

**Report Reference Number:** S/19/8

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**To:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 26 September 2019  
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**Title:** Yorkshire Wildlife Trust: Barlow Common Activity Review April 2018 to April 2019 and the Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust: Hambleton Hough Annual Report 2018-19

### **Summary:**

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the annual reports of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) and Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust (WHPT) about the activity taking place at Barlow Common (managed by YWT) and Hambleton Hough (managed by WHPT) between April 2018 and April 2019.

### **Recommendation:**

**The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the content of the reports and make any comments.**

### **Reasons for recommendation**

The Committee is asked to consider the information as set out in the report as part of their role in scrutinising the performance of partner organisations and other agencies delivering services within the Selby District.

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1** Barlow Common has been leased out to the YWT since 1 March 2013 on a 99 year, peppercorn agreement. They report annually into the Council on their activity.
- 1.2** Hambleton Hough has been leased out to the WHPT since 17 September 2012. This agreement is a 99 year; peppercorn agreement lease and the WHPT provide the Council with an annual activity report.
- 1.3** The annual reports are attached at Appendices A and C.

## **2. The Report**

- 2.1 Barlow Common:** The main responsibilities as outlined in the lease are to maintain the area in good repair and carry out any required works within a reasonable and proper timescale.

Selby District Council, in accordance with the lease arrangements annually contributes £6,000 per annum to the YWT. This is on a sliding scale of payments and is for the first ten years only. The financial contribution will cease in 2023. It will remain at £6,000 until this time.

Leasing arrangements specify that the leaseholder must provide a detailed, site specific, ten year rolling management plan which clearly states the aims and objectives for the site. There is a requirement to prepare an annual report which will clearly state the progress made towards achieving the aims, objectives and outcome of the management plan. The main areas of focus for the YWT over the first ten years are:

1. Improve diversity in structure and composition of woodlands and scrub
2. To maintain, and where possible, improve the species diversity of the grassland
3. Maintain a diverse range of wetlands
4. Engage with visitors to inform them about the reserve, inspire them about the natural environment and pass on YWT and SDC key messages
5. Ensure all legal obligations are met.

YWT are also required to use both of the above documents to assist in the completion of grant and other funding applications to enhance the site and deliver the management plans aims, objectives and outcomes.

- 2.2 Hambleton Hough:** As per the terms of the lease, the WHPT must provide a detailed 10 year rolling management plan incorporating tangible, qualitative and quantitative measures that evidence progress towards achieving the outcomes. The main areas of focus for the WHPT are:

1. Ecological management of the site; Protect and improve the biodiversity and habitat value of the woodland
2. Education
3. Regular safety works
4. Pollution – Ensure that the woodland is kept tidy and free from litter at all times
5. Maintenance and upgrading of the paths within the Hough to ensure that routes are kept free for visitors
6. A re-planting scheme.

An annual report is also an expectation of the lease.

The WHPT are also to use the management plan and annual report to assist in the completion of grant and other funding applications to enhance the site and deliver the management plans aims, objectives and outcomes.

## **3. Alternative Options Considered**

None applicable.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Legal Implications**

Effective Scrutiny arrangements form part of the governance framework of the Council.

### **4.2 Financial Implications**

None.

### **4.3 Policy and Risk Implications**

None.

### **4.4 Corporate Plan Implications**

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out long term plans to make Selby District a great place to do business, enjoy life, make a difference, supported by the Council delivering great value. An effective scrutiny function is essential to fair and transparent decision making, which underpins the work of the Council.

### **4.5 Resource Implications**

None.

### **4.6 Other Implications**

Not applicable.

### **4.7 Equalities Impact Assessment**

N/A

## **5. Conclusion**

### **5.1** The Scrutiny Committee discharges the Council's statutory overview and scrutiny functions and as such has responsibility for scrutinising the performance of the Council and that of its partner organisations and other agencies delivering services within the Selby District.

The Committee's comments and observations on the reports and documents attached at Appendices A - D.

## **6. Background Documents**

None.

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix A – Yorkshire Wildlife Trust: Barlow Common Activity Review – April 2018 to April 2019

Appendix B – Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Annual Plan 2013-2023

Appendix C – Wildlife Habitat Protection Trust: Hambleton Hough Annual Report 2018-19

Appendix D – Forestry Commission Woodland Management Plan – Hambleton Hough

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