

Business Plan 2019 - 2024

I am very pleased to be able to introduce this Business Plan for Syston Town Council for the period 2019 to 2024. Every business has to plan for the future and improve their service to its customers. Syston Town Council is no exception. Our plan sets out our vision for the town and what we aim to achieve in the next five years.

A business plan helps to ensure that the Town Council can take a planned and consistent approach to:

- The design and delivery of services;
- The prioritisation and allocation of resources;
- The achievement of value for money.

All plans need to be flexible. We need to be able to re-act to changing national and local circumstances as the need arises. The plan, therefore, will need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis over its lifetime.

Councillor Paul Henry
Chair of Syston Town Council

Our Mission Statement.

Syston is a prosperous, attractive and historic town seven miles from Leicester City Centre. Our vision is to build on that uniqueness and create a town that meets the needs of local people whilst making the most of its special qualities to attract visitors and shoppers from further afield.

This will be achieved by creating a safe, clean, accessible and attractive town in which people can shop, work, live and pursue their leisure activities. The town should offer something for everyone regardless of their age, lifestyle or status.

Our vision for the town.

- An historic town with heritage appearance protected and a clear separation between it and neighbouring villages
- A shopping and eating destination with a wide range of accommodation, restaurants, shops and events
- Industrial diversity with a mixed employment base
- A robust infrastructure which meets the needs of residents and reduces the need to travel to neighbouring towns
- Well used and accessible public open spaces across the town
- An economically thriving and diverse town centre shopping experience which meets the day to day needs of residents
- A functional transport infrastructure which effectively manages traffic flows and supports the use of public transport and cycling and walking
- A balanced night time economy which attracts all ages in to a town centre where they feel safe
- A wide range of housing provision that meets the needs of the whole of the community. Including affordable housing and town centre living

- A clear sense of community identity, with an active voluntary sector and a range of community groups and facilities

An Overview of Syston Town Council

The Local Government Act 1894 created Syston Town Council which was in existence as a Parish Council until 1974?? when local government reorganization following the 1972 Local Government Act created Syston Town Council.

- The population of the town 2011 census was 12 804 and the electorate 10 154
- The Town Council is made up of 20 Councillors who are elected every four years. The next election is in May 2019
- The Chairman is elected by the Town Council every year
- There are three main Committees: Development and General Purposes, Amenities and Resources, each Committee meets monthly
- There are six Panels: Tree Panel, New Cemetery Panel, St Peter & St Paul Churchyard Panel, Pavilion Panel, Christmas Event Panel, Bowling Club Liaison Panel
- Full Council meet monthly and all Committee and Full Council meetings are held in the Brookside Suite, Syston Town Council Offices and are open to the public. There is a public session for questions to be raised at each meeting of Full Council
- The Town Council employs a CiLCA qualified Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager. There are two administrative officers, two full time Grounds Maintenance workers, one part time Senior Grounds Maintenance worker, one full time Premises Officer, one part time Caretaker, two part time cleaners, one part time Dog/Park Warden, one part time Cemetery Gates keeper, one part time seasonal Litter Picker for Central Park, one full time Contractor working mainly in the Cemetery
- The Town Council has been awarded the Local Council Award Scheme Foundation Award and has adopted the General Power of Competence

What the Town Council does

The purpose of the Town Council is to improve community well-being and provide better services at a local level which will improve the quality of life of the residents of Syston.

Its activities fall into three main categories:

Represent the Local Community

- The Town Council considers every planning and licensing application made in the parish
- It debates highways (eg road safety schemes) and transportation matters (eg location of bus stops), rights of way and street naming
- It supports initiatives in the town (eg; Syston Youth Café)
- Syston is represented by four Borough Councillors and one County Councillor
- It works with the Police on law and order and tackling anti-social behavior
- The Town Council supports the civic duties of the Town Chairman
- It supports the democratic process by holding meetings, Councillor surgeries, elections, polling stations, public consultations and provides information to members of the public

We deliver services to meet local needs:

- The Town Council supports and encourages local music bands, arts, community groups and charity groups
- It provides and maintains the town cemetery and burial records and is currently in the process of overseeing the construction of a new cemetery, using S106 monies and Council resources
- Syston Town Council also assists with enquiries regarding locating burial plots and geneology (where practical)
- It maintains the St Peter & St Paul closed churchyard
- A Churchyard Panel has been formed to identify ways to improve this area (on a budget), for the enjoyment of all, whether passers-by or those who are using the Church facilities and services
- There is a base at the Syston Community Centre to assist with the local policing in Syston. This is NOT a public Police Desk facility
- It controls litter
- It maintains the War Memorial at Central Park
- It provides and maintains street furniture, benches, bins, information boards, litter bins, dog bins (pay district council to empty), rat poison bins
- We provide and maintain a Town Council website, Facebook, Twitter and Linked In accounts
- It supports and sponsors Syston Youth Café
- It provides the Community Centre as a facility for use by community and voluntary groups
- It provides financial support of £2K annually to local charities

We improve the quality of life and community well-being

- The Town Council is responsible for five parks, including football pitches, a bowling green and a local band training cabin, both at Central Park
- It maintains four children's play areas, a skate park at Central Park and BMX track at Deville Park, as well as an older children's recreational playground at Deville Park
- Central Park also houses the Peace Gardens, a quiet and floral area for solace and reflection as well as Park Square a more active area of the park with benches a fire station lamp, a mosaic in tribute of the Queens 90th birthday and a sundial
- Central Park is the only floral park in the town, and it features several floral displays – changing with the seasons throughout the year
- Other parks are grassed areas with some landscaping
- The Pavilion at Memorial Park is used by local football teams for showers and an area of safekeeping of belongings for those playing football on the marked out football pitches. A Pavilion Panel has been formed with the aim of finding funding to upgrade the facilities in the Pavilion
- Syston Bowling Club are constantly seeking to upgrade and improve their facilities, leased by the Council on a peppercorn rent, a number of Councillors and the Town Manager meet with the Club twice a year and the Council provide a small amount of financial assistance to the Club to maintain the amenity
- Community events are held throughout the year on Central Park and these are increasing each year – this encourages tourism and business
- There is one allotment site, incorporating circa 100 allotment plots, some full but mainly half plots
- It provides a large Christmas Tree in Central park and a large display of Christmas lights in the town centre

- Hanging baskets are in place from early to late summer, circa 120 are on display each year and approximately 70% of these are sponsored by local businesses. The baskets are kept watered by a water irrigation system
- There are a number of floral tubs in the town which are maintained by the U3A gardening club and Syston in Bloom
- Each year Syston enters the East Midlands in Bloom competition, in 2018 Syston was awarded a Silver Gilt Award
- It provides, in partnership with the Royal British Legion, and St Peter and St Paul Church, the annual Remembrance Day Parade
- It organizes other events in the Town, the main one being the Christmas Celebration Event, which is growing in popularity
- Two charity fashion shows are held each year at the Community Centre organized by officers and the monies raised are contributed to the Chairman's nominated charity of the year, in 2018/19 this is The Woodland Trust
- It maintains the stock of 1080 trees on Town Council owned land. Trees are surveyed and maintained on a rolling basis by Council Ward
- There are four defibrillators in the town, the Council maintain two of these

Our Plan 2019 – 2024

How we seek to achieve our Objectives

In 2018, Syston Town Council, with assistance from Charnwood Borough Council, carried out an extensive consultation with local businesses. This was in the form of a detailed questionnaire and a consultation meeting with those businesses that had responded to the survey. Charnwood Borough Council had provided a Socio Economic Review of Syston and a SWOT analysis which along with the consultation feedback was brought to the public consultation for discussion and debate. A number of areas of improvement were recognized as well as possible solutions. There were some areas of dis-satisfaction which the Town Council had no control or little influence on, such as local policing, the number of charity shops, housing developments. This consultation outcome focusses on the issues that the Town Council can have an effective on and forms the framework within which the business plan for the Town Council has been developed.

The first task was to gain the businesses views on the main issues facing Syston. As part of that process, people were broadly asked:

1. What do you like about Syston?
2. What don't you like about Syston?
3. What things do you want that Syston doesn't have?

A consultation event was advertised by invitation only to the key businesses in Syston.

Enhancing our Town Centre – Development and General Purposes Committee

- We continue to grow the Christmas Celebration Event and are always looking at options to improve
- We will organize the annual Remembrance Day Parade??
- We will continue to investigate ways to improve the mini roundabout layout at the junction of High Street and Melton/Barkby Road
- We will publish a Town Guide for distribution around the town and for new residents
- We will investigate the potential for free WiFi in the town centre

- This will lead to a possible digital heritage trail for Syston
- We will work with other agencies to reduce anti-social behaviour in the town
- We will seek to improve the public realm of the central shopping area of the town
- We will investigate the costs and feasibility of introducing more litter bins in the town centre
- We will investigate with local shops, the demand for a “shop-front” improvement project

The future Shape of Syston

- We will maintain vigilance on housing numbers and major planning applications
- We will oppose reductions in bus services
- We will continue to monitor the new A46 Western Bypass and its potential impact on Syston
- We will support the proposed Syston Railway Station extension
- We will continue to encourage community groups to enhance the appearance of the town centre using floral displays
- We will maintain awareness of lack of parking facilities in the town centre and be watchful of new parking area opportunities
- We will look at options for additional cycle parking
- We will endeavour to ensure that Syston is a mobility friendly town
- We will investigate the cost and demand of providing training on the use of defibrillators
- We will investigate the interest in a local Chamber of Trade or similar organisation
- We will encourage local business people to consider joining the Town Council
- We will continue to build links with local businesses
- We will monitor the effectiveness of additional CCTV provision
- We will encourage local schools to put forward a Student Council member to the Council

Making the best of our Amenities

- We will maintain our five parks, keep grass mown, landscaping tidy and areas litter and free of unsavoury mess
- We will monitor our playgrounds, skate park and BMX track and ensure all facilities are kept clean, in good working order and safe
- We will ensure litter bins and dog waste bins are kept well maintained and clean – reporting when they are full asap
- We will maintain good relationship with Allotment Committee and monitor allotment plots for non-activity. Continue to assist with future projects and the upkeep of the allotment site.
- We will maintain good relationships with Syston Bowling Club and continue to assist with future projects and the upkeep of the green and facilities
- We will support Syston Town Band and assist with future projects including the replacement of the existing building on Central Park
- We will keep the Chapel as a place of solace, clean and in good maintenance
- We will ensure the Cemetery is kept as a welcoming, attractive and peaceful area for quiet reflection
- We will oversee the building of the new Cemetery on Millstone Lane, make the best use of the space available and keep it as a pleasant and peaceful environment

- We will oversee the building of the new Cemetery Pavilion and maintain and clean it regularly, to ensure that it is a welcome rest area for Cemetery visitors and for the Grounds Maintenance team
- We will continue to maintain and enhance the closed churchyard of St Peter & St Paul Church – in line with the Terms of Reference for the St Peter & St Paul Panel
- We will ensure football pitches on Memorial Park are marked out professionally and to the requirement of the users.
- We will embark on a pitch maintenance programme to raise the standards of the football pitches to FA requirements
- We will keep the Pavilion on Memorial Park in a state of cleanliness and good repair.
- We will continue to work with the FA to seek funding for the refurbishment of the Pavilion
- We will monitor and maintain our stock of XXX trees in our parks and other green spaces

Making the best of our Resources

- We will ensure that Syston Town Council has a reputation as an employer of choice
- We will ensure that employees are paid in line with similar organisations
- We will ensure that all staff are encouraged to keep their training and working methods up to date
- We will ensure that the Community Centre continues to be a popular meeting venue for use by the community and businesses
- We will monitor all hire charges for our facilities are fair and competitive whilst ensuring the Council receives a reasonable financial return
- We will ensure that our Cemetery charges are fair and in line with similar organisations
- We will ensure that we provide the community with excellent value for money and maintain a healthy financial return

Being more effective in our Governance and Administration

- We will maintain our Local Council Award Scheme and work towards Silver and Gold status
- We will investigate the benefits of council related software systems for improved efficiency in our administration
- We will be open to dialogue with our District and County Councils regarding delegation of services to the Town Council
- We will encourage members of the community to take on Snow Warden and Flood Warden roles
- We will improve the use of social media
- We will improve the use of the Town Council Website

How to let you know what we have achieved

- The Town Council will investigate the idea of a quarterly newsletter to keep you informed on what we are doing (electronic with a small number of paper copies)

- We will also publish an Annual Report summarizing our activities
- We will issue regular press releases to the local media
- We will issue regular updates on our Website, Facebook and Twitter as well as Linked In (when appropriate)

How to Comment on this Document and Contact the Town Council

Syston Town Council would very much appreciate your views on the content of this plan as well as any comments, queries or complaints regarding the services provided by the Town Council. It also welcomes suggestions from all sections of the community regarding further services development or on other issues that are important to the town that the Town Council may be able to have an impact on.

If you do wish to comment, or for specific help and advice on matters concerning the Town Council, you can:

Telephone: 0116 2607150

Email: mailbox@systontc.org.uk

Write to: The Town Manager, Syston Town Council, School Street, Syston, Leicester.
LE7 1HN

This plan was reviewed on: December 2018

Further amended on: February and March 2019

Next review: March 2020