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## CENTRAL AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Central Area Community Forum held on 10 September 2018 at 7.00pm at the Town Hall, Matlock

### PRESENT

#### Derbyshire Dales - District Council

Councillors Ann Elliott (In the Chair), Jason Atkin, Martin Burfoot, Sue Burfoot, Joyce Pawley, Garry Purdy, Irene Ratcliffe, Jacquie Stevens and Colin Swindell

Paul Wilson (Chief Executive), Steve Capes (Head of Regeneration & Policy) Resources), Jim Fearn (Communications & Marketing Manager), Ros Hession (Community Engagement Officer) and Simon Johnson (Democratic & Electoral Services Assistant)

#### Members of the Public

Biggin – Pete Tapping  
Cromford Parish Council – Barbara Bowman, Chris Earnshaw, Sue Mosley  
Darley Dale – Kath Dyson, Ingrid Pasteur, plus resident  
DDDC resident – Chris Stait  
Resident – Sue Bliss  
Tansley Parish Council – Vicki Raynes  
Tansley resident – Kath Camm  
N Dibben  
12 in total

#### Remote Participation

The Forum was filmed and broadcast live on You Tube. Many have watched the broadcast live and afterwards.

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Elliott welcomed everyone to the Forum, introduced participating Councillors and officers then outlined the plan for the evening.

## DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL – GOOD NEWS

- Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan has now been formally adopted following a positive referendum earlier this year. Congratulations to the Doveridge Neighbourhood Plan Group for their achievement.

- 'Inspired by the Peak District' branding now has nearly 550 businesses signed up (46% of these are from the Derbyshire Dales), with a toolkit to help businesses develop a marketing edge from their connection to the area
- District Council facilitated a Business Chiefs' Forum held in Cromford for Dales CEOs in July. Key discussions focussed upon how the public and private sector can work closely together to grow Dales businesses
- All 5 of the Dales' towns – Ashbourne, Bakewell, Darley Dale, Matlock and Wirksworth have Fairtrade status. In July, Derbyshire Dales was successful in its bid to gain District status
- Matlock Town Council has agreed terms for a Community Asset Transfer of the toilet block close to the play area in Hall Leys Park, Matlock. The District Council will be providing financial support to the project
- The Annual canvass of the Electoral Register is well underway with 77% of households having responded so far. It's not too late to reply by returning the form or by going on line. We will be knocking on doors to chase the information in October
- We launched a new Limestone Way walking guide in the Spring, and sales are going very well
- Free workshops held throughout the Dales for start-up and new businesses
- Assistance from Derbyshire Dales Business Advice has resulted in £275,000 in new grants being obtained for Derbyshire Dales businesses, which is expected to create at least 24 new jobs
- Planning 'Development Management' Pre-application advice service goes from strength to strength, delivering clear focussed advice to residents and businesses engaging in our planning service which supporting service delivery costs.
- National praise for Derbyshire Dales as Ashbourne is named as the best town to raise a family in the UK in research undertaken by online estate agent Yopa
- Y Not Festival – improved event, management and infrastructure tested by weather but overall arrangements were much improved
- 16 New Welcome signs in situ on all major approaches into the Derbyshire Dales. The project has been successful in attracting over £10,000 sponsorship to date which covers all costs and generates a new income stream for the District Council. Also offers a welcome facelift
- Successful transfer of Leisure Centre Management arrangements to Freedom Leisure from 1st August, facilitating significant investment in our leisure facilities and delivering circa £5 million savings to the tax payer over the duration of the 10 year contract
- Your District Council has given the Ashbourne Sports and Community Partnership the commitment of a long term lease and a £70,000 cash injection to help transform the Pavilion complex on the town's Recreation Ground. The project will see the replacement of three existing aged pavilions with a new modern 'Pavilion in the Park', which it is planned to become a sport and community hub in the town
- Our Cowshed Beer Festival showcased 30 ales from within 30 miles of the popular market town of Bakewell, plus local ciders, a prosecco bar, food stalls and music. We staged the festival at our Agricultural Business Centre in June as part of our target in the coming years is to take a more commercial approach to what we do
- Hall Leys Park is awarded Green Flag status for the 11th consecutive year

# COMMERCIALISATION – A BALANCED INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE

## COMMERCIALISATION – A Balanced Investment in our Future

‘A Presentation on a potential new joint venture to maximise commercial value in the District Council’s assets to generate new income streams’

### Context

- Sustained pressure on Council budgets and resources
- Corporate savings target of £700,000 by 2021/22
- Reducing service costs alone will not be sufficient
- A balanced approach is needed to delivering future savings
- Commercial Board established May 2018

### Commercial Board

#### Primary Purpose:

To create additional revenue streams for the Council to enable the Council to sustain its long-term financial future enabling it to maintain its current services and add value to the communities of the Derbyshire Dales

#### Corporate Aims:

- Grow the economy
- Create prosperous thriving communities
- Deliver transformation in services

### Exploring Commercial Opportunities

- Trading services directly
- Maximising the value of existing assets
- Sharing and selling services amongst peers
- Business transformation and automation of service delivery
- Investment opportunities

### Maximising the Value of Existing Assets

- Property is a valuable resource that directly impacts on the performance of a wide range of local authority services BUT costly to run and maintain.
- Maximising the potential and value of Council’s property assets is critical to the prudent management of the Council’s financial resources.
- New Asset Management Plan in preparation
- Need to explore options to maximise revenue income or revenue savings

<b>Option A - In-House Asset Management</b>	
This is the traditional option of the Council continuing to manage our property and assets in-house on an individual basis through our own staffing and financial resources.	
<b>Advantages:</b>	<b>Disadvantages:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All decisions made by the District Council</li> <li>• All risks managed by the District Council</li> <li>• All income retained by the District Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited capacity to deliver significant projects</li> <li>• Limited access to external expertise or market intelligence</li> <li>• Limited funding available without external borrowing</li> <li>• Requires high level resource at planning and implementation stages</li> </ul>

### **Option B - Development Partnership via Tender Procurement**

This option would involve the Council entering into a partnership agreement with a private sector developer who would provide professional services and expertise to help us maximise the benefit of particular sites or schemes as required.

<b>Advantages:</b>	<b>Disadvantages:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased access to market intelligence and expertise</li><li>• Increased access to staffing and financial resources</li><li>• Access to private sector funding streams</li><li>• Development costs and risks shared</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development costs and profit shared with the developer</li><li>• Contractual relationship with developer limits flexibility</li><li>• Development schemes dictated by the market rather than local need</li></ul>

### **Option C – Developer Partnership**

This option would involve the creation of a formal partnership with a private body to create a business, probably taking the form of a Limited Liability Partnership. This model would enable us to transfer assets into the partnership and in return the Partnership would use its expertise and resources to develop the assets on our behalf. All profits would be shared.

<b>Advantages:</b>	<b>Disadvantages:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to significant levels of Capital investment</li><li>• Highly flexible and creative in operation</li><li>• Presents an additional option to Option A and Option B</li><li>• Does not remove ability to consider other options</li><li>• Allows projects to evolve and be assessed before any commitment</li><li>• Baseline value remains with the council with only the added value shared</li><li>• Investment of private sector funds into projects of mutual benefit.</li><li>• Supports the Council in the development of its strategic review of the property portfolio</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decision making would be by a Board including District Council representatives. This may be seen as being less democratic.</li><li>• The model is dependent on the District Council and the partner to reach agreement on key decisions</li><li>• This model is heavily reliant on project research and planning</li></ul>

### **Option D – Combination Approach**

An approach where we make use all of the options to maximise the benefit to the District.

#### **Your Views**

Comments invited on the District Council's website [www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk](http://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

Deadline for comments: 14th October 2018

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

- Barbara Bowman had vaguely heard of the consultation, but in her role as a Parish Councillor. She believed that the consultation may not have been widely enough

publicised and wondered how many residents regularly looked at the District Council's website.

- Paul Wilson advised that press releases had also been issued and there had been coverage in the local newspapers as well as via social media. The District Council would continue to promote the consultation.
- Vicki Raynes agreed with previous comments, noting huge decisions to be made with huge ramifications and if decisions were to be made on assets that belong to the community, then more publicity should be given. Vicki had looked at the website, but felt more explanation was needed. She appreciated that money was tight, but had concerns about real estate being lost.
- Paul replied that options were being looked at and that there was no plan for the District Council to divest itself of assets, but was rather looking to realise value. He added that the Commercial Board is a constituted committee with all papers published and members of the public may attend the meetings.
- Vicki still believed the matter to be vague, to which Paul responded that it may be perceived as vague at this stage as there are no live projects. The District Council is just exploring opportunities to maximise its assets for the benefit of the taxpayers.
- As a recipient of the District Council's electronic newspaper, Chris Stait felt that it worked well as a communications channel. He asked if the developers would be 'straight' to which Paul replied that only one option, B, involved using a developer only and in any case, all decisions would need the support of full Council to go ahead.
- In response to a question about how this would fit in with Matlock Community Vision, Paul replied that the District Council has been a keen supporter of the Bakewell Road project with financial assistance too. The project seems to be at a bit of a crossroads and these options may allow projects to be taken forward.

## **WASTE & RECYCLING 2020**

### The Challenge

To maintain high quality waste & recycling when:

- Statutory requirements and recycling targets are rising
- Costs of collection are growing
- Prices for recyclable materials have fallen significantly

### Why are we consulting?

- Our waste and recycling contract with Serco comes to an end in 2020
- We will let a new contract by inviting new bids during 2019
- To do this, we must decide the shape of the new service on 29 November 2018 (no later)
- **We want your views before making any decisions on the new service**

### Setting the scene

- **Best waste & recycling performance in Derbyshire (57% recycling rate), but...**
  - 'Optional extras' may be compulsory in future (e.g. food waste collection)
  - 65% recycling target likely to be imposed
- **Cost of collection has risen very significantly in recent years**

- Prices for recyclable materials have fallen
- Currently costs more to collect some materials than they can be sold for
- Good value currently but bidders now cautious

#### Our goal

- To procure a waste and recycling contract that is affordable whilst meeting residents' needs and statutory recycling targets

#### What have we done so far?

- Used the Government WRAP programme to model service options for waste and recycling
- Procured technical expertise (Eunomia Ltd.)
- Engaged with potential contractors
- Spoken with other local authorities
- Developed a risk register
- Consulted the public about food waste
- Consulting the public about waste and recycling options

#### What do we know?

- Market evidence tells us that the same service we have now would cost much more than at present and may not be available
- We therefore have to look at other service options...
- ...whilst keeping the best of the current service
  - and increase recycling
  - whilst controlling costs

#### What are the options?

- The main options open to us are -
  - Charging for garden waste collections
  - Collecting residual waste (black bins/sacks) less often
  - No requirement to collect garden waste
  - Nearly half of those councils that collect garden waste now charge for it
  - Annual charge varies widely from £20-£80 per bin
  - Collecting residual waste (black bins/sacks) every three or four weeks costs less than fortnightly, and boosts recycling

#### What does consultation tell us?

- People like the service as it is!
  - 97% think recycling is important
  - Two thirds of people use the weekly food waste collection service
  - Blue bins are nearly full
  - Paper/card inserts are always full
  - 40% of people's grey bins are three-quarters full or less when they put them out for collection

#### What else have people said?

- Around half of the respondents say they would pay for garden waste collections
- If a charge had to be introduced, 73% think £25 is reasonable
- Of the available options, charging for garden waste collections (and keeping everything else as it is now) was most favoured

- Separate weekly nappy collections could help some people if grey bin / black sack collections were to become less frequent

#### Relative benefits & costs of options

	Food	Recyclables	Residual	ORDER OF RECYCLING	OF COST
	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>Fortnightly</i>	<i>Fortnightly</i>		££££££
A	Weekly	Fortnightly + charged garden	Fortnightly		££££
B	Weekly	Fortnightly	Three weekly		£££££
C	Weekly	Fortnightly + charged garden	Three weekly		££
D	Weekly	Fortnightly	Four weekly		£££
E	Weekly	Fortnightly + charged garden	Four weekly		£

#### Next steps

- Consultation still open – have your say until 23 September
- Council to decide shape of new service on 29 November
- Procurement of new contract commences 2019
- New contract starts 2020

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

- Barbara Bowman had responded to the consultation with her own personal opinion. However, she had concerns around the circumstances of some households in Cromford where storage of waste could be an issue, particularly for those on sack collections with limited space. She also raised concerns that if emptying frequencies are reduced, the current containers will have insufficient capacity.
- Steve Capes noted the valid points made and that the District Council is mindful of different households with different circumstances. Possible options might include bigger bins.
- Chris Earnshaw had completed the survey, but asked how widely publicised it had been, fearing that the public would become aware too late in the process.
- Steve advised that as well as using the District Council's website to promote the waste consultation, press releases had also been issued and ongoing promotion continued.
- Kath Camm asked about the cost of replacement containers to which Steve replied that the containers will need replacing in time and costings will be factored into contract costs.
- Kath further noted that Derby City Council had ceased charging for the collection of green garden waste.

- Steve was mindful that different councils are able to offer different services and that Derby City is in a fortunate position to not charge for green garden waste.
  - Vicki Raynes felt that the questionnaire was too narrow and guided responses in a certain direction. She also noted that food waste was not included.
  - Steve advised that the questionnaire is fairly narrow as this reflects the reality of the options and it is unlikely that the status quo will remain. Food waste was the subject of a separate earlier consultation with results being added to other intelligence. It is hoped to increase take up of the food waste service.
  - Vicki asked if Derbyshire Dales could join with another local authorities to make a more viable and attractive contract for potential suppliers.
  - Steve replied that the District Council had looked at joining with other authorities in Derbyshire, but others had different contract end / start dates. The principle is good, but to achieve a 2020 start day, the reality to share services / a contract is not possible.
  - Vicki applauded an excellent waste service at present, but what other services did the public receive for their Council Tax to which Steve responded that the District Council wanted to ensure that its excellent waste service continued. Council Tax covers many services provided by several authorities.
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- Barbara Bowman had not heard of the food waste consultation and asked when the results would be published.
  - Steve advised that the full results were not yet known – there had been 735 responses. It was believed that around two thirds of households use the food waste service.
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- Chris Stait noted a much larger proportion of Council Tax income for Derbyshire County Council versus Derbyshire Dales District Council and asked if best use was being made of resources and cross service boundaries.
  - Steve explained that Derbyshire Dales District and Derbyshire County Councils are two separate statutory authorities with separate statutory duties. For waste Derbyshire Dales is the collection authority and Derbyshire County the disposal authority. Ongoing negotiations take place to endeavour to work together where possible. Derbyshire County Council also has budget constraints to address.
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- Chris Stait referred to the 67/68% recycling achieved by South Oxfordshire District Council and suggested that Derbyshire Dales needed to push the recycling agenda more.
  - Steve explained that the District Council has a recycling promoter whose role includes working in schools.
  - Derbyshire Dales' 57% recycling achievement is the highest in Derbyshire. By 2023, it is likely that the government will have set a target of 65%.
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- Kath Camm feared that fly tipping may increase if waste collections were less frequent. She also felt that residents who recycle are almost being penalised because of those who don't.
  - Steve reported that evidence from other authorities that have introduced 3 or 4 weekly collection cycles, showed that fly tipping had not increased and that residents made better use of the facilities they had. He emphasised that no decisions have yet been made and that the District Council is looking at better ways to manage waste.

- Paul Wilson commented on the consultation exercise which used all available channels - website, social media, E newsletter, press releases (to local media and village publications that have signed up), via Town & Parish Council clerks and Citizens' Panel & Dales Matters when timely. The District Council wanted to connect with as many residents as possible and urged to let us know if more could be done.
- Councillor Irene Ratcliffe noted how valuable parish publications are which often include links to consultations – some Ward Members are very active in their promotion of District Council business.
- Councillor Swindell added that there was a duty on District Councillors, as ambassadors, to promote matters of public interest via parish channels.
- Councillor Pawley did try to get the message out, but noted that not all Parish Councils meet monthly, nor are all newsletters monthly.
- Councillor Pawley felt that ideas to make money or reduce waste could have been invited in the consultation. Could Derbyshire Dales be a leading council in encouraging the reduction of waste? Also, could recyclable items be used to produce energy?
- Steve welcomed ideas and was very aware of the current situation with plastics. There was likely to be a government consultation paper in the autumn making proposals to reduce plastic waste.
- Other councils had incinerators which produced energy, but these were not particularly environmentally friendly.

## **DERBYSHIRE DALES LEISURE REVIEW – UPDATE**

### **Profile: Freedom Leisure**

- A well established 'not for profit' Leisure Trust
- Born out of a Local Authority in the south of England
- Portfolio of over 80 sites in England and Wales
- Recently awarded contracts to operate Leisure and Cultural facilities in Stafford, Litchfield and East Staffordshire
- Experience of operating Leisure facilities in rural areas
- Purpose, approach and view on partnership working aligns well with the District Council's
- Experienced in managing mobilisation periods (including TUPE)

### **Why Freedom Leisure?**

- Bespoke approach to Derbyshire Dales
- Greater level of investment and across all sites
- Positive approach to partnership and community working
- Staffing structure and provision of staff
- Improved customer experience and offer (a lot of added value)
- Significant reduction in financial risk, due to variant bid

### **The Contract: Key Features**

- 10 year contract with the option of further 5 to be discussed
- Operational and full lifecycle replacement and maintenance responsibilities (variant bid)

- Offers a total revenue saving of £5.1m over the 10 year contract
- District Council to invest £1.2m of Capital Reserves to support improvements works, resulting in a reduced annual management fee
- Freedom Leisure will invest c.£1m over the life of the contract to continually improve facilities
- Financial assessments and pension and performance bonds are in place
- All affected employees are protected under TUPE regulations and were transferred with current terms and conditions
- Transfer date - 1 August 2018

### **Additional Benefits**

- Free swimming for over 75's
- Free swimming during school holidays for young people aged 16 and under (from areas of deprivation)
- Free casual swimming for children under 5
- Free swimming lessons for identified Year 6 pupils who have not reached the National Curriculum criteria of being able to swim 25m
- An annual bank of 1,000 hours to support Active Communities initiatives
- Programme of free activities during summer holidays
- Access to 80+ Freedom Leisure sites across England and Wales

### **QUESTION TIME**

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

- Chris Earnshaw noted the £700,000 savings to be made by 2021/22 and would the venture to maximise commercial value in the District Council's assets to generate new income streams, wholly address this?
- Paul replied that this would not fully close the gap, but the District Council wanted to maximise potential and the commercialisation agenda sought to seek better value from existing assets. The District Council had been achieving year on year savings for the last 8 years - nobody likes to reduce services, but there have been, and will continue to be, difficult decisions to make.
- Chris further asked if there are likely to be more service cuts to which Paul responded that options have to be looked at in order to achieve a balanced budget. £700,000 will not be an easy challenge – the District Council want to work with communities and will listen to residents.
- Paul noted Chris' concerns that Town/Parish Councils and communities are often given little time to consider matters such as taking over public conveniences and urged that more notice be given.

### **CONCLUSION AND THANKS**

Councillor Elliott thanked everyone for their participation.

Meeting closed at 8.20 pm