

Head of Service: Cultural & Neighbourhoods - Report to Neighbourhood Services Committee, Tuesday 6th October 2020

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.

1.3 Grounds Operative, Graham Drewitt, undertakes a range of work each day to improve our local neighbourhoods.

1.4 Assistant Grounds Operatives, Vacant; following the departure of the previous member of staff. Councillors have expressed clear requirements to ensure we have sufficient capacity in this department despite the general restrictions on recruitment due to the uncertain financial situation. Officers consider that given the range and volume of work required that we should employ two-part time Assistant Grounds Operatives to allow flexibility with regards to seasonal work-loads and to provide the capacity to undertake additional work if we transfer additional responsibilities to the town council. A job description has been prepared for the Assistant Grounds Operative role to fit the skills and experience required. These have been approved by the Town Clerk and will need to be checked by the HR Officer prior to advertisement, interviews and appointment. The Assistant Grounds Operatives will be operating the Roadsweeper as well as a range of other duties.

1.5 Volunteer, Ivan has also been giving voluntary support to the department and we are very grateful for his support.

1.6 Training – The NSO is currently undertaking a management apprenticeship leading to a Level 3 Diploma in management skills. The Grounds Operative has undertaken Chapter 8 training allowing him 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 based in the Park.

We have, in recent years, resurfaced the tennis courts and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and recently opened the new storage facility, which will be used to store equipment and provide parking for vehicles.

2.1 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. Hayley Bell is in discussions with the Bowls Club to attempt to broker an alternative lease. Matters relating to the lease and the relationship with the Club will be reported to the Leisure Services Committee, whilst management of the contractors will be reported to this committee.

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

- **Planting** – Due to Covid 19 shutdown of various businesses, we were unable to source appropriate planting for the beds so this year idverdie have used a mix of wild flower seeds and perennials in each of the flower beds around the town. There will be no hanging baskets as these will be taken apart and used to plant in the tubs around the town.
- **Trees** – 4 trees have been planted in their new locations.
- **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.
- **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 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. Verbal update given.

2.3 Community Garden – The shed was due to be removed on 14th March. Verbal update.

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

2.5 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. As a result of recent discussions regarding ongoing maintenance we have agreed with Wiltshire Council that they will continue to undertake grass cutting and we will forego the annual maintenance S106 until a formal agreement is put in place. **All Play Areas have been closed during the Covid crisis and are due to reopen on 4th July in accordance with government guidelines.** 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 provide new equipment subject to available funding.
DRYNHAM PARK	New fencing installed.
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 S106 2020/21.
BREWERY WALK	
OLD FARM	Quotes received for replacement fencing
PAINTERS MEAD	Quotes received for refurbishment to be funded from 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 & other Grant funding 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/OUT – 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 Brook. 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. Funds now received from Wiltshire Council. We are currently seeking additional quotations for the works.

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. **Re-opened on 4th July.**

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. 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) – a reduced street cleaning programme is currently in force, covering town centre (on a regular basis) and neighbouring streets (rotated around a 6 to 10-week cycle).

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 – The town council is responsible for all Bus Shelters in the town. 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 - The town council is responsible for all grit bins in the town and also charges the neighbouring parish council for refilling and checking bins in their areas. All grit bins are currently full.

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. Verbal update by CM (issues at Glos Rd?)

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 continuing to maintain the ROC border during the Covid 19 pandemic whilst abiding by Government guidelines to maintain their safety and that of the public.

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 at St James' has been successfully crown lifted to allow access, preventing anti-social behaviour in this area. **Unfortunately, during the Covid 19 Pandemic there has been a re-occurrence of some re-growth of vegetation under the Yew tree. There will be a cost implication for its removal. This was removed.**



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 11)**

The budget for CATG support projects for 2020/21 is £10,000. A number of allocations have been approved in the previous year and carried forward pending completion.

CATG Match Funding BUDGET	£10,000.00
Survey into pedestrian crossing on Seymour Road	£200.00
TOTAL	£200.00
REMAINING BALANCE	£9,800.00
ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR APPROVAL:	
Footway West Ashton Road, Blackball Bridge to cycleway	£3,500.00
Broadcloth Lane/Cloth Yard/Weavers Drive 20mph	£1,375.00
Newtown 20mph assessment	£833.33
TOTAL	£5,708.33
LEAVING	£4,091.67

RECOMMENDATION: To approve CATG match-funding allocations detailed above and totalling £5,708.33.

Other projects:

- Longfield Gyrotory 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.

6.4 SID - The town council was successful in a bid for a new speed indicator device (SID) this will be installed at Cockhill and then rotated around the town and parishes which will pay an installation fee. This has been on hold during the Covid crisis as it is difficult to install within social distancing requirements.

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. Work has recommenced in a Covid manner (with risk assessments).

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. Work has recommenced in a Covid manner (with risk assessments).

8. CONTRACTS

8.1 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 these dates.

8.2 Grass Cutting – Castley Road open space – has now been undertaken, despite a long term promise from our contractor to do this for the past year.

9. 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. It also covers other aspects of the council's activities including Neighbourhoods, where the Town Council is always working to develop the local facilities and invest in the future, particularly with a growing population.

9.1 Social Media - Neighbourhood Services' Facebook page continues to be a useful way of updating the local community about the Department's activities and as a platform to keep them informed of other relevant material. Councillors are urged to share relevant information from the Neighbourhood Services page on other social media platforms.

9.2 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. FINANCE (AGENDA ITEM 12)

10.1. Q1 Accounts for Neighbourhood Services (2020/2021) are presented (copy attached).

			Q1	YTD		Yr	Reserves			
			actual	budget	variance	budget	01/04/20	to	from	balance
CATG Project	504	exp	5,875	3,774	-2101	15000				
		inc	1,515	0	1515	0				
		net	4,360	3,774	-586	15000				
Neighbourhoods Recreational	509	exp	6,222	32,365	26143	129478	471	0	0	471
		inc	0	18,369	-18369	73474	11802	30220	0	42022
		net	6,222	13,996	7774	56004				
Neighbourhoods General	518	exp	33,570	34,326	756	137549				
		inc	4,884	1,851	3033	7400				
		net	28,686	32,475	3789	130149				
Closed Churchyards	521	exp	829	1,875	1046	7500				
		inc	0	0	0	0				
		net	829	1,875	1046	7500				
Town Park	524	exp	8,002	9,684	1682	38740				
		inc	0	0	0	0				
		net	8,002	9,684	1682	38740				
Allotments	525	exp	121	246	125	991				
		inc	1,753	1,755	-2	7010				
		net	(1,632)	(1,509)	123	-6019				
Neighbourhoods			46,467	60,295	13828	241374				

509 income relates to MUGA refurbishment grants.

Clare Lyall, Head of Service: Cultural and Neighbourhoods

With Contributions from:

Carl Ivin-Maddox – Neighbourhoods Officer (CM)