

HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report To: Scrutiny Committee
11 September 2014

From: Management Team

Subject: **UPDATE ON PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

All Wards

1.0 SUMMARY:

1.1 This report informs Members of action taken to date as a result of a previous policy reviews undertaken by the former Scrutiny Committees.

2.0 BACKGROUND:

2.1 The following policy reviews were completed during 2012 to 2014:-

- Leisure Centres (Scrutiny Committee 1 – completed November 2012)
- Area Forums and Area Partnerships (Scrutiny Committee 2 – completed November 2012)
- Public Lighting Saving Initiatives (Scrutiny Committee 2 – completed February 2012)
- Business Friendly Council (Scrutiny Committee 1 – completed February 2013)
- Ageing Population (Scrutiny Committee 2 – completed February 2014)
- Introduction of Paperless Working within the Council (Scrutiny Committee 1 – completed March 2014)

2.2 Review recommendations were subsequently submitted to Cabinet and decisions were taken.

2.3 It is important that all agreed review recommendations should be monitored on a regular basis.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION:

3.1 The Committee is invited to comment on progress towards previous policy review recommendations.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Background papers: None

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POLICY REVIEW – UPDATE ON PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

REVIEW	RECOMMENDATION	ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN TO DATE
Leisure Centres	<p>To recommend to Cabinet that:-</p> <p>(1) operational running costs of the Council managed Leisure Centres be driven down by reducing expenditure, and increasing income, to a point which creates an overall profit;</p> <p>(2) the facilities that Hambleton has be consolidated and improved rather than expanded further;</p> <p>(3) the "Sweating our Assets" Action Plan be implemented with particular emphasis on improving ICT:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close budget monitoring systems are now in place to identify opportunities to reduce expenditure and increase income. • A review of staffing costs is currently underway, beginning with a 'Management Re-structure'. This will be followed by a review of programming and associated staff requirements. • It is very unlikely that the Leisure Centres will operate at a profit, due largely to significant staffing costs and the operating of x4 swimming pools. • The present economic environment has created significant pressure with regards to income generation. An action plan is in place to address this. • Significant capital investment has recently been made at Stokesley Leisure Centre, Thirsk & Sowerby Leisure Centre and Bedale Leisure Centre. The bulk of the investment was used to modernise changing facilities and replace swimming pool filtration systems. • Hambleton Leisure Centre, has been allocated capital funding to improve the health and fitness offering, this work is likely to begin in 2015/16. • Significant capital investment has been allocated and plans are now being prepared to implement a range of ICT software and hardware improvements across the leisure centres in 2014/15. The focus of this investment is to improve the ability to transact with customers digitally and improve the products that we offer with modern use of technology. • A spinning studio has been provided at Stokesley LC as a replacement for a squash court and works are in train for improving the health and fitness offer at Hambleton LC.

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	<p>(4) new facilities and services for the communities in Thirsk/Sowerby and North Northallerton be delivered by establishing new not for profit management organisations to sustain them;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant, well documented partnership works have been, and continue to be, undertaken at Sowerby with comprehensive communications in place to ensure awareness for members, resident and all stakeholders • The North Northallerton project is at an earlier stage with initial concept drawings having been produced. Cabinet are to consider this project shortly.
	<p>(5) the above recommendations be reviewed each year with a fundamental review in 5 years' time and in light of the Council's overall financial position consideration be given to the need to pursue more radical options such as:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conversion of poorer performing facilities (or cost centres); ➤ Closure of poorer performing facilities (or cost centres); ➤ Change of management method; ➤ Community Asset Transfer of facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plans are in place to ensure that the above recommendations are reviewed and implemented where appropriate. • A fundamental review is yet to take place.

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<p>Area Forums and Area Partnerships</p>	<p>To recommend to Cabinet that:-</p> <p>(1) it be acknowledged that the existing Area Partnerships operate very successfully but that Officers explore whether there is interest in re-establishing an Area Partnership within the Thirsk area;</p> <p>(2) a mechanism of raising awareness of the successful work that the Area Partnerships carry out be explored;</p> <p>(3) that greater scrutiny/ monitoring regarding the value for money these Partnerships present to the Council be undertaken;</p> <p>(4) Area Forums cease operating in their present form as soon as practicable provided that there is a mechanism in place for ad-hoc meetings to be called as and when issues of community interest arise and</p> <p>(5) alternative methods of community engagement be explored, including the proposal of a joint County/District/Parish Liaison meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions have been held with Thirsk CCA, as the local development agency for Thirsk, Sowerby and surrounding area, who confirm that there is an interest in creating an Area Partnership in Thirsk however the political will has yet to be determined • It is suggested that HDC be a partner in any such body formed but not take the lead as it does with the Area Partnerships in other areas • An Annual Report is now produced to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of the Area Partnerships – this is circulated to all key stakeholders, elected members via Council Talk, posted on the website and sent to local media • A timetable of press releases has been agreed with communications to publicise the community grants programme and other Area Partnership projects and successes over the 12 month period • There has been no monitoring of VFM undertaken to date but it is in the Communities work programme for 14/15 • Area Forums have ceased and a range of other community engagement models have been explored including those delivered in other areas of the County • Parish Liaison meetings are now held every 6 months, which are well attended and positively received. The meetings include representation from NYCC, HDC and Parish Councils. Strategic issues are presented and discussed. 2 meetings have been held to date with approximately 30 parishes represented at each. Minutes of the meeting are sent to all Parish Councils for information. There is also a page on the website where the meetings dates and minutes are posted.

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Public Lighting Energy Saving Initiatives	To recommend to Cabinet that approval be given to progress a joint consultation exercise with North Yorkshire County Council and the implementation of part-nighting generally in accordance with NYCC policies at anticipated capital cost for HDC of £100,000.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint consultations with North Yorkshire County Council were undertaken during 2013 with proposals for the installation of part night cells presented to the Police, Community Safety, Ward Members, Town and Parish Councils for comments. 2. Following the consultation process installation of the part-night cells was completed to the Council's towns and villages street and footway lighting together with the Civic Centre grounds and car park between September 2013 and May 2014 3. 2,229 of the 3,637 footway lighting units have been part-nighted constituting 61% of the Council's lighting stock. This equates to a carbon emission reduction of 145 tonnes from the pre-works emissions of 540 tonnes and an approximate £37,000 saving on the annual £137,000 pre-works lighting energy costs. We are awaiting confirmations from the electricity company on specific cost amendments as a consequence of this scheme as detailed in item 8 below. 4. Present committed expenditure on the £100,000 scheme stands at £87,500 however there may be further expenditure requirements later in the year once North Yorkshire County Council in conjunction with the Police undertake a review of the scheme 5. Further works may also be undertaken to the Council's car parks however this would require additional considerations to be taken into account in terms of CCTV surveillance; security implications concerning the Council's Pay & Display machines and various other issues. 6. Since the completion of the scheme there have been relatively few complaints. Most of these have been dealt with in reference to the clear policy guidelines agreed with North Yorkshire County Council prior to commencement of the scheme. We are however aware that the full scheme was completed in the summer and we may experience high volumes of change requests during the forthcoming winter months. 7. Implementation of the scheme in the main has gone well although there were built-in delays proposed around the October change over from BST to GMT as NYCC had experience problems in previous installations as a consequence of the sensitivities of the photo cells over this change over period.

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		<p>8. A formal submission has been submitted to the electricity supply company with the revised lighting stock inventory and we are awaiting a new EAC certificate (Energy Annual Consumption) and cost breakdowns for the new installations together with revised invoicing breakdowns MPANs (Meter Point Administration Number).</p>

REVIEW	RECOMMENDATION	ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN TO DATE
<p>Business Friendly Council</p>	<p>To recommend to Cabinet that:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the overall priority and goals of being Business Friendly be contained within the Council Plan; (2) a succinct Council-wide business friendly guide, a 'how to' deal with businesses be developed and training through workshops and seminars involving the business sector be embedded to ensure that all services understand how to deal with businesses effectively; (3) a new Hambleton Economic Development Study be undertaken in consultation with other partners, which would examine the health of the District and its towns and determine key drivers for the future; (4) a stand alone website to promote the local business offer in the District be developed including promoting, the District as a top class business destination (quality of life, road and rail connectivity, super fast broadband etc.); the high quality local business networks and the variety of elements of Council support on offer; (5) the Council's use of multiple communication channels be improved, including web and social media such as Twitter and LinkedIn to ensure better engagement with businesses; 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Target – guide to be produced and principles embedded in workshops by April 2014</p> <p>Not Achieved. Needs to be informed by the Economic Strategy to reflect key priorities. Target needs to be revised to April 2015</p> <p>Target – to have study undertaken by April 2014 - Achieved</p> <p>Target – to be tendered for and developed by December 2013. Available resources have not enabled this to be achieved. Whilst the site will be a stand-alone site it has also been suggested that it could use the same platform as the new HDC website when developed and the delivery of this is being monitored to enable this to be considered and best cost efficiencies realised.</p> <p>Targets – internal training in social Media use by summer 2013 Integrate LinkedIn and twitter channels to new website – December 2013</p> <p>As there is no global HDC social media policy in place these targets have not been achieved although the Business & Community Team are utilising social media channels where appropriate to promote the district and assist businesses.</p>

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	<p>(6) a business contact database be established within the new website structure, utilising a LinkedIn group which will provide a channel to communicate easily with businesses on a regular basis;</p> <p>(7) regular workshops with micro-businesses be undertaken to gain input on issues affecting them and to inform the shape of Council services and develop specific micro business support building on success of the "Lunch and Learn" and "Apprentice Scheme";</p> <p>(8) local business networks be strengthened and developed by utilising local good practice and promoting knowledge exchange;</p> <p>(9) close relationships with the strategic businesses in the district through Key Account Management be developed to raise awareness of their plans and needs;</p>	<p>Targets - Establish and promote LinkedIn Group for Hambleton Businesses by summer 2013 As above – integrate into new website when developed</p> <p>As this is linked to the website development it has not yet been progressed.</p> <p>Targets – By autumn 2013 to have established groups of businesses to target and have a programme of workshops in place and first in series delivered.</p> <p>The Lunch and Learn programme is well embedded and continues to be successful. Sessions are held most months and are well attended.</p> <p>Targets - To have networks in touch with each other and sharing good practice by Autumn 2013 To have a new network established in the Stokesley/Gt. Ayton area by December 2013</p> <p>The existing networks of Easingwold, Thirsk and Northallerton are now well connected and share knowledge and experience. A Stokesley Business Club is in the initial stages of setting up. A group in Bedale has yet to be established.</p> <p>Targets – To identify the top 50 businesses by size (turnover and/or staff) or by strategic importance – by Summer 2013 To establish a programme of individual meetings with the 20 most significant (frequency to be determined) December 2013</p> <p>The key businesses have been identified and good working relationships developed with the majority. A programme of meetings is being established to facilitate regular engagement with strategic employers in order to better understand their requirements moving forward.</p>

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	<p>(10) an online Contracts Register & local register of interest be developed to better enable local businesses to compete for Council business; ensuring the system is easily accessible and makes sense to the end user;</p> <p>(11) there is better promotion of the opportunities available to do business with the Council and undertake procurement in a manner which allows smaller businesses to be able to better compete for elements of Council business such as procuring in smaller lots or packages.</p> <p>(12) support to businesses new to Council tendering be provided to assist them with the form filling etc. as required.</p>	<p>No target – unsure with current resource available to procurement when this will be achieved.</p> <p>As above.</p> <p>As above</p>

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<p>Ageing Population</p>	<p>To recommend to Cabinet that:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) it be acknowledged that Leisure Services and other activities for the ageing population provided by the District Council and other partners are very good but that when opportunities for improvement are presented they be explored; (2) the provision of more specialist leisure activities for older people be explored by the Disability Sports Officer; (3) provision of housing options for the ageing population, including provision of single storey dwellings, be considered by the District Council through the relevant policies as appropriate; (4) Voluntary Organisations be commended for the work they do in providing services and support for older people and that continued support be given to Hambleton Strollers and the Hambleton Over 50's Forum; (5) it be acknowledged that current partnership working is very effective but that emphasis on the need for greater collaborative working between different agencies be encouraged and that concern be expressed about the reduction in public transport, particularly in isolated areas; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2014 - Review of Hambleton's Older Person's Accommodation and Housing Needs completed. This includes an Older Person's Action Plan. • From April 2014 used evidence gathered in planning negotiations to seek some 2 bed bungalow provision on market housing sites including at North Northallerton • 29th May 2014 - Session with Members held to discuss findings of Review of Hambleton's Older Person's Accommodation and Housing Needs and agree actions. • June 2014 - Discussions commenced with HCA and Broadacres to develop 2 bed bungalow based on Almshouse style developments • July 2014 - Review of Size, Type, Tenure and Quality of New Homes in Hambleton completed.(This includes bungalow provision) • 24 July 2014 findings of Review of Size, Type, Tenure and Quality of New Homes presented to members and actions agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Housing: Size, Type & Tenure SPD being prepared which will seek a percentage of bungalows on larger housing sites (10 or more dwellings) • Timescale - Report to Cabinet 2nd Dec 2014 seeking approval to go out for 4 week formal consultation (January/February 2015). Report to Cabinet 17th March 2015 - Feeding back on Consultation, recommending further changes if required and seeking Adoption of revised SPD • SPD and evidence gathered will inform LDF Review

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	<p>(6) it be acknowledged that the provision of services for older people by the District Council, together with Partners and voluntary organisations, is considered by others to be best practice but will continue to be reviewed and improved if required; and</p> <p>(7) the District Council's Older Persons' Strategy be reviewed and updated; sufficient funding be provided for this if necessary and that the issue of combating vulnerability, isolation and loneliness remain a priority within the Strategy with particular emphasis on the need to support activities across the district.</p>		

REVIEW	RECOMMENDATION	ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN TO DATE	TARGET DATE
<p>Introduction of Paperless Working Within the Council</p>	<p>To recommend to Cabinet that the introduction of paperless working within the Council be supported subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the introduction being undertaken in a staged approach; adequate back up being in place in the event of system failure; the review of the website ensuring that it can facilitate paperless working for Members; 	<p>The Paperless Working system is being introduced in a phased approach:</p> <p>1) Tablets were provided on a trial bases for Cabinet, Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Committees and members of the ICT Member Panel along with Management Team. This will be extended to full Council following May changes; other Officer issue will be on a strict business case basis.</p> <p>2) The paperless working (or decision management) system is Modern.Gov, the trial for this rolled out public documents only and then broadened to include confidential documents; initially for Cabinet. The ongoing phases for this will be to utilise the system for all committees and full Council, developing further uses such as recording of delegated Officer Decisions.</p> <p>A back up system to revert to paper-based systems is available in the event of any downtime.</p> <p>All Members of the new Council will be offered a printer to enable access to paper-based material.</p> <p>The existing website has had amendments to enable the trial paperless system to operate, these will be carried forward into the new Corporate website.</p>	<p>Initial launch completed</p> <p>Ongoing rollout to cover full Council May 2015</p> <p>May 2015 and Ongoing</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>May 2015</p> <p>Feb 2015</p>

