

MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING of the
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
held at the Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote
on Thursday 30th October 2025
at 6.00pm

PRESENT:

Labour Group

Councillor A Archer (Chair) and Councillor A Tilley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors S Bambrick, J Carroll, M Gee, S Harrison, A Haynes, I Hudson, A Jones, L Mulgrew, M Mulgrew, R Pearson, G Rhind, D Shepherd, L Singh, K Storey, B Stuart, S Taylor and N Tilley.

Conservative Group

Councillors N Atkin, D Corbin, M Ford, M Gotheridge, K Haines, A Kirke, J Lowe, S Meghani, D Muller, J Patten and P Watson.

Liberal Democrats

Councillors G Andrew

Non-Grouped

Councillor A Wheelton

CL/42 **APOLOGIES**

Council was advised that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors S Harrison, D Pegg and Councillor V Redfern (Labour Group) Councillor M Gotheridge (Conservative Group) and Jayne Davies (Liberal Democrats).

CL/43 **TO CONFIRM THE OPEN MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The Open Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 11 September 2025 (CL/22 – CL/37) confirmed by Council as a true account and signed by the Chair of Council.

CL/44 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Council was informed that no declarations of interest had been received.

CL/45 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR**

The Chair thanked Councillor S Meghani for the organising the Diwali celebration and reported on recent civic events, including a church roof project, attendance at cultural fairs, a Royal visit by Princess Anne to Toyota, fundraising activities, and upcoming Remembrance events.

CL/46 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER**

The Leader congratulated members on recent activities, highlighted cultural celebrations, and discussed the town masterplan and leisure centre review.

CL/47 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

Council were informed that apologies has been received by the Head of Paid Service.

CL/48 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10**

Council was informed that no questions had been received.

CL/49 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.11 Councillor Andrew has submitted a question to the Leader of the Council”.

Following our question to the Leader on 10th April 2025 expressing concern over the continued use of Glyphosates in our weedkilling activities, to which the Leader responded that he “noted concerns raised which Council was informed that would need to be addressed through a formal process with timescales and the involvement of relevant experts.” (Minute ref CL/136). Myself and Councillor Davies would like to have an update on the formal process described 6 months on.

The Leader addressed Council and thanked Councillor G Andrew for the question and noted that as stated at Council in April the concerns had been raised and a response would be submitted in due course.

“In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.11 Councillor Corbin has submitted a question to the Leader of the Council”.

In recent years, we’ve heard much from the Leader and his administration about their commitment to tackling the climate emergency, protecting our environment, and enhancing biodiversity.

The Leader himself introduced the Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency, and this Labour administration accepted the Independent Members’ motion on ecology and nature recovery. We’ve also heard regular talk from that side of the chamber about tree planting, protecting green spaces, and standing up for nature.

But fine words are easy, leadership is proven through choices.

Can the Leader therefore set out clearly, in plain terms that residents can understand, what the Labour administration’s actual beliefs and policies are on climate change, the environment, tree cover, biodiversity, and the protection of South Derbyshire’s natural landscape, with how those policies are being put into practice today, not just promised for tomorrow.

The Leader addressed Council and thanked Councillor D Corbin for the opportunity outlined actions taken, including, Climate Strategy with 64 actions, 54.7% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions, Installation of 58 EV charging points, Tree planting schemes, Transition of fleet to low-emission vehicles, Biodiversity measures and Green Flag awards, Support for local businesses

“In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.11 Councillor Corbin has submitted a question to the Leader of the Council”.

We are faced with the prospect of Local Government Reorganisation, a process driven by choices made in Westminster and, it would seem, by the civil service machine behind it. Indeed, we have our own specific meeting on this next week.

I agree with the Leader’s position that we must engage in those discussions; you cannot be outside the tent when the future of local government is being shaped.

However, the Government’s own figures claim that reorganisation would save £2.9 billion over five years. Set against an annual UK budget of around £1.2 trillion (before accounting for year-on-year inflation), that’s less than 0.05 per cent, roughly 50 pence saved for every £1,000 spent.

Since then, it has been revealed that the Government failed its own due diligence, not properly factoring in pension liabilities which, though difficult to calculate, are likely to run into the billions, making any projected savings irrelevant and, I would warrant, ultimately costing taxpayers thousands as a result.

I don’t believe anyone in this chamber, or in our communities, wants to see South Derbyshire District Council disappear, given the quality of the services we deliver and the close link we maintain with our residents. We’ve all seen what happens when councils become too large and unwieldy. Birmingham City Council being the most obvious and recent warning. Bigger is not always better or more efficient.

So, while rightly engaging in the LGR process, and I applaud the Leader for doing so in what are difficult times and difficult discussions, alongside that, what has the Leader done formally to lobby Government and our MP to stop what many of us, and many residents, see as unnecessary, costly and reckless change that risks breaking a council which already works for the people of South Derbyshire, given the recent news and revelations?

The Leader addressed Council and thanked Councillor D Corbin for the question and noted the concerns and confirmed engagement in discussions but noted that no formal resolution had been passed to lobby Government.

CL/50 **NOTICES OF MOTION IN ORDER OF WHICH THEY WERE RECEIVED**

Council was informed that no notices of motion had been received.

CL/51 CAPITAL BUDGET 2025-26

The Head of Finance and Resources addressed Council noting that the link provided within the report was not correct and sought approval of the recommendations.

Councillor N Atkin sought clarification in relation to item 4.2, 'unsupported borrowing' and what it meant in terms of repaying interest.

The Head of Finance and Resources confirmed that the funding was sought through reserves, an internal council resource that did not incur any interest to be repaid.

Councillor D Corbin addressed Council raising concerns in relation to uplifted purchase prices, funding plans, additional costs, hire costs and whether this had been factored into the budget.

The Head of Finance and Resources confirmed that the same strategy had been applied as the previous year, which had proven successful.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Council approved the additional Capital Programme expenditure of £142,217.

1.2 Council approved the changes in the Fleet Replacement Programme, for inclusion in the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme as detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

CL/52 LICENSING ACT 2023 – STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The Licensing Services Manager addressed Council and provided a summary of the report, noting that the Statement of Licensing Policy was approved and recommended for adoption by the Environmental Development Services Committee on 18 September 2025, following an 8-week consultation period.

Members considered the report and supported the officer's recommendations.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Council adopted the Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

CL/53 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – SWADLINCOTE AMD SURROUNDING AREA

The Independent Consultant addressed Council providing an overview of the report, highlighting the areas for review and sought approval of the recommendations.

Members considered the report and supported the officer's recommendations.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Council approved a Community Governance Review for the unparished Swadlincote and surrounding area and the parished area of Castle Gresley.

1.2 Council approved the Terms of Reference, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report.

CL/54 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The Executive Director – Law and People addressed Council and sought approval of the recommendations.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Council noted and accepted the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’s Annual Review Letter 2024-5.

1.2 Council noted and accepted the Housing Ombudsman Landlord Performance Report 2024/5 attached at Appendix A.

1.3 Council noted the summary of complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman concerning the Council during 2024/5 as detailed in Annexe A and Annexe B.

CL/55 **COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

The Head of Organisational Development addressed Council providing a summary of the report, noting discrepancies on the Total Expenditure reported, which should have been shown as £61.029m and Financing and Investment Expenditure reported, which should have been shown as £0.849m leading to the pie chart subsequently being imbalanced

Members considered the report and supported the officer’s recommendations.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Members approved, for publication, the Council’s Annual Report for 2024/25, attached Appendix A to the report.

CL/56 **OPEN MINUTES:**

The Council received and considered the Open Minutes of its Committees

Committee	Date	Minute Nos
Overview & Scrutiny	27 August 2025	OS/12- OS/22
Audit & Governance	03 September 2025	AG/22 - AG/36
Finance & Management	04 September 2025	FM/24 - FM/44
Development Management	16 September 2025	DM/52 - DM/62
Environmental & Development Services	18 September 2025	EDS/28 - EDS/38
Etwall Joint Management	24 September 2025	EL/11- EL/16
Housing & Community Services	25 September 2025	HCS/28 - HCS/41

Overview & Scrutiny	01 October 2025	OS/23 – OS/30
Finance & Management	02 October 2025	FM/50 – FM/61
Development Management	14 October 2025	DM/ 63- DM/
Area Forum	Date	Minute Nos
Etwall	14 January 2025	E/A7 – E/A13
Repton	21 January 2025	R/A7 – R/A 13
Melbourne	22 January 2025	M/A7 – M/A13
Swadlincote	29 January 2025	S/A7 – S/A13
Newhall	11 February 2025	N/A8 - N/A14
Linton	12 February 2025	L/A8 – L/A14
D2 Strategic Leadership Board	31 July 2025	10/25 – 17/25

RESOLVED:

That the Open Minutes of the above-mentioned Committees were approved as a true record.

CL/57 **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PANELS 2025/26**

Members reviewed the composition of Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Panels 2025/26.

RESOLVED:**Development Management Committee**

Councillor L Mulgrew was appointed as Chair and Councillor M Gee was appointed as Vice-Chair.

CL/58 **COMPOSITION OF SUBSTITUTE PANELS**

Members reviewed the composition of the Substitute Panels 2025/26.

RESOLVED:

Council was informed no amendments were to be made.

CL/59 **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2025/26**

Members reviewed the Outside Bodies representation list 2025/26.

RESOLVED:

Council was informed that no amendments were to be made.

CL/60 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

Members reviewed the Representation of Member Champions.

RESOLVED:

Council was informed no amendments were to be made.

CL/61 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as indicated in the reports of Committees.

EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

The Exempt Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 September 2025 (CL/39 - CL/41) were received.

EXEMPT QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NUMBER 11

Council was informed that no questions had been received.

EXEMPT MINUTES

The Council received the Exempt Minutes of its Committees:

Committee	Date	Minutes Nos
Finance & Management	04 September 2025	FM/45 - FM/49
Environmental & Development Services	18 September 2025	EDS/39 - EDS/41
Housing & Community Services	25 September 2025	HCS/42-HCS/43
Finance & Management	02 October 2025	FM/62 – FM/63

The meeting terminated at 19:05 hours.

COUNCILLOR A ARCHER

CHAIR OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

