

## Derbyshire Coordinating Group Meeting – 17 March 2018

**Present:** Alex Davenport, Paul Holmes, Robert Court, Midge Dobbs, Peter Dobbs, John Morrissey, Kate Smith, Ian Care, Ruth Skelton, Maggie Hird, Jonathan Sneade (chair), Lucy Care.

**Apologies:** Mike Carr, Sue Burfoot, Barry Bingham, Tony Rogers, Andrew Hollyer, Beth Atkins.

**Minutes:** None available

### **Chair's report:**

Priority at present is to support the two areas with local elections. Some work has been done in support of Derby.

### **Secretary's Report:**

Nothing to add.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Written report provided. Currently £3664 in kitty. Volunteer fundraiser suggested as Stephen Raisen (?), fundraising needs to be strengthened, in part for PCC election (£5000 deposit).

### **Elections 2018:**

**Derby:** Ruth Skelton reported that several action days have happened with support from DCG chair. Two held wards continuing campaigning. Mickleover doing a bit. Abbey ward working with previous candidate standing. Mackworth doing awareness raising campaign. Some members have been removed from electoral register, seemingly on the say so of Labour members. Derby has had electoral fraud convictions, and is being watched by Electoral Reform.

**Amber Valley:** Lots of pilot canvassing. Target ward and candidate agreed. 15 wards being covered and pleased to have campaigning capacity strengthened

**Elections 2019:** Chesterfield interviewed for target candidates and now moving on to other wards. They will sign up to be campaigning for the next 12 months. For example, candidates expected to knock on 1000 doors, equivalent to 30 per week. And can be de-selected if not achieving contact rates. Also literature targets. Monitored by Campaign Committee and reported to Exec.

**Action:** Chesterfield's candidate contract to be circulated.

### **Fire Authority Shift Changes:**

Briefing notes/opinion from Sue Burfoot, and Beth Atkins were circulated. Ruth Skelton (vice chair of Fire Authority) also spoke. Proposal are to downgrade fire stations at Matlock and Glossop from being full time staffing to having retained staff for the night shift. There is fire service housing associated with both stations, but not all personnel live on site. A similar change was made at Swadlincote a few years ago. Retained staff need to live nearby, but the response time can be delayed awaiting for a final staff member to turn up.

Fire Authority says their proposal (initiated by Labour as part of the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017, but is now being taken forward by Conservatives with two Lib Dems) would mean that staffing is matched to risk. Risk has reduced with the number of fires has halved over the last 10 years due to education and technology changes. Consultations were extensive, though criticised as not allowing continuation of the status quo.

Most Derbyshire fire stations only have retained staff, some of these have more calls for service than Matlock and New Mills.

Discussion considered relevance for countywide decision and local campaigning. Need to reflect both the need to take tough decisions and the priorities for local areas. As opposition this is easier to do than when we hold the Vice Chair. Ruth is expecting to abstain, Sue anticipating to vote against. A lot of politics is being played here. Seem to be some grounds to challenge current proposals. Decide not to make a specific proposal but discussion was helpful and the group supported the positions currently being considered.

#### **Treasurer's Account Development:**

Previously only expected funds for PCC elections and so account set up for this was a joint personal one as it is difficult to set up Clubs and Societies Accounts.

**Agreed:** to seek a clubs and societies account to which all four officers (chair, secretary, treasurer and president) are signatories. The account to require two out of four signatories for transactions.

#### **Constitutional Consultation:**

Small group has been working on this (Chair, Paul Holmes and Robert Mee). They have now brought forward proposals. As part of this they have considered the main role of the Group. This has included its role in county-wide campaigning, liaising between Council groups, co-ordination and a role in policy development and democratic co-ordination.

A draft constitution based on the Northamptonshire Groups' constitution was circulated. Discussion included clarifying the role of the Group in manifesto development, the importance of finance, how to activate new members, voting membership of the Group.

**Agreed:** the small group to continue discussion and ideas for further changes by email, including comments from individuals. A further draft to be presented at a future meeting with the intention of submitting proposals to the AGM in the autumn.

#### **Local Authority Reports:**

None to add.

#### **Reorganisation debrief:**

This was a major project last year, and all new local parties are functioning along the new boundaries. A few membership issues are still to be sorted out with HQ.

#### **Campaign Support recommendations:**

Four proposals were introduced by Paul Holmes and then discussed.

Top priority had been to set up physical phone banks by seeking unwanted or buying mobiles and laptops. If equipment is purchased, who has priority for use of equipment? GDPR might have implications for this, after May 25<sup>th</sup>, with not many phone numbers still available. Phoning may become less important.

Secondly, grants to local parties to support their getting active asks questions about the capability of the local party to continue this activity. The start-up costs for getting active are low, and if

people can't organise this, would a grant make any difference. A single leaflet doesn't have any significant impact.

Thirdly, by-election support is more targeted, and shows some commitment. Region already pays for an additional leaflet. DCG could add to this support. Multiple leaflets can change minds and enthuse local members to get active in their local area.

In addition, Region provides training. Sharing experience about how to do things might be more useful. Expenses towards support like this might help. Local fund-raising from standing orders is one of the best ways of getting money in regularly.

Finally, do we need to keep this money for the PCC deposit. This might be supported by the English Party lost deposit scheme.

**Agreed:** To defer this decision until a later meeting.

**AOB:**

Ruth Skelton reported that Kath Pinnock spoke at the Fire and Safety Conference recently and it was believed that Lib Dems have no policy on sprinklers. There was some policy passed in Sept 2017, and Ruth will explore this further.

**Dates for coming year:** June/July, September and AGM in November.