

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning

19 February 2013

Repatriation of Shared Services

The Housing Service was repatriated to Hambleton on 1 February. We will now focus on priorities such as affordable housing provision and homelessness preventions.

The Waste and Street Scene Shared Service is in the process of being repatriated. It may not be possible to achieve the formal transfer until 1 July.

Kerbside Collection of Paper

In January Cabinet, approved new arrangements for the collection of paper from the kerbside. This will also allow the collection of certain kinds of card such as cereal boxes and plain or printed white or grey card, including wrappers from ready meals. New 60 litre bags will be distributed to households by the end of April.

Not only will this improve the service we give but increase our income by around £49k per year.

Traveller Site Provision

In October Cabinet agreed to:

- Discuss the potential for extending the public sites at Sowerby and Seamer.
- Discuss the potential for a new site if it proves inappropriate to extend the existing public sites.
- Identify options for private sites.

Consultation is underway with landowners, agents, Parish Councils and the gypsy and traveller community on private site options. This will be reported back to Cabinet in due course.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy is out for consultation until 1 March 2013. The outcome of consultation will be reported back to Cabinet.

Neighbourhood Plans

Appleton Wiske Parish Council is furthest advanced with its Neighbourhood Plan with a draft plan expected by late March followed by consultation and assessment. Huby are still at an early stage of plan preparation and have yet to appoint a steering group and consult. Elsewhere Neighbourhood Plans as a means of dealing with specific local issues are being considered for Tollerton, Ingleby Arncliffe and Seamer. Husthwaite Parish Council has decided not to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan.

In February Cabinet agreed those settlements where the Council will support the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. This gives a lot of flexibility but in the smaller settlements it would need to be shown that a Neighbourhood Plan would provide social and economic benefits for the whole community.

Homechoice

The Council has been running, in partnership, the choice based letting system of housing allocations for 18 months and a policy review is now underway. Recent changes to the law on housing allocations and the need to prepare for the impacts of welfare reform have also meant that aspects of the policy need to be changed. The proposed new policy tightens up access to the housing register to prevent people without a connection to North Yorkshire applying. It also prevents home owners and people that can afford their own homes joining the list. There will be a full consultation on all the proposed policy changes.

Homelessness

As homelessness continues to rise in Hambleton, our Housing Service was repatriated earlier this month. Work is underway to develop an investment strategy for the Government's Homelessness grant to support homelessness. We are also signing up the Government's No Second Night Out Strategy – which aims to prevent rough sleeping and street homelessness. They will then refocus on helping families within Hambleton to try to avoid the disruption of homelessness.

Councillor Mark S Robson

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning