

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2020**

BI/2020

28 January 2020

REPORT TO TOWN COUNCILLORS

AGENDA ITEM 7 – Report from the Outdoors and Properties Manager

AIM

The aim of this report is to inform Councillors of any new and/or ongoing projects relating to any Council owned properties.

BACKGROUND

The vast majority of the routine work carried out by the DLF ground-workers is cyclical and will not change significantly from one year to another. Any deviations from the normal will be highlighted in this monthly report. Work carried out by the maintenance team is also cyclical to a degree, however due to the age of most buildings it is largely reactive and preventative.

DISCUSSION/ COMMENT

- **Freshwater First – ERDF – Lodge Lane Wooded Area Improvements Scheme.**
Shropshire Wildlife Trust has secured funding to help finance seven separate projects within the county of which BTC is one. Our project bid involves woodland improvements and recreational areas, the introduction of new meadowland, improvements to the hedges and the creation of a sustainable drainage system (Suds). £40,500 of earmarked ERDF money is to be match funded with £27,000 of Lodge Lane S106 money that has to be spent this year. Our project is 6th in line and should commence in December this year.
- **Tree work** continues at a pace and major improvements have been made at the far end of Severn Park, the entrance to Well Meadow, Brook Hollow, woods below Morfe Road Open Space, Foundry Park, and Lodge Lane if time permits before the bird nesting season begins in March. In addition, there are several trees that were highlighted for felling in the latest Tree Survey Report that are too big for our tree team and are being contracted out at a cost of £2,950.00. Much of this work could have been avoided had there have been a robust tree management system in place earlier.
- **Castle Walk** . Quotes have been submitted to Shropshire Council to renovate and paint the whole stretch of railings on Castle Walk, from the entrance to Castle Grounds to the Cliff Railway and for the vegetation clearing and annual weed maintenance of all the major steps in town.

- **Maintenance General.** The maintenance team have carried out a number of leak repairs highlighted by the recent wet spell. They have done an excellent job of decorating the Mayor's Parlour and carried a number of woodwork repairs on the ground floor. They continue to work through the endless list of outstanding jobs highlighted in the previous Quinquennial Report and fire-fire new priority tasks as and when they arise.
- **Hanging Baskets.**

The Town Council awarded an annual contract for the provision of hanging baskets and some bedding plants to a company called Plantscape for last year's displays. The contract entered into included an option to extend for up to 3 years at a fixed price £9028.75 (subject to the Town Council being satisfied with the service).

Finding companies willing to quote has in recent times been difficult; indeed, the last round of tenders in 2018 saw no interested parties. We approached Plantscape as a result and they hastily put forward a price that was not unreasonable.

There were a few issues with the quality of the baskets last year and this was due to a number of reasons most of which lay at the door of the Council including. Late ordering, which allowed for limited stock to be procured and a delivery date of early May (all deliveries dates for late May early June had been taken by other customers) when we would prefer first week of June. Furthermore the weather conditions last year (wet) affected the quality of the displays. However, Plantscape responded positively to our difficulties and the service received was satisfactory.

We have met with Plantscape to discuss the contract for this year over the course of the autumn and winter to identify most appropriate plants, plant feed, watering schedule and delivery date, they are as keen as The Town Council to have a high standard of display as it is their reputation at stake and from which they get referrals. The cost of the contract for 2020 is the same as in the previous year £9,028.75 (no increase). We have agreed to extend the contract into a second year and minded to continue into a 3rd year (should we consider the service to be at least satisfactory).

RECOMMENDATION(s)

It is recommended that the Town Council acknowledges that the current Hanging basket contract with Plantscape has been extended in to a 2nd year at the same price.

B INCE

Outdoor & Property Manager