



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

Report to Council on Thursday 21 February 2019

Housing Development Programme

Delivery of the Council's Housing Development Programme took another step forward recently with the completion and handover of 13 high quality houses for local people at the Crawford Close scheme in Byram. The official opening was on Thursday 14 Feb. Cllrs Crane, Pearson, and Sage attended, along with Mrs Crawford, whose late husband was instrumental in bringing the scheme about in his role as a District Councillor.

Feasibility work is progressing for the Phase 2 and Phase 3 sites further reports will be made to the Executive as detailed information on site conditions and cost estimates are made available when feasibility works are completed.

Health

As part of the Selby Health Matters work we have been involved with North Yorkshire County Council Public Health team on the wider Healthy Weight Healthy Lives strategy work to tackle obesity. The partnership has been successful in the submission of an Expression of Interest to the Local Government Association to deliver a Childhood Obesity Trailblazer programme. This includes a focus on specific schools in the Scarborough and Selby areas to develop multi-disciplinary approaches to Healthy School Zones. This is a great opportunity to develop long term thinking to improve younger resident health and promote healthy eating, active travel and influence planning policy.

We are also working with North Yorkshire County Council Highways as part of a Better Together approach to identify key areas of the district that would benefit from a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This project looks to establish a better understanding of how our transport infrastructure enables residents to move around the district through active travel means, as well as where there are gaps in opportunities to do this. The plan will give us an identified number of schemes which can then be used to go for external funding opportunities in a responsive and timely way. The plan will help support the development of a number of schemes and interventions associated with various infrastructure programmes, including recent work to unlock Transforming Cities Funds through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority around Selby Station. The work will include engagement with internal officers but also local, relevant stakeholders to support delivery.

Selby 950:

Planning for Selby 950 is well underway with a great response from local communities to celebrate the year of our Abbey. The list of events taking place this year is growing all the time and the Communications team have put together a plan so that we can use the

District Council's reach to help all the 950 delivery partners to get the word out about everything that's happening.

We've developed a marketing toolkit for community groups to use which is live on our website: <https://www.selby.gov.uk/selby-950-toolkit>. The Welcome to York digital team are supporting the events and have created a Selby 950 microsite which they are hosting. This will be live shortly and will hold the full digital events guide which can be showcased to the region and beyond.

The Abbey is hugely important for 950 and the Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan. We're doing everything we can to support the Abbey team this year and for their future development. This has recently included helping them to submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project which will help them to develop capacity and skills. The Abbey should hear whether the application is successful by the end of March 2019. We're also supporting the Abbey on a day-to-day basis with, for example, their marketing materials through the Tourism Development Officer.

The Community, Partnerships and Customers team have also submitted funding applications to the Arts Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund to support Selby 950 (and beyond). If successful, this could bring an investment into the town circa £100k. We will hear mid/late March 2019. The process is extremely competitive and if successful will support a great range of quality events. If not, we still have a great list of activity borne of community involvement, as well as the illumination event planned for November 2019 supported by Drax Power Ltd.

Plans for the year also include a 'Selby Swan Off' which asks local businesses (large and small) to make a swan (from any materials which are appropriate to their business e.g. cardboard, metal). The best swans (in a number of categories) will be shown in the town and, we hope, join our Parade on July 31st (St Germain's Day). If you know of businesses who would be interested in getting involved and showcasing their industry then please let me know.

Tour de Yorkshire:

We are less than 100 days away from the Tour and there is a great buzz about it across the district. Welcome to Yorkshire report that the 9th January Roadshow hosted in Selby Abbey was one of their best ever attended and over 100 people turned out to hear more information on the TdY route, timings and how they can get involved. We also used the event to talk about Selby 950. There are two more Roadshows yet to come – one in Cawood on 21st Feb and one in Womersley on 6th Feb.

We've been working on a Community Engagement Pack which is nearly complete. This contains a wealth of information including ideas for ways that communities along the route can celebrate the event and animate the route. We're also working on the plans for the activity which will keep people entertained whilst they wait for the Finish. Much of this will be in partnership with local businesses, who we are encouraging to think about what they may like to do to maximise benefit from the huge opportunity that the Finish offers. This includes window-dressing workshops for local shops and high street businesses, as they all have a part to play in ensuring the town looks its very best. We've also sent out a community survey to ask people how they would like to celebrate the Tour within the town centre. We've had some great responses and people are suggesting they wish to engage

in activities, eat, watch the race and generally stay in the town area as long as activity is in place.

We are committed to delivering an engaging and safe event with Pennine Events appointed as the events management company for the Selby Stage 1 finish of the Tour de Yorkshire.

Yorkshire 2019 Para-cycling international

The Yorkshire 2019 para cycling event planning is also well underway in Tadcaster with representatives both from the local community group TEMPT, Tadcaster Town Council and the Selby District Disability Forum attending regular District Council planning meetings. The Forum are supporting us to deliver an inclusive and accessible event for both riders and spectators and we will also be gaining support for the Tour de Yorkshire to this effect.

The Tadcaster TEMPT group (volunteers running events in the town) are well-advanced in their planning for a festival of cycling for the UCI and para cycling events. The early events ideas (all on the theme of bicycles/cycling) are imaginative and will bring a great buzz to the town.

Waste Collection Over the Festive Period

Changes were made to waste services in a number of areas whose collections would have fallen on Christmas Day, Boxing Day or New Year's Day. In total around 12,000 properties were affected by the changes but all rounds were completed as scheduled. Our thanks go to the staff at Amey Plc who worked over three consecutive weekends during this time to ensure as little disruption to residents as possible.

Empty Homes

We continue to work across departments to encourage reoccupation of empty homes. We write to all owners of homes approaching 2 years empty to provide support and advice. Our Empty Homes Officer works on around 20 high profile empty homes at a time with a view to achieving reoccupation. At the end of Quarter 3 records show that there are 522 empty homes in Selby district, of which 191 have been empty for more than 2 years a net reduction of 18 from 2017.

At the end of Quarter 3 we had brought 24 empty homes back into use (the target for the year is 20). 22 of these were through advice, support and informal enforcement and 2 through the use of grant/loan assistance. There are a further 3 empty homes grants/loans currently being processed. We are taking Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) enforcement action against 1 long term empty home owner. In addition we are discussing the possibility of voluntary purchase with the owners of 3 other empty homes.

Void properties

During 2018 the Council has seen an increase in the number of VOID properties and an increase in the work required to bring empty properties back to a lettable standard. This has led to an increase in the time taken to let voids. The Property team has responded to

this and have delivered 73 properties back to a let in Q3 compared to 61 in 2017 an increase of 12 properties.

The properties fall into 3 categories, a standard void which requires normal inspection and repairs, a major void which requires additional work such as a new kitchen or bathroom and a refurbishment void which require a full scheme of improvement, bathroom, kitchen, re-wiring, damp works etc.

In the short term additional staff are working on voids and more work has been commissioned from specialist sub-contractors. This has had an impact for example, the total number of 'active' voids currently requiring works is down from 66 to 46 since the beginning of January 2019. As this continues void completion times will reduce across the board and significantly in the 'Standard' void category.

For next year I am pleased to report that additional capital resources are being secured in the budget, subject to approval at this Council meeting, to provide resources to address the increase in voids and to carry out a proactive improvement programme for our council houses

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