



Council – 29 February 2024

DERBYSHIRE DALES PLAN 2024-28 (CORPORATE PLAN)

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 and sets the framework for allocating scarce financial and human resources through the budget.

The report reiterates the Aims, Themes and Principles approved by Council in December 2023, and proposes priorities, outcomes and delivery plans for adoption as the detailed Derbyshire Dales Plan for the period 2024-2028.

Recommendations

1. That the Aims, Themes and Principles approved by Council on 14 December 2023 as the basis of the new Derbyshire Dales plan (and set out in Appendix 1) be noted.
2. That the Theme priorities, outcomes and Delivery Plans set out in Appendices 2 to 7 be adopted as the new Derbyshire Dales Plan 2024-28

List of Appendices

Appendix 1	Aims, Themes and Principles (for information)
Appendix 2	Theme priorities and outcomes for approval
Appendix 3	Environment Delivery Plan for approval
Appendix 4	Housing Delivery Plan for approval
Appendix 5	Place Shaping Delivery Plan for approval
Appendix 6	Community services Delivery Plan for approval
Appendix 7	Corporate and finance Delivery Plan for approval

Background Papers

- Governance and Resources Committee, 15 February 2024
- Community and Environment Committee, 8 February 2024
- Council, 14 December 2023
- Governance and Resources Committee, 14 September 2023
- Council, 24 November 2022

Exempt from Press or Public

No

Derbyshire Dales Plan 2024-28 (Corporate Plan)

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 Council on 14 December 2023 at which the high-level plan (Aims, Themes, Principles) were approved. It seeks adoption of priorities, outcomes and Delivery Plans for each of the five themes, which have been developed by Member Working Groups.

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 were held of Progressive Alliance Working Groups, some of which 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 were developed. These were considered at an All-Member Workshop on 4 December 2023. They were subsequently approved as the basis for the new Derbyshire Dales Plan by Council on 14 December 2023, and they are attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.6 In order to create delivery plans, aligned with the budget for 2024/25, Council resolved that (for each of the five themes) a cross-party working group be established. These met first in January and completed their initial task in February. They each comprised one Member from each of the four political groups. The Chair of each working group was selected by its members at its first meeting. Each working group had officer support. The output of each working group was to arrive at a delivery plan for the 2024/25 financial year initially. Each working group reported to a 'parent' policy committee, as follows:
- *Community and Environment Committee (8 February, meeting cancelled due to snow)*
 1. Environment
 2. Housing
 3. Place shaping and Economy
 4. Community services and resources
 - *Governance and Resources Committee (15 February)*
 5. Financially sound, fair and responsive Council (corporate)
- 2.7 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 was to manage expectations with regard to prioritisation and resourcing. Therefore, Working Groups tested ambitions against resources to ensure that there are adequate resources, both human and financial. Therefore, of necessity, not all ambitions will have full captured in this plan. However it is a living document and Members are able to remove some priorities in future in order to accommodate new ones.
- 2.8 The Member Working Groups with officer involvement operated as a highly effective mechanism for progressing understanding and agreement in a joint officer-member and cross-party manner. Members may wish to consider re-using the mechanism in future.

3 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 3.1 The recommended next step is to adopt and deliver the new Derbyshire Dales Plan (corporate plan).

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 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 have each developed a delivery plan for the 2024/25 financial year initially. As the delivery plans are developed further, this is likely to result in resources being re-aligned with the new Aims. Where the financial implications of the new delivery plans have been costed, they have been reflected in the draft budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan that are due to be approved at the same Council meeting as this Corporate Plan.
- 7.4 Elsewhere on the agenda for this Council meeting is report on the proposed revenue budget for 2024/25. Within that report approval is sought to transfer a further amount to the Corporate Plan Priority Reserve at 31 March 2024. Subject to Members' approval of the recommendations in the revenue budget report, this will increase the balance on the Corporate Plan Priority Reserve to £935,456 as at 31 March 2024. £51,896 has been earmarked in 2024/25 and £149,575 in 2025/26 to finance a capital project, leaving an uncommitted balance of £733,985. This uncommitted balance of £733,985 would be available to finance revenue or capital expenditure to support key actions in the delivery plans (subject to relevant approvals).

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 two 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, Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) will be carried out on delivery plans prior to the implementation to ensure the Council meets its statutory duties on equalities. The EIAs will highlight and, if needed, suggest mitigation for potential positive and/or negative implications.

10 Climate Change and Biodiversity Implications

10.1 There was a 'green thread' running through the Working Group discussions and climate change and biodiversity considerations have been integral to the development of Delivery Plans. There will be further opportunities to consider these implications as plans are brought forward for implementation in the coming years.

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	21/02/2024
Director of Resources/ S.151 Officer	Karen Henriksen	21/02/2024
Monitoring Officer	Helen Mitchell	21/02/2024

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***

