
Goose Management Scrutiny Review Task Group
Report of the AD Governance & ITT

26 January 2016

Goose Management Scrutiny Review Report

Summary

1. This report introduces information in support of objective (i) of the review remit for the Goose Management scrutiny review, and asks the Task Group to formally agree the remit and methodology for the review.

Background to Review

2. At a meeting in September 2015, the Communities & Environment Policy & Scrutiny Committee agreed to proceed with a scrutiny review of Geese Management across the city following submission of an associated scrutiny topic by Cllr Kramm – see Annex A.
3. A Task Group made up of Cllrs Kramm, Gunnell and Richardson was set up and tasked with drafting a suitable review remit and carrying out the review. The Task Group met for the first time in early December 2015 and the following was drawn up:

Aim:

To improve the experience of residents and visitors to public parks, gardens and open spaces by examining the geese (and other water fowl) related problems affecting Rowntree Park and the University.

(NB: All references thereafter to Geese, relate to both Geese and other water fowl).

Objectives:

- i. To understand previous examinations of the geese related problems in York, lessons learnt, cost to the city, associated health risks etc.
- ii. To examine best practice nationally and elsewhere.

- iii. To consider technical options for dropping removal, the associated costs and external funding possibilities.
 - iv. Consult all interested parties on geese population management and control practices, to understand the requirements for different species and animal protection issues.
 - v. Identify appropriate solutions and options for funding.
4. Furthermore, the Task Group agreed to co-opt two members on to the Task Group, one a member of the 'Friends of Rowntree Park' group and one a representative from the University of York.
5. Subsequently the Task Group identified dates for a number of meetings over which to conduct their review and the following review methodology was drawn up:

Meetings	Tasks
Meeting 1 - Formal Tuesday 26 th January 4pm (West Offices)	Objective 1 – To consider information relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The geese population in York • All previous related work undertaken by the Council • The associated cost to the city • Lessons learnt • Any associated health risks
Meeting 2 – Formal Tuesday 2 nd February 5.30pm (West Offices)	Objective 2 - To examine best practice nationally and elsewhere. Objective 3 - To consider technical options for dropping removal, the associated costs and external funding possibilities.
Meeting 3 – Informal Tuesday 9 th February 5.30pm (West Offices)	Objective 4 – Consultation Meeting Invitees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Rowntree Park • Other support groups for parks and gardens • Yorkshire Wildlife Trust • University of York • RSPCA • Askham Bryan College • Public Health • Other interested parties

Meeting 4 – Informal Wednesday 17 th February 5.30pm (West Offices)	To consider findings and consultation feedback, and identify appropriate review conclusions
Meeting 5 – Formal Thursday 3 rd March 5.30pm (West Offices)	To consider draft final report.

Introduction to Geese in York

6. There are two main species of geese found in York – Greylag and Canada. There are also a small number of Barnacle geese to be found at the University, and very occasionally elsewhere, and a resident population of domestic farm geese to be found, in the main, at Castle Mills.
7. These Geese can usually be found at Rowntree Park, in and along the River Ouse between Scarborough Bridge and Rowntree Park (including War Memorial Gardens, Kings Staith, Tower Gardens and Eye of York), River Foss between Yearsley Bridge and Foss Basin, Hull Road Park, Chapman’s Pond, Hogg’s Pond, Rawcliffe Lake, University of York campus, Wigginton Pond, other remote ponds and lakes in York.
8. The Law
The geese, like all wild birds in Britain, are protected under the EC Wild Birds Directive implemented in Great Britain through the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. This Act makes it an offence to capture, kill or injure birds, or to damage or take their nests or eggs. There are exceptions, the most important of which relate to the open (hunting) season (between September 1st and January 31st) and to actions licensed under Section 16 of the Act.

Information Gathered

9. Objective (i) - To understand previous examinations of the geese related problems in York, lessons learnt, cost to the city, associated health risks etc.
In support of this objective the Task Group will receive a PowerPoint presentation from the Strategy & Contracts Operations Manager at this meeting.

Council Plan 2015-19

10. This scrutiny review addresses an ongoing issue for residents in a number of wards and will aim to identify a solution that those local communities want. The review therefore supports the 'a council that listens to residents' priority of the Council Plan.

Implications & Risk Management

11. At this early stage in the review there are no known implications or risks associated with the review. All implications and risks identified as part of the ongoing work will be detailed in the review draft final report for the consideration of the full Communities & Environment Policy & Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations

12. The Task Group are asked to:
- Formally agree the review remit, future meetings dates and review methodology detailed in paragraphs 3 & 5 above;
 - Consider and comment on the information provide in the powerpoint presentation provided and agree any further information required in support of Objective (i);

Reason: To progress this scrutiny review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols

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Wards Affected: Guildhall, Micklegate & Hull Rd



Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Annex A: Goose Management Scrutiny Topic Registration Form