

## **Clerks Report 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

### **Freedom of Information Request**

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have received the following FOI request:

*“Midsomer Norton Town Council has made an application for approval to borrow funds in the form of a Public Works Loan, which was made through the Avon Local Councils Association, earlier this year.*

*Can I get a copy of the application and the accompanying report?”*

In order to comply with Data Protection principles, DLUHC are unable to share personal details of the requester. They are intending to disclose copies of the application form and supporting information provided by Midsomer Norton Town Council on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 which will include the name of our organisation. Any personal data such as names, phone numbers and email addresses in these responses will be redacted.

If Midsomer Norton Town Council wished to object to the publication of any of the information DLUHC were intending to release, we had to notify them by 5pm Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July. Following the specified time DLUHC will proceed to release the information.

### **Town Hall - Project Manager & QS Phase 2**

As agreed at the last meeting the tender brief for the project manager and QS for phase 2 of the town hall transformation has been published (19<sup>th</sup> July 2022) on Contracts Finder - <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/1064e182-10e7-48b2-bbce-6b638a5f3bc8>

This will run for 4 weeks and an appointment will be made WC 26.08.2022 to ensure we fit within the programme.

### **Bins/Benches/Picnic Table**

We have had confirmation of a dispatch date of 11<sup>th</sup> October for the bins, benches and picnic table.

Lead times are normally quicker than this but recent global events have had effects on order intake, resulting in longer lead times.

Go Plastic will let us know immediately if this lead time is brought forward.

### **Tennis Nets – MUGA – West Clewes**

We are currently looking at a way of hiring out the tennis nets for the MUGA at West Clewes. Councillor Gordon Mackay is kindly looking into an online booking system to facilitate this. We envisage the nets being kept in a locked container on site, with coded access.

### **Ash Dieback Tree Works – West Clewes**

With regards to planned tree works at West Clewes, we have had a message regarding the application for traffic management. BANES will not allow any works on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August due to having other works in the area. The next available dates would be during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of October 2022 so the tree works are now planned for Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

## **Funding Applications – Town Hall Phase 2**

Funding applications and expressions of interest, in order to ascertain eligibility for funding applications for Phase 2 of the Town Hall Transformation Project, are now being completed and submitted.

We have now contacted the following:

- Architectural Heritage Fund
- Arts Council England
- Levelling Up Community Ownership Fund
- Sainsbury Family Charitable Trust

## **Youth Connect South West**

An overview of what has been happening with Youth Connect South West was sent out to all Councillors on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

Both George, youth worker manager and Harry, senior youth support worker for Midsomer Norton have now left the organisation. Jayne Lewis is their interim youth programme manager leading the youth team at present.

## **Midsomer Norton Park Run**

The zig zag path built to parkrun specification and altered for them, is not safe according to parkrun HQ. It has been approved by two local parkrun ambassadors, but HQ won't approve it. Sally from Welton Baptist Church has sent data from the 5K run she organised with Welton Baptist Church, along with a video of her completing the course. A complaint has been made to parkrun, but they won't change their minds regarding the course.

## **Active Travel Social Prescribing Funding**

B&NES have had confirmation from the Department of Transport that they have been successful in their bid for funding to set up an active travel and social prescribing pilot. B&NES is one of 11 Local Authorities that have been awarded funding.

B&NES will be reviewing the project plan and priorities this week and next and will be in touch with a suggested way forward to ensure delivery of the pilot. There's a huge amount of work to now be done, but what an exciting opportunity for active travel and social prescribing in B&NES and to inform wider learning for others.

The gov.uk press release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/walking-wheeling-and-cycling-to-be-offered-on-prescription-in-nationwide-trial>.

## **Somer Valley Rediscovered - Update and Steering Group**

Working with Radstock Town Council, Westfield Parish Council and Midsomer Norton Town Council and other stakeholders, SVR has submitted a bid to WECA for a 3 year project focusing on 5 key greenspaces; Haydon Batch in Radstock, Waterside Valley in Westfield, and MSN Town Park, Wellow Brook Walk and Staddlestones in Midsomer Norton. The primary objective of the Green Recovery Fund (GRF) is nature recovery so there are biodiversity projects included such as grassland restoration, watercourse management and woodland management. We have also been able to include access and interpretation improvements for each site as well as an extensive community engagement package, with

volunteering opportunities, green social prescribing activities and other more general events on greenspaces to engage people. We expect the outcome in September.

### **Town Hall – Office Move**

The contractor's programme of works for the Town Hall have been sent to all Councillors for information purposes. The programme will be amended as needed and adopted as a live document.

After looking at various options and considering the cost implications for office space, provisions have been put in place for the Town Councils server and IT to be moved to Unit 14. A hot desk provision has been made for officers along with the Community Trust staff in Unit 14, and there will be a mix of office working in Unit 14 and home working for Council officers. The phone lines will all be moved and when officers are working at home they will still be contactable by phone on the same numbers previously used during lockdown.

The Town Council has booked Unit 14 for Monday and Thursday afternoons to provide some time for community engagement, and for holding working group and staff meetings. The days and times will be added to the website, giving members of the public the opportunity to either book appointments by calling or emailing in advance, or by using these days and times as a drop in centre. Not only does the booking of Unit 14 give the opportunity for members of the public to see officers in person, but also provides the Community Trust with a regular income from the booking. This will prove to be invaluable for the Community Trust as they will be losing income from the Town Council office rent and meeting bookings throughout the time of the refurbishment. The Hollies Council Chambers have been booked for all council and planning meetings for the foreseeable future, and this has been added to the website.

The staff team, including the Town Warden and Councillor Steve Plumley, have worked incredibly hard with the Community Trust in preparing for the move. Everything has been put in storage in various locations (Orchard Hall, Loft space at Unit 14 and the Town Hall) and the rest will be completed in time for the development to start.