ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 31ST JANUARY 2024

E09/24: SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT

1. TOWN TEAM

We have two operatives working at present as another team member has gone off on ill-health post-op. Ivan is working to re-establish project work on ad-hoc days, and he has recently completed a job referred via Cllr Groucutt regarding issues behind Underhill Crescent where a walkway had ben mistreated and used to dump soil and rubbish, so this has now been cleaned and cleared.

A recent fly tipping incident in Byefield Lane Car Park was reported by him to Environmental Team, and they have issued an enforcement letter to the address found within the rubbish that had been fly-tipped. It is hoped that a fine can be issued to help combat these issues which are becoming more frequent.

Ivan has been asked about tacking the issue of bird seed being scattered around the town encouraging the pigeons. This will be referred back to Environmental Health as they can request to access CCTV footage as they know what time these incidents are occurring. The team were asked to photograph the perpetrator carrying this out, but this is beyond the remit of the team.

1. TOILETS

The Town Council has been liaising with the Cleaning team and Gwent Police to tackle ongoing issues in Brewery Yard Toilets. The disabled toilet was being used by a rough sleeper, and being left in a terrible state, with excrement up the walls and evidence of fires being lit. These incidents are being reported every time they are found so a case can be built to issue an order banning the individual form using the toilets, but in the meantime, a staple and padlock has been fitted to this and the other two disabled toilets so they are unable to be accessed overnight. Our only issue is Sunday Access as no-one is employed to come into town to open and clean them on a Sunday now.

The Service Level Agreement has completed for 2023/24, with no communication from Monmouthshire County Council as to the possible uplift for 2024/25. They have issued an invoice for cleaning the Bailey Park Toilets across the year, which is being challenged as no notice of this has been received prior to the invoice being received. A separate agreement was requested to reflect the summer opening which is usually requested and paid for by the Town Council. The invoice for this has also being received and paid as per the email correspondence between both parties arranging this.

1. GREENFINCH NURSERIES

Notes from meeting with the team held 18th January 2024.

1 Broken ‘rusty’ planters.

a Greenfinch wish to rescue trees and plants, agreed liaise with Town Team to arrange a time next week to transport trees, plants and reservoirs to ‘Greenfinch Towers’ for repotting and replanting.

b Damaged ‘rusties’ to be disposed of by town team. [In discussion with Town Team to organise meet Greenfinch, process the ‘rusties’ and clear up].

c Possible repair to the long ‘rusty’ opposite Cable News. Consult Ivan.

d Observation: planters in need of cleaning. Assured Greenfinch, Town Team has the cleaning of the planters on the job sheet.

e Castle Street beds require a mulch. Jay agreed Greenfinch undertake the work.

2 Style, number and construction of replacement planters plus locations to be confirmed. In order to maintain the street-scape, it is suggested that fabricated planters, rusting naturally, be considered rather than other styles of planters. Possible Heritage link to ironwork on Heads of the Valleys bridges

3 Where are we with the bus station refurbishment and replanting? Community Spaces for Nature? Further discussion to be arranged.

4 Tesco Bus-stop. Who will take on the planting once the contractor’s contract is up? Is this area something that the Town Council can adopt and utilise Greenfinch planting plan? NB a number of plants (ferns) from the bus stop planting, have died.

5 Water Butt at solicitors could be clad and have artwork and a ‘living roof’ attached. The host has agreed to a specific size and does not want a larger water storage facility. HOWEVER, the idea is excellent and a larger second butt + artwork may be better placed in the proposed Community Spaces for Nature development area (behind King Street near Morrisons.) It could facilitate watering offer Public Art venue.

6 Public Art – could it become part of a town-wide art trail for visitors (TIC)?

7 Abergavenny in Bloom – Portfolio - Greenfinch have seasonal photos and work in progress photographs and would be happy to share them. Is there a medium to display/change the display these?

8 Planters on Tudor Street can we revisit the planting scheme to blend perennial planting of other areas of the town.

9 Greenfinch would like to have further discussions with Town Council re: ideas for an innovative watering scheme.

1. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

A follow up meeting has been requested by Wayne Lewis from BBNPA to discuss future options for the Abergavenny Tourist Information Centre. This meeting will hopefully take place in the next week, so a full report can be brought back to Town Council on how the service provision will be supported in the next 12 months. Staff have been notified that Monmouthshire County Council are withdrawing their £10,000 contribution as per the 2024/25 budget consultation.

1. DOG BINS

Businesses are complaining of an increase in dog fouling incidents in the town centre area. After discussions around if a campaign could be considered to try and encourage dog owners to always carry bags, and that ‘any bin will do’ it was suggested that maybe the Town Council could purchase dog bags (£45 for a box of 5000) to distribute to businesses so that if a dog owner is seen without bags, and their dog has left a mess outside their establishment, they can offer the bags so the owner has the opportunity to pick up after their pet and dispose of the waste responsibly. Discussions with Sue Parkinson about this idea have brought up the fact that it is easier to tell owners to take their waste home, and to encourage owners to always carry bags, but advertising that businesses will carry ‘free’ bags for those times when they are caught out, may not help to solve the problem, and may in fact cause a bigger one if people start to rely on the ‘free’ bags being available.

There are some ‘freebies’ which can be made available to promote a campaign, as funding has covered the cost of these items so they can be used to help launch a new initiative. The next meeting of the Dog Fouling Action Working Group is due to take place on 22nd February, so this will be brought up at this meeting to see what else may be possible to help tackle this growing issue.