



Civic Centre,  
Arnot Hill Park,  
Arnold,  
Nottinghamshire,  
NG5 6LU

# Agenda

## Cabinet

Date: **Wednesday 25 March 2015**

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Time: **11.00 am**

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Place: **Reception Room**

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For any further information please contact:

**Lyndsey Parnell**

Senior Elections and Members' Services Officer

0115 901 3910

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# Cabinet

## Membership

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Chair</b>      | Councillor John Clarke   |
| <b>Vice-Chair</b> | Councillor Michael Payne   |
|                   | Councillor Peter Barnes<br>Councillor Kathryn Fox<br>Councillor Darrell Pulk<br>Councillor Henry Wheeler |
| <b>Observers:</b> | Councillor Chris Barnfather<br>Councillor Paul Hughes  |

## **AGENDA**

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## MINUTES CABINET

Thursday 12 February 2015

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)

Councillor Michael Payne  
Councillor Peter Barnes

Councillor Darrell Pulk  
Councillor Henry Wheeler

Observers: Councillor Chris Barnfather and Councillor Paul Hughes

Absent: Councillor Kathryn Fox

Officers in Attendance: J Robinson, S Bray, A Dubberley, M Kimberley, L Sugden and D Wakelin

**197 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fox.

**198 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2015.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

**199 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None.

**200 CREATION OF A COMBINED AUTHORITY FOR NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.**

Corporate Director Stephen Bray presented a report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, seeking executive approval for the Council to join the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire combined authority.

**RESOLVED** to endorse the following, which was approved by Council on 21 January 2015:

- 1) To agree that a submission be made to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for the establishment of a Combined Authority for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire;

- 2) To approve Gedling Borough Council formally joining the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority once this is established;
- 3) To delegate authority for the signing off of the final Governance Review and Scheme to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Opposition Group Leaders.

**201                    QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING, PERFORMANCE DIGEST & VIREMENT REPORT**

Mark Kimberley, Corporate Director, presented a report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, informing Cabinet of the position against Improvement Actions and Performance Indicators in the 2014/2015 Gedling Plan, updating Cabinet on the likely outturn of the Revenue and Capital Budgets for the 2014/2015 financial year and seeking approval for changes to targets and budgets as outlined in the report.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) Approve the changes to the Indicator Action target as detailed in paragraph 2.1. of the report, as an amendment to the agreed Gedling Plan;
- 2) Approve the General Fund Revenue Budget virements included within Appendix 1 to the report;
- 3) Approve the changes to the Capital Programme included in paragraph 2.2.3 of the report;
- 4) Include details of budget and performance monitoring in a quarterly performance digest, to be published on the Council's website and Intranet in line with the recommendations of Performance Review Scrutiny Committee.

**202                    PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATOR MONITORING 2014/15 AND QUARTERLY TREASURY ACTIVITY REPORT FOR QUARTER ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2014**

**RESOLVED to:**

Note the report, together with the Treasury Activity Report for Quarter 3 at Appendix 1 to the report, and the Prudential and Treasury Indicator Monitoring for Quarter 3 at Appendix 3 to the report.

**203                    SCRUTINY REPORTS.**

The Leader invited Councillors Lawrence and Gregory to present findings of recently held scrutiny reviews, which had been circulated

prior to the meeting, into Reducing Unemployment in Gedling Borough and Homelessness and Hardship.

Members thanked Jane Ansell, who had moved to a new post at the Council, for her support and assistance with the reviews and wished her well for the future.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) To receive the recommendations from the “Reducing Unemployment in Gedling Borough” and “Homelessness and Hardship” scrutiny reviews; and
- 2) That the appropriate Cabinet Member will respond to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

**204**

**PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.**

**Councillor Peter Barnes (Environment)**

- Work on the Gedling County Park was slowly coming to fruition with the opening arrangements currently being finalised. More details would soon follow.
- The Bulky Waste Amnesty had been well received by residents and was very popular.
- The new tree cutting service had been established and was proving successful.
- A new 4 x 4 vehicle had been purchased and was deployed in the recent bad weather conditions.

**Councillor Henry Wheeler (Health and Housing)**

- A meeting had taken place with the Gedling Homes Board on the subject of Universal Credit. It was agreed that Gedling Homes would write to affected tenants to explain the impact of the new arrangements.
- A series of information exhibitions would be held to showcase proposals for affordable housing in Netherfield.
- Work with the Gedling Older Persons Action Group was moving forward at pace.
- The Council’s Obesity Management strategy would launch soon.
- The first meeting of the anti-tobacco working group would be taking place soon.

- The Men in Sheds project would open during March at Jubilee House.
- The Youth Council was going from strength to strength and had recently held a Q and A session with Councillors Barnfather and Hughes. Youth Parliament elections were currently taking place.

**Councillor Darrell Pulk (Leisure and Development)**

- Work was being done to review leisure centre pricing tariffs in light of reduced revenue especially the downturn in squash court bookings.

**Councillor Michael Payne (Public Protection and Communications)**

- The inaugural pride of Gedling Awards had recently taken place and was a great success. Gedling's Communications team and the Nottingham Post were thanked for their work in organising the event.
- The extra edition of Contacts Magazine had been finished and would soon be printed and sent out to residents.

**205 MEMBER'S QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.**

None.

**206 ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting finished at 1.30 pm

Signed by Chair:  
Date:

**MINUTES  
CABINET**

**Thursday 19 February 2015**

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)

Councillor Michael Payne  
Councillor Peter Barnes

Councillor Darrell Pulk  
Councillor Henry Wheeler

Observers: Councillor Chris Barnfather and Councillor Paul Hughes

Absent: Councillor Kathryn Fox

Officers in Attendance: H Barrington, S Bray, M Kimberley, L Parnell and D Wakelin

**207 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fox.

**208 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None.

**209 PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY INDICATORS AND TREASURY STRATEGY 2015/16**

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, presenting the Council's Prudential Code Indicators and Treasury Strategy for 2015/16 for approval.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Strategy 2015/16, as detailed in the report, and refer it to Full Council for approval as required by the regulations.

**210 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16**

The Chief Financial Officer presented the report of the Senior Leadership Team, on behalf of the Leader, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, summarising the proposed capital programme for 2015/16 and future years in light of the Council's priorities and available resources.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) Note the capital financing available for 2015/16;
- 2) Note the likely resources available for 2016/17 and 2017/18; and
- 3) Refer the Capital Programme for 2015/16, detailed at appendix 1 to the report, to Council for approval.

**211 GEDLING PLAN (INCLUDING BUDGET) 2015/16**

The Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director introduced the report of the Senior Leadership Team, on behalf of the Leader, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, setting out the priorities, objectives and top actions for the Council for the forthcoming year with the associated revenue budget.

**RESOLVED:**

The recommend to Council on 3 March 2015:

- 1) That the financial threshold above which decisions will be regarded as Key Decisions be set at £0.5m for 2015/16;
- 2) A Council Tax increase of 0% which balances the financing of a Net Council Tax Requirement of £5,450,800 in 2015/16; and
- 3) That the detailed budget, priorities, objectives and actions and performance measures for 2015/16, as detailed in Appendices 1, 2 and 4 of the report, be approved.

**212 ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting finished at 1.00 pm

Signed by Chair:  
Date:



## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Decision of the Local Government Ombudsman

**Date:** 25 March 2015

**Author:** Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

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### **Wards Affected**

Not applicable.

### **Purpose**

To notify the Executive that the Local Government Ombudsman has made a finding of maladministration in respect of the way the Council handled Council Tax demand for a rented property.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a Key Decision

### **Background**

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) decided to re-categorise complaints with effect from 1 April 2014. As a result of this change in decision reasons, complaints which would previously have been categorised as "local settlement" or "investigation complete and satisfied with authority actions or proposed actions and not appropriate to issue report" will now be categorised as "maladministration". As a result, this triggers the obligation on the Monitoring Officer to prepare a report under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (in the case of non-executive functions) or Section 5A (in the case of executive functions). The Act requires the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service and the Corporate Director as s.151 Officer to be consulted as far as reasonably practicable in the preparation of such a maladministration report. Both statutory officers have been duly consulted.
- 1.2 Following an investigation, the LGO concluded that there has been fault by the Council in the way in which it handled a council tax demand for a property the complainant owns and rents out and which caused the complainant injustice. The LGO recommended payment of £100.00 compensation as an appropriate remedy. The Council agreed to make

this payment and the payment has already been made. The statement of reasons summarising the complaint and setting out the LGO's final decision appears at Appendix 1 to this report.

The LGO will include this complaint in the published figures for the year ending 31 March 2015. The decision will be recorded as: Benefits & Tax Upheld: maladministration and injustice and will appear in the annual report which will be reported to Cabinet in due course.

- 1.3 This complaint arose as a result of a clerical error. Unfortunately, these are inevitable in view of the fact that the Service administers 52,000 council tax accounts. However it is rare for an error not to be picked up and corrected during the various stages of the process. Officers are confident that the policies and procedures are robust and that this is unlikely to occur again.
- 1.4 Members should note that before referring the matter to the Ombudsman, the complaint went through the Council's complaints procedure. Officers accepted that the complainant had not received the service he was entitled to and apologised for this in both the first stage and second stage responses. In addition, Officers agreed to cancel the recovery action taken and the costs (including enforcement agents' fees) and confirmed that the Council would not pursue the outstanding council tax liability of £38.01. The Service Manager also discussed the case with his Revenues Manager and Client Officer to ensure that other taxpayers do not have the same experience.
- 1.5 Under sections 5A of the Act the Monitoring Officer is under a duty to present a report to Cabinet in the event of a finding of maladministration in respect of an executive function. Cabinet is under a duty to consider that report and prepare a report which specifies:-
  - (a) what action (if any) the executive has taken in response to the report;
  - (b) what action if (any) the executive proposes to take and when;
  - (c) the reasons for taking the action or, as the case may be, for taking no action.
- 1.6 The Monitoring Officer is also obliged to arrange for a copy of the report to be circulated to all members. In order to comply with this, a copy of this Cabinet report will be provided to all members of the Council.

## **Proposal**

- 2 It is proposed that Cabinet:
  - a) Notes the Local Government Ombudsman's findings and endorses the steps already taken by Officers by way of offering a remedy;

- b) Agrees that no further action needs to be taken in relation to the matter set out in this report; and
- c) Notes that a copy of this Cabinet report has been circulated to all members of the Council.

### **Alternative Options**

- 3 In view of the fact that the LGO has categorised the complaint as Upheld: maladministration with injustice, the statutory process for reporting the decision must be followed. The Council does not legally have to follow the LGO's recommendations, but the Corporate Director has agreed that it is appropriate to do so.

### **Financial Implications**

- 4 None arising from this report.

### **Appendices**

- 5 Appendix 1 – Local Government Ombudsman statement of reasons.

### **Background Papers**

- 6 None identified.

### **Recommendations**

**THAT** Cabinet:

- a) Notes the Local Government Ombudsman's findings and endorses the steps already taken by Officers by way of offering a remedy;
- b) Agrees that no further action needs to be taken in relation to the matter set out in this report; and
- c) Notes that a copy of this Cabinet report has been circulated to all members of the Council.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 To comply with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 7.2 To confirm that the steps already taken represent an appropriate remedy.

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**Complaint reference:**  
14 011 038

**Complaint against:**  
Gedling Borough Council

## **The Ombudsman's final decision**

Summary: Mr A complains about the Council's handling of a Council Tax demand for a property he owns and rents out. There was fault by the Council which caused Mr A injustice and the Council has agreed to pay him £100 in recognition of this fault.

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## **The complaint**

1. Mr A complains about Gedling Borough Council's handling of a Council Tax demand for a property he owns and rents out. It failed to send communication about the debt to his letting agents and failed to deal properly with his attempts to resolve matters which caused him distress and inconvenience.

## **What I have investigated**

2. While I have investigated the Council's handling of his council tax account and his complaint about its actions, the final paragraph of this statement explains why I have not investigated the part of Mr A's complaint about the behaviour of a particular member of staff he spoke to.

## **The Ombudsman's role and powers**

3. The Ombudsman investigates complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this statement, I have used the word fault to refer to these. If there has been fault, the Ombudsman considers whether it has caused an injustice and, if it has, she may suggest a remedy. (*Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1)*)
4. The Ombudsman cannot investigate a complaint if it is about an employment issue. (*Local Government Act 1974, Schedule 5/5a, paragraph 4*)

## **How I considered this complaint**

5. In considering the complaint I spoke to Mr A and reviewed the information he and the Council provided. Both Mr A and the Council were given the opportunity to comment on my draft decision.

## **What I found**

6. Mr A owns a property which he rents out to tenants via a letting agency. His previous tenants moved out and the Council decided he was liable for Council Tax on the property from 22 October to 7 November 2013, after which time new tenants moved in.

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7. The Council wrote to Mr A with three Council Tax demand notices to the last address it had for him in Mansfield but Mr A had moved from this address some time ago.
  8. Then on 12 November Mr A's letting agents emailed the Council to tell it new tenants were moving in and asking it to send all correspondence concerning council tax directly to them as they were acting for Mr A.
  9. The Council logged this information against the new tenants' council tax account but did not log it against Mr A's council tax account. The Council therefore continued to send correspondence to the Mansfield address, including the council tax final notice and summons. Having failed to obtain payment, the Council obtained a liability order for the outstanding amount of £38. This debt, together with costs of £80, was passed to bailiffs for collection. The bailiffs visited the Mansfield address twice and then traced Mr A to his current property and wrote to him there on 10 May 2014 for payment.
  10. On receipt of the bailiffs' letter Mr A emailed the Council the same day. The case was allocated to a Council officer on 12 May. However, having received no response to his email of 10 May Mr A rang and spoke to staff at the Council's Contact Centre three times on 13 May to try and resolve matters. Mr A explained he was away from home with little opportunity to deal with the matter before the payment date stipulated by the bailiffs' letter.
  11. As matters were not resolved Mr A sent a further email on the same day to the Council's Council Tax mailbox. This was treated as a complaint and passed to an officer who telephoned Mr A that day to confirm action by the bailiffs had been put on hold to allow his complaint to be investigated.
  12. In responding to Mr A's complaint about its handling of his case, the Council acknowledged it should have put his account with the bailiffs on hold when he first rang. It accepted that while Call Centre staff do not have the authority to take such decisions, the adviser to whom Mr A spoke to should have placed his call on hold and checked with back office staff if the account could be placed on hold.
  13. To resolve the complaint the Council first confirmed the debt had been recalled from the bailiffs and all costs cancelled. Later, as a gesture of goodwill because Mr A had not received the service he was entitled to, it confirmed it would not be pursuing him for the £38 council tax arrears.
  14. Dissatisfied with the Council's response and disputing his liability for the £38 and seeking further compensation, Mr A complained to the Ombudsman.

### **Analysis**

15. There has been fault by the Council. On being advised on 12 November by the letting agents that they were acting for Mr A the Council failed to update his Council Tax account and continued to send correspondence to an old address. When Mr A finally became aware of the problem on 10 May, having received a letter from the bailiffs at his current address, the Council did not take the steps necessary to put his account on hold straight away.
16. The Council has acknowledged its fault here and tried to resolve matters by clearing all costs from Mr A's account and confirming it would not pursue Mr A for the outstanding council tax.
17. Mr A has said that the Council's attempts to remedy its fault are inadequate given his belief that he is not liable for the £38 council tax and because of the levels of

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stress and inconvenience he was put to. He says this was made worse because he was away from home when the bailiff letter was received at his current address and he had to try and contact the Council while on an intensive study course.

### **Agreed action**

18. In recognition of the Council's fault, and Mr A's stress and inconvenience, I proposed the Council pay Mr A £100. In asking for this amount I took into account Mr A's view, whether correct or not, that he was not liable for the £38 council tax debt. The Council has agreed to make the £100 payment.

### **Final decision**

19. There has been fault by the Council which caused Mr A injustice. As the Council has agreed to my proposal to settle matters by payment of £100 the complaint will not be pursued any further by the Ombudsman.

### **Parts of the complaint that I did not investigate**

20. The restriction highlighted at paragraph 4 applies to the part of Mr A's complaint which concerns the attitude and behaviour of the individual staff member he spoke to. The Council looked into this matter and agreed with Mr A that the conversation he had with this particular staff member had been unsatisfactory and it apologised for this. As the Ombudsman is prohibited by law from investigating matters which relate to employment, including disciplinary issues, this matter will not be pursued by the Ombudsman.

### **Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman**

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## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Proposed declaration of the 'Hobbucks open space' as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

**Date:** 25 March 2015

**Author:** Service Manager, Parks and Street Care

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### **Wards Affected**

Killisick

### **Purpose**

It is proposed that the Council seek Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status for The Hobbucks and adopt and implement the 5 year management plan produced by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT) (2013 – 2018) for the site.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

### **Background**

A Nature Reserve is defined in Section 15 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as:

'land managed for the purpose of providing, under suitable conditions and control, special opportunities for the study of, and research into, matters relating to the flora and fauna of Great Britain and the physical conditions in which they live, and for the study of geological and physiographical features of special interest in the area; or of preserving flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features of special interest in the area; or for both these purposes.'

It is very clear in the legislation that sites selected for designation as LNRs must be of special interest. It is also clear that the words 'in the area' when applied to LNRs mean the area over which the local authority has responsibility. The 1949 Act states that the local authority should feel that the site in question would be appropriately managed as a nature reserve and that it has special interest or value in their area. LNRs have important parts to play in Local Biodiversity Action Plans and, in most cases have potential for community involvement. English Nature suggests that they can be used as indicators for sustainability and that a target of one hectare of LNR per 1,000 population is realistic. Particularly where LNRs are used to serve community needs, some meaningful input must be made by the community. This should include discussion of what the community wants as well as how it can make a direct contribution to management. Careful monitoring will be needed to see whether societal or ecological/geological objectives are being met and whether adjustments to projects or management plans need making.

The Council has previously agreed to Netherfield Lagoons, Gedling House Woods and Meadows as having LNR status.

The Hobbucks open space is situated on the urban fringe, approximately 2 miles north east of Arnold town centre, and can be located at grid reference SK 596 466 off Killisick Road, in the Borough of Gedling in the County of Nottinghamshire as identified on the plan. See Appendix 2.

It once formed part of the open countryside and occupies a total area of approximately 14 hectares, and benefits from significant native flora and fauna; hedgerows, wild flower meadows, scrub, grassland, veteran trees and plantation woodland which are a valuable habitat for the site's vertebrates, species of bird and small mammals. The open space has a network of paths, making it accessible to all, with mature hedgerows or scrub belt on most boundaries. It is bordered by open fields and a recently closed landfill site. To the east and west there is predominantly private housing and to the south are Guinness Housing Trust properties.

The Hobbucks was first considered for development as a local resource in the late 1990's, prior to this it had been an area of scrubland with minimal maintenance.

During the latter part of the 1990's the Agenda 21 Officer working with Groundwork Greater Nottingham, carried out a consultation exercise with the local residents to establish how the site should be developed. The general consensus was that it should be developed as a Local Nature Reserve. Plans were drawn up for a network of footpaths and habitat improvements, funding established and the first wave of works started in early 2000. Groundwork Nottingham supervised the work on behalf of the Council.

The site has had a continuous history of problems, predominately with fly tipping, illegal motor cycle use and fires. In 2007 local residents became concerned that the infrastructure was being damaged and the desire to establish a local nature reserve on the open space was once again raised. The residents group AKRA and officers from PASC Services worked closely together to establish a 'Friends of the Hobbucks' group to help carry out environmental improvements at the site to combat its potential decline.

The land is owned and partially maintained by Gedling Borough Council, working in partnership with 'The Friends of The Hobbucks'. The group are actively working to promote a sense of pride in the area.

It is used substantially by local residents for rest; relaxation; exercise; social interaction; education; dog walking; quiet contemplation and other recreational pursuits. Local Nature Reserve status would proffer some protection against currently unplanned building developments encroaching into the area and raise public and national awareness of the importance to wildlife and nature in general.

The priority work that has taken place over the past few years has been to improve Biodiversity, access for the more vulnerable members of the community through path improvements, remove trees and scrub height along path edges to improve light availability and sight-lines. There has also been tree planting, wildflower meadow creation and fencing works undertaken.

Funding to achieve these developments to date has predominantly been raised by The Friends of the Hobbucks Group through successful applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Building Better Communities Fund and member donations.

The Friends of the Hobbucks group formed approximately 10 years ago, they hold monthly committee meetings and organise 2 working days on site each month, if required. To date the group has managed to:

- tidy large quantities of fly tipping, remove broken glass
- prune hedge lines
- installed a high quality resin bonded path
- improved a right of way footpath with roadstone
- created a new footpath, added a bin and bench at a view point
- created 3 small wild flower meadow and added to interpretation boards
- pond improvements
- installed bird feeding tables
- removed invasive species
- planted new trees

The 'Friends of Group' are working within the parameters of the original development brief and have been instrumental in developing the attached management plan. They are encouraging local schools in the area, to use the site as an outdoor classroom for ecological studies, having met with the Countryside Foundation for Education, with a view to helping deliver the 'Teaching Trees' project to schools, as a part of the national curriculum. They have also recently met with Groundwork Greater Nottingham and are assisting in delivering a summer environmental project with local young people.

The 'Friends of Group' are also currently making provision for the feeding and nesting of the increased wildlife to the site, taking into consideration the issues of human and rodent behaviour.

They are also seeking long-term solutions to tackle fly tipping and anti social behaviour problems on the site, by raising awareness of the issue in the local community.

Recognition as a Local Nature Reserve would be an appropriate reward for the hard work that has gone into the site by GBC Park Rangers, the Friends of Group and local volunteers and would also act as a valuable promotional tool to raise the sites profile within the Borough. It will help increase group motivation for any future planned works to further enhance the site.

Designation will increase the sites status and lead to greater awareness amongst local residents and visitors to take more interest in, and 'ownership' of, the Open Space. This will help further decrease acts of antisocial behaviour on the site.

Designation as a Local Nature Reserve will also help to conserve and enhance the wildlife, biodiversity, landscape and amenity value of the Hobbucks open space under a wider policy of conservation and recreation management. This requirement is enshrined in the Borough's adopted Green Space Strategy in the need to designate more of the boroughs open spaces as LNR's.

The benefits of designating a Local Nature Reserve are;

- providing a quality environment for local people
- community involvement in LNR management
- opportunities for education and research
- enhancing biodiversity and contributing towards national priority targets
- protection from inappropriate use and development.

By designating Local Nature Reserve status at the Hobbucks open space, the Council will be meeting several aims in the Core Strategy and Green Space Strategy for the following areas:

- health, recreation and well being
- urban and village extension eco-town requirements
- promoting district tourism
- biodiversity
- environmental quality

Local Authorities are now legally responsible for managing biodiversity in a positive way under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Therefore designation of the Hobbucks open space as an LNR would be a logical progression in achieving this for Gedling Borough Council, its residents and visitors to the borough.

Gedling Borough Council has consulted with Natural England with regard to the proposals.

### **Proposal**

To seek approval for the Hobbucks to be declared as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Under this act local authorities have the power to acquire, declare and manage nature reserves, in consultation with Natural England.

Natural England requires the endorsement of the relevant Council committee before a formal declaration can be made. Therefore, the proposal is for the Borough's Cabinet Committee to endorse the awarding of Local Nature Reserve status for the Hobbucks site.

The 5 year Hobbucks Management Plan (Appendix 1) provides a summary of species of flora and fauna identified on the site, a classification of the different habitats and identifies management objectives and related action plans. The plan will be updated at the end of 2018 with conservation continuing to be the priority for the management of the site.

The Management Plan has been written in support of and with the application for LNR status in mind, to highlight the rarity of this type of landscape and its intrinsic value in the local area. It sets out the importance of habitat management and tackling detrimental human activities, in order to maximise the value of the site to wildlife diversity.

Work has already started to improve access, safety of its users and biodiversity on site. The Management Plan will give the 'Friends of Group' a structured plan to work from, for future improvements to the site.

## **Alternative Options**

To neither adopt the management plan nor declare The Hobbucks site as a Local Nature Reserve.

## **Financial Implications**

The 5 year Management Plan has minimal financial implications for GBC. The 'Friends of the Hobbucks Group' have a good track record of attracting funding from a number of grant providers to assist with site improvement works. There is currently a limited GBC budget for this area of development work, approval of LNR status will assist in the 'Friends of' group attaining further 'grant aid' to support future projects. It will also provide encouragement to the local community and limit the revenue needed due to volunteer works. Future PASC revenue spend on the open space is estimated at no more than £1,500.00 per annum. This will involve cutting the wildflower meadow at the end of the season and removing arising's and some hedge maintenance. Such costs will be covered by existing departmental revenue budgets.

## **Appendices**

1. The Hobbucks 5 year Management plan (2013- 2018)
2. The Hobbucks Location Plan, indicating the boundary of the designation

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Recommendation(s)**

**Cabinet members are recommended to:**

1. Designate the Hobbucks open space which is in in GBC's ownership as a Local Nature Reserve.
2. Authorise the Corporate Director and the Council's Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, in conjunction with the Service Manager, Parks and Street Care Services to proceed with the declaration.
3. Adopt the 5 year site Management Plan of produced by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

To assist both Gedling Borough Council and the 'Friends of the Hobbucks Group' to have a sound management plan for the area with a priority to conserve the flora and fauna within the site and to meet national targets set by Natural England to have a corporate standard of one hectare of designated Local Nature Reserve (LNR) per 1000 population, currently Gedling Borough Council's provision is 0.51 hectares per 1000 (as identified in GBC's Green Space Strategy 2012-2017) The current LNR's declared in Gedling Borough as mentioned previously are the Netherfield Lagoons and Gedling House Woods\ Meadow.

**STANDARD BACKGROUND DOCUMENT**

**CONSULTATION**

Finance

Legal

Personnel

Planning

Estates

**CONSIDERATION**

**Equal Opportunities/Impact Assessment**

The adoption of this action will ensure access for all continues and is actively promoted. (See impact assessment.)

**Children**

The LNR status will ensure that the area is preserved. The management plan includes proposals to provide for school visits and for the active promotion of the site for educational uses.

**Crime and Disorder**

The increased public involvement associated with these proposals is seen as a positive move to reducing crime and disorder

**Risk Management**

**N/A**

## EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

|   |  |                                |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Policy/Service/Procedure to be assessed</b>  | <b>The Hobbucks –Draft Management Plan and Local Nature Reserve Status</b> |                                |
| <b>Assessment completed by:</b>   | <b>Jane Richardson</b>   | <b>Date:</b><br><b>30.7.14</b> |
| <b>Aims/objectives of the Event</b><br>Approval of Draft Management Plan and to gain Local Nature Reserve Status  |  |                                |
| <b>Performance Measures</b>   | <b>Current Performance</b>   | <b>Target</b>                  |
| To complete the project on time and on budget   | N/A  | To be decided                  |
| To increase public awareness and accessibility of the site  | N/A  | On Designation                 |
| To designate more LNR's within the Borough  | N/A  | On Designation                 |
|   |  |                                |
| <b>Who are the customers and stakeholders of this service?</b><br><br>Local Community, Ward Members, Natural England, Volunteers e.g. Friends of Hobbucks |  |                                |

**Detail below what information you already have about the impact this project has on the following groups including results from consultation, complaints, census:**

The site was first considered for development as a local resource in the late 1990's. Prior to this it had been an area of scrubland with minimal maintenance. During the latter part of the 1990's the Agenda 21 Officer working with Groundwork Greater Nottingham, carried out a consultation exercise with the local residents to establish how the site should be developed.

The general consensus at that time was that it should aim to be developed as a Local Nature Reserve. Plans were drawn up for a network of footpaths and habitat improvements, funding established and the first wave of works started in early 2000. Groundwork supervised the work on behalf of the Council.

The site has a history of problems with fly tipping, illegal motor cycle use and fires and in 2007 local residents became concerned that the infrastructure put in and the desire to establish a local nature reserve was being damaged by this. Working with Parks Services and the Killisick Residents Group AKRA, the Friends of the Hobbucks have been established.

The Council operates a comments and complaints system. The leisure department analysis's compliments and complaints annually. There have been no complaints in relation to any of the equality strands in relation to parks and open spaces in Gedling.

|                                  |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Black and minority ethnic people | The park is open access and free to all | 91.8% white<br>British – no other significant groups               |
| Men/women and trans              | The park is open access and free to all |  |
| Disabled people                  | The park is open access and free to all |  |
| Gay/Lesbian/bisexual People      | The park is open access and free to all |  |
| People from different faiths     | The park is open access and free to all | 71.8% Christian<br>18.7%No religion<br>No other significant groups |
| People of different ages         | The park is open access and free to all |  |

| <b>How will this event impact on the following groups:</b> |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <b>Positive impact</b>  | <b>Negative impact</b>                       |
| Different racial groups                                    | No evidence of a positive or negative impact  | No evidence of a positive or negative impact |
| Men/women and transgender                                  | The Draft Management Plan and Local Nature Reserve status will help raise funding for the improvement of the site, for all the community to access  |  |
| Disabled people  | The Draft Management Plan and Local Nature Reserve status will help raise funding for the improvement of the site, for all the community, inclusive of DDA requirements   |  |
| Gay/Lesbian/bi-sexual people                               | No evidence of a positive or negative impact  | No evidence of a positive or negative impact |
| People from different faiths                               | No evidence of a positive or negative impact  | No evidence of a positive or negative impact |
| People of different ages                                   | The park is used by schools for ecological studies. School visits have been included in the management plan. Benches have also been installed to improve the access for older people. Further funding could improve outreach to more schools in the area by providing transport to access the site and also supply further seating. |  |

**What changes could be made to the policy/service/procedure to address any negative impacts?**

No negative impact but the area would benefit from promotion of the facilities available at the Hobbucks?

**What monitoring will be carried out to ensure this policy/service/procedure meets diverse needs**

Parks Development staff attend monthly meetings to give advice on the site and to see that the Friends of the Hobbucks work within their management plan, constitution and the aspirations identified by all groups within the local community

**What actions will be included in your service plan arising from this assessment?**

| Action              | Outcome                        | Date? | Who?                     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| Press releases      | Increase awareness             |       | Friends group to deliver |
| Monitor current use | Identify users and there needs |       | Friends group to deliver |
|                     |                                |       |                          |
|                     |                                |       |                          |
|                     |                                |       |                          |

Are you satisfied that all aspects of this policy/service/procedure have been thoroughly assessed for all the strands of diversity and that no further investigation is required? **Yes**

**If no then a fuller impact assessment is required.**

# Hobbucks Local Nature Reserve

## Draft Management Plan

**2013 - 2018**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The original management plan 2008-2013 for the Hobbucks was produced by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust on behalf of, Gedling Borough Council and the Friends of Hobbucks. This update 2013-2018 builds upon the original plan with recognition of the previous 5 years achievements and looks forward to the next 5 years.

The site now enjoys many benefits following on from the work of the previous management plan, which includes:

- New footpaths installed throughout the site allowing improved access and egress
- Reduced the incidences of ASB and crime, in particular fires and fly tipping
- Planted native hedging, plants and bulbs
- Created new wildflower meadows
- Installed 2 new interpretation panels
- Increased visitor numbers, particularly families and children
- Installed a small pond and planted native water plants
- Hosted and continue to host educational environmental projects with young people
- Increased biodiversity with the installation of a small pond

The management proposals contained within this plan have been agreed in consultation with the representatives of Gedling Borough Council and the local community through the Friends of Hobbucks Nature Reserve.

It is intended to designate the area as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) during the period of this plan. LNR status will not only protect the area's habitats and wildlife from development and damaging operations but will also increase people's awareness of their environment and issues relating to the site and its long term management. It will be a place where children can learn about nature, and the local community can become involved in the management of their natural environment.

Local Nature Reserves are protected open green spaces for local people, which are designated by councils after guidance from Natural England.

All the Local Nature Reserves within the district of Gedling will have a town centre or urban fringe location. Although the sites have high wildlife content, the range and types of species are limited due to their location and previous management techniques, however the implementation of management plans focussing on improving the nature conservation value of a site will enhance the sites biodiversity and increase its recreation and educational resource. Urban based sites often contain archaeological heritage features, which are an important part of the area's rich history and provide excellent opportunities for local people to learn about and preserve their local history. Local Nature Reserves also provide valuable amenity, recreation and educational opportunities to communities with limited access to open green spaces.

The production and implementation of a management plan demonstrates a commitment by the local authority and the local community to manage the area for the benefit of wildlife, local communities and schools and aims to implement 5 main management objectives:

- § Maintain and enhance the habitat types and species present
- § Combine habitat enhancement and management with education, recreation and access provision
- § Encourage public understanding and awareness of issues relating to the site
- § Conserve and interpret the archaeological and historical elements on the site
- § Monitor effects of management on the wildlife on the site

The purpose of the Management Plans is to describe each site and to decide what prescriptions or actions are required, by whom and by what date, so that the sites can be improved in line with the management objectives.

Public consultation and support for the designation of Local Nature Reserves is an important element of the designation process. We have therefore tried to keep this Management Plan short and simple and easy to understand to encourage community feedback and engagement. Where local volunteering, enthusiasm and ideas for improving our local environment are developed, we will adjust the management plan accordingly.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

### **i Gedling Borough Council**

Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, gives principal local authorities the power to acquire, declare and manage nature reserves. When using these powers, local authorities must consult with Natural England.

The designation of a Local Nature Reserve means that the local authority accepts a commitment to manage the land as a nature reserve and to protect it from inappropriate uses or development.

Gedling Borough Council will oversee management of the sites and will undertake a strategic role in bringing interested partners together through a local Friends group.

Gedling Borough Council will lead on a review of current operational practices in partnership with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and make changes to support habitats, where this is practical.

As landowner of Local Nature Reserves, Gedling Borough Council has a duty of reasonable care to ensure people's safety.

Gedling Borough Council is keen to support partners who can commission and/or undertake site work to enhance and create wildlife and habitats as laid out in the management plan.

Where Friends Groups, community, voluntary or business organisations wish to carry out independent events or work on Local Nature Reserves, the Council requires a signed indemnity form which provides proof of :-

- § Public Liability Insurance to a value of at least £5 million
- § A Risk Assessment for each activity held on the site

In addition to the above, Gedling Borough Council has published a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2012-2017 which includes an action plan with stated aims.

The important areas for the Hobbucks management plan within this strategy are:

***Aim 2 To promote the central role that green spaces play in contributing to the Boroughs biodiversity, sustainability and heritage***

*Objective 2.1 – Protect the biodiversity of the many habitats found in the Borough's urban and rural green spaces. To be achieved by developing management statements for all countryside sites, LNR's, SSSI's and SINCS with action plans for delivery. Consult and involve relevant local groups regularly on proposed management*

The full strategy can be found on Gedling Borough Council's website using this link  
<http://www.gedling.gov.uk/media/documents/leisureculture/Final%20Approved%20GBC%20Green%20Space%20Strategy%2010.1.13.pdf>

All relevant local, regional and national policies affecting green spaces in Gedling Borough are mentioned within the strategy. The strategy also includes an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **ii Natural England**

Natural England sees LNRs as an important way to achieve its goal of maintaining England's rich natural heritage, and giving people access to places where they can enjoy that heritage.

LNRs are an essential part of the country's green infrastructure. They are an important way to enhance and conserve nature and ecosystem services – the services nature provides to benefit people – against threats like climate change, declining biodiversity and lack of access.

Natural England would like to see more local authorities establish LNRs and would expect that Open Space, Green Space or Green Infrastructure strategies capture LNR sites as an important part of their natural greenspace provision.

LNRs are covered by Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt). Ideally, they should form part of a network of LNRs and other accessible green spaces that help to meet the ANGSt standard, which seeks a minimum of 1 ha of LNR per 1000 head of population.

More information can be found in the Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance *Nature Nearby*.

Gedling Borough Council are working towards these targets.

### **iii Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust**

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust is the largest charitable environmental organisation in Nottinghamshire. The Trust works to promote nature conservation through the work of its officers and volunteers and works closely with other organisations and communities throughout Nottinghamshire to maintain and enhance biodiversity. The Trust is committed to supporting projects that facilitate participation of local communities in improving their local environment and quality of life including:-

- § Encourage the participation of our membership through the local group, in the community participation and management of the Local Nature Reserves.
- § Promoting Local Nature Reserves as an important resource for the improvement of the quality of life for local communities to ensure social, health and environmental well-being.
- § Providing high quality ecological advice via our Conservation Policy & Planning team to local authorities and friends of groups of local nature reserves.
- § Sharing our experience as the manager of 68 nature reserves and over 1200ha of land, with local authorities and communities.
- § Supporting efforts to identify funds and mechanisms to continue delivery of both environmental/conservation restoration and management works on, and community engagement with, LNRs.

### **iv Local Friends Groups**

It is vital to encourage and support the local Friends Groups, interested schools and community groups for each Local Nature Reserve.

The role of local friends groups can include:-

- § Information on what site improvements are most important for local people
- § Assisting in species and habitat monitoring
- § Raising awareness and public support for Local Nature Reserves
- § Carrying out practical management tasks on sites

### **v Environmental Organisations**

Environmental organisations are taking a lead role in the borough of Gedling to improve wildlife habitats. The Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group has the responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the Nottinghamshire target habitats and species.

### **vi Local Businesses**

Local businesses are to be invited to contribute to delivery of the Local Nature Reserve management plan, which could include supporting the Friends Group on volunteering days or providing technical or other assistance with enhancing the site for nature conservation.

## **PART 1: DESCRIPTION**

### **1.1 Location**

Hobucks Nature Reserve is located to the north east of Arnold in Nottinghamshire. The centre of the site can be located at grid reference SK 596 466, in the Borough of Gedling, County of Nottinghamshire (Vice County 56) (see Appendix 1 for location map). The reserve lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 49, 'Sherwood NE333', details can be accessed at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/1401066?category=587130>.

### **1.2 Map Coverage**

Ordnance Survey Landranger map no.129 (1:50 000 scale) & Ordnance Survey Explorer map no. 260 (1:25 000 scale).

### **1.3 Owner**

Hobucks Nature Reserve is solely owned by Gedling Borough Council.

### **1.4 Size**

14 hectares (approx.)

### **1.5 Soil and geology**

The majority of the site occurs on the Gunthorpe Formation, part of the Mercia Mudstone Group, resulting in red-brown mudstone soils with undurated beds (skerries) of green dolomitic siltstone. The remaining small proportion of the site occurs on the Radcliffe Formation, resulting in mudstone soils, which can be pinkish, red or green. These soils are interlaminated with pale grey finely grained sandstone.

The Mercia Mudstone Group was laid down in the Triassic Period (Geological survey (1996)).

Differing underlying geology can affect the types of plants that can be found on a site and can therefore increase the diversity of plants occurring. However, as both of the above formations result in mudstone soils, it is unlikely that they will support differing types of plants.

### **1.6 Aspect, topography and altitude**

The reserve lies 105 metres above sea level at its lowest point, rising to 135 metres above sea level to the north-west. A variety of aspects occur on site with the SE of the site having an easterly aspect and the NW having a south or south-westerly aspect.

### **1.7 Access**

The site is open at all times and can be accessed at a number of points. The main vehicular access points are off Killisick Road and Elder Close NG5. There are also footpath access points from Surgeys Lane.

There are consolidated footpaths covering most of the site allowing disabled and pushchair access. One footpath between compartments 10 and 11 has been eroded but it will be repaired subject to funding availability.

## **1.8 Surrounding land use**

The reserve is bounded by housing developments to the south and west, horse paddocks and agricultural land to the east and by Dorket Head landfill site to the north. The reserve therefore forms a transitional area between urban development and open countryside. The landfill site is screened from the reserve by a woodland plantation belt.

## **1.9 Site Description**

Hobucks Nature Reserve occupies 14 hectares of land which would once have been part of the open countryside but is now an angular and almost linear area of land that is dominated by grassland, scrub with occasional trees and small areas of plantation. The site has overly mature or unmanaged hedgerows or scrub belt on most boundaries.

A number of consolidated and desire line footpaths interconnect throughout the site making it possible to take long or short walks. Some of the footpaths towards the centre of the site however are overshadowed by scrub giving an oppressive feel to this area which may deter people from walking into the area. This should be rectified through the implementation of this plan.

To the northwest of the reserve there are two large grassland fields which have recently been incorporated into the reserve and therefore have an agricultural feel currently. The two fields are intersected by a wide amenity mown grassland strip. All of the fields are bounded by unmanaged hedgerows.

The site management currently consists of mowing footpath edges to keep them clear and the removal of litter and the after effects of vandalism. Some path works, tree planting and fencing have been carried out in the past by organisation such as BTCV and the Probation Service. As a result of limited management the grassland areas not regularly mown have become rank and are losing diversity as more robust species out compete the more desirable flower and grass species. Similarly most of the scrub is of a similar age and structure which is overly mature and is therefore losing its value to wildlife on the reserve, such as birds, small mammals and insects. Implementation of this management plan should increase diversity of species and vegetative structure throughout the reserve.

The site is well used by the local community for dog walking and informal recreational pursuits.

## **1.10 Statutory Designations**

There are no statutory designations on this reserve.

It is proposed to seek designation as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in the near future.

LNR status applies to land of at least local wildlife interest, and allows the local authority (which must have close involvement through ownership or written agreement) to protect that interest through creation of special bye-laws. LNRs are usually close to or within urban areas and provide considerable opportunities for introducing large numbers of people to sustainable enjoyment of the countryside. It is the future aspirations of both Gedling Borough Council and the Friends of the Hobucks to apply specific byelaws to the site.

## **1.11 Non-statutory Designations**

There are no non-statutory designations on the reserve or within the immediate locality.

## **PART 2: EVALUATION & OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 Evaluation of site features (Ratcliffe's criteria)**

#### **2.1.1 Size**

The reserve is approximately 14 hectares in size. This is a significant area of land to be managed for conservation and is large enough to have areas that can remain undisturbed, for species of bird and small mammals, which are intolerant of disturbance.

#### **2.1.2 Diversity**

The reserve contains a number of habitats:

- grassland
- scrub
- hedgerows
- plantation woodland

These habitats currently have poor species and structural diversity due to a lack of management in recent years. As a result the number of faunal species that the habitats can support is limited. The diversity of each habitat will be increased as follows.

Grassland - it is intended to increase the botanical diversity of the grassland through the introduction of an annual mowing regime which will introduce the cutting of all grassland areas in September and the removal of the arisings i.e. cut grass. Over time this will reduce the amount of nutrient in the soils supporting the grassed areas, which favours less robust meadow species of flower and grass and allows them to compete with the more robust species currently dominating the sward.

The grass areas will also be mown into undulating or scalloped shapes at the grassland / scrub interface, which will enhance their ability to support insects through creating microclimates within the undulations. A 1 metre buffer of long grass will be left between the mown grass areas and scrub or bramble areas to provide overwintering habitat for birds, mammals and insects. This will also provide structural diversity as it will create three lengths of grass within the reserve. Small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip will require cutting / strimming during February of each year (before the bird breeding season) on a rotational basis, to prevent further scrub encroachment into grassland areas.

Areas of wildflower meadow have been created at the Killisick Lane and Elder Close entrances to the nature reserve and have been created using a wildflower rich seed mix, which have increased both the flowering species on the reserve and the grass species. These grassland areas have attracted increased numbers of insects such as butterflies and hoverflies, which in turn have attracted other species such as birds and bats to feed upon them.

Scrub – some large areas of scrub exist on site and are a highly valuable wildlife resource. However, much of the scrub is overly mature and because of a lack of management in recent years, is a similar size and shape. This not only shortens the life of the scrub but also limits the type and number of species that can be supported by it. To increase the diversity of the scrub it is intended to implement a programme of coppicing over the lifetime of this plan i.e. 5 years, but it is recommended that areas remaining uncoppiced at the end of that time should be scheduled for coppicing during the subsequent five-year plan. Coppicing entails cutting a shrub down to its base to allow it to regenerate. This will result in shrubs sizes ranging from newly coppiced through to 5 years growth and mature plants that have yet to be cut. This variety or diversity of heights will allow the scrub areas to support a wider variety of species of bird, mammal and insect and will be more attractive for visitors. Coppicing the shrubs will also renew and enhance their ability to produce flowers and fruit for the benefit of wildlife and visitors to the reserve and will increase the light levels and sight lines along the paths in the central section of the reserve.

Hedgerows – A large proportion of the reserve has hedgerow boundaries. The majority of the existing hedgerows are unmanaged overly mature and have therefore become ‘gappy’. In their current condition the hedgerows support very few species of bird, mammal and insect and are declining in condition as well as increasing the current unkempt look of the reserve. It is therefore proposed to implement a programme of hedge laying and planting up of gaps within the hedges with species characteristic of the area but which are not currently found in the hedgerows. This will increase the variety of heights of hedgerow as the programme progresses each year, will afford the reserve a more managed and ‘reserve’ feel to the site and will increase the number of species found within the hedgerows.

Plantation Woodland – some small areas of plantation woodland exist within the reserve predominantly towards the southeast of the site. The plantations are currently heavily stocked with trees which would now benefit from thinning out. The plantations also have a shortage of shrubs within them to provide the correct structure for woodland areas. It is therefore proposed to remove at least 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the trees within the plantation areas to allow the better specimens to grow on. Some additional shrubs will be planted in areas left bare by tree removal. As these areas run alongside the main footpath from Killisick Lane, native woodland bulbs and plants such as snowdrops, bluebells and wood anemones could be planted throughout the plantations to increase their attractiveness to visitors and wildlife.

The chestnut pale fencing that is currently forming a boundary around the plantations should be removed as it looks unnatural and is in a state of disrepair. Retaining the fencing will make it a target for vandals in its current condition. Supporting stakes which are no longer required and tree guards while have become restrictive should be removed.

### **2.1.3 Naturalness**

The reserve is predominantly man-made and appears to have been enhanced by footpaths and amenity areas for the use of the local community probably associated with the development of the area of land to the south and west of the reserve for housing.

Some aspects of the reserve have developed naturally such as the secondary woodland that is developing to the west of the reserve. Some aspects of the reserve however, particularly the grass fields to the north of the reserve reflect the influence that agriculture has had on the surrounding area.

#### **2.1.4 Rarity**

The reserve and its habitats could not be considered rare or uncommon. It is characteristic of urban and semi-urban open green spaces found within Nottinghamshire. Surveys to identify floral and faunal species have been carried out during the previous management plan and will continue during the lifetime of this plan. No rare species have been discovered, however this is not to say they are not present as the site has not been surveyed by specialists. If funding allows this will be actioned see section 3 Management projects.

#### **2.1.5 Fragility**

The reserve does not support any fragile habitats i.e. those likely to be destroyed by nutrient or pollution input, changes in hydrology or increases in disturbance for example. The predominant threat to the reserves resource at present is a lack of management but this will merely result in a further decline in diversity it would not destroy the reserve.

#### **2.1.6 Typicalness**

The site is characteristic of urban or semi-urban reserves and contain habitats typically found in man-made natural open green spaces.

#### **2.1.7 Recorded history**

The reserve would have been part of the surrounding agricultural land in recent history (see Sanderson map of 1835 Appendix 2) and appears to have been made up of small fields or paddocks. Encroaching housing developments have altered the use of the land in recent years to public open space and has, along with other developments in the locality, increased the pressure on this area of land.

#### **2.1.8 Position in an ecological/geographical unit**

The reserve is an important conservation and local community resource in its own right. Its value is further enhanced by its connectivity to the open countryside consisting of pony paddocks and agricultural land in the immediate vicinity and predominantly agricultural land in the wider landscape. This connectivity to rural areas greatly enhances the reserves value as a biodiversity resource. Increasing the diversity of the reserve and therefore the number of species it is able to support also enhances the reserves position in the wider ecological unit.

Please see Appendix 7 for further information regarding Wildlife corridor and connectivity to open countryside.

Please see appendix 6 for Rights of Way Network

#### **2.1.9 Potential value**

With appropriate management, Hobbucks Nature Reserve has great potential value as a recreational, nature conservation and educational resource.

The reserve has great recreational and educational value which could be enhanced through the provision of interpretation material identifying habitats, species and individual plants of interest, in addition to the management practices used throughout the site. Engaging local communities in addressing issues relating to this site and the local area should promote a culture of involvement and ownership in the site and increased interest and knowledge about the local natural environment promoting heightened awareness of damaging and inappropriate behaviour. Local community involvement in the site will allow the opportunity to train local people in practical management of the site, faunal and floral surveying techniques and running a friends group.

The site has great potential as an educational resource and links should be fostered with schools, colleges and local community groups to promote the sites potential for formal and informal education. The reserve could be

used as an outside classroom by students to learn about a range of topics from art, history and geology as well as environmental topics.

The site is also an ideal area to provide life long education in the form of training for local volunteers in practical conservation work, guided walks, open days, and participation in survey events.

Further ecological potential could be realised through positive management of the habitats contained within this site and the creation or re-creation of additional habitats appropriate to the area bringing about an increase in biodiversity. An increase in the biodiversity in the reserve has the potential to increase the biodiversity in the wider landscape.

#### **2.1.10 Intrinsic appeal**

The sites intrinsic appeal lies in its resource to the local community as a valuable recreational resource as well as providing the opportunity to experience nature. It is very much a gateway to the surrounding countryside. The grass fields to the north of the site allow very great views to the west over open countryside and south towards the city of Nottingham. The hedgerows and scrub areas provide screening to the adjacent housing development giving the feeling of seclusion. This aspect should be further enhanced through this plan.

The area provides a valuable recreational green space that local people can enjoy without the need for transport provision to reach it or financial expenditure to enjoy. It is large enough to ensure that a variety of long and short walks can be taken around the site and the planting is dense enough in the centre of the site that users are unable to see large vistas encouraging exploring. The floral, structural and topographical diversity provides recreational and wildlife interest and ensures that exploring and wildlife watching is a worthwhile activity.

## **2.2 Objectives**

- Ensure that Hobbucks Nature Reserve is a safe environment for recreational uses
- Improve appearance and encourage public understanding and awareness of issues relating to the site to reduce anti-social behaviour
- Maintain and enhance the habitat types and species present
- Combine habitat enhancement and management with education, recreation and access provision
- Conserve and interpret the archaeological and historical elements on the site
- Monitor effects of management on the wildlife on the site

## 2.3 Factors Influencing Management

- Safety - the entire site is accessible at all times, therefore in the interest of public safety, all possible measures should be taken to ensure public safety whilst work is being carried out, including closing paths
- Community involvement - local community and interest groups should be involved in and consulted upon the practical and strategic management of the reserve at every possible opportunity.
- Funding - the management identified cannot be guaranteed for the full term of the plan. It may therefore be necessary for some tasks to be rolled over into subsequent years, to be completed when funding becomes available or for grant funding to be raised for specific projects.
- Revenue costs for the Hobbucks site over the next 5 years will be met from the Parks and Street Care existing revenue budgets within Gedling Borough Council. Due to budget cuts affecting the service over the next three years 2014-2017, no capital funding will be available for the foreseeable future. Currently and into the future there is no staff provision on site on a daily basis.
- Legal obligations - work likely to cause disturbance to breeding birds i.e. felling and scrub clearance cannot be undertaken during the bird-breeding season (March to September). Therefore all felling and scrub clearance must be undertaken during the autumn and winter as it is an offence to disturb any wild bird (with the exception of pest species) while it is tending a nest containing eggs or chicks, until the chicks have *successfully* fledged. To do so would be a criminal offence under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.
- Protected species - mature trees identified for felling which are likely to provide roosting opportunities for bats should be surveyed by a licensed bat worker prior to felling. All species of British bat plus their roosting sites are protected by The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, the CROW Act 2000 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.
- Management - annual or bi-annual meetings regarding the implementation of the management plan for the site are required to identify work programme and schedule of works. Meetings should involve Gedling Borough Council, Notts Wildlife Trust, BTCV, contractors and anyone else likely to carry out work on site.
- Only native species characteristic of the area should be introduced to the reserve.

## 2.4 Management proposals

- 2.4.1 Install reserve signs at entrances if funding becomes available
- 2.4.2 Carry out regular litter picking events and clear fly tipping as soon as possible.
- 2.4.2 Alter grass mowing regime to one of annual cutting of all grassland areas in September and removing the arisings. Mown areas in compartment 2, 3 & 8 should create scallops into the scrub areas and should mirror the meanders in the path in 2 and 3 and create a circular glade in compartment 8. A buffer strip of 1 metre should be left at all grassland / scrub interfaces to provide winter habitat for insects, small mammals and foraging for birds
- 2.4.3 Continue to mow 1 metre either side of paths to allow easy access and maintain a managed look to the reserve.

- 2.4.4 Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip between grassland and scrub on a five-year rotation during February.
- 2.4.5 Create areas of wildflower meadow at the Killisick Lane and Elder Close entrances to the nature reserve.
- 2.4.6 Cut and bale grass fields to the north of the reserve on rotation ie one each year.
- 2.4.7 Introduce a rotational scrub coppicing regime to improve the structural diversity and increase light availability.
- 2.4.8 Lay some of the hedgerows forming the boundary of the reserve over a period of five to 10 years.
- 2.4.9 Gap up sparsely vegetated hedgerows with native species characteristic of the area (see appendix 4 for suggested species)
- 2.4.10 Thin out overly crowded plantation areas by removing less attractive trees or weaker trees to favour strong attractive specimens.
- 2.4.11 Create some open areas within plantations and plant some open areas with shrubs (see appendix 4) to create a more natural feel to plantation areas.
- 2.4.12 Source and plant native woodland bulbs and plants within plantation areas once thinning has occurred (see appendix 4 for suitable species)
- 2.4.13 Enhance plantation areas with supplementary tree and shrub planting to soften edges creating undulating shapes.
- 2.4.14 Carry out botanical and bird surveys to collect baseline data for to allow monitoring of the effects of management proposals on biodiversity.
- 2.4.15 Remove trees likely to pose a Health & Safety hazard
- 2.4.16 Maintain pond area and surrounding planting
- 2.4.17 Erect bird and bat boxes and ensure regular maintenance
- 2.4.18 Continue to provide environmental education to the community
- 2.4.19 Encourage additional corporate involvement with the maintenance of the site

## PART 3: MANAGEMENT DETAILS

### 3.1 Management Projects and Prescriptions

| Ref. No. | Project Title                                    | Prescription  |
|----------|--|---|
| 3.1.1    | Install reserve signs                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reserve signs should be installed at key entrances declaring the status of the open green space and the bye laws adopted as part of the LNR process. Other information could be made available on these boards such as contact details for Friends Group and Gedling BC contact for LNRs.</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.2    | Carry out litter picks and remove fly tipping    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large scale community led litter picks should be carried out biannually or more frequently if there is the need. The litter picks should be co-ordinated and should be supported by Gedling BC by the provision of skips and manpower</li> <li>The reporting of fly tipping incidents by the local community (contact details on reserve board) should be encouraged. Gedling BC should ensure that the response to fly tipping reports should be swift to promote a situation of zero tolerance and pride in the site.</li> <li>Remove litter from within scrub wherever possible but particularly before coppicing and deadhedging these areas.</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.3    | Alter grass mowing regime                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All grass areas should be cut once a year, in September with a mower or strimmer. Compartments 10 and 11 with be cut and baled in the Autumn</li> <li>The arising should be collected / raked and removed off site to remove nutrients and fire hazard and should be taken to a green waste facility.</li> <li>A 1 metre buffer strip between the grassland and scrub or woodland should be left uncut to provide overwintering habitat for insects, small mammals and a seed source for birds.</li> <li>Hay taken off the fields to the north of the site could be given to local horse owners or stables if they can collect. It may therefore be advisable to ensure that the hay is baled into small bales.</li> </ul> |
| 3.1.4    | Regularly mow 1 metre either side of paths       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mow 1 metre either side of paths on a regular basis to maintain easy access and promote a 'managed' feel to the grasslands and the site in general</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.5    | Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strim 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the buffer strip between grassland and scrub each year to rejuvenate grassland and prevent further scrub encroachment.</li> <li>It should be possible to dispose of the arisings from this cut into the bottom of the scrub and hedgerows</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.6    | Create areas of wildflower meadow                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas of wildflower meadow should be created in compartment 9</li> <li>Identify area to be created in consultation with GBC/NWT/FO Group but should remove uneven areas dominated by common nettle.</li> <li>Topsoil on the areas to be created will need removing to a depth of 10 to 12 inches to remove nettle roots, which currently dominate these areas.</li> <li>Remove soil from site</li> <li>Harrow or rake remaining topsoil to a fine tilth</li> <li>Sow good quality wildflower seed mix at recommended rate, usually 4g per sq m.</li> <li>Compact seed into soil using roller</li> <li>Spread thin layer of brash over seeded area to prevent birds eating seed.</li> </ul>                                 |

|        |   |   |
|--------|---|---|
|        |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove pernicious weeds such as nettle and dock by hand for 12 months.</li> <li>The meadow can then be incorporated into the annual grass cut in September</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.7  | Cut and bale grass fields to the north of the reserve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cut and bale one field each year i.e. on rotation</li> <li>Hay will need to be removed from site as it is a fire hazard but instead of taking it to green waste it could be given to local stables or private horse owners if they can collect. If it is to be given to horse owners it will need to be baled into small bales.</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.8  | Coppice scrub   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement scrub coppicing regime with 1/10<sup>th</sup> of scrub being coppiced each year</li> <li>Start with coppicing scrub 2 metres either side of path in compartment 7, 9 and 12, including Surgery Lane path, to open up paths and increase light</li> <li>Litter pick as far into scrub as possible once shrubs have been coppiced</li> <li>Deadhedge brash into the base of remaining tall scrub to prevent access into scrub areas.</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.9  | Lay boundary hedgerows                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lay boundary hedgerows over a 5 year period, if possible</li> <li>Lay hedgerow alongside Killisick Road entrance in winter of 2014/15, to improve appearance of entrances.</li> <li>Brash should be chipped and blown into the bottom of scrub or hedgerows.</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.10 | Gap up hedgerows                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hedgerows that are found to be excessively ‘gappy’ after laying should be gapped up using species detailed in appendix 4</li> <li>Alternatively, local school children could grow shrubs for use on the reserve from seeds and fruit sourced from the reserve. This would be a good way of engaging local schools and children in activities on the reserve and will provide educational as well as practical experience.</li> <li>Whips planted into hedgerows should be protected with a can and spiral guard, however, if it is felt that they will become targets for vandalism it may be advisable to plant whips without protection and run the risk of rabbit grazing.</li> <li>Grass cuttings or wood chippings could be placed around the base of newly planted whips as a mulch to prevent moisture loss and weed growth</li> <li>Check whips over the next 3 years and replace dead ones</li> </ul> |
| 3.1.11 | Thin out plantations                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of trees within plantation areas selectively removing weak, broken or diseased specimens to favour strong trees.</li> <li>As trees are small, trees can be cut using bowsaws. Alternatively, they can be felled with a chainsaw if a suitably qualified person is available.</li> <li>1/3<sup>rd</sup> of stumps can be left to regrow as coppice stems</li> <li>Remaining stumps should be treated with a herbicide such as Garlon 4 to prevent regrowth.</li> <li>Brash could be piled to create habitat piles or if this is thought to be a fire risk, brash could be chipped or removed off site.</li> <li>Removal should promote a light and airy feel to plantation areas.</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.12 | Plant shrubs in plantations                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In plantations dominated by trees with very little shrubs, it would be advisable to plant some flowering and fruiting shrubs (see appendix 4) in the thinned out areas to create a more natural softer appearance. This will also attract birds into the plantations.</li> <li>As with hedgerows, shrubs could be grown by local schools</li> </ul>  |

|        |  |   |
|--------|--|---|
|        |  | <p>or the local community and should be protected with canes and spiral guards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shrubs should be planted sparsely to retain light open feel to plantations</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.13 | Plant native bulbs and plants within plantation  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once plantations have been thinned out to allow more space and light, native bulbs and plants should be planted within plantations and on the edge nearest to the path in informal drifts. See appendix 4 for suitable species</li> <li>• If grass is dense it may be advisable to remove turfs to allow plants (not bulbs) to compete or to spray small sections with herbicide to make bare areas for planting.</li> </ul>                               |
| 3.1.14 | Enlarge and alter shape of plantations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When path installations and plantation thinning has been completed, it would be appropriate to soften the edges of the plantations, to mimick the meanders in the path, or just to naturalise these areas.</li> <li>• Using species identified in appendix 4, plant additional standard trees and shrubs around the edges of the existing plantations, to create random natural shapes rather than the rectangular blocks that currently exist.</li> </ul> |
| 3.1.15 | Undertake botanical and bird surveys   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out botanical and birds surveys in spring / summer 2014 to collect baseline data.</li> <li>• Repeat surveys in year 5 of the plan to assess the impact of the plan on biodiversity and to inform the next management plan</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.16 | Remove trees likely to pose a Health & Safety hazard                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check pathside trees in compartments 7, 8, 9, 11 &amp; 12 to assess if they may pose a hazard in storm conditions</li> <li>• Fell trees likely to pose a hazard</li> <li>• Monitor remaining trees on an ongoing basis</li> </ul>  |
| 3.1.17 | Maintain Pond area   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear pond area of litter on an annual basis and carry out maintenance to surrounding pond plants</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.18 | Erect Bird and Bat Boxes and maintain according to relevant legislation                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If funding becomes available erect bird and bat boxes. Carry out timely maintenance according to relevant legislation</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.19 | Continue to utilise the site as an environmental educational resource                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the site as an educational resource to the wider community and continue to assist with current Environmental educational programmes in place.</li> </ul>   |
| 3.1.20 | Continue to develop relationships with local businesses for volunteering in Nature Reserve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand on the working relationship with local businesses for regular litter picking and environmental projects, e.g. coppicing</li> </ul>  |

### 3.2 Five Year Work Plan

Priority 1=High, 3=Low

| Reference Number | Prescription  | Years |      |      |      |      |
|------------------|---|-------|------|------|------|------|
|                  |   | 1     | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
|                  |   | 2013  | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| 3.1.1            | Install reserve entrance signs                        |       | 1    |      |      |      |
| 3.1.2            | Carry out litter picks and remove fly tipping         | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.3            | Alter grass mowing regime                             | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.4            | Regularly mow 1 metre either side of paths            | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.5            | Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip      | 2     | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    |
| 3.1.6            | Create area of wildflower meadow                      |       | 1    |      |      |      |
| 3.1.7            | Cut and bale grass fields to the north of the reserve | 2     | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    |
| 3.1.8            | Coppice scrub   | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.9            | Lay boundary hedgerows                                | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.10           | Gap up hedgerows                                      | 2     | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    |
| 3.1.11           | Thin out plantations                                  | 1     | 1    | 1    |      |      |
| 3.1.12           | Plant shrubs in plantations                           |       |      |      | 2    | 2    |
| 3.1.13           | Plant native bulbs within plantation                  |       |      |      | 2    | 2    |
| 3.1.14           | Enlarge and alter shape of plantations                |       |      |      | 2    | 2    |
| 3.1.15           | Undertake botanical and bird surveys                  | 1     |      |      |      | 1    |
| 3.1.16           | Fell hazardous trees                                  | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.17           | Maintain Pond area                                    | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.18           | Erect Bird and Bat Boxes                              |       | 1    |      |      |      |
| 3.1.19           | Utilise site as educational resource                  | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| 3.1.20           | Expand relationships with wider business community    | 1     | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |

### 3.3 Annual Work Plan

#### Year 1 – 2013

| Ref No. | Priority (1-3) | Compartment / Prescription Detail   | Season (Sp/Su/Au/Wi)       | Who (contractor, Gedling BC, volunteer group)          |
|---------|----------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| 3.1.2   | 1              | • Litter picks and fly tipping removal  | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au /<br>Wi | Friends of Group / Gedling Borough Council             |
| 3.1.3   | 1              | • Cut all grass annually and remove arisings (except buffer strip)  | Su<br>(Sept)               | Gedling Borough Council                                |
| 3.1.4   | 1              | • Mow 1 metre either side of paths  | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au         | Gedling Borough Council/F O Group                      |
| 3.1.5   | 2              | • Strim 1/5 <sup>th</sup> of buffer strip in compartments 2, 3, 7 & 8   | Sp/Feb                     | Gedling Borough Council/<br>F O Group                  |
| 3.1.7   | 2              | • Cut and bale compartment 10 & 11 to the north of the site   | Au                         | Gedling Borough Council/Contractor                     |
| 3.1.8   | 1              | § Coppice scrub   | Wi                         | F O Group /Probation Service/Business Volunteers       |
| 3.1.9   | 1              | § Lay boundary hedgerow   | Wi                         | F O Group /Probation Service/Business volunteers       |
| 3.1.10  | 2              | § Gap up recently laid hedgerows where necessary (this may have to wait if whips are to be grown from seed sourced from site) | Wi                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.11  | 1              | § Thin out plantations  | Wi                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.15  | 1              | § Undertake botanical surveys   | Sp /<br>Su                 | F O Group and if funding allows Ecological Consultants |
| 3.1.16  | 1              | § Fell Hazardous Trees  | Wi                         | GBC/Contractor   |
| 3.1.17  | 1              | § Maintain Pond Area  | Au                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.19  | 3              | § Utilise site as educational resource  | All Yr                     | F O Group/Wider community                              |
| 3.1.20  | 3              | § Expand relationships with wider business community  | All Yr                     | F O Group/GBC  |

See Part 3 – Management Detail for details regarding implementation of prescriptions detailed above.

## Year 2 - 2014

| Reference Number | Priority (1-3) | Compartment / Prescription Detail   | Season (Sp/Su/Au/Wi) | Who (contractor, Gedling BC, volunteer group)    |
|------------------|----------------|---|----------------------|--|
| 3.1.1            | 1              | <p><b>This prescription may not be achievable in year 2 if funding is available, but if it isn't, then consider for each successive year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install reserve signs at entrances to reserve from Killisick Road and Elder Close as a minimum. Smaller reserve signs on other entrances if possible</li> </ul> | Sp/Su/Au/Wi          | GBC and Friends Group                            |
| 3.1.2            | 1              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Litter picks and fly tipping removal</li> </ul>  | Sp / Su / Au / Wi    | Friends of Group / Gedling Borough Council       |
| 3.1.3            | 1              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cut all grass annually and remove arisings (except buffer strip)</li> </ul>  | Su (Sept)            | Gedling Borough Council                          |
| 3.1.4            | 1              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mow 1 metre either side of paths</li> </ul>  | Sp / Su / Au         | Gedling Borough Council/F O Group                |
| 3.1.5            | 2              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip</li> </ul>  | Sp (Feb)             | Gedling Borough Council/ F O Group               |
| 3.1.6            | 1              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create wildflower meadow in compartment 9</li> </ul>   | Sp/Au                | Contractor/GBC and Friends Group                 |
| 3.1.7            | 2              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cut and bale compartments 10 &amp; 11 to north side of site</li> </ul>   | Au                   | Gedling Borough/Contractor                       |
| 3.1.8            | 1              | § Coppice scrub   | Wi                   | F O Group /Probation/ business volunteers        |
| 3.1.9            | 1              | § Lay boundary hedgerow   | Wi                   | F O Group /Probation Service/business volunteers |
| 3.1.10           | 2              | § Gap up newly laid hedgerow if necessary   | Wi                   | F O Group  |
| 3.1.13           | 1              | § Thin out plantations  | Wi                   | F O Group  |
| 3.1.16           | 1              | § Fell Hazardous Trees  | Wi                   | Gedling Borough Council                          |
| 3.1.17           | 1              | § Maintain Pond Area  | Au                   | F O Group  |
| 3.1.18           | 1              | <p><b>This prescription may not be achievable in year 2 if funding is available, but if it isn't, then consider for each successive year</b></p> <p>§ Erect Bird and Bat Boxes</p>  | Au/Wi                | Contractor/F O Group/Gedling Borough Council     |
| 3.1.19           | 1              | Utilise site as an educational resource   | All Yr               | F O Group/Wider community                        |
| 3.1.20           | 1              | Expand relationships with wider business community  | All Yr               | F O Group/Gedling Borough Council                |

**See Part 3 – Management Detail for details regarding implementation of prescriptions detailed above.**

### Year 3 - 2015

| Reference Number | Priority (1-3) | Compartment / Prescription Detail                                  | Season (Sp/Su/Au/Wi)       | Who (contractor, Gedling BC, volunteer group)   |
|------------------|----------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| 3.1.2            | 1              | • Litter picks and fly tipping removal                             | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au /<br>Wi | Friends of Group / Gedling Borough Council      |
| 3.1.3            | 1              | • Cut all grass annually and remove arisings (except buffer strip) | Su<br>(Sept)               | Gedling Borough Council                         |
| 3.1.4            | 1              | • Mow 1 metre either side of paths                                 | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au         | Gedling Borough Council/F O Group               |
| 3.1.5            | 2              | • Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip                 | Sp<br>(Feb)                | Gedling Borough Council/F O Group               |
| 3.1.7            | 2              | • Cut and bale grass fields to the north of the reserve            | Au                         | Gedling Borough/Contractor                      |
| 3.1.8            | 1              | § Coppice scrub  | Wi                         | F O Group/Probation Service/Business volunteers |
| 3.1.9            | 1              | § Lay boundary hedgerows (if not completed in previous years)      | Wi                         | F O Group/Probation Service/business volunteers |
| 3.1.10           | 2              | § Gap up hedgerow if necessary                                     | Wi                         | F O Group                                       |
| 3.1.11           | 1              | § Thin out plantations if necessary                                | Wi                         | F O Group                                       |
| 3.1.16           | 1              | § Fell hazardous trees   | Wi                         | Gedling Borough Council/Contractor              |
| 3.1.17           | 1              | § Maintain Pond Area   | Au                         | Friends of group                                |
| 3.1.19           | 1              | § Utilise site as educational resource                             | All Yr                     | Friends group and wider community               |
| 3.1.20           | 1              | § Expand relationships with wider business volunteers              | All Yr                     | Friends of group/Gedling Borough Council        |

**See Part 3 – Management Detail for details regarding implementation of prescriptions detailed above.**

## Year 4 – 2016

| Reference Number | Priority (1-3) | Compartment / Prescription Detail                                  | Season (Sp/Su/Au/Wi)       | Who (contractor, Gedling BC, volunteer group)              |
|------------------|----------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| 3.1.2            | 1              | • Litter picks and fly tipping removal                             | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au /<br>Wi | Friends of Group / Gedling Borough Council                 |
| 3.1.3            | 1              | • Cut all grass annually and remove arisings (except buffer strip) | Su (Sept)                  | Gedling Borough Council                                    |
| 3.1.4            | 1              | • Regularly Mow 1 metre either side of paths                       | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au         | Gedling Borough Council/<br>F O Group                      |
| 3.1.5            | 2              | • Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strips                | Sp (Feb)                   | Gedling Borough Council/<br>F O Group                      |
| 3.1.7            | 2              | • Cut and bale grass fields to the north of the reserve            | Au                         | Gedling Borough Council/Contractor                         |
| 3.1.8            | 1              | § Coppice scrub if required  | Wi                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.9            | 1              | § Lay Boundary hedgerows if not completed in previous years        | Wi                         | F O Group/Probation Service/business volunteers            |
| 3.1.10           | 2              | § Gap up hedgerows if necessary                                    | Wi                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.12'          | 2              | § Plant shrubs in plantations                                      | Wi                         | F O Group / schools  |
| 3.1.13           | 2              | § Plant native bulbs in plantations                                | Au/Wi                      | F O Group / schools  |
| 3.1.14           | 2              | § Enlarge and alter shape of plantations                           | Wi                         | F O Group / schools /Probation Service/Buisness volunteers |
| 3.1.16           | 1              | § Fell Hazardous trees   | Wi                         | Gedling Borough Council/Contractor                         |
| 3.1.17           | 1              | § Maintain Pond Area   | Au                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.19           | 1              | § Utilise site as educational resource                             | All Yr                     | F O Group/wider community                                  |
| 3.1.20           | 1              | § Expand relationships with wider business community               | All Yr                     | F O Group/Gedling Borough Council                          |

**See Part 3 – Management Detail for details regarding implementation of prescriptions detailed above.**

## Year 5 – 2017

| Reference Number | Priority (1-3) | Compartment / Prescription Detail                                  | Season (Sp/Su/Au/Wi)       | Who (contractor, Gedling BC, volunteer group)              |
|------------------|----------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| 3.1.2            | 1              | • Litter picks and fly tipping removal                             | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au /<br>Wi | Friends of Group / Gedling Borough Council                 |
| 3.1.3            | 1              | • Cut all grass annually and remove arisings (except buffer strip) | Su<br>(Sept)               | Gedling Borough Council                                    |
| 3.1.4            | 1              | • Regularly Mow 1 metre either side of paths                       | Sp /<br>Su /<br>Au         | Gedling Borough Council/<br>F O Group                      |
| 3.1.5            | 2              | • Strim small sections of the 1 metre buffer strip                 | Sp<br>(Feb)                | Gedling Borough Council/<br>F O Group                      |
| 3.1.7            | 2              | • Cut and bale grass fields to the north of the reserve            | Au                         | Gedling Borough Council/Contractor                         |
| 3.1.8            | 1              | § Coppice scrub if required  | Wi                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.9            | 1              | § Lay boundary hedgerows (if not completed in previous years)      | Wi                         | F O Group/Probation service/business volunteers            |
| 3.1.10           | 2              | § Gap up hedgerows if necessary                                    | Wi                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.13           | 2              | § Plant native bulbs within plantation                             | Au/Wi                      | F O Group / schools  |
| 3.1.14           | 2              | § Enlarge and alter shape of plantations in compartment 2          | Wi                         | F O Group / schools /probation service/business volunteers |
| 3.1.15           | 1              | § Carry out botanical and bird surveys                             | Sp /<br>Su                 | F O Group and if funding allows ecological consultant      |
| 3.1.16           | 1              | § Fell Hazardous trees   | Wi                         | Gedling Borough Council/Contractor                         |
| 3.1.17           | 1              | § Maintain Pond Area   | Au                         | F O Group  |
| 3.1.19           | 1              | § Utilise site as educational resource                             | All Yr                     | F O Group/wider community                                  |
| 3.1.20           | 1              | § Expand relationships with wider business community               | All Yr                     | F O Group/Gedling Borough Council                          |

**See Part 3 – Management Detail for details regarding implementation of prescriptions detailed above.**



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## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** The Adoption of an Animal Welfare Charter for Gedling

**Date:** 25th March 2015

**Author:** Service Manager – Public Protection

### **Wards Affected:**

Borough Wide.

### **Purpose**

To seek the adoption by Cabinet, of a Gedling Borough Council Animal Welfare Charter.

**Key Decision:** This is not a Key Decision

### **Background.**

- 1.1 The Animal Welfare Charter enclosed in Appendix 1. Has been written to ensure that in carrying out its functions the council promotes the welfare of animals.
- 1.2 As a district, the Council has statutory powers to regulate certain activities such as the licensing of pet shops, which directly affect the welfare of animals. Formal responsibility for animal welfare as laid out in the Animal Welfare Act 2006 lies with the County Council.
- 1.3 The enclosed animal welfare charter has been developed by officers in consultation with members over a series of meetings, to ensure that animal welfare matters are taken into account by the authority when carrying out activities that are not covered by statutory responsibilities.
- 1.4 Paragraph 5 of the charter states: "The Council believes that it has a moral responsibility for the welfare of all captive and domestic animals and all wild animals in-so-far that its activities impinge upon them. The role of the Council to influence derives from its status as a democratically elected body able to reflect the view of the community. As a large organisation the Council has the ability to influence the animal welfare debate and by supporting and encouraging other organisations with similar interests who operate

peacefully and within the law”.

### **Proposal**

- 2.1 The proposal is to adopt and publicise the enclosed charter, to ensure that in carrying out its functions Gedling Borough Council promotes the welfare of animals and also does not inadvertently damage their wellbeing.

### **Alternative Options**

- 3.1 An alternative is to not proceed with the adoption of the charter. This approach could mean that the council may damage the welfare of animals, either directly through its actions or inadvertently.

### **Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None

### **Appendices**

- 5.1 Appendix 1. Gedling Borough Council Animal Welfare Charter

### **Background Papers**

None identified

### **Recommendations**

**THAT Cabinet:**

**Adopts the Animal Welfare Charter enclosed in  
Appendix 1.**

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

To ensure that in carrying out all its activities Gedling Borough Council shall, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals.

## Appendix 1.



### GEDLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### CHARTER FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS

1. Animals are capable of feeling, of enjoying a state of well-being and are capable of suffering. The Council recognises the needs of animals as sentient beings (as defined by the European Union Protocol under the Lisbon Treaty which came into force in December 2009) and that they should have a life free from cruel treatment and unnecessary suffering.
2. In formulating and implementing all relevant policies and in the use of its enforcement powers the Council shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay due regard to the welfare requirements of animals.
3. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, people have a duty of care towards animals in their charge.
4. In considering the welfare of domestic or captive animals due regard should be had to the principles (known as the 5 freedoms) that the animals must be accorded as developed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council:
  - Freedom from hunger and thirst – by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
  - Freedom from discomfort – by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
  - Freedom from pain, injury or disease – by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
  - Freedom to express normal behaviour - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
  - Freedom from fear and distress – by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.
5. The Council believes that it has a moral responsibility for the welfare of all captive and domestic animals and all wild animals in-so-far that its activities impinge upon them. The role of the Council to influence derives from its status as a democratically elected body able to reflect the view of the community. As a large organisation the Council has the ability to influence the animal welfare debate and by supporting and encouraging other organisations with similar interests who operate peacefully and within the law.

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