

District Cllrs Karen Roberts and Peter Harris Report for September 2024

Details are on the Council's website - see The Council - Calendar of Meetings for links to each of the papers and reports.

There are very few meetings during the summer but there has been one recent development.

Sadly our Councillor Keith Melton who represents neighbouring villages on the Trent valley has been removed from the Cabinet by the Labour Leader. Liberal Democrats have had one seat on the eight member Cabinet since May 2023. Keith said, "It seems to me that [the Labour Leader] has reacted badly to my attempts to push the Climate Change agenda and the restoration of nature "too hard" within the joint administration. It appears that the Labour Group on the council did not take kindly to my attempts to challenge the decision on developing land in the Lowfield Lane area [Balderton], by trying to organise a revision of the Arkwood [N&SDC's development company] plans from over 140 houses, down to a more sustainable level of about one third of that, preferably fewer than 45 houses."

Keith also said ""The area of Lowfield Lane has a significant segment of "species-rich grassland" and that is a designation of land that has already suffered huge losses of around 90% in the national context. The first rule of land development is that you should "do no harm" to the natural environment and that is not the case with the current NSDC and Arkwood Ltd plans for Lowfield Lane."

Karen and Peter will continue to press for all development in the village to be sensitive and responsive to local issues and improving our environment..

Cabinet meeting June 11

Last year's budget showed a surplus of three quarters of a million pounds that is transferred to the Council's reserves after a deficit was expected. Next year there will be a plan to redevelop the small units that are on the old Council Depot on Crew Lane Southwell, and an expansion of the CCTV. Discussion of land at Old Hall Farm Endingly is still being taken in secret.

The revised Customer Care strategy developed under Peter's leadership last year - where the officer that takes your call or email, will take responsibility for answering your enquiry, or make it clear what is going to happen, has begun to take effect. Any issues of this not being followed should be reported to us.

There will be a meeting of the Council on Sept 20 to agree the new Allocations Plan and Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Strategy. Issues for the area have already been seen by residents, and comments related on.

Anti social behaviour in the towns is causing concern and so the Council is putting more resources into this to reduce its impact.

Council meeting June 18

There was a petition asking the Council to consider providing some parking spaces without height restrictions for vehicles transporting multiple wheelchair users. This will be considered by the Cabinet. There was a discussion on how scrutiny of the Council's decisions should be improved, as was a proposal to develop a system for making local members more aware of matters in their own wards. We will report back on progress on this.

Planning Committee Aug 10 and Sept 8

No local matters were referred to the Committee on Aug 8

The Vineries [the 6th iteration of the plans - after the Outline application for this Allocated Site was agreed - was considered at the Sept 8 meeting. It is very disappointing that the developers, Cameron Homes, and the land owners, including Sir John Starkey and others [all of whom are listed on the publicly available application papers], did not engage with the residents to consider how to take this application forward. They put forward each changed plan - with slight adjustments - but no comprehensive review in response to the Southwell Neighbourhood Plan and local residents views.

Policy and Policy Improvement Committee Sept 2

The UoN/NCC's Green Awards' programme is revived but only accessible via a mobile phone app with 2 x £20 'winners' per month. There are 611 members in N&SDC. The Performance Review of the Council to June is now published. The 'footfall' monitor for Southwell is not yet installed and reported on. There are a number of performance reports that are below target - and these are being monitored and addressed.

The Committee heard a briefing from the Portfolio Holder - Public Protection and Community Relations, and considered the placement of the Kidney Stones at Castle House and the Council's digital strategy

The next meeting of the Committee will hear from Councillor Rowan Cozens - Portfolio Holder - Heritage, Culture and the Arts, and discuss the Tenant Engagement Strategy and Food Waste

Cabinet Sept 10

Agenda not published when report was drafted

Karen Roberts and Peter Harris

Cllr Penny Rainbow September 2024 Report Southwell Ward Member

Newark and Sherwood District Council Report; August 2024

August is always a quiet month for committee meetings. The planning committee meets every month, we met on August 1st, where a planning application for an allocated site on Lower Kirklington Road, Southwell, known as the Vineries.

The application for 45 houses was deferred owing to concerns around overlooking, size of houses and a lack of information, within the report, from the NSDC tree officer.

It is expected the application will be re-considered at the September meeting.

Kidney stones

The administration of NSDC, Labour, Independents for Newark and the Liberal Democrat's are all supportive of the plan to locate the Kidney Stones outside Castle House.

Currently, the cost will be £81,240, although the cost may rise.

The £81,240 will be met from Council funds.

Robert Kidney was a sculptor, born in Nottingham in 1900 with his work being displayed in the Royal Academy.

The Kidney Stones comprise of 12 pieces of stone forming panels. The individual stones measure 2m in height and 1m in width and are carved sandstone.

The stones, property of Newark Town Council, have lain under tarpaulin for 40 years in Newark cemetery.

Members of the Cabinet, with the exception of Cllr Rhona Holloway (Conservative Group Leader), all voted in favour for the location and costs of the project.

As a member of the Policy, Performance, Improvement Committee, I submitted a Topic Request application that a working group consider and play an active part in the process of looking at the 'reach' of the public consultation and the extent of information shared within the document.

The consultation period will start on September 2nd and last for the month.

The Consultation will be widely advertised through NSDC social media, online, local press and shared with clerks of Town and Parish Councils.

Please take part in the consultation, online and have your say on how your council tax should be spent!

At a recent full council meeting I voted for and spoke to a motion regarding out of hours medical care in Newark, following the attendance of NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust at the Policy and Performance Improvement Committee. I also asked the Council's Portfolio Holder for Health and Well-being, an additional post created by the Council's administration and held by a Councillor from the ruling coalition - about what she has done in regards to working with these bodies to represent the health concerns of residents across Newark and Sherwood.

I support the efforts of our local Member of Parliament who is campaigning for the 24/7 urgent treatment centre in Newark to be reinstated.

The September meeting of NSDC planning committee saw permission being granted for the long running Vineries application. However, concerns still remain.

The new scheme of delegation pertaining to this committee, which allows public participation, will be reviewed at a later date, owing to the vacancy of a business manager for the department.

Cllr Penny Rainbow

Southwell Ward Member