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NORTHERN AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Northern Area Community Forum held on 1 November 2017 at 7.00pm at the Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell

PRESENT

Derbyshire Dales - District Council Councillors Helen Froggatt (In the Chair), Alyson Hill, Neil Horton, Lewis Rose, OBE, John Tibenham and Joanne Wild

Dorcas Bunton (Chief Executive), Karen Henriksen (Head of Resources), Sandra Lamb (Head of Corporate Services), Tim Braund (Head of Regulatory Services) and Ros Hession (Community Engagement Officer)

Peak District National Park Authority John Scott (Director of Conservation and Planning)

Members of the Public Bakewell Residents – John Riley, Leonard Twigg
Bakewell Town Council – Bill Storey
Girl Guiding Bakewell - Doreen Furness
Foolow – Simon Wills
Hassop Parish Meeting - Annabel Dunn, John Fawcett
Hucklow Parish Council – Martin Beer
Stanton in Peak Parish Council – Sue Fogg
John Boyle, George Challenger, Janet Challenger, Mary Chaplin, Richard Chaplin, Henry Folkard, Melissa Miller, J A Twigg
17 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

Dorcas Bunton talked about some of the District Council's recent successes which included:-

Leisure Centres: We have completed a fabulous refurbishment programme of each of the Fitness Suites, plus the new functional space at Ashbourne and new viewing area too. New Indoor Cycling Studio at Arc is amazing and has seen participation rocket.

Hall Leys Park MUGA: Work has been completed to convert the single tennis court in Hall Leys Park into a Multi-Use Games Area, improving recreational facilities in the park, including enclosed football and basketball activities and - we hope - reducing anti-social behaviour.

Ashbourne Thursday Market: Is now at its new location, prompting us to consult on the possibility of switching the Saturday market to the same site.

... and we awarded the tender to The Market Co. for a monthly artisan market in Ashbourne Market Place, this started in September.

Great British Spring Clean: Following on from the success of the 2016 'Clean for the Queen' initiative, this year we encouraged more than 25 groups to take part in the 'Great British Spring Clean', including schools, parish councils, women's institutes, businesses and various community groups.

Invoices: For 2016/17 99.65% of invoices were paid on time. This is our best ever performance, and helps the Council's suppliers operate successfully (many are local firms)

Minor Planning Applications: 77.9% determined in 8 weeks, well above target and second best performance in 5 years.

Business Advice: In the last 12 months, our Derbyshire Dales Business Advice Service has helped 22 local firms win £800,000 in grants – creating 72 new jobs in the Derbyshire Dales.

...**26 New Businesses** were started in the Derbyshire Dales last year with direct assistance from the District Council's business support schemes, and a further 101 existing firms got business advice from us.

CCTV: We have tendered and are now installing a new CCTV System to cover our 4 main town centres and help people who live, work and visit the area feel safer.

Regeneration: We have worked with the residents' association on Hurst Farm estate in Matlock to win a £200,000 investment from DCLG to identify the regeneration needs of the estate.

Vulnerable People: Derbyshire County Council has agreed a two year deal with us for £300,000 additional Council Tax raised on 2nd homes to be invested in services for vulnerable people threatened with homelessness in both 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Accreditation: Our Homelessness Team has achieved the Bronze level of accreditation with DCLG's Gold Standard award and is now working towards the Silver level.

Housing Investment: Working in partnership with Derby City Council and all of the Derbyshire authorities, we have led a project to fund a 2-year post that will help to bring additional housing investment to the county. Financed from an external grant, it will start in September.

Disabled Facility Grants: We completed 59 of these grants in 2016/17 – the highest ever number, meaning more people helped than ever before.

Jack Rabbits, The Green Man, Ashbourne and Sudbury Courtyard were both Building Control project finalists - the Sudbury Courtyard was an actual winner in the Best Small Commercial Project category at the East Midlands 2017 Building Excellence Awards.

Matlock Town Centre: We've given £10,000 to Matlock Community Vision (a local community-led company) to carry out a viability assessment of their initial plans for land off Bakewell Road.

Ashbourne By-Pass: We've given £10,000 to Derbyshire County Council (DCC) as a contribution toward the work required in assessing the feasibility of a by-pass. Together with an Officer from DCC and a local representative, the Corporate Director attended a meeting with the Secretary of State (arranged by the MP) to discuss potential funding sources.

Active Everyone: Our popular Active Everyone project is to be extended thanks to Sport England funding. Since 2014 it has engaged with 1,500 people in some of the Dales' most deprived communities.

Walking for Health: This growing scheme hosted Nordic Walking taster sessions at Whitworth Park - a huge success with more than 60 people attending.

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

- Judith Twigg noted determination of planning applications which referred only to Derbyshire Dales and not applications in the Peak District National Park.
- John Scott advised of separate figures for the Peak District National Park Planning Authority being of a similar percentage.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR EFFICIENCY PLAN?

Karen Henriksen gave a presentation on the District Council's Efficiency Plan.

We need to find ongoing savings of £1.7m a year by 2020/21.
That's almost 17% of current spending!

Q. How do we hope to achieve those savings?

A. With the projects set out in our Efficiency Plan

This is your chance to give us your views on the proposals

An overview of the proposals

	2018/19 £'000s	2019/20 £'000s	2020/21 £'000s	2021/22 £'000s
Savings required (as MTFP)	683	1,049	1,709	1,513
Service Reviews	-625	-775	-775	-775
Service Changes	-485	-485	-485	-485
Transformation	-130	-155	-165	-165
Additional Income	-150	-150	-150	-150
Net Spending Requirement	-707	-516	134	-62

Proposed savings from service reviews

	2018/19 £'000s	2019/20 £'000s	2020/21 £'000s	2021/22 £'000s
Outsourcing management of leisure centres	-350	-500	-500	-500
Public conveniences: close some	-200	-200	-200	-200
Public conveniences: introduce charging	-75	-75	-75	-75
Total	-625	-775	-775	-775

Proposed savings from service changes

	2018/19 £'000s	2019/20 £'000s	2020/21 £'000s	2021/22 £'000s
Markets Review	-40	-40	-40	-40
Boundary Review Fewer Members	-25	-25	-25	-25
Cease pest control service	-15	-15	-15	-15
Gulley Emptying	20	20	20	20
Review of leases	-425	-425	-425	-425
Total	-485	-485	-485	-485

Proposed savings from transformation

	2018/19 £'000s	2019/20 £'000s	2020/21 £'000s	2021/22 £'000s
Review of car user expenses	-40	-40	-40	-40
BSU savings	-15	-15	-15	-15
Support services following outsourcing of leisure management	-75	-100	-100	-100
STEP Review			-10	-10
Total	-130	-155	-165	-165

Proposed areas for additional income

	2018/19 £'000s	2019/20 £'000s	2020/21 £'000s	2021/22 £'000s
Charge for car parks that are currently free	-60	-60	-60	-60
Council Tax Premium for Empty Homes (DDDC share)	-10	-10	-10	-10
Planning fees, pre-application, waste bins etc	-80	-80	-80	-80
Total	-150	-150	-150	-150

Efficiency Plan: Key Messages

The MTFP shows a balanced budget for 2017/18 with savings required for later years; Our EP has identified savings that will balance our books. Members have already given approval for officers to explore the areas but some tough decisions will have to be made; If these savings can be delivered, we shouldn't need to look at any other areas for savings over the next few years.....

Further public consultation will be required before some of these proposals can be implemented.

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

Reduction of street cleansing services

- Judith Twigg appreciated the need to make savings, but urged that Parish Councils be kept informed of any cuts to services. 3 waste bins had been removed in Eyam, but the Parish Council had not been aware of plans for their removal.
- Karen undertook to advise relevant colleagues.

- **Post meeting note** - Colleagues in Environmental Services advise that some bins were removed as part of the 2014 Review, in consultation with the Parish Council. Another has been removed from private land and can be replaced at a suitable location. The Parish Council have been contacted and urged to contact Environmental Services direct to discuss.

Pre-application planning advice

- John Scott noted that the Peak District National Park Planning Authority had introduced a pre-application advice service some years ago and this had worked well as people liked the certainty. He also noted central government's discussions to increase fees by 20%.
- Tim Braund added that a 20% increase will attract around £80,000 additional revenue. Derbyshire Dales had introduced pre-application advice in April 2017 with an estimated income of £20,000, but it was now anticipated that £30,000 may be raised.

Gulley Emptying

- In response to a question about the increased costs for gulley emptying, Karen explained that the District Council carried out this service for Derbyshire County Council; there are plans, however, for DCC to take back the service. This will result in an initial loss for DDDC, but achieve long term savings eventually.

Ongoing efficiency savings

- Leonard Twigg admired the work done by Karen and her team to balance the books and also acknowledged the political leadership's input into the process.

Affordable Housing – remote participation

- A question was put by John Green on Facebook. The DDDC proposed capital program through to 2020 shows drastic cuts to a lot of services, yet also shows in excess of £3 million to be spent on "affordable housing". Who gets that money and why please?
- Officers responded: Enabling the provision of new affordable homes for local people has been a priority for the District Council since 2002. Though we do not provide homes ourselves, we do work with housing associations to build, let and manage new affordable homes. Financing each new home requires several different agencies to work together. The Government makes grants available through the Homes and Communities Agency, housing associations borrow money from banks and building societies based on the future rents and Councils can use land and capital funding to support schemes. As the Housing Association will own the properties, council funding is paid to them to support the development costs. This is a common arrangement, with Councils across the UK adopting the same principles. In some parts of the Derbyshire Dales, development costs can be quite high relative to other areas. In such cases the funding from government and the housing association isn't enough to cover the cost of development without extra support from the Council. If the Council didn't provide additional grant, far fewer affordable homes would be built in the district.

The grants provided by the council come from contributions from private developers when they build market homes and capital receipts from the sale of former council houses still subject to the Right To Buy.

The capital programme shows the Council's planned investment in assets, such as

homes, sites for economic regeneration, buildings, cemeteries, car parks, vehicles and software. Spending on capital assets can vary significantly from year to year, depending on which assets need to be replaced or improved, or the new projects that the Council has approved at that time.

The table below shows the approved capital programme for this year and the last two years:

Approved June 2017 for 2017/18 to 2021/22 £9.9m

Approved June 2016 for 2016/17 to 2020/21 £10.8m

Approved June 2015 for 2015/16 to 2019/20 £9m

Day to day spending on services is shown in the Council's Revenue Budget.

The District is proud that, despite year-on-year reductions in grant funding from central government, we have not yet had to cut frontline services to the people of the Derbyshire Dales. Instead, by seeking efficiencies, partnerships and exploring shared services, we are managing to reduce costs while maintaining services.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Purpose of the Review

- District Council funding gap of £1.6M over next 4 years
- 26 Public Conveniences owned/managed by the District Council
- Cost of Public convenience service is £470K per year
- Derbyshire Dales is a tourist area attracting 4.2 million visitors per year
- Trying to find ways of saving money whilst maintaining services

Options for the Review

- Charging for use
- Community Toilet Scheme
- Sponsorship
- Community Asset Transfer
- Closure

Current Position

- Assessing numbers that use facilities
- Consultation on charging at:
 - Matlock Hall Leys Park
 - Granby Road, Bakewell
 - Shawcroft Car Park, Ashbourne
 - Nether End, Baslow
 - Memorial Gardens, Matlock Bath
- Consultation on basis for Community Toilet Scheme
- Criteria agreed for assessment of closure as a last resort

Next Steps

- Completing the public consultation
- Assessment of consultation responses
- Obtaining quotes for charging units
- Report to Committee in New Year with recommendations for each facility

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

- Henry Folkard urged that if a charge is introduced, it be of a specific coinage eg 10p, 20p, 50p.
- This would be included in any specification, Sandra assured, but also with a facility to take multiple coins eg 2 x 10p = 20p. Cashless options were also being looked at.
- A comment was made about providing more toilets in Bakewell.
- Judith Twigg acknowledged the high standard of the facilities in Bakewell, partly due to an attendant looking after them. She urged that any charging system should be via a barrier system and not by each cubicle which was open to abuse.
- Sandra reported that the working party had visited other authorities such as Newark where the public conveniences are run by the Town Council. They learnt not to charge per cubicle and also to have a CCTV system pointing at the barrier system to deter any misuse of the system.

DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL – PROVISION OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR DERBYSHIRE DALES LEISURE CENTRES

Dorcas Bunton gave an update on the leisure review.

The timetable

December 2014	Introduction of Service Reviews - Does the service have to be provided? - DDDC or other provider? - What level of service is required?
January 2016	Options presented to Elected Members - 5 options
December 2016	Decision on final options
January 2017	Specification and Contract - Consultation
June 2017	Approval of Specification

Specification includes:

- Contract Terms
- Contract Length
- Pricing Policy
- Programming
- Opening Hours
- Maintenance and Lifecycle Cost
- Energy
- Surplus Share Agreement
- Performance and Review

Next steps

July 2017	Advertisement of Contract
October / November 2017	Evaluation Phase One
November 2017	Negotiation

January 2018	Evaluation Phase Two
March 2018	Award Contract
June 2018	Implementation

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

- In response to a question from a member of the public, Karen confirmed that the term of the contract would be for 10 years with an option for an additional 5 years.

QUESTION TIME

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

Bakewell Showground Events

- Mary Chaplin recalled that at the Forum last year it was stated that the Peak Park were investigating the events on the Showground as to whether or not the Show had permission from the Peak Park to run such events. Please may we have an update on the position? Some events are not well run, whereas others are, such as Thornbridge Brewery's Peakender event.
- John Scott explained that for the last three years the Peak District National Park Authority had been talking with Janet Bailey of Bakewell Show to establish if there had been a change of use of the showground. The showground committee had been asked to look at what they are doing and the events being held. The Peak Park did not want to issue enforcement, but would rather work with the showground to look at the amount of events being held and the time of year. Fewer events would cause less disturbance and preserve the ground better.
- Mrs Chaplin noted that caravan rallies have increased.
- John explained that these can take place without permission through the clearing house process through which the main camping and caravanning organisations consult the National Park Authority on caravan rallies which are otherwise permitted development. John did not believe that the number of rallies had increased, but would check.
- A further comment was made that days are added on before and after events to make a four day event become an eight day one.

Gates to Agricultural Business Centre / showground

- Judith Twigg commented on the planning condition and asked if the gates to the Agricultural Business Centre and showground are closed.
- Dorcas believed that the gates are closed at night, but would check.

Travellers

- John Riley believed that travellers were occupying the showground without paying parking fees and could enforcement action be taken. It appeared that the showground had limited powers.
- Tim explained that the showground, as the landowner, is responsible for taking legal action and evicting the travellers. The District Council will provide legal and financial support.
- It is not appropriate to charge car parking fees and the government suggest that it may be appropriate to tolerate certain encampments if not causing a nuisance.

- This was substantiated in a letter from the District Council's Parks and Street Scene Manager, Keith Postlethwaite, that charging for car parking is considered counterproductive.
- Dorcas added that Janet Bailey of Bakewell Show informed the District Council when the travellers arrive and both parties liaise closely. The District Council will support eviction if required, but there is an issue around tolerance to bear in mind.
- Richard Chaplin spoke of issues associated with hygiene and rubbish – he had witnessed rubbish being tipped into the river. Also, some people found the travellers' behaviour intimidating.
- He added that some vehicles are encamped whilst others come and go. He understood that the DDDC lease from the showground precludes overnight parking.
- Tim responded that you could argue that they are encamped, not parked and this must be tolerated for a period of time.
- Tim replied that the District Council would take a serious view on fly tipping and this encampment was not normally known for this behaviour.
- Tim explained that one of the younger travellers has learning difficulties and his behaviour may be perceived by some as threatening.
- Mr Chaplin confirmed that it was others who displayed threatening behaviour to which Tim recommended that this be reported to the police and / or District Council.
- Tim was aware that the current encampment is larger than normal and this does cause more problems. If a forced eviction takes place, all vehicles will be removed.
- In response to a final question from Mr Chaplin about the travellers continually returning, Tim advised that a permanent traveller site was being looked at through the Local Plan process.

Showground surfacing

- Mr Challenger asked about the surface of the car parking area which he believed was meant to be green grass which had become very muddy and then some hard surface added.
- Dorcas responded that it is the District Council's responsibility and is currently looking at replacing 2 strips down either side of Agricultural Way and would also look at any further maintenance that needed doing. The current material had been in place for 18 months and had been agreed with the Peak District National Park Authority.

Highways issues, Great Hucklow

- Henry Folkard spoke on behalf of Great Hucklow Parish Council on the temporary traffic regulation order on School Lane which had recently been lifted and presumed that this was because Camphill Lane was now open. He had concerns about the width of the road and safety issues. It was irrelevant whether Camphill Lane was open or closed there were serious safety issues which were a matter of great concern and urged for a solution.
- A member of the public added that the school entrance is on the main road, a stretch of road often used by off roaders.
- Mr Folkard was advised that this was a highways issue and Derbyshire County Council would be contacted on his behalf.
- **Post Meeting Note** - Peter White, FIPROW, Rights of Way Officer, advises 'we are aware of the concerns of the Parish Council, which were raised prior to the long-term closure being put in place. If the Parish Council would care to report incidents to DCC where public safety is compromised we would be better positioned to

respond and consider what would be the best form of action to take. If you have an enquiry about Rights of Way please phone Call Derbyshire on 01629 533190'.

CONCLUSION AND THANKS

Councillor Froggatt thanked everyone for their participation.

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm