

## **ANNUAL COUNCIL – 15 MAY 2018**

### **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR T EYNON TO COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON**

“How does this Council manage its relationship with community heritage societies to inform effective, appropriate, acceptable conservation and urban design?”

How could this relationship be improved?”

#### **RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON**

“The Council manages its relationship with community heritage societies in a number of ways to ensure effective and appropriate conservation and urban design. I have set out the current arrangements for our engagement below which illustrates the breadth of the Council’s joint working with community heritage societies.

##### **Statement of Community Involvement**

North West Leicestershire District Council has a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out how we involve and engage with the local community, businesses and key organisations in preparing Local Plan documents, other planning policy document and processing planning applications.

The SCI is a requirement on Local Planning Authorities to ensure that in making decisions as part of plan making and the planning application process the outcome of engagement will be taken into account alongside all other material considerations. Examples of engagement with our community heritage societies:

##### **- Planning applications – Snibston Colliery Site**

The permission for the former colliery site and Scheduled Ancient Monument was approved last week at our Planning Committee. The process for engaging with community heritage societies including Coalville Heritage Society followed our Statement of Community involvement and the Heritage Society had been consulted and supported the application.

##### **- List of Local Heritage Assets**

We have invited nine local history societies and museums to submit nominations for our ‘list of local heritage assets’:

- Charley Heritage Group;
- Coalville Heritage Society;
- Coleorton Heritage Group;
- Diseworth LHS;
- Friends of Thringstone;
- Ibstock Historical Society;
- Long Whatton LHS;
- Newbold Heritage Group;
- Whitwick Historical Group.

The proposed list will be considered by the Council’s Local Plan Committee before further consultation and engagement with our heritage societies.

- **Review of Conservation Areas**

The Council has consulted and engaged with three local history societies and museums through our recent review of conservation areas and positive contributions have been received from Ibstock Historical Society; Kegworth Museum and Measham Museum.

- **Local Plan**

Consultation is undertaken at various stages throughout the preparation of the Local Plan in accordance with the SCI. A database of contacts is maintained, including community groups.

**Engagement in Council Projects**

The Council has set out within its Delivery Plan the priority to build confidence in Coalville and a number of projects are underway. Two projects illustrate the active engagement with community heritage societies:

- a. Heritage Strategy - the production of a heritage strategy for the Coalville area is in progress working with consultants Stuart Warburton and Professor Graham Black. Council funding has been allocated to support this and engagement with the Heritage Lottery Fund which is currently refreshing its funding framework and the Council will be working to support community bids as it moves forward.
- b. Memorial Clock Tower – work will commence in May on the repair to the tower. Coalville Heritage Society have been working with the Council on the delivery and recognition of external heritage funding and developing a programme of community engagement and learning activities.

**Cultural Services – “Heritage Network”**

Our Cultural Services team organises regular “heritage network” meetings at Ashby Museum and Diseworth Heritage Centre. The Network is supported by over 20 districtwide heritage and museum groups.

**Hello Heritage – 1 to 16 September 2018**

Hello Heritage is a celebration of heritage venues and activities across North West Leicestershire for a fortnight from Saturday 1 September to 16 September. The event will engage with heritage and historical organisations who will offer free heritage experiences to local people and visitors. The 2018 event is building on the successful pilot scheme in 2017 seeing partnership working with South Derbyshire District Council.

**“How could this relationship be improved?”**

I consider the relationships with our community heritage societies are strong as illustrated above and the Council has continued to put resources into engagement and building relationships, for example the work of our Cultural Services goes much further than many Councils are able to support. However, there will always be opportunities to improve. In this respect our SCI is to be the subject of a review, which will include not only looking at how it can be amended to improve engagement, but also who needs to be included as consultees in the future. I would welcome comments from any of our community groups on how this could be achieved.