surveyed November 2013) had seen a copy of Dales Matters and 75% read half or most of it.

We will continue to edit, design and organise publication and distribution of Dales Matters, directed by an editorial panel (the Communications & Marketing Hub) comprising a representative from every service area.

Similarly, we will edit, design and organise publication of other special publications such as:

- Council Tax information leaflet
- Agricultural Business Centre annual leaflet (including Bakewell Farmers' Market dates)
- Other leaflets and fact sheets



We will maintain and develop our programme of media and integrated **campaigns** that underpin the district council's values and priorities.

We will use no/low-cost external sites such as poster frames in our pay & display car parks and public toilets to promote our services, including:

- Markets
- Parks and open spaces
- Special events such as our Matlock Bath Illuminations
- Do it online campaigns (channel shift)



The communications team, in consultation with the head of corporate services, will regularly change the organisation's **corporate email sign-off** as another channel to promote ongoing campaigns.

We will continue to evaluate and cost the potential of paid-for media (including local commercial radio stations and newspapers/magazines) to further promote our campaigns.

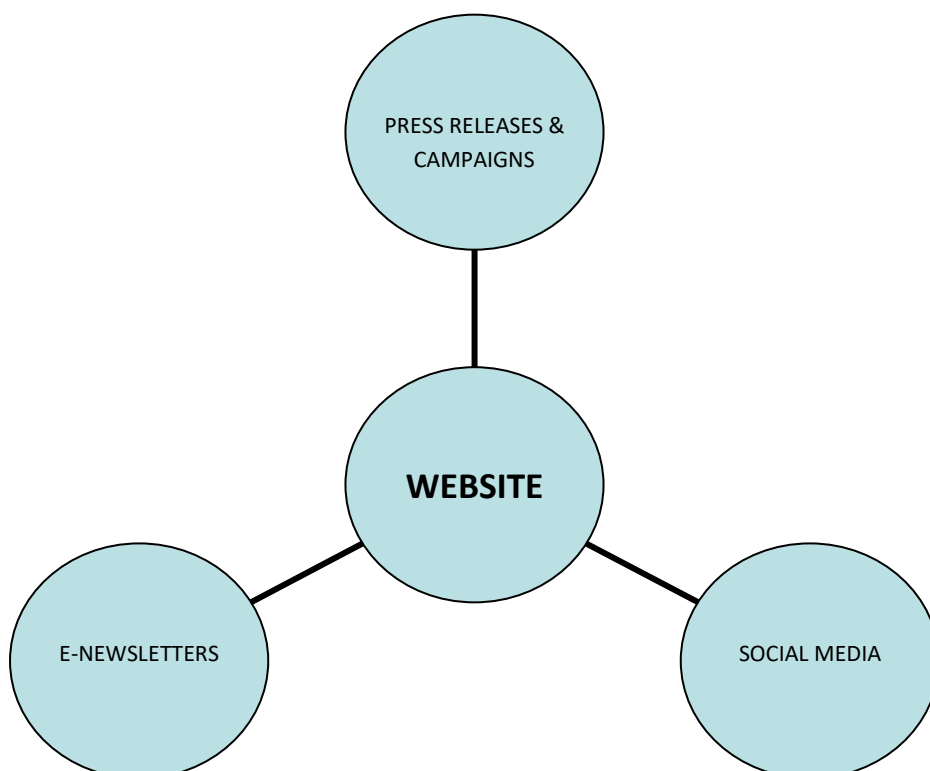
## DIGITAL MEDIA

We recognise the value of our website as a source of information, as a point for customer transactions and as a low-cost alternative to face-to-face and telephone contact.

Our communications going forward will have a digital focus, building on the platform created by our website, a mobile-friendly version of which was relaunched in 2016, again using an open source (Joomla) content management system to serve the public and businesses of Derbyshire Dales. A new homepage promoting new and updated CRM webforms was launched in April 2020.

We are committed to continually reviewing and developing the website to make it even easier to find the information residents and stakeholders need, to report faults and incidents, to ask questions and to conduct many different types of transactions, all in a 24/7 environment.

Not only is this usually faster than alternative methods of contact, it means residents can conduct their business with the district council when and where they like, while doing so at a lower cost to the taxpayer. We will aim to further increase use of the website, which currently attracts more than 107,000 visits every month (source: Google Analytics, year to October 2018) and is the "hub" of our communications.





We are committed to continuing to improve visitor numbers and the accessibility of the website, creating new web forms and payment portals (new CRM launched April 2020).

We applied the same principles to the development of a new intranet site for staff (launched autumn 2014 and redeveloped in November 2020).

**Social media** platforms have become an integral part of our communications strategy. We recognise the opportunities that social media can deliver in terms of reputation enhancement, engaging with the public using their medium of choice, greater two-way dialogue and the insights that social media can provide, and as an opportunity to reduce cost versus other communications channels.

We will exploit the penetration of social media in dealing with crisis communications, providing regular news updates on our digital channels to create a channel shift away from phone calls to service centres during busy periods.

While operating and monitoring established Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube channels, we will examine the potential of other social media platforms. District council service areas will be assisted in setting up their own social media channels on request.



We will continue to use social media management tools such as Hootsuite to monitor our own social media activity and also gain a better understanding of the conversations about us in which we are not currently participating.

In parallel with the development of this Communications Strategy, we will continue to promote and, where necessary, update, our social media policy and staff guidelines.

We will seek to build our **e-newsletter** (MailChimp) database, enabling us to target key messages on a regular basis to engaged people in our communities. We recognise the huge potential of e-newsletters as an effective communications channel

**Surveys and questionnaires supporting the council’s consultations with residents, businesses and other stakeholders** will be digital by default. We live in a digital age, and while paper versions of online surveys and questionnaires will be made available on request, our digital by default policy recognises that the vast majority of our residents now have access to the internet directly or indirectly through family, friends and their local library. Adding paper-based consultation feedback to the digital survey database is time-consuming and resource-heavy for the council. Consultations will be promoted using a combination of digital and traditional media and, where timing allows, through the twice-yearly Dales Matters residents’ newsletter.

## **INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

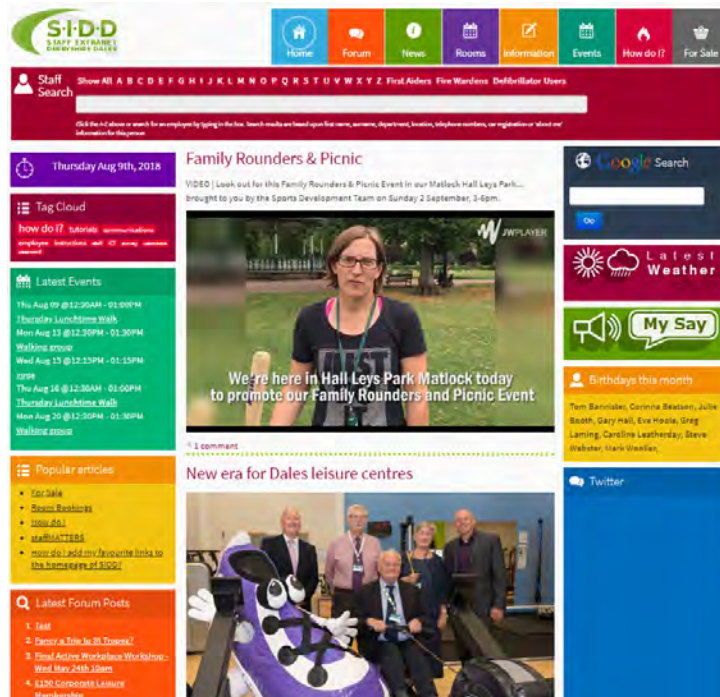
Internal communications play a key role in ensuring staff keep in touch with the district council’s plans and priorities, and the challenges ahead.

Employees need to understand how their actions contribute to the overall achievement of priorities and how their behaviour affects the way the organisation is perceived internally and externally.

Our internal communications will include:

- Publication of internal newsletters and blogs, including regular blogs from the Chief Executive (average fortnightly frequency)
- A new (November 2020) more accessible intranet site (SIDD)
- An intranet-based feedback form (“My Say”) where staff can feed back comments (anonymously if desired) and suggest good ideas
- Regular all-staff emails
- In-house posters
- Screensaver messages on staff PCs
- Core briefings **videos** to get our messages across
- During Covid: Zoom-based all-staff meetings and core briefings
- An opt-in staff SMS service for urgent communications
- A staff “closed” Facebook group





Through all the channels listed above, we will support our consultation teams in their work to help the district council understand what the public truly want, to deliver on our values and priorities and to provide the best possible value for money.

## Looking ahead

A Corporate Peer Review carried out in 2019 helped the district council confirm its vision – which is to continue to use the reduced resources available to us efficiently to maintain and - where possible - improve the quality of life for Derbyshire Dales people. A key aim of our communications is to help local people understand the financial challenges faced by the district council and the hard choices it is having to make in terms of service delivery.

The 2019 Review found a real sense of ambition and commitment to continuous improvement at Derbyshire Dales District Council, pointing to “a positive supportive culture which has dedicated loyal staff at its centre”.

The Review reported that the Council has good internal and external communications but needs to widely celebrate success. The peer review team encouraged the council to ensure that its communications focus more clearly on reflecting DDDC’s desire to continue to build local trust and reach out into its communities effectively. The team also stated there appears

to be an opportunity for the role of elected members to be reviewed to ensure councillors can play a full role in DDDC effectively undertaking this community leadership role.

The Review executive summary added that in taking forward its ambitions for the future the council needs to fully embrace the modernisation agenda, for example through systematic approach to digital technology.

Our plans continue to be built on clear **values** that will help to steer us through the years ahead. Applying these values will mean that the district council is not only smaller, but also more flexible and more responsive to local people's needs and expectations.

#### **We value:**

- the uniqueness of our communities, businesses and residents
- working in partnership to deliver affordable, quality services
- our employees
- teamwork, working together across the organisation
- creative thinking and ambition

#### **Supporting our values:**

- the Council will be open and transparent when making decisions and will use public resources ethically and responsibly.
- we will behave with integrity, courtesy and respect, listening and responding to the very best of our abilities and treating everybody fairly, and by encouraging Members and staff to deliver improvements through their own personal development.

#### **Providing the basics**

In the coming years, we will have less money and will have to make sure we spend it where the need is greatest. Our role is to make sure local people get good outcomes from their services and we understand that it is the quality of the service that matters to local people, not who provides it.

*Our focus should be on:*

Promoting and regularly reinforcing the distinctive qualities both of the Derbyshire Dales and the district council. It is appropriate therefore to build communications skills across the organisation, supported by an in-house communications resource that is empowered to identify and solve communications problems, and resourced to implement solutions.

#### **Helping communities help themselves**

The district council is at its most effective when it is helping people to live successful lives as independently as possible and helping communities to help themselves. We believe that if power is in the hands of local people, you get better results and achieve better value.

*Our approach will be to:*

- Give individuals more say about the services they receive and the support they receive
- Empower communities to do more themselves and give them the tools they need for community action
- Recognise that some areas need more help than others and that, with a little support, they can get their ideas off the ground
- Support the transfer of buildings and other assets to community ownership so that they can become a hub for local activity – flexible and responsive to local needs.

## **Evidence and analysis**

What do our customers and stakeholders say?

We continue to invite customers and stakeholders to help us set some key priorities that support our values. The Corporate Plan 2020-24 sets out the vision and improvement priorities for Derbyshire Dales District over the next four years. It is the key strategy from which the District Council's Budget and Service Plans cascade.

### **Priorities**

There are 3 broad priority areas:

- People - providing you with a high quality customer experience
- Place - keeping the Derbyshire Dales Clean, Green and Safe; and
- Place - supporting better homes and jobs for you.

*These were agreed at the Council meeting on 5 March 2020.*

## Action Plan 2019/20

The Governance & Resources Committee agreed that in the 2019/20 year the communications and marketing strategy needed to focus on reviewing and improving our corporate website, which attracts 1 million visits per year, and the staff intranet (SIDD).

### The full Action Plan looks like this:

- New Government guidelines mean our website is required to have an accurate and qualified Accessibility Statement in the next year. We will therefore develop a toolkit to allow non-technical staff to accurately determine the accessibility of their websites templates, individual pages and digital media, notably PDFs and video, and develop practical guidance for non-technical staff to ensure all future content is accessible and, where possible, to make inaccessible content accessible.
- Review and improve the staff intranet (SIDD) to make it fit for purpose.
- Take measures to improve the quality of live video broadcasts by improving the live stream infrastructure, including the sound system in the Council Chamber.
- Continue to generate sponsorship to support the Action Plan, focusing on welcome signs, parks signs, Big Belly Bins and advertising in our paid-for public toilets.
- Improve access to the current Members' Portal.
- Support members and managers with new presentational and social media training.
- Ensure all leases and licences include District Council branding by condition to enhance the authority's reputation, linking to a new Events Strategy.
- Utilise our online panel to gauge the overall level of satisfaction in the District Council.
- Continue to measure the success of large event promotions and marketing (eg Matlock Bath Illuminations) via social media engagement tools, post-event surveys and takings/visitor numbers.
- The Hub will take the lead on important corporate communications issues, including actions from the waste procurement process.

## Back to Agenda