

## **COUNTY COUNCIL - GARTREE NEWS**

### **HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD**

Leicestershire County Council has been at the forefront of the NHS changes included in the Health & Social Care Bill (January 2011). Leicestershire became an early implementer in establishing a shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), which becomes mandatory for each upper tier authority this April.

What will the HWB do? It will promote integration and partnership working between the NHS, Social Care, Public Health and other local services; and improve local democratic accountability. By taking on the early implementer status, the Leicestershire HWB will already have two years experience when all the Boards become a reality this April.

Membership of the Board is prescribed and includes County Council Cabinet leads and Directors of Health, Social Care and Children's Services, representatives from the two county clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and two of the districts, as well as Healthwatch and other health bodies.

Councillors were briefed on 4 January about the changes and the transition arrangements for responsibility for some health services moving to the county council. This big change will help reduce health inequalities through integration and closer working with council departments, and all their partners, in areas such as environmental health, adult and children's social care, housing, leisure, transport, employment and economic development.

This change in the accountability of some health functions brings added responsibility for elected councillors. The HWB will publish joint strategic needs assessments (JSNA) and a health and wellbeing strategy for the county, so will be engaging with local people about health and wellbeing.

Although not given executive power until April, Leicestershire's HWB has already obtained County Council Cabinet approval to invest £410,000 funding in Sports legacy following the 2012 Olympic & Paralympic successes. From 7 January 2013 sports clubs have been able to bid for money towards improving facilities and equipment, with a second pot to help them to provide additional coaching and staff training.

Details are available online from the website: [www.lrsport.org/leicestershire-legacy-fund](http://www.lrsport.org/leicestershire-legacy-fund)

### **BURTON BROOK WIND FARM APPLICATION**

There were seventy-one individual objections for the application by ProWind UK for a 102m high single wind turbine (equivalent to at least 22 stacked double decker Arriva buses) in the Burton Brook valley in Carlton Curlieu parish. I would like to publicly thank all of them for their interest and detailed remarks.

The application came before the Harborough District Council Planning Committee on Tuesday 9 October. The 16 pages of the planning officer's observations, summaries of the comments made and recommendations covered the points made by the public and parish councils. The officer recommendation was to refuse the application based primarily on the scheme not being compliant with HDC Core Strategy policies CS9, CS11 and CS17 and Regional Plan Policy 40. The reasons given were the size, siting, design and prominence of the turbine which would have appeared as a dominant and visually intrusive feature in the landscape, and would detrimentally affect the character of the High Leicestershire landscape.

After a brief discussion, the Committee voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation to refuse. So that was excellent news for those who voiced their objections. Wind turbines proposed in locations that do not affect the character of any natural landscapes, or tower over residential properties, have a part to play in the UK environmental strategy, but they need to comply with locally adopted policies.

This specific turbine was too massive and in the wrong place, and although it was refused, the developer didn't appeal the decision. Instead ProWind UK have recently contacted local parish councils and objectors to seek their views about a possible new application, due in March 2013, for a smaller 77m high wind turbine (equivalent to at least 16 stacked double decker Arriva buses) in exactly the same location.

If this new application is made, then I would hope that residents are prepared to repeat their comments, as I believe that even 25m lower, the location is unsuitable for this huge turbine and I will use the same planning comments as for the last application; as they are all just as relevant. Please let me know your views.

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