



Councillor Christopher Pearson - Executive Member for Housing, Health, & Culture

Report to Council on Tuesday 17th July 2018

Selby District Council Tree Policy

A tree policy governing the management of our tree stock was approved in June that provides clear guidance for our approach to managing and maintaining a healthy tree stock. Key issues within the policy include:-

- Effective tree pruning and management rather than felling
- Effective risk management
- A commitment to increasing the District's tree stock, maximising the benefits that trees deliver

Shortly after our tree policy was approved the Government announced the appointment of a tree champion, Sir William Worsley. His broad objectives are too:-

- Increase tree planting and woodland creation
- The commitment to strengthen the protection of ancient woodlands through the planning system
- Supporting the introduction of a new duty for local councils to consult before felling

The objectives of the governments tree champion support and strengthen the aims of our new tree policy.

Visitor Economy

The Visitor Economy Strategy Action Plan is in progress and has seen the successful recruitment of a Culture, Visitor and Creative Economy Project Manager. Final checks are in place and the post should be filled in early Autumn. The next 3 years agreed funding from Programme For Growth on this agenda will see the district council support local groups and businesses to develop their attractions for local residents as well as tourists from further afield. We want to help raise awareness of the great assets we have here and acknowledge some of the great work our communities and businesses already do. Some of the great things our communities and businesses have done over the last few months include the Royal Wedding Garden Party at Carlton Towers, the Sportive at Tadcaster and the Great Selby Bike Ride from Barlby and Stillingfleet Gardens Wildlife Day: not to mention all the activity town and parish councils put in with fun days, galas and fetes. We endeavour to help promote local activities so please do encourage any organisers to get in touch with our communications team.

Other activity has included engaging in a Discover England £1.2million project for an East of England Touring Route promoting to the German markets: led by Newcastle Gateshead

this is a 300 mile route from Newcastle including partners from areas such as Northumberland, York, Leeds, Lincolnshire, the Peaks and Nottingham. Subject to local engagement, the focus of promotion will be on Selby Abbey, Towton Battlefield and Drax Visitor Centre and surrounding hospitality businesses. The project supports a range of development support and marketing initiatives for our tourist attractions. Our position on the main road and sea travel routes is at the heart of the journey for the German and Scandinavian markets who are looking for 'hidden gem' experiences; something we can offer in abundance across the district.

Selby 950 project

Planning for the Selby Abbey 950th Anniversary is well underway alongside the Selby Abbey Trust, Selby Civic Society, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, Drax Power, Selby College and Selby Town Council. A key emphasis of the project is to raise civic pride and encourage participation and to celebrate our rich past and present arts, culture and heritage. Artistic direction is currently being taken to deliver a timeline for events and a costed plan for 2019. As agreed at the last Full Council, the district council has earmarked £50,000 through Programme For Growth to support the marking of the occasion and a further £150,000 subject to potential hosting of the Tour de Yorkshire in 2019. The fund will be used to support the development of events as well as unlock wider investment in the occasion and in the town's legacy. Further details on the calendar of events for 2019 will emerge in the autumn. However emerging plans include a civic dinner in the Abbey, a gala concert, a new icon for the Abbey, reading and literature events and a larger scale illumination event.

Health

The Council has supported the establishment of a community sector led mental health forum in the district. This has been developed in partnership with Selby Big Local and as part of finalising the Selby Health Matters local action plan with North Yorkshire County Council Public Health to establish local community networks to deliver services differently. The forum is being led by Brighter Futures, a service user led and organised group supporting anyone experiencing emotional and mental distress. The official launch of the forum will be on 24th July from 4.30pm – 6pm at Selby Town Hall.

Selby ParkRun has been supported by the district council and the Central and Southern Community Engagement Forums. Since its start in December 2017 this has been a great success and has seen over 1000 participants in just 6 months with 'first timers' accounting for 6% of each event's numbers. The run is at Burn Airfield and attracts both local and touring runners from around the country.

Countryside Management

Hambleton Hough

The annual report for Hambleton Hough has been received from the Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust (WHPT) and there have been some really positive steps taken here in the last year.

1500 trees have been planted between November and April which include Birch, Oak, Beech and Douglas Fir.

By the end of March 2019 it is expected that there will be 3000 trees planted.

A local villager has made and installed bird boxes across the Hough and seats have been constructed to allow people to sit and admire the scenery.

The WHPT continue to communicate to residents by Parish newsletters. The Community, Partnerships and Customers team have also secured a three year agreement with the University of York to use the site as an ecological study site which will give us rich information on understanding the nature of the place.

Barlow Common

The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) have seen a modest increase in group membership for the site in the last year and the Common remains a great community space with active use of the area by Scouts, the Forest School, fishing as well as open public access. It is estimated that there are now between 10-15,000 visitors per annum.

Work has focused on bringing some of the natural land back into access which has resulted in a 15% expansion of the grasslands.

Bird and Butterfly surveys continue to be undertaken and there have been 6 public events on the site which saw an average of 20 people at each.

Housing Delivery Programme

Work continues to bring forward several sites as part of the Housing Delivery Programme, approved by the Executive on the 4th January 2018

- Work is progressing well on the construction of 13 new homes for Selby District Council at Byram Park Road in Byram, and in accordance with the agreed programme that will see the properties handed over in January 2019.
- The construction of 5 new family homes, delivered in partnership with the Selby and District Housing Trust on a former Council owned garage site at Landing Lane Riccall are progressing well and are due to be handed over to the Trust in September 2018
- The construction of 12 family homes for the Selby and District Housing Trust has also commenced on a site at Ousegate in Selby. These properties are due to be handed over in January 2019
- As part of an updated report to the Council's Executive on the 12th July on the Housing Development Programme a preferred approach is outlined for the Council to enter into a Joint Venture Agreement with a development partner to develop the Edgerton Lodge site in Tadcaster site for housing. As a first stage the Housing and Regeneration Team has sought Expressions of Interest in developing the site on a joint venture basis.
- Following the Council's approval of an updated Affordable Housing Development Programme in January 2018, an update on progress is being presented to the Council's Executive on the 12th July 2018. This will outline the proposed sites in the second phase of development on smaller sites owned by the Council and the next steps in the process to achieve additional family homes starting on site in early 2019.
- Following on from a successful seminar held on the 12th June 2018, the Council's Housing and Regeneration Team is hoping to progress discussions with individuals and organisations interested in developing Community Led Housing in the District.

Gambling Act 2003 Review

Selby District Council is the Licensing Authority responsible for the licensing of certain gambling premises licences and all types of gaming machine permits in Selby District. As part of this role the Council must have regard to the statutory licensing objectives and issue a statement of licensing principles (the Gambling Policy) which must be reviewed every 3 years. The next review is due by January 2019. The existing policy was adopted in 2017 and the regulatory regime is unchanged. For that reason it is considered that the only changes required are to update the area's population and to add a footnote under stakes and prizes which states that these may change.

After the report has gone to the Executive in July the public consultation will run for 4 weeks commencing mid July, to ensure that the policy can be considered and adopted by the Council and come into force in January 2019.

Taxi Consultation

The Licensing Authority will shortly commence a Taxi Trade consultation regarding a number of changes proposed to the current Taxi Policy:

Discreet licensing on Executive Private Hire Vehicles, which allows proprietors to apply to the Council for permission to remove the condition to display the vehicle licence plate. This is a potential safeguarding issue and it proposed to make the application procedure more robust for the Licensing Authority to make a decision, and will include adding further conditions to the Discreet licence.

The consultation will also cover what the definition of what Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) is, as the Authority looks to implement the wheelchair accessible vehicle requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which allows the Council to produce a list of designated Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles. It is proposed that the vehicle must have WAV status recorded on its V5 certificate, or have been issued with an official certificate of conformity to highlight WAV status. A list of WAV should be compiled by officers and consideration should be given to the make-up of Selby District Council's fleet of licensed vehicles in terms of WAV / non-WAV ratio, to ensure that enough vehicles were available to allow all passengers to travel throughout the District. If a designated WAV did not meet the criteria upon renewal of the licence, that vehicle should be removed from the Council's WAV list. To agree the procedure for exempting drivers on physical / medical grounds from their obligations to help passengers in wheelchairs. It is proposed that drivers wishing to apply for medical exemptions would need to request an application form from the Council, which ask specific questions to ensure that the Licensing Authority has all the information required to make a decision on the application.

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