

Electoral Services

The announcement of a snap General Election on 12th December 2019 has seen the Electoral Services Department spring into action again this year. Hambleton District Council is concluding the Annual canvass and final reminders have been sent ahead of the 1st December deadline to publish the register. Great efforts are made to see that no-one who is entitled to vote is disenfranchised and every household who has not returned the forms to the Council has been visited by a canvasser.

The Council has carried out a review of all our polling stations earlier in the year so we are confident that all are fit for purpose and serve the community.

The Elections Team have been working longer days and weekends in order to prepare and are looking at all scenarios for Election day should the weather turn extremely cold, wet or even worse if snow falls!

Legal

Some time ago I became aware of the issue of unlicensed taxis operating in the area. This raises many issues for those who innocently use them and I am pleased to see that for the first time the Legal Department are involved in a prosecution for "Plying for Hire" which has been brought about through a collaborative process with other agencies.

HR Department

This department works quietly to see that the Council runs smoothly and that staff are happy in their work, and as a result of the hot weather in the summer, are for the first time, formulating a policy for "Dress and Appearance" which will seek to set the parameters for a suitable dress code in extremely hot weather. This is at the request of staff.

ICT and Customer Services

The Council's Digital Programme is championed by Customer Services and enabled by ICT where increased cross working is occurring in the Council to enable services to be accessed online more easily by the Customer. The Council has committed to the Government's 'Local Digital Declaration' which is a shared ambition for better digital local public services.

Markets

Thirsk will now benefit from a Farmers' Market being held at the beginning of each month which will add to the attractions in the town and we would hope increase footfall.

For the Christmas period, markets in Northallerton have been rearranged for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve in consultation with market traders. Thirsk market will operate as normal over Christmas.

And on that note may I wish all those who work at Hambleton District Council a very Merry Christmas.

Councillor Mrs Isobel Sanderson
Portfolio Holder for Governance