



Council – 14 December 2023

DERBYSHIRE DALES PLAN 2024-28

Report of the Leaders of the Progressive Alliance

Report Author and Contact Details

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Wards Affected

District-wide

Report Summary

The Derbyshire Dales Plan (corporate plan) is the District Council's primary policy document. It establishes the Council's policies and priorities for the coming years and sets the framework for allocating scarce financial and human resources through the forthcoming budget and service planning process.

The report reiterates the commitments of the Council's leadership, and sets out Aims, Themes and Principles. It proposes a process and timescale for completing the detailed Derbyshire Dales Plan for the period 2024-2028.

Recommendations

1. That the Aims, Themes and Principles set out in Appendix 1 be approved as the basis of the new Derbyshire Dales plan
2. That the draft Theme priorities and outcomes set out in Appendix 2 be noted as work in progress
3. That a cross-party working group be established for each of the five Themes (each with one member from each Political Group) responsible to policy committees, as set out in the report
4. That each Political Group makes their nominations to the working groups directly to the Council's Director of Corporate and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer) by no later than 5pm, 15 December.
5. That the process and timescale for completing the development and adoption of the Derbyshire Dales Plan set out in the report be agreed.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Aims, Themes and Principles for approval
Appendix 2 Draft Theme priorities and outcomes (work in progress)

Background Papers

Governance and Resources Committee, 14 September 2023
Council, 24 November 2022

Exempt from Press or Public
No

Derbyshire Dales Plan 2024-28

1 Background

- 1.1 The Derbyshire Dales Plan (corporate plan) sets out the aims of the District Council for the coming years and lists the key improvement projects. The Plan is the over-arching strategy for the District Council as it sets out specific areas to maintain and improve service delivery in the coming years.
- 1.2 The current corporate plan was adopted by Council in March 2020 and has three themes:
 - *People* – providing you with a high quality **customer experience**
 - *Place* – keeping the Derbyshire Dales **clean, green and safe**
 - *Prosperity* – supporting better **homes and jobs** for you.
- 1.3 Derbyshire Dales District Council has limited human and financial resources with which to deliver its statutory and discretionary services and initiatives. Despite being one of the smallest principal councils in the country, the Council has succeeded in delivering significant projects and services; but only by carefully prioritising what it does, when it does it, and to what level.
- 1.4 The preparation of the Derbyshire Dales Plan provides the opportunity for the new administration to set out the District Council's priority services and projects, and to ensure that appropriate budgetary and staffing provision is made to deliver these. It then provides a yardstick against which progress over the coming years can be measured.
- 1.5 This report updates work on the new Derbyshire Dales Plan since the report to the Governance and Resources Committee on 14 September 2023. It seeks approval of the high-level plan (Aims, Themes, Principles) and agreement to the remaining process and timescale for developing and adopting the new plan.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Council on 24 November 2022 considered and agreed the initial steps for the preparation of new Corporate Plan for the period 2024 and beyond, taking into account staff and financial resources. This followed an informal cross-party 'sounding board' session with Members on 18 October 2022.
- 2.2 Consulting residents, Members and staff on their views on the relative importance of District Council services and their satisfaction with those services, plus gathering their aspirations for the future, gave the Council an important steer on the direction of travel it needs to take. The results of this consultation, plus statistical evidence on the needs of the Derbyshire Dales district, were presented to the Governance and Resources Committee on 14 September 2023. An all-Member Workshop was held on 19 September, where hard evidence from data and residents' consultation was presented.
- 2.3 To recap, the evidence base presented to Members sets out the key issues for the Derbyshire Dales to be as follows:

Significantly **low local wages** and **high local house prices** are contributing to a declining and **ageing population**; and together with **CO2 emissions** and **insulation** these are concerns.

- 2.4 Residents' survey respondents said the three services most important for the Council to prioritise spending on are:
1. **Keeping town centres, villages, and streets safe, clean, and clear of litter, dog fouling and fly tipping**
 2. **Household waste and recycling collections**
 3. **Creating and sustaining local jobs and business opportunities**
- 2.5 Since September, meetings have been held of Progressive Alliance Working Groups, some of which have had officer input. Through this process, and meetings between the Corporate Leadership Team and Progressive Alliance Leaders, a set of high-level Aims, Themes and Principles have been developed. These are attached at Appendix 1, and were considered at an All-Member Workshop on 4 December 2023. They are proposed as the basis for the new Derbyshire Dales Plan.
- 2.6 Agreeing and expressing aims, themes and principles is the first part of preparing a corporate plan. The next task will be to cut down the multitude of possible activities and projects into a programme that is deliverable within available financial and staff resources. This is work in progress, and the current draft priorities and outcomes for each Theme are set out in Appendix 2 for noting.
- 2.7 In order to take forward these drafts and create delivery plans, aligned with the budget for 2024/25 to be presented to Council on 29 February 2024, it is proposed that (for each of the five themes) a cross-party working group be established. These will be task and finish groups, meeting first in January and completing their initial task in February. They will each comprise one Member from each of the four political groups. The Chair of each working group will be selected by its members at its first meeting. Each working group will have officer support. The output of each working group is to arrive at a delivery plan for the 2024/25 financial year initially. Each working group will be responsible to a 'parent' policy committee, as follows:
- *Community and Environment Committee*
 1. Environment
 2. Housing
 3. Place shaping and Economy
 4. Community services and resources
 - *Governance and Resources Committee*
 5. Financially sound, fair and responsive Council (corporate)
- 2.8 The work undertaken by Circling Squares (Council, 29 September 2022) identified that the current Corporate Plan includes too many targets, projects and actions. In order to match ambition to resources, a challenge for the working groups is to manage expectations with regard to prioritisation and resourcing. Therefore, as more definitive actions, targets and projects start to take shape, these will need to be tested to ensure that there are adequate

resources, both human and financial to ensure that they are capable of implementation at the required time.

3 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 3.1 The recommended next step is to develop delivery plans via cross-party working groups. These are a means of testing options prior to Council consideration of a deliverable, detailed Derbyshire Dales Plan at its meeting on 29 February 2024.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 The Derbyshire Dales Plan preparation has involved extensive consultation with members, residents and staff, as set out in this and previous reports.

5 Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 It is envisaged that the new Derbyshire Dales Plan will form the basis of budgeting and service planning, with budgets for 2024/25 and an updated Medium-Term Financial Plan being approved at Council on 29 February 2024. The new Derbyshire Dales Plan would come into force from April 2024. It will replace the current Corporate Plan which runs to March 2024.

6 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The new Derbyshire Dales Plan will set the overall direction for the delivery of Council services and policies. This may result in different service areas adopting new and revised policies, depending upon the extent of changes envisaged in the Plan.

7 Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The development of a new Derbyshire Dales Plan will require an appropriate level of budgetary provision to deliver the projects and proposals included therein. This may necessitate some prioritisation and redeployment of existing budgets and staff.
- 7.2 In this regard, the crucial task for Members will be to select from the multitude of possible activities and projects (all of which fit within priorities) and agree a focused programme that is deliverable within available financial and staff resources. Such an approach allows for the development of a realistic and deliverable plan.
- 7.3 The working groups are expected to each develop a delivery plan for the 2024/25 financial year initially. This is likely to result in resources being re-aligned with the new Aims. This re-alignment will be reflected in the draft budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan that are due to be approved by Council on 29 February 2024.
- 7.4 Elsewhere on the agenda for this Council meeting is a revenue budget monitoring report, which forecasts a surplus on the revenue account for 2023/24. That report recommends that £225,579 is transferred to the Corporate Plan Priority Reserve. Subject to Members' approval, that would provide some additional funding to support key actions in the delivery plans.

7.5 The financial risk of this report's recommendations is assessed as low.

8 Legal Advice and Implications

8.1 This report refers to the Derbyshire Dales Plan which as stated is the District Council's primary policy document and a statutory requirement under the Local Government Act 2000. There are 5 recommendations contained within this report, the legal risk of challenge associated with taking the decisions as recommended has been assessed as low.

9 Equalities Implications

9.1 As the Derbyshire Dales Plan will impact all Council services, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be carried out of delivery plans prior to the February Council meeting to ensure the Council meets its statutory duties on equalities. The EIA will also highlight and, if needed, suggest mitigation for potential positive and/or negative implications.

10 Climate Change and Biodiversity Implications

10.1 To be considered as activities emerge.

11 Risk Management

11.1 To be considered as activities emerge.

Report Authorisation

Approvals obtained from Statutory Officers:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Paul Wilson	06/12/2023
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer	Karen Henriksen	05/12/2023
Monitoring Officer	Helen Mitchell	6/12/2023

AIMS

We have a clear goal: Thriving communities in a thriving environment.

We will:

- ***Build flourishing and sustainable communities for residents and businesses through our housing policies, economic development plans, local development plan, and service provision***
- ***Protect and enhance the Derbyshire Dales environment by prioritising climate change and working with partner organisations to minimise pollution and improve biodiversity***
- ***Create an open and modern Council by working with our communities, and engaging with partners (including other public authorities and infrastructure bodies) to champion rural towns and villages***

THEMES

From 2024 to 2028, we will focus on five themes:

- ❖ ***Housing that meets the needs of Derbyshire Dales residents***
- ❖ ***Prosperous and sustainable Derbyshire Dales communities and businesses***
- ❖ ***A thriving environment in the Derbyshire Dales***
- ❖ ***Resources and services to enable communities to flourish***
- ❖ ***A financially sound, fair and responsive Council***

PRINCIPLES

The mission and themes described the position we want to get to. The following principles state how we want to get there.

- ***Place thriving communities and environmental sustainability at the heart of all policies and actions***
- ***Pursue excellence in the services Derbyshire Dales provides***
- ***Manage our financial affairs responsibly and sustainably while using public resources prudently and effectively***
- ***Undertake and monitor all activities with diligence to ensure fairness, equality and non-discrimination***
- ***Recognising the statutory role of the Peak District National Park Authority, work together to ensure that communities across Derbyshire Dales benefit from the outcomes of this plan***
- ***Collaborate at county, mayoral and regional levels where more effective access and use of resources is possible and better outcomes will be achieved***
- ***Supporting and enabling community self improvement through Parish and Town Councils and community groups***
- ***Recognise the local knowledge and expertise in the Derbyshire Dales communities***
- ***Be accountable to the communities that we serve***

APPENDIX 2 DRAFT THEME PRIORITIES AND OUTCOMES (WORK IN PROGRESS)

Theme 1 Environment

A thriving environment in the Derbyshire Dales

Function: Across Housing, Clean and Green, Economic Development and Regeneration and Planning functions

Overall aims:

- Protect and enhance the Derbyshire Dales environment
 - Derbyshire Dales is a great place to live, work and visit; our decisions must secure that for future generations. Our Council will have sustainability at its heart, sustainable communities in a sustainable environment

Priorities:

- **Carbon neutrality and biodiversity net gain:** Facilitate District carbon neutrality by 2040 and biodiversity net gain (BNG), including more than 10% BNG in new developments through policies in the revised Local Plan, working with other stakeholders and facilitating householders and businesses
- **Future of Dales agriculture and land management:** work with other stakeholders to help farmers adopt sustainable agricultural practices and contribute to the Dales carbon footprint reduction, biodiversity and water retention in the land
- **Landscape:** Protect and enhance the landscape initially through policies in the revised Local Plan and a subsequent revised strategy
- **Pollution:** Actively monitor, identify and proactively address air and water pollution sources in the Dales in conjunction other authorities; encourage communities in monitoring through citizen science
- **Recycling:** Increase recycling and reduce landfill particularly associated with organic waste, plastics and rare and dangerous elements
- **Homes and Infrastructure:** Work with utilities and infrastructure providers to facilitate householders reduce their carbon footprints, un-recycled rubbish; enforce planning conditions including on site management companies regarding biodiversity requirements

A thriving environment in the Derbyshire Dales

Priorities	Outcomes
Climate change and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A “web of green” is incorporated in all Council policies and functions with an emphasis on “Clean and Green”, Planning, Economic Development and Housing The climate action plan is extended to set a goal of carbon neutrality for the District by 2040 working with partners and stakeholders in business, housing and voluntary sectors
Dales agriculture and land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm diversification grants are allocated and implemented DDDC supports Parish councils in gaining access to resources to increase the number of allotments
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies in the Local Plan address strategic landscape protection and enhancement Revision of the landscape strategy and SPD once the Local Plan is adopted
Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AQAP in Ashbourne is finalised and adopted as a priority action Measures to minimise the impact of vehicle and other sources of air pollution (including particulates) in the District are developed and implemented Severn Trent Water is proactively and assertively lobbied through all available means to reduce river pollution and overtopping of drainage and foul water sewers
Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledging the success of recycling in the Dales, higher targets and measures to achieve them are implemented
Housing and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulation and heat pumps to reduce the Dales carbon footprint are in widespread use Developers are required to provide designs for critical infrastructure with applications Planning conditions and building regulations are enforced Standards for site management companies are adopted following work at a national level to which the District has contributed

Housing that meets the needs of Derbyshire Dales residents

Function: Across Housing, Regulatory Services, Economic Development and Regeneration and Planning functions

Overall aims:

- To deliver a 'whole District' Housing Strategy which has at its centre the belief that everyone should have the right and ability to live and prosper within their own community, and that the existing and future housing stock should be 'fit for purpose' in the context of the challenges of climate change

Priorities:

- Increase the number of affordable homes built each year over the period of the plan, and beyond , to meet the determined District housing need with availability matched with local housing need across the whole District and available funds and land.
- Maintain our good track record on homelessness. Minimising homelessness within Derbyshire Dales, with an objective of people being made homeless are able to be rehoused locally.
- Stem the loss of housing stock to second and holiday homes so that they are managed and communities are not lost. This will be accomplished by utilising the council tax and planning system.
- Work to ensure that all rented housing, private and social is fit to live in with a robust council team supporting tenants.
- Noting the legal framework in which Home Options is provided, maintain the Home Options scheme and seek new ways of using housing services to maintain and enhance communities
- Provide support and guidance for improving the housing stock to cope with climate change and the cost of living
- Urgently work with communities, and the gypsies and travellers themselves, to provide safe, secure and properly serviced temporary and permanent sites for travellers and gypsies to comply with the law and the Local Plan

Housing that meets the needs of Derbyshire Dales residents

Priorities	Outcomes
Increasing the affordable housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Housing and Related Financial and Land Banking Strategy to support ramping up the delivery of affordable houses (2024) • An understanding of where new houses are needed and growth targeted to meet the local demand • Providers, experts, PDNPA and local groups have been brought together to input in delivering the housing strategy • The Housing development function is reinforced to support the growth activities • Affordable Houses delivered have increased year on year
Prevent and minimise homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and implemented the Homelessness Strategy due March 2024 • When required people made homeless remain within their local community
Second and Holiday homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions within the Local Plan that changes from residential to Holiday/Second homes require planning permission. These provisions apply across Derbyshire Dales and the Peak Park • Council tax premium is in place and agreement on how the extra income is used to support the local communities
Improving Housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A one-stop centre to advice householders exists for guidance, trusted trader and grants (County, Citizens Advice, Rural Action Derbyshire and Age UK undertake these services)</i>
Quality of Rental stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A support and maintenance charter for providers and tenants has been developed and enforced
Housing allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Options, S106 and Derbyshire Dales clauses are reviewed
Travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary and permanent sites are found and a strategy developed for the future

Prosperous and sustainable Dales communities and businesses

Function: Housing and Economic Development and Regeneration

Overall aims:

- Encourage the provision of attractive well-paid employment and local career opportunities for residents through a focus on higher value adding and growth sectors
- Maintain support for individual businesses focused on grant funding and investment for micro businesses

Priorities

1. Working with the mayoral authority, increase the attractiveness of Derbyshire Dales to high value adding, growing sectors and business decarbonisation by:
 - Encouraging utilities to provide the required telecoms, electricity, water and transport infrastructure for housing and commercial use
 - Increasing the take up of education , apprenticeships and training opportunities in higher value occupations by Derbyshire Dales residents
 - Ensuring sites are available for housing and commercial use through the Local Plan, by working with public and private stakeholders and by accessing grant funding to bring brownfield sites back into use
2. Continue to improve the attractiveness of Dales towns and villages through targeted grant-funded redevelopment
3. Maintain the business support delivery, alongside external partners, aimed specifically at achieving a high level of grant take-up

Prosperous and sustainable Dales communities and businesses

Programme	Outcomes
Strategic framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised economic plan developed in conjunction with the mayoral authority Revised Local Plan adopted by end 2026 with related documents including the revised infrastructure plan Marketing plan for Derbyshire Dales for the target markets of mayoral authority, high value adding and growth businesses and investors
Implement the strategic plans	The profile of Derbyshire Dales is raised regionally and with targeted sectors, and infrastructure provision and site availability improved
Facilitate town centre regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pipeline of other town and large village centre regeneration projects The Ashbourne Reborn programme successfully delivered Matlock's Bakewell Road site redeveloped successfully
Identified and installed brownfield sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A masterplan for the development of Ashbourne Airfield phases 1 and 2 Plans for other strategic brownfield sites prepared with support from Homes England and implementation partners in place
Support small businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The business support role facilitates access to grant aid and financing Focus on high value growth business, decarbonisation opportunities and farm diversification

Resources and services to enable communities to flourish

Function: Clean and Green

Overall aims: *Recognising the excellent work done under this theme already, provide resources and services that create resilience in communities and that enable individuals within them to live fulfilling lives*

Priorities

Play areas: Orphaned play areas are adopted by a suitable organisation so that children's play needs are satisfied and facilities managed, maintained and improved

Leisure centres and services: Periodic contract review to determine value for money and focus of community based leisure services

Parks, open spaces and street environment: Continue to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of these places consistent with environmental policies

Events: Continue to provide attractive events with third parties that bring together the Dales' communities

Toilets: Working with community organisations and others, re-open toilets where feasible to do so and where there is an established need

Car parks: Maximise the benefit to the Council and the Dales' communities that car parks provide through additional sources of revenue generation while tariffing car parks to attract residents and visitors to Dales' towns

Waste and recycling: Prepare a policy and strategy for the period following the end of the Serco contract

Emergency planning: Continue the excellent support provided

Community safety partnership: Work to reduce crime and disorder and improve community safety in the Dales

Resources and services to enable communities to flourish

Priorities	Outcomes
Play areas	A policy and strategy for orphaned play areas and their ongoing management and maintenance is developed and implemented by suitable organisations
Leisure centres and services	Leisure centres reach levels of utilisation necessary to break even with continued growth in membership throughout the plan period Leisure services associated with well-being show growth in take up throughout the period
Parks, open spaces and street environment	Maintained to a high standard in accordance with environmental policies
Events	Programmes of events across the Dales for residents and visitors alike
Toilets	Continue to identify opportunities for re-opening toilets closed in the last five years working with community organisations and others
Car parks	An implemented strategy for increased car park revenue generation and space utilisation An implemented strategy for tariffing to attract residents and visitors to town centres
Waste and recycling	A prepared plan for the post-Serco period of waste and recycling collection
Emergency planning	Continued review and revision to maintain and improve the Dales resilience Identification of major threats to the Dales and strategies for eliminating
Community safety partnership	Maintain input and support of Community Safety Partnership

A financially sound, fair and responsive District Council

Overall aims

- The Council is the champion of the Derbyshire Dales community when working with partner organisations in the public and private sectors and in the provision of its own services.
- The Council supports particular vulnerable groups for which it has a responsibility by taking a lead even when unpopular decisions have to be made.
- The Council takes actions to ensure that the Derbyshire Dales are an attractive working and leisure environment, including leading by example with conditions for its own workforce.

A financially sound, fair and responsive District Council

Priorities

Consultation and engagement with residents

1. Undertake well publicized and designed consultation with residents about major policy changes and decisions that will affect them, the activities they pursue, the services we provide and the area in which they live.
2. Recognize that residents are often the eyes and ears of the Council whose evidence is to be taken into account in policy development and in decision making.
3. Ensure that all residents, and their Parish and Town Councils, understand how their communities will change during the implementation period of the Local Plan.
4. Ensure that access to DDDC services and information is provided to meet the needs of all individuals noting the difficulties some have with particular technologies and office locations.
5. Ensure management information is available to enable the effective management of functions and services

Sustainable finances and services

1. Manage financial affairs responsibly and sustainably using public resources prudently and effectively, while exploring opportunities to increase external income

DDDC staff terms and conditions

1. Work to ensure that staff terms, conditions, benefits, work-life balance and career development are regularly reviewed, in order to meet the needs of recruitment and retention, and to set an example to other local businesses and organisations

A financially sound, fair and responsive District Council

Outcomes

Consultation and engagement with residents

1. Acknowledged use of residents' local knowledge and expertise, noting that this is often to a recognised professional standard
 - Revised consultation process associated with planning applications
 - *Staff supported and enabled to follow the revised consultation process and its objectives*
2. Satisfaction survey results evaluate level of satisfaction with Council services and taken into account in subsequent service delivery
3. Information systems that make best (and cost effective) use of emerging technologies and approaches for interacting with residents and other stakeholders, and for managing services, functions, resources and staff

Sustainable finances and services

1. A financially sound District Council

DDDC staff terms and conditions

1. Actions taken to address recruitment and retention challenges