

5. FACILITIES MANAGERS REPORT – 10th March 2020,

FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Staff

Our new Facilities Manager, Jacqui Orange, joined us on 24th February and I have pleasure in welcoming her to the team. Although Jacqui takes immediate control of the Facilities department, I will continue in a handover role until March 31st. Jacqui brings a wealth of knowledge from her previous career, and most recently in a similar role with Tavistock Town Council. I wish Jacqui every success in her new role with us.

Unfortunately, Niall Stewart, our relief caretaker, has decided not to continue with us and Jacqui and I are now looking at how best to deploy the remaining caretakers whilst keeping within the established staffing hours.

Outside Spaces

Parks – The parks are still very quiet during this period; especially given the extreme weather events we have seen in recent weeks.

The storms did bring some damage to our parks, firstly with a reasonably large tree being blown over in Thorn park and a large section of fence collapsed at the Skate Park.

The tree in Thorn park has been removed and no other damage was incurred to equipment etc.

The damage to the fence at the Skate park was partly due to ongoing vandalism, but finally collapsed due to rotting fence posts and very strong winds. The damaged sections of fencing have been removed and the remaining area made safe. However, the fence in question was acting mainly as a sound barrier to neighbouring properties and ideally should be replaced.

A fuller report will be made as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Working Group strategy.

The transfer of the Play area at Golitha Rise from Barratt Homes to the Town Council is currently being dealt with by our solicitor.

The Parks and Open Spaces Working Group met on the 5th March and the notes from this meeting are attached for information.

Allotments – The two vacant plots at Lake Lane are still awaiting a decision from John Ede regarding the Liskeard Together project and Making Spaces for Nature. In addition, one plot is about to become vacant at Pengover Road and, including John Ede, we have three names on our allotments waiting list, with Mr Ede at the top of the list.

Public Toilets – No new activity to report on the Public Toilets other than some drainage difficulties at Westbourne, which now appear to be rectified.

Local Maintenance Partnership

The Cornwall Council LMP grant for 2020/21 has been confirmed at £1185.10 for the grass cutting of the public rights of way as detailed on the attached map.

The areas designated are the same as previous years and the grant amount also remains unchanged.

Our usual contractor for this work has confirmed his price for carrying out the contract this year will be £1140.00, which is fully covered by the Cornwall Council payment.

7. Pavement Weed spraying Contract 2020/21

In the 2019 season we trialled a new contractor for the weed spraying of the Town's pavements. The contractor uses a computer controlled spraying machine which selectively identifies and sprays individual weeds, thereby reducing the amount of overspray and chemical used. However, the weed killer used is a glyphosate-based product, which is seen by some as not environmentally sound. Our previous contractor also used glyphosate but via a hand spray which was much more indiscriminate.

The roads and footpaths covered by this contract had been added to in previous years and the exact lengths to be sprayed was difficult to confirm and it was agreed with the contractor that some 30km of the Town's roads with 60km of pavements would be sprayed at a cost of £3500 + VAT

Two sprays are provided for this fee, the first in April / May and the second in October / November, although the exact timing is very much weather dependant. This method has proved very effective in controlling the pavement weeds.

Since the completion of last year's contract, the distances to be sprayed have been re-assessed at 40km of roads with 80km of pavements to be sprayed, which has resulted in an additional cost of £340 for 2020.

Cornwall Council has produced a guidance note on the use of pesticides in response to concerns about the impacts on pollinators and human health. Cornwall Council is encouraging local authorities to use alternatives to pesticides to control unwanted vegetation. It is recommended that a clear policy statement about the use of pesticides is developed which can be used in response to enquiries or complaints and that the Town Council investigates alternative weed treatment methods and that a report is presented to the Facilities Committee in due course.

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the Committee APPROVES the continuation of the current contractor and weed spraying regime for the 2020 season, pending further detailed investigation on the possible use of a chemical-free alternatives.

(b) That the Committee AGREES an interim policy statement about the use of pesticides to control unwanted vegetation.

Guildhall

8. Fire Door Upgrades

We are still experiencing difficulties with the approved contractor. We have been in contact with the contractors again regarding a revised start date for the work and are still awaiting their response. Given the importance of this safety improvement unless we receive a satisfactory response from the contractor within the next 10-days then we will be proposing re-tendering this work.

Foresters Hall

Waldon's Security our fire alarm provider has informed us of a potential issue with the monitoring service which will require an upgrade to the signalling method. This will be accomplished as part of the already approved fire safety upgrades at the Foresters' Hall Building.

9. Pipe Well Drainage Repairs

The drainage repairs to the Pipe Well have unfortunately not been completed as of this date. The approved contractor has failed to provide a start date despite repeated requests. We are in the process of seeking alternative quotes for this work.

RECOMMENDATION: That provided the alternative quotes do not exceed the current agreed spend that the Committee **APPROVES** delegation of the decision to re-award the contract to the Chair and Facilities Manager.

Public Hall

We are making progress and planning for the approved alterations to the Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour/Member's Room.

A fault with the heating system was discovered 21st February and following investigation the pump to the circuit to the Main Hall was found to be failing. The Chair of Facilities Committee has authorised the emergency replacement of the pump at a cost of £800.00 plus fitting.

10. Internet Communications Equipment Agreement

At the last Full Council Meeting Wildanet, an independent internet provider, made a presentation to the Council regarding the possibility of installing communications equipment on the main Public Hall building in exchange for free internet access.

The following is an extract from the minutes of that meeting:

504/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Paddy Paddison – Wildanet. Gave a presentation the key points of which were:

- The company had been in existence for a number of years but had only recently opened in Liskeard which it considered to be a good base for building its business.
- The company would be pleased to undertake joint publicity with the Town Council to launch its establishment in Liskeard as an operating base and the broadband services it offered.
- The antenna required were shown to be small and 3 would provide full round coverage when on a mounted on a pole on the gable end of the Public Hall.
- The signal can have a maximum range of 10 kms and serve 240 properties.
- Wildanet would provide free broadband to the building for the Council to use and would cover the cost of the electricity.

During discussion with councillors, it was confirmed that the company was taking part in the Government (DCMS) sponsored roll out of superfast broadband provision. It was agreed that the proposal should go to the next Facilities Committee for consideration.

From an operational point of view the installation of the antenna on the western gable end wall is straightforward. The contractors will use a scaffold to install the equipment, but any future maintenance or servicing will be undertaken via a cherry picker.

The provision of free internet access under this scheme will result in the cancellation of our two current BT fibre to premises (FTP) broadband connections, thereby making a cost saving. There will be an item on the next Finance Committee agenda providing further details.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Facilities Committee APPROVES the use of the Public Hall for the siting of the Wildanet communications equipment.

11. Public Hall Premises Licence

Having become concerned about upcoming bookings for the Public Hall where alcohol will be supplied, we have made further enquiries with the Licensing Team at Cornwall Council and discovered that we are not fully compliant with the conditions of the Premises Licence. A supplementary Entertainment and Alcohol Conditions of Hire document has been approved by the Chair of the Facilities Committee and will be sent to hirers pending a more thorough review of the existing Conditions of Hire document and booking process. In addition, having sought clarification from our insurers regarding risk assessment provided to us by hirers we will be incorporating this into the booking process. All of this will be presented to the Facilities Committee for approval at the next meeting.

Emerging from these investigations there is also a requirement for the Town Council to have in place an Age Verification Policy, please see supporting document.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Facilities Committee APPROVES the implementation of the Age Verification Policy as presented