

Policy Review Committee

- Venue: Committee Room
- Date: Tuesday 13 September 2016
- Time: 5.00pm
- Present: Councillors J Deans (Chair), M Hobson (Vice Chair), K Arthur, J Cattnach, D Hutchinson, and R Packham.
- Apologies for Absence: Councillor Mrs J Shaw-Wright.
- Officers Present: Alex Dochery – Graduate Trainee, Chris Watson – Assistant Policy Officer, Michelle Dinsdale – Policy Officer, and Janine Jenkinson - Democratic Services Officer.
- In Attendance: Councillor C Metcalfe – Lead Member for Communities and Economic Development.

8. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9. MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2016.

RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the Policy Review Committee held on 21 July 2016 for signature by the Chair.

10. CHAIR'S ADDRESS

The Chair thanked Councillor Cattanach for chairing the previous Committee meeting, held on 21 July 2016. The Chair explained that he and the Vice Chair had been unwell and unable to attend the meeting. In addition, he explained that the substitute Member he had arranged to attend on his behalf had unfortunately also been unable to attend the meeting on the night.

The Chair emphasised the importance of Members arranging a substitute, if they were unable to attend a meeting.

With regard to the PLAN Selby item that had been added to the revised agenda, the Chair informed the Committee that following discussions with the Policy Officer, it had been agreed to defer the item to a future meeting when Members would have the opportunity to review a detailed report.

11. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT CAR PARK STRATEGY

The Policy Officer introduced the report and explained that the report provided the Committee with an opportunity to comment on the Draft Strategy as part of the consultation process.

Members were informed that the draft Car Park Strategy 2017-2020 had been approved for consultation by the Executive on 25 August 2016. The consultation would run from 2 September – 12 December 2016.

Councillor Metcalfe explained that the Draft Strategy aimed to promote economic development throughout the District. The role of car parks had been reviewed and the aim was for car parks to provide a gateway into communities, encouraging increased use of town centres and promoting economic growth and vitality.

Members made the following comments:

- With regard to setting car parking tariffs, some Members felt that it would be inappropriate to introduce a universal charge throughout the District. Members felt that it was important that the Strategy took into account the needs and characteristics of each locality, so not to deter people from using Council owned car parks.
- The Committee highlighted the importance of gathering car park usage data before any tariff charges were proposed.
- In relation to car park usage in Sherburn-in-Elmet, Councillor Packham suggested that people using long stay car parks, did so because they worked in the centre of the town, rather than because they were parking and then travelling on the train out of the District.

Some concern was raised that the introduction of a tariff in Sherburn would displace car parking to nearby residential streets and unregulated car parks.

- Councillor Packham queried the population figure for Sherburn listed on page 45 of the report. He stated that there had been population growth and the latest figures indicated the population was approximately 6,800. Therefore, given the larger population, the issue of car parking availability in Sherburn had been underestimated in the report.
- Members suggested there was a lack of clarity regarding the benchmarking evidence in relation to the comparator and neighbouring councils, presented in Appendix C of the report.
- Councillors highlighted the need for car parking provision at train stations, in particular at Sherburn and South Milford stations. Councillor C Metcalfe explained that in his North Yorkshire County Council role as Executive Member for rail strategy, he had been working with rail operators to secure additional car parking provision.
- The Chair requested that information regarding the need for coach parking in Selby town centre was gathered. He suggested the information could be used to indicate if there would be demand for a park and ride shuttle service into the town centre.
- There was some discussion regarding the use of disc permits. It was noted by some Members that their experience of disc permits was primarily for on-street parking rather than for use in car parks.
- Concern was raised regarding Abbey Walk car park in Selby, due to the number of people that had been fined. Members felt that the bad experience of using Abbey Walk car park would discourage visitors from returning to Selby and this would have a detrimental impact on the local economy. Members highlighted that Abbey Walk was a privately managed car park and felt this should be made clear in the Strategy. The Policy Officer reported that discussions with the management company had taken place, however the company had no plans to change the enforcement arrangements on site.
- It was highlighted that Morrisons car park in Selby was often full, and as an alternative, people parked in Portholme Crescent. It was suggested that Morrisons could be encouraged to introduce a pay and display scheme, whereby shoppers were refunded the fee if they spent a certain amount in the supermarket.

The Committee thanked the Policy Officers and Councillor C Metcalfe for providing the report.

RESOLVED:

That the comments made by the Committee, as detailed above, be fed into the consultation process.

12. DEVELOPMENT OF A REVISED CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Graduate Trainee introduced the report and explained that the Council's Complaints Policy (Comments, Compliments and Complaints) had last been reviewed in 2011 and was now due to be updated.

Members were advised that the report set out the scope and timetable for a revised policy and the details of the consultation and approval process.

The Committee was informed that initial project work on the Corporate Complaints Policy had involved reviewing the existing Complaints Policy, examining several other local authorities' complaints policies, and holding initial discussions with officers.

Following these actions, it was proposed that a revised Complaints Policy should achieve the following:

- Define what constituted a corporate complaint and what did not.
- Provided clear and accessible information.
- Explained how members of the public could complain.
- Set out the relevant timescales for a response.
- Set out how the Council would deal with complaints.
- Set out steps that could be taken if a complainant was dissatisfied with how the Council handled/ responded to a complaint.
- Provide information about how the Council deals with vexatious complaints.
- Set out how the Policy would be monitored and reviewed.

Councillors reported that they had no first-hand experience of the Corporate Complaints process; and therefore suggested the Graduate Trainee contacted former complainants to ask them about their experience and how the process could be improved.

In relation to the accessibility of the document, Members highlighted the need to provide information in a variety of formats i.e. via the Council's website and in print. In addition, the use of graphics/ flow chart diagrams and the importance of clearly signposting information on the Council's website were discussed.

The Committee thanked the Graduate Trainee for the report.

RESOLVED:

That the comments made by the Committee, as detailed above, be fed into the development of the Policy.

13. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

Members considered the Committee Work Programme 2016/17.

The Chair informed Members that he had received a request from the Solicitor to the Council for the Committee to consider a change in the Taxi Driver Licence Policy. Members agreed to consider this item at the November meeting.

RESOLVED:

An item regarding the Taxi Driver Licence Policy be added to the Work Programme for the November meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.50 p.m.