

Statement by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Governance

13 April 2021

Car Park Improvement Scheme

The Council has now installed 29 new pay and display machines and introduced a payment App across its car parks. The new machines allow for payment by coins, cards and mobile devices. Tariffs are available for large vehicle/double bay rates allowing vehicles with trailers and camper vans to use our car parks. These changes, in addition to the work carried out providing wider bays and enhanced CCTV coverage at Bedale, Northallerton and Stokesley has brought our Car Parks up to date with modern technology. This could not have been completed at a better time when we expect increased visitor numbers in Hambleton due to the ongoing Covid restrictions on foreign holidays. New signage and improved pedestrian safety in the Car Parks will be of great benefit to those people visiting Hambleton for the first time.

Covid Testing and Vaccinations

The Council continues to support COVID testing and Vaccinations with the Forum car park in Northallerton continuing to host a walk-in testing until the end of June 2021, as well as parking for those attending the Forum for their vaccinations. The Galtes Centre also continues to operate as a vaccination centre and Millgate at Thirsk operates a weekly testing station.

Customer Services

Over the last twelve months the resilience and response to the challenges faced have been considerable with surges in customer contact, and changes in the working environment. The Customer Services team and the Council as a whole have responded incredibly well and, I am sure I speak for all District Councillors, in acknowledging this. Front line support from Customer Services has continued with residents and customers being encouraged to use online facilities whilst also providing enhanced telephony support for others.

The annual Council Tax despatch has seen an unprecedented surge in calls and electronic contacts, and as we move forward through the roadmap and easing of restrictions, Customer Services will play an important role in the offer of any support to both customers and as back office support to Revenues and Benefits.

Legal

The Legal Department continues to provide assistance over a wide ranging portfolio of work. This covers subjects as diverse as responding to judicial reviews and car parking orders.

During the last twelve months they have supported the delivery of important projects for the Council such as Treadmills and the Crematorium where any legal delays would have impacted badly on our ability to deliver there's projects on time.

Northallerton High Street

NYCC have agreed to continue to close the High Street on Market Days until June 2021. We can only hope that by then “Social Distancing “ is no longer part of our daily lives.

Electoral Services

Preparations are now underway for the Police Crime and Fire Commissioner elections in May. The Elections team will be in the Main Committee Room from 14 April and Covid Safe working measures are in place for office staff, postal opening teams, polling station staff and count staff.

Councillor Isobel Sanderson
Portfolio Holder for Governance