



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Town Councillors
Members of the Public & Press

Dorset Council Councillors

Dear Member

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council which will be held in the **Corn Exchange**, Market Place, Blandford Forum on **Monday 30th September 2019 at 7.00 pm** to consider the following items.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
24th September 2019

A G E N D A

Prior to consideration of the following Agenda, there will be a democratic quarter of an hour, which may be extended at the discretion of the Committee, during which time members of the public may speak. During the course of the meeting, members of the public and our elected representatives from the Dorset Council may indicate they wish to speak, and, at the discretion of the Chairman, and with the approval of the Members, they may be allowed to do so on points of information only. The Committee may on occasion invite members of the public to comment on specific issues where points of information or their particular knowledge on a subject might prove of benefit to the Committee. Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, belief or disability), Crime & Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights. Disabled access is available.

1. Public Session
2. Report from Dorset Council Councillors
3. Apologies
4. To receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
5. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 8th July 2019
6. Town Clerk's Report & Correspondence
7. Civic Report
8. [Recommendations and Receipt of Minutes](#) (paper attached)
9. [To consider the future ownership of the Old Bath House](#) (paper attached)
10. [To appoint a contractor for the Town Pump restoration](#) (paper attached)
11. [To receive an update on the small Christmas trees and approve expenditure for installation of the trees and column lights](#) (paper attached)
12. To receive an update and consider any requests from the:
 - 12.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford +
 - 12.2 BFTC Commemoration Group
 - 12.3 Public Art Plan

- 12.4 Corn Exchange
 - 12.4.1 To approve the plans for the Corn Exchange stage and lantern light ceiling (subject to receipt of these from the architect)
- 12.5 VE75 Planning Group
 - 12.5.1 [To receive an update and consider expenditure authority to support the VE Day 75 Celebrations](#) (paper attached)
- 12.6 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project
 - 12.6.1 To consider creating a working group to formulate a plan and make recommendations to full council
- 13. [Christmas Window Competition](#) (paper attached)
 - 13.1 To consider Christmas Window Competition details and expenditure approval for proposed prize money
 - 13.2 To appoint the judges for the Christmas Window Competition 2019
- 14. Reports from Community and Local Organisations (Councillors are requested to advise the Chairman of Council or the Town Clerk if they wish to make a report under this heading)
 - 14.1 [Report of visit to Blandford Citizens Advice 09/07/19](#) (paper attached)
- 15. Confidential

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

 - 15.1 To consider a request from the owners of the Old Bank House (subject to the outcome of Agenda Item No. 9)

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 7th October Planning Meeting
- 28th October Town Council Meeting (followed by Trust Meeting)

Minutes of the Town Council and Committee meetings are available from Blandford Library, the Town Clerk's Office and at www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

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Town Clerk's Office
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Recommendations and Receipt of Minutes

1. Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 9th September 2019

1.1 Minute No. 20 – To receive the recommendations from the free venue hire working group

The paper was tabled (see Appendix F).

Cllr Lindsay PROPOSED that the system remains the same, within the Grants budget, but this was not SECONDED.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full council that**

The recommendations of the Working Group are approved, starting from 1st April 2020, subject to the following amendments:

- **(Amendment to last bullet point in the report) In March each year, the Committee notes the free venue hire requests approved throughout the financial year and considers the virement of any underspend.**
- **A separate budget line is created for free venue hire within Earmarked Reserves.**
- **Any grant approved is worth no more than £300 of venue hire.**

Since the meeting, some Councillors have suggested that the following should be taken into consideration:

- *any hiring past 10pm as overtime is then paid to the member of staff in attendance – is there an intention to pass this cost on to the free hirer?*
- *are the regular, paying hirers cancelled or relocated (if possible) to accommodate a free hire?*
- *could the free hire be dealt with as a 100% discount to avoid transferring funds from one budget to another (with the booking system, a council meeting is booked as Free of Charge and no charge is made).*

1.2 Minute No. 24.1 Blandford Literary Festival – First Application

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr P Osborne and AGREED (5 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention) that a **RECOMMENDATION is made to full Council that**

A grant of up to £360 + VAT is awarded for free hire of Town Council venues for the Blandford Literary Festival.

Post Meeting Note: The Bookings Receptionist has confirmed that the total cost of the current reservations is £409.29 + VAT and this would be reduced to £327.44 + VAT due to there being 10+ bookings (20% discount).

1.3 To RECEIVE the Minutes.

2. Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16th September 2019 To RECEIVE the Minutes.

3. Town & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 23rd September 2019 The meeting was cancelled due to it being inquorate.

To consider the future ownership of the Old Bath House

Introduction

The Town Council owns the Old Bath House, which is Grade II listed, and there is only a right to access it via the Old Bank House for maintenance work to be carried out. This was as a result of an agreement with the previous owners of the Old Bank House.

Background

Over the last year, Councillors have considered various options for the property and accompanying land (retention/part-retention (façade only), private sale, open market sale) and, most recently, at the meeting held on 29th April 2019, Councillors resolved that:

The Town Council declines the offer and resolves to appoint an architect (and approves associated expenditure) to apply for planning permission to create an entrance from Church Walk but reserves the decision to put the Old Bath House on the open market (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8), using funds from the Old Bath House/Town Pump/ Churchyard budget line.

A planning application has therefore been submitted and an outcome is awaited.

It was noted at the April meeting that a new council should make the important decision about the future of the Old Bath House and the new owners of the Old Bank House are eager to understand what the Town Council's intentions are due to the positioning of the property.

Financial Impact

Two valuations have been received this year on the Old Bath House, which were shared with Councillors at the time but please contact the office should you require a copy. One provided a detailed report on the condition of the property and works required. Officers do not doubt the accuracy of the condition survey that has been provided and there is not an adequate budget for this work to be carried out. It is recommended that Councillors consider the current condition of the property and the lack of funds required to carry out the necessary work.

The Town Council currently has a shared budget line for the Bath House, Churchyard Wall and Town Pump with a balance of £37,233.16.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors resolve to retain or dispose of the Old Bath House.

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
18th September 2019

To appoint a contractor for the Town Pump restoration

Background

Pre-app advice was sought from the Conservation Officer to ascertain the best way to move forward with the restoration of the Town Pump. In the report we received it was recommended that we obtain a 'specification of works' report from a stonemason to be able to seek quotes and to give a framework for any Listed Building Consent application.

Officers then obtained a specification of works and sought three quotes from local contractors who are experienced in this area of work i.e. the cleaning and restoration of protected buildings/monuments.

Detail of the Report

Officers have met with three contractors to discuss the Conservation Officer's comments and the Specification of Works report. One of the three contractors, was keen to remove the roof and dismantle the top four courses of stone to remove the old and decaying ferrous metal fixtures as well as the plaques for cleaning as he felt this was the best way to stabilise the monument and deal with the cracks and movement caused by the decay of the metal cramps. (a similar situation to that we faced during the façade works).

The other two contractors were not in favour of this as they felt it could be more detrimental than beneficial to the monument to carry out such invasive works and they also felt it would be unlikely to get LBC approval. They stated that dismantling the stonework was not required to deal with the cracks and decaying cramps and this would significantly increase the cost.

Financial Implications

Contractor A:

He met with the Conservation Officer to discuss his suggested works for the pump. The contractor is in strong disagreement to the deconstruction of the pump. As soon as the pump is deconstructed historical relevance of that structure is compromised. In his professional opinion minimal intervention with the structure to remove the ferrous fixings is possible and more appropriate. The removal of all existing cementitious mortars and replacement with an agreed lime mortar would suffice in consolidating and preserving the monument.

- Stonemason/conservation operative plus Labourers for 10 days - £2,500.00
- All materials including both new Portland and Chilmark stones - £1,750.00 (the cutting out and reinstatement of the return egg and dart string course)
- Both mechanical (Thermatech steam cleaner) and physical (poultice) cleaning of entire monument including plaques - £1,750.00 (Thermatech was used on the façade to clean the stonework).
- Complete reinstallation of new leadworks to both roof and fountain bowl - £2,500.00
- Scaffolding/site security - £1,100.00

Total £9,600.00

Contractor B:

- Scaffolding for four weeks, one lift sheeted plus security fencing
- Plant hire including large water butt, labour and materials
- Cleaning the monument to remove loose debris, gentle pressure wash followed by applying a solution to draw all the organic staining
- An appropriate poultice to be applied to the area with heavy carbon deposits several times
- Stone repairs, raking out and re-pointing with recommended mortar

Total £7,460.00

Contractor C:

Cleaning

- Supply and fix protection for the lettered plaques against excessive water on their faces and down through joints, £150
- Remove general staining off all exposed masonry and base using high-pressure steam equipment, Inc
- Soften up sulphation stains to underside of portico elements using intermittent water/steam spray, in conjunction with the general cleaning, and scrub off with bristle brush. Should the result need it carry out further cleaning with AB sepiolite / cellulose / AFT poultice, £950

Repointing

- Carefully chisel out all loose and fractured pointing to the masonry and plaques, prepare joints and repoint, £875
- Carefully remove all mortar from joints in plinth base, clean and flush out then deep-pack and repoint using gallets / slips to fill and support larger voids, £675

Dismantle & Rebuild

- Carefully remove lead roof covering and set aside for scrap recycling, £125
- Take dimensions and design of internal roof structure and carefully dismantle. Consult with CA to either replace, repair or re-use, £125
- Design and install temporary shoring/support to roof structure, Scaffold £1100
- Carefully dismantle masonry above lintels, clean and set aside for reuse, £750
- Remove any exposed ferrous metal. Supply and fix stainless steel link cramps and cover slips to exposed course of masonry, Allow for ten: £420
- Supply and fix cramps to top course of structure and pediment stones, Allow for ten: £420
- Rebuild top courses to original dimensions, £950
- Supply and install new timber roof framing and boards PS, £500
- Supply and install new lead covering to roof, £1200

Repair

- Supply and fix Dutchmen to stones missing material, £300
- Supply and install scissor pinning to fracture in column, £75

Plaques

- Carefully remove two central plaques for cleaning and redecorating, £125
- Carefully clean all the lettered plaques using a combination of poultice and non-ionic detergent, sponged down with warm water, £250
- Supply and install a waterproof neoprene / silicon layer behind the plaques, £100
- Apply a lightly buffed micro-crystalline wax protective coating to the faces and edges of the plaques, £60
- Supply and replace ferrous mounts and restraints of plaques with stainless steel to original design, £175
- Re-fix plaques, £475
- Clean the terracotta plaque, £75

Total £9,875.00

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors appoint a contractor for the required works, using funds from budget line 1019 OBH/ St Peter & St Paul Churchyard/Town Pump and match funding from the already obtained S106 monies from the Lidl store (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
12th September 2019

Jon Goodenough
Operations Manager

To receive an update on the small Christmas trees and approve expenditure for installation of the trees and column lights

Background

In February 2019 Councillors agreed for Town Council staff to take on the installation, maintenance and removal of the small Christmas trees along East Street, the Market Place, West Street and Salisbury Street. At the Town and General Purposes committee meeting held on Monday 15th July 2019 an update was given to Councillors. Since the decision to take this work on, a number of meetings have been held and research has been carried out into the best way of doing it and the costs involved. This has taken time and has evolved due to new information regarding the use of ladders etc., which was reported to Councillors in July.

A full audit has taken place of the tree holder locations and the condition/apparent stability of the holder. Thirty new holders have been ordered to replace 18 in poor condition, leaving us with spares, and these will be replaced by a contractor prior to the installation of the trees.

New Information

As reported at that meeting, Town Council staff had been told not to use ladders to install the trees by the trainer giving their working at height training (the purpose of which was for putting up the trees). This advice was given on site whilst assessing the job and it was recommended to use either a cherry picker or a scissor lift. Whilst using a ladder would seem the best way to carry out this work, the fact that staff have been advised not to, during training, has complicated things. Staff cannot now be instructed to carry out the work from a ladder and if an accident did happen during the installation of the trees it would be said that the Town Council had ignored the advice given by a qualified trainer directly to the staff and it would be liable for any damages.

The issue of the use of ladders for this task was discussed with the Town Council's Health and Safety advisor whose response was:

"The trainer is right; a cherry picker or scissor lift would be safer. If you choose to ignore his advice which you have paid for, and he has given to your staff, what would happen if one of your Staff or Members of the Public were injured, would your insurers cover you for the resulting claim? Could a local Plant Hire Company sponsor the Council and provide an operator for a mobile scissor lift? You would only then have to provide banksman. Unfortunately, common sense does not prevail when working at height as a fall could result in a fatality."

Due to this, and the ongoing requirement to use a cherry picker for the lights on the main tree in the Market Place, four members of staff have now attended a cherry picker training course. This will mean six members of staff have had this training. If a scissor lift was used for the small trees, then a different training course is required.

Ladders cannot be used for the lights on the lamp posts, which staff have also been asked to install this year, including the 10 extra ones that will be new for this Christmas (a total of 21 lamp posts). Last year the original 11 were done by a contractor, who hired a truck mounted access platform (similar to that used by SSE to maintain the lighting columns), the total cost of the installation was £2,680.00. A quote has been received for the installation and removal for all 21, from the contractor who did it last year. Councillors will recall that this was part funded with £7,500.00 from the Lidl S106 monies due to the improvements being made to the town centre lighting scheme.

A Councillor suggested a contact he had for a truck mounted access platform, as this is not something the usual hire companies we use can help us with, and the cost from the recommended contact is £450.00 per day. The problem with this is the possibility of bad weather once the platform has been hired. Ideally this would be done on consecutive Sundays, but this would cost more if the hire is split

over two periods. I am also unsure if all the trees and the lamp post lights could be installed in two days as this isn't something we have done before.

The issue with the use of a trailer mounted access platform, of the type used for the main tree, is the time it will take to reposition it and stabilise it every time it is moved and this will be at least 50 times for the small trees plus the lamp posts. It will block the pavement and the outriggers will be in the road, so signage barriers and cones will be required, and they will also need repositioning every time.

It is worth mentioning in relation to the lamppost lights, that these were installed last year by a local electrical contractor who has a good knowledge of Christmas lighting having worked on the festive lights in Oxford Street. This probably explains why they were done so well and received such positive feedback. Whilst in no way under estimating the abilities of the caretaking and ground staff, I think it is fair to say that their skills and knowledge are not in this area and they will also need guidance from last year's installer in relation to the final connections into the mains and the setting of the timers.

Officers have contacted other Town Councils in the county to ascertain who installs the Christmas decorations and the majority are done by contractors or professional lighting companies and are paid for by the local BID or Chamber of Commerce with financial contributions from the Town Councils. Some Councillors will recall that a contractor was paid for the installation and removal of the small trees when the Chamber used to manage it.

Financial Implications

Small tree installation and removal costs:

The volunteers who installed the trees previously suggested that with the use of a ladder it would take approx. 30-35 hours to install the trees and 10 hours to take down with two people. These timings would increase drastically if the trees are installed with a cherry picker, so the following is based on the use of a ladder, doing this on a Sunday, which will cause the least disturbance to shops and the public. In addition, workload is already at capacity so outside of contracted hours is a must so that it doesn't impact on our other responsibilities.

2.5 days for the installation of the Christmas trees using 4 members of staff.

1.5 days for the removal of the trees.

A total of 4 days.

Wages total per day of £905.78

Approximate additional cost in staff wages **£3,623.12**

If an access platform/Cherry Picker is used, as advised, then the time taken would increase and the hire charges of £450.00 per day would also need to be factored in. This will clearly significantly increase the cost to the Town Council. It would also require Sunday working to avoid disruption to the public.

Cherry picker hire for 4 days **£1800.00**

A quote has been sought for the installation and removal of the small Christmas trees from a local contractor, and they have quoted **£1,400.00**.

Since this quotation was received, additional information about the connections for the small trees has been provided and this has strengthened the case for a qualified electrician to carry out the work as basic electrics is involved, which the majority of the staff are not qualified to do.

Lights on lamp posts installation and removal:

The contractor who put up the lighting on the lamp posts took a day, but there are now double the amount of lamp posts with lights and as the staff are not familiar with this work it is likely to take a

minimum of 3.5 days (working on a Sunday again, which is also preferable due to the access platform blocking the pavement) for the installation and removal.

Approximate additional cost in staff wages **£3,169.52**

Hire of access platform **£1,800.00** (4 days hire)

Total cost for staff to do the work **£4,969.52** (including the hire of the access platform)

Contractor quote **£5,300.00** (this includes the hire of the access platform). This quote is from the contractor who connected and decorated the lamp posts last year that received so many compliments.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors approve expenditure authority of:

- £1,400.00 for the installation and removal of the small Christmas trees using funds from the DC Highways budget line which has a balance of £10,587.00, and
- £5,300.00 for the installation, connection and removal of the lights on 21 lamp posts throughout the town, using funds from the Town Improvements budget line which has a balance of £10,544.00, and
- It is also recommended that the Committee either commits this amount within its existing budgets, or a budget is added to this Committee's Earmarked Reserves to cover the costs of putting up and taking down the Town's Christmas decorations each year.

Jon Goodenough
Operations Manager
28th August 2019

To receive an update and consider expenditure authority to support the VE Day 75 Celebrations

Two meetings have now been held to discuss and plan for the VE Day 75 celebrations over 8-10 May 2020, as well as one-to-one meetings with various groups. These meetings have been based on the national guidance provided by the Pageant Master. Notes from the meetings are available from the Town Clerk if required. The outline plan for the weekend is attached at Appendix A.

This has now been added to the monthly Town Council agendas so that regular updates can be provided. Groups contributing to the weekend have been asked to advise the Town Council of any requests for financial support in time for this meeting so that Councillors can consider if they wish to commit funds within existing budgets or include the amounts in the 2020/2021 precept.

The Georgian Fayre organisers will not be holding the Georgian Fayre on the Monday as this Bank Holiday has been moved to the Friday for the VE Day 75 celebrations. They are therefore suggesting that they contribute to this weekend by organising an event in the Market Place and Marsh & Ham car park to include stalls, rides, music stage, etc. with a road closure on East Street, the Market Place and West Street (timings and financial request to be confirmed by the organisers).

The Crown Hotel has arranged the following:

Friday – Live music in the grounds 11am – 8pm. The bands have all been booked and confirmed and we will be having outside bars/ food tents.

Saturday – Vintage Market in the Sealy Suite and Street/Village style party in the Sealy gardens with dancing and games and vintage music of the time. We will be having outside bars/food tents.

I am particularly keen to find out about any road closures as we need to keep the entrance on West Street clear for suppliers to arrive/unload and also for hotel residents to move freely as it is a weekend in May which is peak time for us.

Forum Drama has been unable to provide their financial request to date but have provided their requirements for the production (attached at Appendix B).

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors:

- Comment on the proposals to date
- Approve any expenditure requests to date and allocate a budget
- Commission two commemorative/celebratory VE Day 75 benches for Woodhouse Gardens and approve associated expenditure
- Instruct officers to publicise the plan for the weekend
- Introduce a shop window competition, like the Town Council's Christmas window competition (to encourage shops/businesses to decorate their premises)
- Offer the Big Band evening free of charge, with donations to SSAFA
- Position the silent soldiers on the churchyard for the weekend
- Seek public contributions for bunting
- Consider the dates requested by Forum Drama and free hire
- Instruct officers to write to the pubs, clubs and hotels in the town with the national guidance
- Instruct officers to invite the twin towns to join in this joyous occasion (as per the guidance)
- Ask Cllr Carter to involve the schools with relevant activities
- Request groups involved to register their events at www.veday75.org

Linda Scott-Giles
Town Clerk
18th September 2019

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	LEAD
Friday 1st May – Saturday 2nd May			
10am – 4pm	VE / VJ Exhibition	Corn Exchange	Commemoration Group
Thursday 7th May			
7:30pm	Forum Drama Theatrical Performance	Corn Exchange	Forum Drama
Friday 8th May			
10am – 6:55pm	VE Day Celebrations (music stage, stalls, rides)	Market Place Corn Exchange (wet weather plan/base)	Georgian Fayre
3:00pm	Piper to open VE Day 75 with Battle's O'er, Churchill's Speech, Mayor's Address and Nation's Toast	Churchyard or Market Place (stage?)	Town Council
6:55pm	Cry for Peace (Town Crier)	Market Place	Town Council
7:00pm	Church Bells Ringing Out for Peace	Church	Tower Captain and Bell ringers (via BFPC)
7:00pm onwards	Parties and Celebration	Throughout the town	All!
Saturday 9th May			
Morning	Veteran's Breakfast & Bugler 10am-11:30am	Corn Exchange	Matt Slater SSAFA (TBC)
Daytime	TBC		
7:00pm	Ambassador's Big Band Concert	Corn Exchange	Town Council Ambassador's Big Band
Sunday 10th May			
10:30am	Church Service with The Right Reverend Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne and The Reverend Canon Jonathan Triffitt	Parish Church	BFPC
Daytime	Cream Teas & Talk	The Legion	RBL

Peace in our Time – Draft Schedule(s)

	EVENT	COMMENTS
Thursday 30		
Friday 01 May	EXHIBITION	
Saturday 02		
Sunday 03	SET UP IN MORNING / TECHNICAL IN EVENING	
Monday 04		Town Council Meetings
Tuesday 05	DRESS REHEARSAL – EVENING	Slimming World (am and 7.30pm)
Wednesday 06	PERFORMANCE – EVENING	Slimming World (am and 7pm)
Thursday 07	PERFORMANCE – EVENING	Market (till 3pm) and Martial Arts (6pm)
VE DAY		
Saturday 09	Ambassador Big Band – FLOOR	
Sunday 10	PERFORMANCE – MATINEE ???	
Monday 11		

13.1 To consider Christmas Window Competition details and expenditure approval for proposed prize money

1. Background and further information

For many years now the Town Council has held the Christmas Window Competition for local shops and businesses. Shops are given the poster attached as Appendix A to display in their shops. This seems to be well received. The winner is announced at the Blandford Yuletide Festival by the Town Mayor.

2. Financial Implications

The following prizes have been awarded in previous years.

1st Prize - £150.00

2nd Prize - £100.00

3rd Prize - £50.00

Charity/not for profit organisation - £50.00

Total prize money: £350.00

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee approves details of the Christmas Window Competition as set out in Appendix A and approves expenditure for the total of £350.00 to use for the prize money using funds from the Christmas Town Decorations budget line (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence Localism Act 2011 sl-8).

13.2 To appoint the judges for the Christmas Window Competition 2019

1. Background and further information

In 2014 Councillors introduced an opportunity for members of the public to vote for their favourite shops and businesses taking part in the Christmas Window Competition. The public vote was then used to shortlist the favourites before the judges made the final decision.

In 2017 the Committee agreed to not have a public vote but to form a judging panel solely consisting of the Chairman of Council/Town Mayor, the Chairman of T&GP and the editor of the Forum Focus. In 2018 the Committee agreed to include the Mayor's S/G/C and/or young person on the judging panel.

Judges are to be available for judging over the weekend of 7th and 8th December 2019 to confirm the winners to the office on Monday 9th December 2019 for certificates and prize money to be presented at the Yuletide Festival on 11th December by the Town Mayor.

2. Recommendation

Councillors are requested to approve the judging panel.

Sybille Maddock
Assistant Town Clerk
24th September 2019

CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION 2019



The Town Council is continuing to run its Christmas Window Competition, hoping to encourage shops and businesses to enhance the Town's image and create a wonderful atmosphere for its residents and visitors to the Town, during the festive period. This year the decorated windows will be judged over the weekend of 7th – 8th December 2019 by a judging panel consisting of the Mayor's Scout and Guide, the Chairman of the Town & General Purposes Committee, the editor of the Forum Focus and the Town Mayor, Cllr Lynn Lindsay, who will also present the prizes to shopkeepers at their premises on Wednesday 11th December 2019.

The prizes for the most original and creative displays are as displayed below:

1st Prize £150.00
2nd Prize £100.00
3rd Prize £50.00

Charity/not for profit organisation £50.00 (to the charity).

Good Luck!

The Town Clerk's Office will close on
Friday 24th December 2019 at 12:30pm and
will re-open on Thursday 2nd January 2020 at 9:30am.

Merry Christmas!

Blandford Forum Town Council, Church Lane, Blandford Forum, DT11 7AD
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Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

Report of visit to Blandford Citizens Advice 09/07/19

As I chose to be a new rep for the CAB, I decided to visit and find out more about their work. Having recently followed the plight of Universal Credit applicants who struggle to access their benefits, I was particularly keen to discuss ways in which some IT-trained friends or other groups, possibly even local 6th form students, might be of assistance.

Elaine Morley, the Advice Service Manager, took time to fill me in on all aspects of the work of this amazing voluntary service.

The following might be of particular interest:

- There has been a rise in residents using the service since the CAB moved to the Parish Centre - due to the easy access to the building for disabled people
- The grant from BFTC was gratefully received
- Most users are hit by a multitude of unfortunate factors that leave them to struggle. These are all interlinked and are all dealt with together by the advisers who are highly trained.
- At present the CAB has only enough volunteers to operate once a week in Blandford, but the aim is to add a second day.

A plea for volunteers will go out via Forum Focus in August with the next 6-month training course starting in September.

- The CAB has recently been tracking gambling habits of those seeking help. There has been an increase in gambling through gambling apps, and even seemingly harmless recreational gambling like Bingo can have a negative effect on a person's already difficult financial situation.

- A CITIZENS ADVICE GAMBLING CASEWORKER IS CURRENTLY GIVING TALKS TO COUNCILS THROUGHOUT THE SOUTH WEST REGION. SHE WOULD BE HAPPY TO VISIT BFTC IF OUR COUNCILLORS WISH HER TO DO SO.

Cllr Doro Russell
10/07/2019