

# COUNCIL MEETING – 25 NOVEMBER 2021

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS RULE OF PROCEDURE 15

### AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 (A)

**Questions from Councillor Martin Burfoot to Councillor Garry Purdy, Leader of the Council:**

*“This Council has rightfully declared a climate emergency and Britain has of course hosted the recent COP26 conference in Glasgow. Given councillors’ concern about the implications for our District, the country and the entire world of global warming and climate change, can Cllr Purdy and relevant officers explain how they expect the handful of EV charging points for electric vehicles provided by the Council so far, in our car parks, to make a significant contribution to cutting CO2 emissions, or more importantly encourage residents to purchase an electric car before 2030?”*

*Motorists in rural areas face a shortage of charging points. According to the County Councils’ Network, there is one every 16 miles, compared to one for every mile in London. Research has shown that rural drivers are being deterred from making the switch to electric by a lack of faith in Government’s ability to deliver the necessary infrastructure, so I believe this Council should be in a position to take the initiative and develop a programme of charge point delivery in the Dales, given our many car parks and other publicly accessible facilities.*

*I have also been informed that the charging points installed outside the Town Hall, in Edgefold Road, Matlock are only 7Kw capacity, which require about 12 hours for a full charge. This is hardly practical, user friendly nor fair to other potential users of those parking bays. These charging points obviously depend on a ‘customer’ finding a vacant parking space when they need it urgently.*

*Can Cllr Purdy therefore explain when the provision of higher capacity, ultra rapid, say up to 50Kw charging points will be considered, in order to match future demand as EV cars and commercial vehicles become more popular? Adequate supply of higher Kw chargers will obviously ‘make or break’ the success of electric vehicles.”*

#### **RESPONSE:**

All the EV chargers which have been installed in three out of four of our public car parks were part of a project which was funded by Central Government and managed by Derbyshire County Council. The County had some funding to increase EV provision for residents on-street but didn’t have any on-street areas which were suitable. So they looked at car parks across the County which would meet the criteria set by Central Government.

This is why the EV charging points in Edgefold car park, Matlock, New Street car park, Bakewell and Shawcroft car park, Ashbourne are 7KW as these are designed to ‘drip feed’ during the night which is perfect for residents. Each car park has four chargers and cost in the region of £35,000 per site.

There was a separate project to increase the number 'rapid' EV chargers across Nottingham and Derbyshire. Derbyshire County Council accessed number of sites across the Districts and Wirksworth in the Dales was successful. This EV charger has capacity of up to 50KW and cost in the region of £40,000 for this one 'rapid' charger. BP Chargemaster was the company which was successful and carried out the installation and amangement of the current EV chargers and they also funded the other 25% of the costs needed to complete the project, therefore there was no direct cost to the District Council.

With regards to what have/are we the District Council doing to encourage residents and others towards considering purchasing an electric vehicle. Residents and taxi drivers have been invieted to seminars which have provided information on electric vehicles, the benefits and answers to some of the most common questions.

Officers are also looking at installing more EV chargers in our car parks in the next twelve months. However, the funding available from central government only covers up to 75% of the total costs for the supply and installation of any EV charging points and is specifically centred around increasing provision for residents, so any chargers installed will likely be 7KW.

The charging points can be used by anyone wanting to charge their vehicle but it doesn't quite meet the immediate needs of visitors a booster charge in a short period of time.

A large proportion of the costs is for the installation of the EV charging points, which is one of the reasons there are multiple EV charging points in three of the car parks as the infrastructure is in place then it make sense to add as many chargers as possible. However, if the local substation requires an upgrade to accommodate the installation of new EV charging points then we would be required to meet 50% of the costs accosiated to upgrading the substation and this would not be covered by the funding available. The costs for replacing the substation can run in to tens of thousands of pounds.

With regards to future provision of higher capacity EV chargers, this is been looked at by Derbshire County Council they have commissioned a study to help identify demand for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, both public facing and on-street. This countywide assessment of demand will include identification of suitable locations for EV charging infrastructure to help meet this demand. This will require a joined up approach and will involved other organisations including the District Council.

The District Council is also an active member of the District/Borough Council Derbyshire County Council working group on EV charging infrastructure and have fed into the desired outcomes of the study, including advocating for the inclusion of consideration of provision in our remote rural villages lacking off street parking. As types of chargepoints are to be considered including those of higher capacity. The Council await the outcomes of the study (due at the end of the year) to inform next steps. Derbyshire County Council consider partnership working will be vital in terms of delivery and the District Council intends to be an active partner as this work moves forward into the delivery phase.

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 (B)

### Question from Councillor Clare Gamble to Councillor Garry Purdy, Leader of the Council:

*“1. On July 26th, officers made the operational decision to landfill food waste for 3 months, without any climate change impact assessment. This decision expired on 26th October. At the full council meeting on 14th October Tim Braund agreed with me, that any future decision to landfill food waste should have a climate change assessment. Can you tell me if a climate change assessment has been done, for the subsequent decision to landfill food waste, that must have been made on or after 26th October?”*

*2. We have all witnessed recent events that paint a picture of the Conservative Party as one of sleaze and lobbying for vested interests. At the Governance and Resources Committee on 18th November I watched you use your allocated speaking time to present the case for a local landowner. Do you think this is an appropriate use of your position as the leader of a council who is supposed to represent all of the residents in the Derbyshire Dales? How many times, and on what dates, have you met Mr Newton, the owner of the land which the Starkholmes allotments are on? Were officers present on all occasions?”*

*3. Earlier this year, as part of a complaint, I provided the Monitoring Officer with photographic evidence of Cllr Atkins declared employer, with outside table and chairs that would require a pavement license. Cllr Atkin had participated in debate and voted to give businesses free pavement licenses. I was told by the Monitoring Officer he would prefer to treat the issue as a training matter. Can you inform me whether Cllr Atkin has received the training required to inform him he should not be voting to financially benefit his employer?”*

### RESPONSE:

1. A Climate Change Impact Assessment was not undertaken. As stated in previous meetings, the primary focus and reason for the temporary adjustments to the waste and recycling collection service was to support the improvement of waste collections to our residents. Whilst it is regrettable that the Council has needed to take these steps, we have seen a significant reduction in the disruption to our waste collection service as a result of these difficult decisions.

Officers understand and acknowledge the concern of Members in respect of the Methane emissions associated with food waste temporarily going to landfill, however completing a full quantitative assessment would have not changed the situation. At this time there were not enough drivers to to restore the food waste rounds. We are however, pleased to report that separate food waste collections and the collection of side waste for recycling will resume from Monday 29 November.

2. Thank you for raising this issue, Cllr Gamble. I do not accept your view that I was presenting a case for anyone. I used my contribution to share information that had been provided to me in the meeting I had agreed to hold with the landowner. This information was relevant to the matter under discussion. I am keen that the discussion can move on to support all parties to achieve a solution for the allotment holders at Starkholmes. I will provide the remaining information to you in writing after the meeting.
3. All Members have been invited to attend training on Decision Making and Ethics in December and I understand that the Monitoring Officer will provide a much needed refresher for all Members on the requirements of the Code of Conduct and maintaining the highest standards as elected representatives. I am advised that the Monitoring Officer has discussed the issue with Cllr Atkin, despite not receiving a formal complaint when the matter was raised in September 2020, and reiterated the need to seek advice on such matters in future. I would recommend any Member to approach the Monitoring Officer for advice or counsel ahead of any decision whether they consider that there may be a potential conflict of interest.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 (C)**

### **Question from Councillor Steve Wain to Councillor Garry Purdy, Leader of the Council:**

*“At the Governance and Resources Committee meeting held on Thursday 18 November 2021, Councillor Purdy took it upon himself to criticise Matlock Town Council for their handling of correspondence they had received, from a land agent relating to the Starkholmes Allotments.*

*He actively put forward the account of the owner of the allotment site, as one Councillor alluded to, as if he were his agent, stating that letters had not been responded to and a letter was not read out at Council.*

*As a former Police Officer, what enquiries did Councillor Purdy undertake with Matlock Town Council, to establish their account of events, and therefore ensuring he provided a balanced and impartial view to Members at the G&R meeting and those subsequently viewing the meeting by Zoom?”*

### **RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your question. I held a meeting on Tuesday 9 November with Councillors Cruise and Hughes, town councillors for Matlock who had participated in the original discussion and vote on this matter on 30 September in order to discuss in confidence the issues raised by the landowner in respect of the actions of Matlock Town Council. This discussion helped to inform my views to the meeting, and despite the supposition referred to in your question, I was able to approach the matter with an open mind.