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NORTHERN AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Central Area Community Forum held on 18 September 2018 at 7.00 pm at the Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell

PRESENT

Derbyshire Dales - District Council Councillors Helen Froggatt (In the Chair), Susan Hobson and John Tibenham

Paul Wilson (Chief Executive), Steve Capes (Head of Regeneration & Policy) Resources), Ashley Watts (Head of Community & Environmental Services) and Ros Hession (Community Engagement Officer)

Members of the Public

Bakewell – George & Janet Challenger
Bakewell Town Council – John Boyle, Steve Edwards
Derbyshire County Council – Judith Twigg
Foolow – Simon Wills
Grindlow - Henry Folkard
Hassop – J N Anderson
Hathersage – Jean Marsh
J Breeze, P Breeze, Pat Lunn
12 in total

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Froggatt 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

Option A - In-House Asset Management	
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.	
Advantages:	Disadvantages:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All decisions made by the District Council• All risks managed by the District Council• All income retained by the District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited capacity to deliver significant projects• Limited access to external expertise or market intelligence• Limited funding available without external borrowing• Requires high level resource at planning and implementation stages

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.

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

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.

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

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

Deadline for comments: 14th October 2018

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

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:-

Green Flag Award

- Judith Twigg noted the District Council's success in achieving the Green Flag Award status for Matlock's Hall Leys Park for the 11th consecutive year and asked if other parks & gardens such as Bath Gardens were entered, to which Ashley Watts replied that others would be entered in the future.

DDDC Welcome signs

- Judith Twigg asked about relevant agreements to place signs in the Peak Park in villages such as Bradwell, Grindleford and Hathersage.
- Paul replied that the District Council had engaged with Derbyshire County Council Highways Section prior to the signs being installed and that no planning permission was required from the Peak District National Park Authority. Signs had been replaced 'like for like'.

Waste & Recycling

- Henry Folkard appreciated that the District Council is in a difficult position, but highlighted that there is quite a difference between having a black bin for residual waste versus black sacks which are not always easy to store depending on household circumstances.
- Ashley Watts advised that properties are assessed taking into account access for crews, residents and storage space.
- Mr Folkard had concerns that if a charge was introduced for the green garden waste service, this may lead to fly tipping in the countryside which, as well as being unsightly, incurred costs for its removal to which Ashley responded that, in areas where charging for garden waste had been introduced, there had been no evidence of any increase in fly tipping.
- Mr Folkard also noted viruses and pathogens in some garden waste means that it may not be suitable for domestic composting and can be harmful if dumped in the countryside.

- Steve Edwards noted the current 57% recycling achieved and that government targets were likely to place greater pressures on the District Council and its residents. He felt there was a risk for residents to feel inclined to put recycling in residual waste if collection frequencies decreased.
- Steve Capes reported that this point had been put to the consultants and whilst some residents may be inclined to do this, on the whole there shouldn't be an increase in residual waste percentages.

Monsal Trail

- Nigel Anderson asked for an update on the Monsal Trail.
- Paul Wilson had heard nothing recently about this long held aspiration with which Derbyshire Dales District & Derbyshire County Councils had had an involvement along with the Peak District National Park Authority.

Public conveniences in Bakewell - Riverside & Recreation Ground

- In light of the commercialisation agenda, Steve Edwards asked Paul Wilson for an update on the Riverside and Recreation Ground toilets.
- Paul explained that one of the first work streams is to look at public conveniences that have now closed. A business case, for the Recreation Ground toilets, was currently being worked on for the end of October to include provision of toilets and a possible commercial venture e.g café.

- Pat Lunn noted the recent closure of the Riverside toilets, but a pity they were not still in use, particularly when large events are taking place eg 7 or 8 coaches had visited a recent event.

- Paul Wilson reported that visitors are signposted to the Granby Road toilets. The Agricultural Business Centre toilets are not actively promoted because of additional resources and costs associated with increased usage.
- The District Council had previously spent £455,000 per annum to run and maintain 26 public conveniences. The District Council's financial constraints had been highlighted in the presentation earlier. It was not financially sustainable for some facilities to remain open – he added that a recent BBC article cited that in 2013 Cornwall ran 253 public conveniences, it now ran 14 as they had been either closed or transferred. 37 authorities now have no public conveniences.
- Pat Lunn described Bakewell as a tourist mecca and lack of facilities is a minus factor as far as tourists are concerned. In response to Mrs Lunn suggesting that someone might take over the Riverside toilets, Paul replied that the District Council was open to suggestions.
- Paul further added that a lot of work was done as part of the public conveniences review including monitoring of usage and financial arguments for a pay system. Town centre locations were the only ones that would be self-financing and so far the revenue is as expected. For other more rural facilities, the District Council may be able to support others to take on initially, but cannot sustain in the long term.
- Steve Edwards contributed that no one is 'moaning' about having to pay in Bakewell and that Bakewell Town Council supported the District Council's proposals to introduce a pay system.
- Steve added that people do seem to be able to override the barrier system and 'sneak' in at busy times. Ashley Watts was aware of this.

Transfer of Public Conveniences

- It was noted that there were several successful examples of public conveniences being transferred to Parish Councils including Ashford in the Water, Hathersage, Winster and Youlgrave.

Granby Road toilets – out of hour's procedures

- Steve Edwards had been asked, in his capacity as a Town Councillor, to attend the Granby Road toilets at 9.45 pm on Saturday 15 September.
- A passer-by was concerned that the alarm was sounding in the disabled toilet and that someone may be inside.
- Steve tried a number of channels including ringing Derbyshire Dales District Council, the Derbyshire County Council call centre, Healthmatic (the provider of the payments system for the public conveniences) and eventually Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service's non urgent contact number.
- Steve raised concerns from the point of view of the District Council managing its assets – were officers aware of the incident on Saturday night, was there a fault and what measures are in place to deal with such situations?
- Paul Wilson replied that the District Council had not been aware of the situation and that in genuine emergency situations, Derbyshire County Council are able to contact District Council personnel.
- Ashley Watts added that if the facility had been faulty at the time of locking, the operative is able to contact their supervisor who in turn is able to contact Healthmatic. Ashley continued that there is a safety feature when the door should open after a certain time period and in addition a RADAR key may be used to access the cubicle.

- There are mitigating measures in place to release the door, but Paul noted that a procedure should be in place and that the District Council would not want to unnecessarily involve the emergency services, appreciating that their resources are stretched.
- The matter would be looked into.

Parking surface – Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell

- George Challenger spoke of the state of the access road to the Agricultural Business Centre which he described as a sea of mud. The grass comes up and the grassgrid wears away.
- Paul Wilson explained that the grass groove surface is a reinforced plastic grid which allows the grass to grow through. It works well in other areas, but the sheer volume of vehicles at the ABC car park takes its toll on the surface, exacerbated also by other activities such as erection of tents and marquees. The District Council endeavours to 'rest' the ground from time to time and rotate activities where possible.
- Mr Challenger asked if other, more robust, surfacing could be investigated, to which Paul replied that these are at significant costs. Previous patch repair works have been carried out in the past costing circa £40,000. The cost of replacing the whole car park surface is prohibitive.

Transfer of Leisure facilities to Freedom Leisure

- Steve Edwards complimented that the customer experience of the leisure transfer had been seamless. Freedom Leisure had some good ideas and are making great investments.

Forum participation & attendance

- Simon Wills noted non-attendance by Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park Authority as there were issues he would like to raise. Representation did not appear to be as wide as it used to be.
- Henry Folkard appreciated the opportunity the Forum presented to speak with representatives from local authorities and thanked those who attended.
- Paul Wilson advised that the Peak District National Park Authority is usually represented, but could not be on this occasion. Any issues raised would be forwarded to other authorities if their responsibility.

Derbyshire County Council – highways issues follow up

- Simon Wills raised a point for Derbyshire County highways. He had raised a matter with them back in May for which he had been issued a reference number. Because the DCC website was not up to date, he had had to ring the offices which resulted in a half hour conversation with a member of staff. This was a waste of time and resources when the information could have been accessed on line and felt the DCC had not 'joined up the dots'.

Post Meeting note – Derbyshire County Council have confirmed that the Highways department is dealing with Mr Wills' report of Japanese Knotweed on a section of A623 from Housley Rd to Long Lane, Foolow on 3 May 2018.

Silence Mine, Bretton Edge

- Simon Wills raised concerns around mineral extraction at Silence Mine. Cracks previously filled in by Derbyshire County Council, were now re-appearing.
- Mr Wills urged for adequate safeguards to be in place for any effects to be mitigated which Paul Wilson undertook to report back to the relevant authorities via these notes.

Trade waste

- John Boyle asked if businesses and holiday homes should pay for a trade waste service to which Steve Capes affirmed this is the case.
- Mr Boyle suspected that there were many holiday homes using black sacks as part of the domestic waste service and that some trade waste is placed in litter bins. Not only unfair, but also a potential loss of revenue for the District Council.
- Ashley Watts explained that checks are made and there are waste team members who will inspect properties. Sadly, some businesses do use litter bins and where waste is identifiable (e.g by addressed correspondence) then a proactive approach will be taken to address the matter.
- Paul Wilson urged for any intelligence to be conveyed to the District Council for follow up.
- Ashley added that the District Council does not have capacity to check every property, but will take action on intelligence and through a review of business rates records.
- Steve Capes commented that there can be a genuine lack of awareness about trade waste, particularly for holiday lets and that matters such as this are highlighted through tourism communications with accommodation providers.

Oddfellows Road, Hathersage – car park

- Jane Marsden asked for a review of the car park signage at the Oddfellows Road car park in Hathersage which stated 77 spaces. However, Jane believed that there were only about 45 as some had been let for residents and permit holders. She understood that the Parish Clerk has raised the matter with the District Council.
- Ashley Watts undertook to follow this up.

Post meeting note – Keith Postlethwaite (Parks and Street Scene Manager) has confirmed that new signage has been ordered to reflect the new layout and will be installed in due course.

CONCLUSION AND THANKS

Councillor Froggatt thanked everyone for their participation.

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm