

Head of Service: Cultural & Neighbourhoods - Report to Neighbourhood Services Committee Tuesday 24th March 2020

As a result of Covid 19 and the government's advice, the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services committee will not take place, instead this report is being circulated and members of the committee should respond to the Town Clerk by midnight on 24th March with any comments. Following this, the Town Clerk will make any decisions necessary resulting from this report, that would otherwise have gone to the committee.

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 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. The two Groundsman Operatives have undertaken Chapter 8 training allowing 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.

2.2 Trowbridge Bowls Club – A meeting has been undertaken to discuss the maintenance schedule for the bowling green. The bowls club are currently happy with the arrangements. 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 encourage bees for cross pollination.
- **Trees** – we were unable to plant trees in the park as there were no areas feasible for doing this. It will be ensured that the current trees are correctly looked after. 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 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 – The shed was due to be removed on 14th March.

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 - 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. We now maintain these, with £50,000 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
YEOMAN WAY	
CORNBRASH RISE	
YORK BUILDINGS	
SILVER MEADOWS CLOSED	Being closed. Returning to grass and informal public space. Close to SPRING MEADOWS.
BEECH GROVE	
THE POPLARS CLOSED	Being closed. Returning to grass and informal public space. Close to SPRING MEADOWS.
WESTFIELD CLOSE	
SPRING MEADOWS	
CAVELL COURT	
PARSONAGE ROAD – CLOSED	Looking to remove the playarea and provide a new play area subject to available funding.
DRYNHAM PARK	No work carried out to date
LAMPLIGHTERS WALK	
WOOLPACK MEADOWS CLOSED	Await public consultation. Due to Health & Safety considering removal of equipment and investment in Worsted Close which is nearby.
WORSTED CLOSE	
DOWNSIDE PARK	No work carried out to date
HULBERT CLOSE	Improvements to be funded from Elmhurst S106 2020/21.
BREWERY WALK	
OLD FARM	Quotes received for replacement fencing
PAINTERS MEAD	Quotes received for refurbishment to be funded from Elmhurst S106 2020/21.
BROOK ROAD	
STALLARDS	No work carried out to date
SEYMOUR	Refurb of equipment – March 2020

SEYMOUR MUGA	Refurbishment funded from Sport England Grant for 2020/21
REGENTS PLACE	
STUDLEY GREEN BMX TRACK	
STUDLEY GREEN MUGA	Refurbishment funded from Sport England Grant for 2020/21
TROWBRIDGE PARK	
LONGMEADOW MUGA	Area Board Grant Successful £20,000 for spend in 2020/21
PAXCROFT BROOK	
STALLARDS SKATE PARK	No work carried out to date
THE GROVE	
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

PHASE FOUR - Parsonage Road Hulbert Close, Painters Mead and Paxcroft Broo. Phase 4 plans are to refurb these using the remaining s106 monies. 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. Agreement has been received and money invoiced to Wiltshire Council to release these funds, other S106 funding is also available.

3.1 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.

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.

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 which then go on to CATG.

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). The Team is working early shifts on Fridays 5am till 12pm cleaning entrance ways into the town including roundabouts and splitters. 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',

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 – Letters have been issued regarding setting up an association. There are currently 4 interested parties. 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 applied for a grant from St. James' Church Trust, awaiting a response. The 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. The Down Cemetery is managed by Wiltshire Council through a contract with Idverde. The NO 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. The Yew Tree has been successfully crown lifted to allow access, preventing anti-social behaviour in this area.

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 £450per 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
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	(paid Feb 2020)
Street nameplates	£158.00	(paid Feb 2020)
Broadcloth Lane, Clothyard and Weavers Drive, 20mph speed limit assessment	£833.00	(paid Feb 2020)
College Road/Sycamore Grove, additional bollards	£156.00	(paid Feb 2020)
Survey into pedestrian crossing on Seymour Road	£200.00	
TOTAL	£8,352.40	
REMAINING BALANCE	£6,647.60	
ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR APPROVAL:		
Newtown Pedestrian Crossing	£833.33	
Footway West Ashton Road to link to cycle route	£3,500.00	
LEAVING	£2,314.27	

RECOMMENDATION: To approve the above two additional contributions totalling £4,333.33 to CATG projects, subject to Wiltshire Council advising us prior to instructing the works and an assessment of affordability being undertaken at that stage.

Other projects:

- Longfield Gyratory is subject to a bid to the government for £6million for alterations to the lights and sequencing, footway from the Lamb Car Park to the pedestrian crossing and from the entrance to Longfield House to the pedestrian crossing as well as other pedestrian and cycling improvements in the area. 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, possibly as part of the Future High Streets Fund.
- 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 is due on 23rd April 2020.

6.4 SID - The town council was successful in a bid for a new speed indicator device (CID) this will be installed at Cockhill and then rotated around the town and parishes which will pay an installation fee.

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

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

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

8. **FINANCE (AGENDA ITEM 12)**

8.1. Q3 Accounts for Neighbourhood Services (Oct - Dec 2019) are presented (copy attached).

SUMMARY FIGURES			
Neighbourhoods Q3 (April '19 - December '19)	Actual	Budget	Variance
Gross Expenditure	£215,313	£228,809	£13,496
Income	£43,969	£57,465	-£13,496
Net	£171,344	£171,344	£0

9. **CONTRACTS**

9.1 Grounds Maintenance contract and additional play areas – We have a green space maintenance contract with id-verde including the seasonal floral displays. Wiltshire Council also has a green space maintenance contract with id-verde and 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. The NS team are carrying out additional grass cutting when required and minor maintenance work. We are now also extending our contract in line with this.

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.

10.1 Social Media - Neighbourhood Services' Facebook page continues to run very successfully, Councillors are urged to publicise the neighbourhood services page for any issues as this is readily available whilst out on the jobs.

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 – Neighbourhoods Officer (CM)