



# The Councillor Portal

**Corporate Services and Cost of Living Scrutiny Board**

December 2023

# Agenda

- What is the Councillor Portal?
- Why has the Councillor Portal been introduced?
- Twelve-month review
- Improvements – short-term and long-term
- Support for councillors



# What is the Councillor Portal?

- An online tool to help councillors raise, manage and respond to casework quickly and effectively
- Allows councillors to raise and respond to casework via their desktop or handheld device.
- Cases allocated to the teams closest to the point of service delivery, reducing duplication and inefficiency within DCC.
- A means to maintain and monitor corporately agreed response times to councillor enquiries.
- Designed for transactional casework – issues that can be quickly resolved and reported back to the councillor and/or resident.



# What is the Councillor Portal?

- **NOT** suitable for more complex cases requiring input from multiple services across the Council – support instead available via Councillor and Civic Support / Localities teams
- **NOT** intended for reporting urgent issues such as safeguarding concerns or danger to life / property.
- **NOT** intended for enquiries relating to Derby Homes at present.
- **NOT** a means for monitoring the workload of councillors.



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

CASE DETAILS

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

LOCATION OF THE ISSUE

EVIDENCE

VISIBILITY

What is the category of your issue? \*

Environmental Protection

✓

What is your issue? \*

Overgrown hedges/trees impeding public footpath

✓


Please describe the issue \*

1000 characters maximum

Overgrown tree obstructing the footpath on Oakwood Park.

56

✓



This information will be shared if you submit this case to a Council Service or share it with other councillors.

Does a Council service need to work on this case? \*

Yes

No

✓

Are you raising this issue on behalf of a member of the public? \*

Yes

No

✓

Is this issue about an address or location? \*

Yes

No

✓

◀ PREVIOUS

✕ CANCEL

NEXT ▶

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

CASE DETAILS

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

LOCATION OF THE ISSUE

EVIDENCE

VISIBILITY

NOTIFY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

CHECK AND SUBMIT



You can add up to three members of the public who you wish to associate with this case, below.

### ADD MEMBER OF PUBLIC

	Name	Phone number	Email address	Address	Has this person given consent to share their personal details?
<span>✕</span> <span>✎</span>	Miss. Jane Smith	07905 859859	janesmith@coldmail.com	18-19 Iron Gate, Derby, DE1 3GP	Yes

Would you like to notify these members of the public about this case? \*

Yes

No



◀ PREVIOUS

✕ CANCEL

NEXT ▶



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Do you know the address for the location of the issue? \*

Yes

No



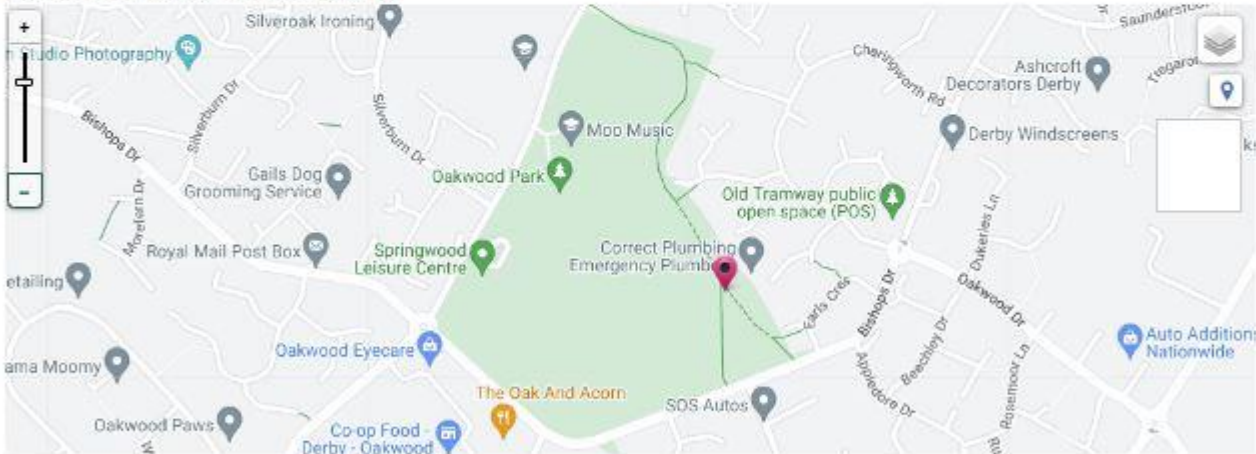
Can you pinpoint the location on a map? \*

Yes

No



Please pinpoint the location on the map



< PREVIOUS

✕ CANCEL

NEXT >



[BEFORE YOU BEGIN](#)[CASE DETAILS](#)[MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC](#)[LOCATION OF THE ISSUE](#)[EVIDENCE](#)[VISIBILITY](#)[NOTIFY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ⓘ](#)[CHECK AND SUBMIT](#)

## Notify by email

Would you like to notify anyone by email? \*

☒ Yes☐ No

Who would you like to notify by email? \*

☒ Miss. Jane Smith

## Notify by post

Would you like to notify anyone by post? \*

☐ Yes☒ No

Message to member of the public \*

Your message will be automatically sent to all members of the public selected previously.

Thank you for raising your case with me relating to the overgrown tree in Oakwood Park. I have asked the Council to investigate and will respond to you when I have more information share.

[← PREVIOUS](#)[✕ CANCEL](#)[NEXT →](#)

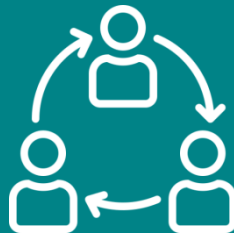
# What is the Councillor Portal?

- Additional benefits of using the Portal include:
  - Easily sharing information with ward colleagues and other interested parties.
  - Accessing data about the type and frequency of issues raised within your wards.
  - Managing data protection and information governance requirements as individual data controllers.



# Why introduce the Portal?

- To provide councillors with a modern and bespoke means of managing casework.
- To provide data and insight to councillors.
- To improve efficiency in the allocation, resolution and sign-off of councillor casework within the Council.
- To achieve MTFP savings and respond to pressures on frontline services.



# Annual review - headlines

- Initial target of 40% of councillors regularly using the Councillor Portal within its first year of operation.
- 583 cases raised via the Councillor Portal since 1 January 2023.
- 80% of councillors have raised at least one case.
- Of those councillors, 29% have raised more than 10 cases.
- Volume of cases raised trending upwards month on month – peak usage in June coinciding with Councillor Inductions.
- **BUT** recognition there are areas where the system can be improved.



# Annual review - questions

- What could be preventing more councillors from using the Councillor Portal frequently?
  - Time taken to raise cases within the Portal?
  - Time taken to receive responses from services?
  - Availability of support and training?
  - Layout and design of case management within the Portal?
- Feedback from frequent users suggests a combination of the above – working closely with IT Services to identify short-term fixes and long-term improvements.



# Troubleshooting

- Known issues:
  - Layout of case management page for councillors
  - Ability to add more information to an existing case
  - Review user interface of mobile version
  - Formatting of PDF letters generated by the system
- Feedback collated from councillors regularly using the system.
- Working with users in services to ensure cases are routinely responded to within corporately agreed timescales.
- Fortnightly development sessions held between Councillor and Civic Support and IT Services.



## My Requests

Show

10

Filter

All

Search



Case ID	Process	Case Start Date	Case End Date	Case Status	Current Stage
▼ CPCT557094206	Create casework - TEST	25/10/2023 15:35:54		Open	With the council
Create casework					
Task ID	Start Date	Completed Date	Summary	Action	
CPCT557094206	25/10/2023 15:35:54	25/10/2023 15:35:54	Case summary : Mr. John Rood	VIEW	
▶ FS-Case-536300730	Civica payment tester	02/08/2023 11:25:16	02/08/2023 11:25:17	Closed	Case Closed
▶ FS-Case-536089667	Civica payment tester	01/08/2023 15:32:42	01/08/2023 15:32:42	Closed	Case Closed
▶ FS-Case-536074925	Civica payment tester	01/08/2023 14:56:53	01/08/2023 14:56:54	Closed	Case Closed



# Further development

- Planned enhancements in future iterations:
  - Homepage content bespoke to individual councillors, integrated from other DCC systems. For example:
    - Upcoming committee meetings
    - Scheduled highways improvements
    - Ward-level census data etc.
  - Improved functionality for reports and searches.
  - Integration with the Council's starters and leavers process.
- Seeking support and input from councillors to develop the system to its full potential.





# Support for Councillors

- Online resources to support both councillors and officers with using the Council Portal is available via the Democracy Sharepoint page, accessed via the Council's intranet.
- Includes step-by-step video guides for raising and responding to cases within the Portal.
- Training delivered as part of the Councillor Induction process and refresher training available on request.
- Information routinely circulated via Keeping in Touch with Councillors.



# Summary

- Anecdotal evidence suggests cost of living and reductions in public services having a direct impact on councillor caseloads.
- Obligation as both councillors and officers to change how we work to meet the current challenges faced by the Council.
- Collectively strive to be more efficient and embrace technological solutions.
- Encourage councillors to work with Councillor and Civic Support to use and improve the Councillor Portal.



# Key Contacts

Alex Hough – Head of Democracy

Lee Haynes – Head of Digital Enablement & Automation

Jody Shelton – Councillor and Civic Support Manager

Maureen Tierney – IT Development Manager

John Rood – Senior Information Software Support Officer

For general enquiries: [councillor.support@derby.gov.uk](mailto:councillor.support@derby.gov.uk)



# Any questions?

