

Head of Service: Cultural & Neighbourhoods - Report to Neighbourhood Services Committee Tuesday 17th December 2019

The Neighbourhood Services Committee is delegated to exercise and perform on behalf of the Council, all powers and duties of the Council in relation to the following.

- Management of the Town Park
- Management of the council's support to street cleansing and coordination with the Parish Steward Scheme.
- Management of the Community Services provided in partnership with the Probation Service.
- Management of the Grounds Maintenance Contracts.
- Support for Trowbridge in Bloom, Trowbridge Park volunteers, Friends of Biss Meadows, Friends of the Down Cemetery and other organisations seeking to deliver environmental improvement for the town.
- Maintenance of all of the Town Council's neighbourhood assets, including play areas, bus shelters, benches, litter bins and allotments etc.
- Develop projects and approve schemes including street furniture, signage and minor highway improvements in partnership with Wiltshire Council.
- Issues relating to the provision of public transport services, development of transport and other environmental matters including liaison with Wiltshire Council's Community Area Transport Group (CATG) and with reports made through the MyWiltshire app.
- In relation to all activities performed by the Committee, that issues relating to Health & Safety are risk assessed and appropriately prioritised
- To bring forward proposals for the ongoing development of these services on behalf of the Town Council and to oversee the management of any such developments as are undertaken.
- To deliver specific aims of the Council Strategy (see purple boxes within the report).
- The Committee can appoint Sub-Committees and can delegate any of its powers to sub-committees.
- The Committee is empowered to incur expenditure where it has allocated budget provision.

1. **STAFF**

1.1 The HEAD OF SERVICE: Cultural & Neighbourhoods, Clare Lyall, has responsibility for Neighbourhood Services as well as the Museum and related cultural activities.

1.2 The Neighbourhood Services Officer (NSO), Carl Ivin-Maddox, undertakes day to day organisation and activity within the department. **The Grounds Operatives, Marcus Almadi and Graham Drewett**, undertake a range of work each day to improve our local neighbourhoods. Graham will focus in particular on using the new Road Sweeper. Ivan has also been giving voluntary support to the department since Graham's appointment, and we are very grateful for his support.

1.3 Training – The NSO is currently undertaking a management apprenticeship leading to a Level 3 Diploma in management skills. We met with Wiltshire College on 14th October 2019. The two Groundsman Operatives will be undertaking Chapter 8 training which will allow them to carry out highway works.

2. **TOWN PARK**

The Town Council Strategy says:

NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITIES

Trowbridge Town Council will continue to care for and enhance the Town Park in conjunction with the Friends of Trowbridge Park, ensuring that it retains its position as a fantastic resource in a central location at the heart of our town centre.

Trowbridge Town Council will work with community Groups, Wiltshire Council and others to enhance the environment, including open spaces and highway infrastructure, ensuring that funding resources achieve excellent value.

The Town Park was dedicated to the town in a number of blocks from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards. It was transferred from Wiltshire Council to the town council in 2012. We now receive no funding from Wiltshire Council for its upkeep. We contract with id-verde for all green area maintenance including the Park and they have one member of staff located in the Park each day.

We have in recent years resurfaced the tennis courts and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and we are currently implementing a new storage facility behind the bandstand.

2.1 Town Park Events – The Town Park hosts a number of events. We have been in discussion with the Facilities Manager regarding any cost implications for our department (such items as additional litter picking and bin emptying) in the use of the park by outside agencies is highlighted within our contracts with them.

Provisional bookings for 2020:

John Lawsons Circus	18-21 June 2020
Wiltshire Armed Forces and Veterans Weekend (WAFVC)	25-28 June 2020
Active Festival	11 th July 2020
Carnival Country Fayre	13 th September
Apple Festival	10 th October 2020
Lantern Festival and Christmas Lights switch-on	28 th November 2020

2.2 Trowbridge Bowls Club – Following the change of staffing at Id-verde we are currently awaiting a meeting to discuss the maintenance schedule for the bowling green. The Bowls Club have a lease for the club building and rights to use the green and make it available for the public.

2.3 Climate Emergency – the department is currently considering ways of making the Park **carbon neutral** in line with the council's proposed carbon neutral strategy.

- **Planting** – As an experiment we have earmarked a flower bed at the front of the Sensory Garden for the TIC who will be planting perennials, and will be assessing the public's reaction to this type of planting before we roll this idea out with our contractor in respect of the remaining flower beds, which could incorporate planting to encourages bees for cross pollination.
- **Trees** – we are looking at species of trees that are able to cope with an already changing climate. We are also replacing the four trees removed during the construction of St George's Works/Park Storage Unit development.
- **Water** – we are looking at schemes which other councils have introduced with regard to approaching local shops to have a water filling station allowing the public to refill their water bottles. Verbal update at the meeting.
- **Wildlife** – we currently have a bug hotel within the park which provides a habitat for insects, who break down natural detritus which then improves the quality of the soil.
- **Weedripper** - The new weed-ripper machine has allowed us to reduce our chemical footprint by 100% by eliminating all weedkiller, however some contractors we use do use chemicals but we will endeavour to minimise where possible.

2.4 Community Garden – (AGENDA ITEM 7) - The shed is currently cemented next to the tiled picture, which may result in damage to both if the shed is removed. Currently the pictures displayed inside the shed are provided by schools outside the Trowbridge boundary. It is suggested these are replaced with pictures supplied by Trowbridge schools only.

RECOMMENDATION: That the shed remains in situ and any future pictures supplied for display within the shed are restricted to Trowbridge based schools only.

2.5 Volunteers - The Riot of Colour (ROC) Border volunteers have renamed themselves the Trowbridge Volunteer Gardeners (TVG) (see 5.2)

2.6 Refreshment Kiosk – The Kiosk situated next to the crazy-golf is let to a concession operator and is opened during the spring/summer season.

3. **PLAY AREAS**

DELEGATION OF ASSETS AND SERVICES FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

Trowbridge Town Council will take a proactive approach to asset and service transfer from Wiltshire Council; Recreation Grounds, Play Areas and Open Spaces, Public Car-Parking, Bus Shelters, Litter Bins, Seats, Grit Bins and Street Cleaning and will seek to simplify and speed up the transfer process.

Prior to 2018 the town council owned and maintained a small number of play areas including the Town Park, Grove Recreation Ground and Regent's Place. In 2018 we also took over a further 24 play areas from Wiltshire Council and now maintain these, with some funding from Wiltshire Council on transfer and a small annual S106 maintenance fund. We have not yet signed a formal agreement for this but we are taking full responsibility for them. Please find below a list of works carried out to date:

Work Completed

No further action

Pending

PLAY AREA	WORKS CARRIED OUT	FUNDING SOURCE	
		S106	TTC
YEOMAN WAY	Full refurbishment completed July 18	£16,877.12	
CORNBRASH RISE	Repairs to existing fence and replacement equipment completed Sept 18	£8,999.72	
YORK BUILDINGS	Repairs to current equipment and safety surfacing completed Sept 18	£3,999.95	
SILVER MEADOWS CLOSED	Please see public consultation results attached. Returning to grass and informal public space. Close to SPRING MEADOWS.		
BEECH GROVE	New roundabout and resurfacing of track area	£3,290.00	
THE POPLARS CLOSED	Please see public consultation results attached. Returning to grass and informal public space. Close to SPRING MEADOWS.		
WESTFIELD CLOSE	Full refurbishment		£5,198.20
SPRING MEADOWS	New swing seats, See map and photo above.		£500.00
CAVELL COURT	Replacement bridge due to vandalism New bridge at Cavell due to first replacement piece being vandalised		£795.00 £795.00
PARSONAGE ROAD – CLOSED	Looking to remove the playarea		
DRYNHAM PARK	No work carried out to date		
LAMPLIGHTERS WALK	New bin – no cost as installed from set we had last year.		
WOOLPACK MEADOWS CLOSED	Await public consultation. Due to Health & Safety considering removal of equipment and investment in Worsted Close which is nearby.		
WORSTED CLOSE	Replaced the swings Clean of equipment – no cost		£400.00
DOWNSIDE PARK	No work carried out to date		
HULBERT CLOSE	Improvements to be funded from Elmhurst S106.		
BREWERY WALK	1 replacement swing		£200.00
OLD FARM Budget 20/21	Quotes received for replacement fencing Replaced the swing		£200.00
PAINTERS MEAD Awaiting S106 monies	Quotes received for refurbishment to be funded from Elmhurst S106.		
BROOK ROAD	2 swings replaced		£200.00
STALLARDS	No work carried out to date		
SEYMOUR	New goals and removal of fencing Refurb of equipment – Jan 2020		£16,369.00
SEYMOUR MUGA	Refurbishment funded from Sport England Grant.		

PLAY AREA	WORKS CARRIED OUT	FUNDING SOURCE	
		S106	TTC
REGENTS PLACE	Vandalism costs: removal of gravity, installation of new swings and removal paint, £956.50 Maintenance costs: the replacement of the roundabout, £,4658.50 Enhancement costs: resurfacing, cleaning and staining of the wooden equipment to preserve it, £3,019.		£8,634.00
STUDLEY GREEN BMX TRACK	Resurfacing		£3,999.00
STUDLEY GREEN MUGA	Refurbishment funded from Sport England Grant		
TROWBRIDGE PARK	Emergency repairs to slide Emergency resurfacing New basket swing due to vandalism new Swing lugs New see saw Replacement of the net on slide Replacement of new Ladybird ride		£4,561.00 £345.60 £1,408.60 £1,198.00 £2,649.00 £350.00 £500.00
LONGMEADOW MUGA	No work carried out to date, awaiting decision of Area Board.		
PAXCROFT BROOK	New climbing board New mini ramp and rope New swing seat – due to vandalism. Invoice has been sent to the parent who has agreed to pay for the replacement.		£150.00 £944.00 £200.00
STALLARDS SKATE PARK	No work carried out to date		
THE GROVE	Replacement of site fencing 23 rd Dec		£6,000
GROVE MUGA	Refurbishment funded from Sport England Grant.		

Section 106 monies still to spend (explanation within Phase Four):-

07/03864/outes – land to the north of Green Lane - £20,000 – expires 22/03/2021

15/04948/ful – land adjacent to Elmhurst - £29,168.23 – expires 15/06/2021

05/00821/ful – Trowbridge Rugby Club - £2,146,36 – expires 13/08/2021

The NO will give a verbal update at the meeting.

PHASE FOUR

Parsonage Road Hulbert Close, Painters Mead, play areas – Phase 3 plans are to refurb Hulbert Close, Painters Mead, Parsonage Road and Paxcroft Brook using the remaining s106 monies. Cllr Halik will further investigate the delay in receiving payment of the S106 monies, together with other Wiltshire Councillors who have been requested to do what they can to expedite this payment.

We have received confirmation from Ashford Homes that the Section 106 contribution in respect of the development at Elmhurst totalling £29,168.23 can be divided between the play areas at Hulbert Close (£19,268.23) and Painters Mead (£10,000) for play enhancements, however Wiltshire Council are not accepting this confirmation as their legal department is concerned that the developers will withdraw their funding.

Paxcroft – completed using Section 106 monies.

3.1 Silver Meadows/The Poplars/Spring Meadows (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Following receipt of responses to a public consultation carried out on the suggested amalgamation of the Poplars and Spring Meadows (copies attached) please consider the following

RECOMMENDATION: To remove equipment at the Poplars and Silver Meadows play areas and invest in additional equipment at the larger Spring Meadows, at a cost of £20K within budget and which is accessible from the other two areas. The ground for the removed play areas to be returned to a seating area and green open space.

3.2 Skate Park – The town council provides a concrete construction skatepark on land at Stallards Recreation Ground leased from Wiltshire Council, adjacent to the railway station.

4. STREET SERVICES - All issues regarding litter, highway defects, grass cutting etc. should be reported to the town council through report@trowbridge.gov.uk. The Neighbourhood Services Officer (Carl Maddox) will then ensure that information is compiled so that the issues can be reported on one of the Wiltshire Council reporting systems. If it is a highway maintenance matter or litter issue these will be reported on the My Wiltshire App by the NO unless we can resolve them immediately. Highway safety issues requiring a longer term solution including yellow line requests will be reported through the Area Board Issues Log.

4.1 Street Cleaning (Weedripper and Road Sweeper) –an extensive weekly street cleaning programme is currently in force, covering town centre (on a daily basis) and neighbouring streets (rotated around a 6 to 10-week cycle). Currently we are experiencing a heavy usage on fuel, hiring of skips, and replacement brushes due to the state of the town streets and excessive leaf litter. The proposed cost of hire to Trowbridge parishes per day is around £350 for the street sweeper and we have now made some formal approaches to Staverton, Hilperton, West Ashton, North Bradley, Southwick and Bradford-on-Avon. Verbal update to be given at the meeting.

4.2 Barrowman – This service is funded by Wiltshire Council through their contract with id-verde and is one of the services expected to transfer to the town council. We are still working closely with the contractor to ensure that the work undertaken by the Barrowman is prioritised. He is now regularly litter picking the multi-storey car park. This may need to change if the car-park is sold to the owners of Castle Place.

4.3 Litter Bins – Requests for new bins to be installed have been received from Cllrs Bryant, Cavill and Fuller, The majority of litter bins are the responsibility of Wiltshire Council, except those located on Town Council land. The litter bin service is one of those which is proposed to be transferred to the town council. Members are asked to note the comments and resolution from the Neighbourhood Services meeting held on 29th May 2018 as follows:

*The Town Clerk reported that following the resolution made at the previous meeting held on 27th February 2018: 'to adopt a policy and procedure to enable provision and refurbishment of litter bins and litter bin collection services', he felt that a full policy was not required and therefore requested members consider his recommendation: **That until such time as we are in a position to take over the litter bin service from Wiltshire Council, including waste removal (which is likely to be after 2020/21) then the town council will only be able to support the replacement of existing bin locations, with Wiltshire Council continuing to provide the emptying service.***

Cllr Halik reported that this could be an opportunity to consider taking over use of recyclable bins, however it was noted that the biggest issue is the emptying of the bins which could have a significant cost to the town council, and the requirement for a Waste Transferral Licence, with no significant monies currently in the budget for this.

The Town Clerk suggested that the recommendation could be amended, encompassing bringing forward for consideration the possibility of the town council providing this service.

RESOLVED to approve: That until such time as we are in a position to take over the litter bin service from Wiltshire Council, including waste removal (which is likely to be after 2020/21) then the town council will only be able to support the replacement of existing bin locations, with Wiltshire Council continuing to provide the emptying service but that the town council will consider costs and options for transfer at the earliest opportunity.

4.4 Bus Shelters – A new shelter has been installed in Market Street (£7126) the cost of which was met by insurance. The Facilities Manager is looking into replacement and maintenance of the bus shelters on the proviso we are permitted to advertise within them. The Town Council has taken responsibility for all bus shelters in the town.

4.5 Grit Bins - all grit bins will be filled in readiness for the winter. The Town Council has taken responsibility for all grit bins in the town and also manages those in some of the neighbouring parishes for which a charge to the respective parish councils is made.

5. OTHER ASSETS (CM)

5.1 Allotments (CM) – The Town Council owns three allotment sites, Gloucester Rd in Newtown which is leased to and managed by an Association, Mornington Gardens on Bradford Rd and Home Farm Close between Longfield and Dursley Road.

5.1.1 Home Farm Close – the tenants have requested a number of improvements to the site which exceed the budget available. If they were to set themselves up as a constituted group they could apply for funding themselves to carry out this work. We will be encouraging them to set themselves up as a constituted group. One of the improvements we have been looking at implementing is the surfacing of the current rough path through the site from Dursley railway bridge to Longfield, which is open to the public.

5.2 Textile Garden – The Trowbridge Volunteer Gardeners (TVG) have taken on the maintenance and upkeep of the Textile Garden in Union Street. We are very grateful for their continued support with the ROC border. The TVG are in discussion as to whether they go ahead with forming a constituted group.

5.3 Closed Churchyards – The town council manages 3 closed churchyards at St James'; St John's, Upper Studley; and Holy Trinity, and the Down Cemetery is managed by Wiltshire Council through a contract with Idverde. The NSO attended a meeting of the Friends of the Down Cemetery and we will be utilising the weedripper at the cemetery in conjunction with the Friends at an agreed cost. This will be included into the weekly schedule at a mutually convenient appropriate time.

5.4 Fleet Management

5.4.1 Pickup – The Neighbourhood Services Team operate a pick-up truck, although the cost for this is included in the Facilities Budget.

5.4.2 Road sweeper – The sweeper commenced in September 2019 and the current lease contract is for 5 years at £450 per week.

6. WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

6.1 Highways Newsletter – From Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Waste, is circulated to councillors.

6.2 My Wiltshire Highways & Street-scene App – Changes to submission of highway improvements and traffic survey requests - Wiltshire Council are changing the way highway improvements and traffic surveys are requested by members of the public and through Town and Parish Councils. The current process requires updating to improve the customer experience and to reduce the steps involved. The proposed new system will foster a closer working relationship with town and parish councils, whilst providing a better and more informed experience for members of the public (see Briefing Note No. 19 – 016 sent electronically)

6.3. CATG – (AGENDA ITEM 10) The budget for CATG support projects for 2019/2020 is £15,000 and the council has already approved allocations as follows:

Drynham 20mph (excluding Holbrook Lane)	£4,000.00	Completed August 2019
Footway improvements in Bellefield Crescent	£972.40	(paid April 2019)
Footway works Union Street (Hiscocks Eng.)	£1,533.00	(paid April 2019)
Pitman Avenue to Gloucester Road to formalise cycling	£500.00	
Survey into pedestrian crossing on Seymour Road	£200.00	
TOTAL	£7,205.40	
REMAINING BALANCE	£7,794.60	
ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR APPROVAL:		
Broadcloth Lane, Clothyard and Weavers Drive, 20mph speed limit assessment	£625.00	
College Road/Sycamore Grove, additional bollards	£250.00	
LEAVING	£6,916.60	

RECOMMENDATION: To approve the above two additional contributions totalling £875.00 to CATG projects.

Other projects:

- Cycleway/Footway along County Way from Ashton Street to Hilperton Road and revised Puffin Crossing – now complete
- Longfield Gyratory is being assessed for alterations to the lights and sequencing, the following are being included in this scheme: Footway from the Lamb Car Park to the pedestrian crossing and footway from the entrance to Longfield House to the pedestrian crossing. No contribution from the Town Council is expected for this scheme.
- Pedestrian direction signs in the town centre including White Hart Yard and St George’s Works. Proposals to come forward in the future.
- Footway resurfacing in Polebarn Rd and Wingfield Rd. No proposals have been considered yet.
- Improved access and egress arrangements for Upper Broad Street Car Park.

The next meeting of CATG will be January 2020.

7. PARTNERSHIPS

NEIGHBOURHOOD FACILITIES

Trowbridge Town Council will work with community Groups, Wiltshire Council and others to enhance the environment, including open spaces and highway infrastructure, ensuring that funding resources achieve excellent value.

7.1 Trowbridge Volunteer Gardeners – Neighbourhood Services continue to work alongside the remaining members who continue to maintain the ROC border on a voluntary basis (See 5.2).

7.2 Trowbridge in Bloom – the Awards Evening took place at the Civic Centre. We provided in kind support at a cost of £593.32 and paid for hall hire at a cost of £1338.60.

7.3 Friends of Biss Country Meadows (FOBM) – held their meeting on 24th October 2019 at the Tesco Community Room at 7pm.

7.4 Friends of Paxcroft Brook Open Space (FPBOS)- NTR

7.5 Friends of The Down Cemetery – This group are now becoming increasingly more involved with the local community.

8. FINANCE (AGENDA ITEM 12)

8.1. **2nd Qtr Accounts for Neighbourhood Services (April - Sept 2019)** are presented (copy attached).

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Gross Expenditure	£107,367	£152,691	£45,352
Income	£23,334	£38,310	£14,976
Net Expenditure	£84,033	£114,381	£30,348

Summary:

Whilst the department is **underspent by £30,348** some of this will be allocated for spending on play area improvements and will be required to fund the running of the street sweeper.

8.2 DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21 (AGENDA ITEM 13) (copy attached)

To consider the Draft Budget 2020/21 for Recommendation to the Policy & Resources Committee at their next meeting on 14th January 2020.

9. CONTRACTS

9.1 **Grounds Maintenance contract and additional play areas (AGENDA ITEM 11)** – We have a green space maintenance contract with id-verde including the seasonal floral displays. In addition Wiltshire Council also has a green space maintenance contract with id-verde. Wiltshire Council has confirmed that it is extending its current contract to 2022 at which time it expects that all such services will have been transferred to the town and parish councils. Currently Wiltshire Council are still paying for the grass cutting at the play areas that the town council is now taking responsibility for, albeit on a reduced level. The NS team are carrying out additional grass cutting when required and minor maintenance work. Our current contract has an option to extend to 2022 and the drafting of a revised Grounds Maintenance contract which will take effect from 2022 is currently on hold, pending negotiations with Wiltshire Council on any further transfers.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Town Council extends the current green space maintenance contract with id-verde until 31st March 2022 in accordance with clause 4 of the existing contract so that it falls in line with Wiltshire Council.

9.2 **Grass Cutting – Castley Road open space** – will be included in the grass cutting timetable as follows in 2020: April x2; May x2; June x2; July x2; August x1; Sept x2 ; and then 2 additional cuts during the winter. It is in the id-verde contract and it has been verified that they will be doing this.

10. RESPICE PROSPICE

Look Back Look Forward is the Town Council motto and this perfectly encapsulates the £2.4 Museum expansion which will use Trowbridge's rich and unique past to develop a regionally significant tourist attraction. We will interpret the wealth of textile related architecture that still remains within Trowbridge's townscape (see 10.1 below). The Town Clerk has now received a review of the town centre conservation area from Rob Amour Chelu of Amour Heritage. The significance of the importance of heritage value adding to the uniqueness of our town, is to be incorporated within the Neighbourhood Plan.

10.1 **Social Media** - Neighbourhood Services' Facebook page continues to run very successfully; we have achieved 651 likes to date.

10.2 **Town Centre Wayfinding Signage** – there is the potential for funding from the Future High Street Fund. Should we be successful we will look at undertaking a mapping exercise to indicate where all the signage in the town centre is presently, directing pedestrians to specific locations within the town.

10.3 **Bus Friendly Town** – I carried out a site visit to Devizes (a Bus Friendly Town) to see the basic requirements for becoming a Bus Friendly Town. It would be imperative to have coach parking and coach driver facilities with a view to increasing tourism within the town. Should the Town Council take over ownership of the car parks from Wiltshire Council, this could be given further consideration.

Clare Lyall, Head of Service: Cultural and Neighbourhoods

With Contributions from:

Carl Ivin-Maddox – Neighbourhood Services Officer (CM)