DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

5 December 2018

Report of the Director of Legal Services

Petition Relating to the Elvaston Castle Country Park

1.   **Purpose of the Report**

To consider the receipt of a petition relating to the Elvaston Castle Country Park.

2.   **Information and Analysis**

The Council has received a petition containing 10,510 signatures relating to the Country Park. Since the petition contains more than 7,500 signatures and a Full Council debate has been requested, the Council's Petition Scheme provides that the petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition and it will then be debated by Members for 15 minutes.

The preamble to the petition reads as follows:-

"We, the undersigned, want Derbyshire County Council and Elvaston Castle and Gardens Trust to fully acknowledge and recognise the comments and feedback being outlined in points 1 - 5 below by way of a petition to the draft Master Plan for Elvaston Castle Country Park.

Whilst it is recognised and supported that Elvaston Castle Country Park needs to be financially sustainable, this petition;

1. Supports a complimentary and sympathetic development of the Castle and core buildings to retain the character of the Castle and Country Park, to benefit both the local community and visitors to Elvaston Castle Country Park in general. However;

2. Strongly objects and is opposed to the provision of new southern and

western access roads (particularly along the historic South Avenue), car parks, residential housing or any unsuitable developments i.e. caravan/camping/glamping on existing green spaces currently used for access to the countryside and wildlife, livestock grazing and the pursuit of active recreation and exercise by visitors.

3. Whilst we accept that Derbyshire County Council faces severe cut backs in government funding, we do not believe that developing areas of Elvaston Castle Country Park for residential housing provides an answer to long term sustainability and would seriously detract from the rural experience of a country estate. Alternative solutions (i.e. collect funding ideas from the public consultation and community fundraising) should be fully explored.

4. Strongly objects to the relocation of the showground and main car park or the provision of further vehicular access routes, despoiling further areas of Elvaston Castle Country Park. Existing roads and car parks should be developed with a view to improving their efficiency alongside the encouragement of active recreation by visitors to the park centre.

5. This petition encourages the maintenance of the sporting heritage of the estate, particularly in relation to equestrian activities and Elvaston Cricket Club, as these elements promote wellbeing as exemplified by 'Towards an Active Derbyshire 2016-2021' and 'South Derbyshire Open Space, Sport and Community Facilities Strategy April 2016', which both aim to increase the health and wellbeing of the community through the pursuit of such activities and active recreation.

What do you think the Council should do? We the undersigned call upon the County Council to make appropriate changes and amendments to the draft Master Plan for Elvaston Castle Country Park taking into consideration the comments and feedback."

The Petition Scheme provides that where a petition relates to issues upon which the Cabinet is required to make the final decision, the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. Cabinet will be making the final decision on this issue in due course.

3.   **Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors have also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, legal, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

4.   Background Papers

Elvaston Castle Petition containing 10,510 signatures.

5.   Recommendation

The Council is asked to receive the petition relating to the Elvaston Castle Country Park.

Janie Berry
Director of Legal Services