

Neighbourhood Caretakers Development and Update

Summary

1. Executive and officers are keen to seek Scrutiny Committees views on the first 7 months of implementation and ideas on how a Neighbourhood Caretaker model may be further developed.
2. Attached as **Annex A** is a presentation of current success to date and ideas for further development.
3. Proposed approaches for Weed treatment opt out and Community Public Realm Management are outlined in **Annex C** and **Annex D**.

Background

4. Within the Council Plan is a commitment to Develop a 'Caretaker' proposal to reflect pride-in-place priorities in neighbourhood plans.
5. Scrutiny are being asked to provide feedback on outcomes and how different approaches to expanding on the success to date may be considered.
6. This model informed teams to specifically focus on local priorities that emerge from ward walk abouts but are not picked up by existing service delivery as issues have not met the threshold for earlier intervention.
7. There has been both people and equipment resource dedicated to the Neighbourhood Caretaker team:
 - a) 1 Neighbourhood Caretaker Foreperson

- b) 7 Neighbourhood Caretakers
- c) 2 Commercial vehicles
- d) 1 Mechanical sweeper
- e) Various small pieces of small plant and equipment

8. Within the Communities Team Community Officers have planned the walkabout routes, liaised with invitees, facilitated the walkabouts and captured and reported the issues identified. Environment and Community Officers have attended walkabouts to support on issues relating to green spaces.
9. The first walkabout took place on 29th September 2025, with the delivery team following 2 weeks later to undertake the tasks identified.
10. Since then, walkabout and follow up visits have been consistently weekly with the exception of the Christmas break.
11. It was agreed that the operational team would be planned in approach and not be used as part of the wider Public Realm service to and not be another reactive resource.
12. Additional one off funding was agreed for 2026/27 to appoint a further two Neighbourhood Caretakers, with a focus on Active Travel Route (ATR) and in accordance with the LCWIP.
13. ATR's will be included in scope of walkabouts as well using data and maps to undertake maintenance.
14. Communications have been key to promoting the work of the caretakers and various messages and images have been shared across social media platforms.
15. To compliment the work of the Neighbourhood Caretakers and consistent with the Neighbourhood model, communities have expressed interest in public realm management. This has been a challenge in the past mainly due to health and safety considerations when work in the Highway. **Annex D** proposes some trial areas to work through the opportunities and issues.

16. Communities have also expressed an interest in managing weeds in a different way in their areas. **Annex C** explores a proposed process for this.

Consultation

17. A report was presented in January 2025 to the EPAT Scrutiny Committee to gather feedback to inform the policy and model for the neighbourhood caretaker approach.

Council Plan

18. Within the Council Plan is a commitment to Develop a 'Caretaker' proposal to reflect pride-in-place priorities in neighbourhood plans.
 - a) Environment – Embed pride in place culture and improve communities
 - b) Equalities – The Neighbourhood Caretaker team have worked through a programme of works following the neighbourhood model of areas. By the time of Place Scrutiny Committee every ward within the four-area model will have been visited **Annex B**.

Implications

19. This report is for discussion; there are no direct implications arising.

Risk Management

20. Since the introduction of the neighbourhood caretaker team, there have been no risks associated with how the team operate and the initiative and the service have received positive feedback from stakeholders and residents.
21. There is no impact on the wider service and the neighbourhood caretaker team operate in with dedicated resource.

Recommendations

22. The committee is asked to:

- i. Review and feedback on the Neighbourhood approach to date;
- ii. Comment on the scope of the Neighbourhood approach;
- iii. Suggest further improvements that can be made.

Reason: To contribute to the development of the Neighbourhood Caretaker model.

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**Report
Approved**

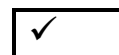


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Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

EPAT Scrutiny - Neighbourhood Caretakers: Proposal Development
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s181303/Caretakers%20Cover%20Report.pdf>

EPAT Scrutiny - Neighbourhood Caretakers Presentation January 2025
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s181304/Neighbourhood%20Caretaker%20EPAT%20Scrutiny.pdf>

Annexes

Annex A: Neighbourhood Caretaker Place Scrutiny Presentation

Annex B: List of areas visited to date

Annex C: Weed treatment opt out process

Annex D: Community Public Realm Management