

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2023

SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE

1. TOWN TEAM

In the week 12th – 17th January the team reported several arson incidents which we forwarded to Gwent Police for investigation. Thanks to time frames being established by the Town Team, our gardening contractors, and CCTV from MCC Markets Team, the person responsible was arrested and charged on 19th January. This has highlighted to everyone the value from having a localised team on the ground on regular routes to be able to swiftly pick up on incidents which was also proven with the action on the Graffiti incidents last year.

We have found MCC Waste and Recycling are asking the team to go deal with fly tipping incidents in areas that now fall outside the boundaries of our 6 wards. Access to MonMaps which will show these clearly will help with this (mapping system accessible via Your Services on the Monmouthshire Website). If the team is asked again to tackle incidents outside our boundaries we may need to have discussions with the surrounding local community councils to seek contributions towards these services being available to their communities, as MCC cut back these services being available.

The bunker is now clear, and able to accommodate the team working on street furniture so it is hoped work on this can start in the next few weeks.

Two out of the three operatives are now fully First Aid qualified after attending 30-day British Red Cross courses. All have done their manual handling and hedge cutting courses, and one will be undertaking chainsaw training in the next month.

2. DOG BINS

Contract with our current provider is in the process of being renewed to a 12 monthly annual contract, and an audit of their current state will need to be undertaken to establish if any replacements will be needed. A new bin request from MCC has been received, and this will involve purchasing and fitting a bin (£225 approx.) plus the increase to the contract of £7 per week. The location is the corner of Deri View School, and is right on the edge between us and Llantilio Pertholey (appendix C). The MCC Officer who submitted the request said regularly bags of dog waste are thrown over into the school field at this location, and so to combat this going forward, an additional bin is being requested. KAT reported there is an increase in bagged dog waste around this area which they are picking up when out on litter picks in this area. Our current tally is 38 bins, this would take us to 39 and increase the annual cost by £364. There is capacity in the budget to purchase, install and add this bin to our contract should ATC resolve to take this action at the request of MCC.

New A4 information stickers to dissuade people putting anything but bagged dog waste into the dog bins have been received and will be attached to all bins where possible in the coming weeks.

3. GARDEN CONTRACTORS

The Town Clerk is hoping to be able to draw up individual contracts for all areas of town and the watering schedule once the planter audit is complete to enable each area to be covered in the coming year. We have been advised the tiered planters are no longer safe to use so will need to be replaced this year. They are usually put in place in May, filled and planted and left in place until October, though this year they were still flowering into late autumn so they were left in place longer than usual. ATC have had 7 of these in various locations, but going forward 4 or 5 will be needed as some areas had planters obstructed by business waste bins and A-board signage. Costs are to be sought once an exact number is established. These replacements will need to be covered by monies in reserves, (a single planter is £400 approx.) which may also be used to cover new branding and signage around the town and for all planters to enable consistent branding and information throughout town. The Precinct Fountain Planters vary in shape on the bases, and some are available in a variety of colours – we currently have blue and green in the town in the self-watering styles.

The Bus Station Beds project is well underway with the last of the roots being removed last week to enable the soil to be prepared for the new plantings. The Mill Wheel has been exposed and will be moved to its new home at the side of the entrance to the Community Orchard soon, once the dress stone has been put in place to create a plinth. The media company offering to look after the social media and branding of the In Bloom project have offered to film the moving of the mill wheel with go-pro cameras to make a piece for the online In Bloom pages. The Veterans Group and Abergavenny Branch of RBL are keen to assist with planting and looking after the area once it is in place, as a new community project for them to be involved with. Again, Abergavenny Rotary may also wish to assist with this in some way. It is anticipated this will become a herb spiral, so fits well with the Community Orchard offer it will be sited next to.

Tudor Street beds are being trampled so a meeting with the contractors has led to a quote being sought for new plants and hazels to be planted throughout the beds to attempt to stop people walking through the plants and allowing dogs to wander through the more delicate plants at one end. The Nature Isn't Neat sign has been knocked and damaged, so this needs repairing and new signs to signify the importance of these plants and the wider project, which again can be publicised via the new platform being created both on our website and social media platform.

4. PUBLIC TOILETS PROVISION

MCC Scrutiny Committee recently discussed the public toilet provision, which was reported in the media, and of particular interest is the report on the substantial provision that Abergavenny is blessed with. Off the back of these reports, a request has again been sent to request when we may have our SLA, as MCC are chasing payment for 2 years' worth of the £45,000 payments that ATC have mandated the Town Clerk/RFO to not pay until the SLA is received. MCC have now issued another invoice for £45,000 for the 2022/23 toilet provision.