

46. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE (cont.)

Planters – The grounds staff have been working hard planting up all the troughs, planters, hanging baskets and the new wooden planters at Badger's Cross, and have subsequently been keeping them hydrated since. They look fantastic and we have received lots of compliments about them.

With regards to sponsorship, the Mayor's Assistant has been working hard to secure additional sponsors in the absence of Specsavers and C&O Tractors. Letters were sent to businesses to ask if they would like to sponsor a planter. Unfortunately, we didn't receive any responses. Planter sponsorship has also been advertised on Facebook. Following the Facebook post we received an email from a local business but we haven't received a response to the email explaining which planters are available and the costs involved. The list below shows which planters are currently available:

3 tier planter, Wimborne Road (Langton Road turn off) x3, £90 each

2 tier planter, The Tabernacle (between military benches) £90

2 tier planter Wimborne Road bus stop £90

Base planter Shaftesbury Lane (next to Lidl) £110

47. GENERAL UPDATES FROM:

- 47.1 Blandford Business Support Group – Catherine Chapman reported that the Business Support Group is concerned about the current situation in the town, with businesses closing and empty shops. She is hosting an evening event at her offices to discuss the possibility of having business pods in the old Natwest bank building. Catherine raised concern over the town dying due to a lack of events bringing people in (e.g. the Georgian Fayre) which supports the local economy. The support group has now been running since 4th May 2018.

Cllr Chapman asked Catherine to encourage shops and businesses to respond to the pedestrianisation consultation. The Town Clerk confirmed that the free events the Town Council hosts, such as the tea dance and children's entertainment, bring people into the town as well as providing recreation for residents. The regeneration of the Corn Exchange will help to support the local economy when it is finished September 2025.

The Blandford Business Awards will be held on 1st November 2024 at Bryanston School and Catherine asked if the Town Council would continue to sponsor one of the awards. She was invited to submit the request to the Town Clerk.

The Committee Chairman suggested a meeting with the Business Group to discuss possibilities, but Cllr Lacey-Clarke pointed out that it is difficult to discuss opportunities with private properties without input from, or knowledge of, the property owners.

- 47.2 Blandford Police – a report was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillors were thankful for the report and would like to invite the new PC to the next meeting.
- 47.3 Market Manager – a report was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr H Miéville remarked that both the markets, at Woodhouse Gardens and the street market, are struggling but he suggested use of social media to encourage both visitors and new stall holders. Cllr Lacey-Clarke mentioned that lots of people came to the pavilion on both election days looking for the café, which is very popular. He suggested tasking the Market Manager with sourcing new stallholders ready for the reopening of the Corn Exchange.

48. DORSET COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

- 48.1 To consider a proposal for an extension of the 20-mph zone.

Cllr Holmes explained her thoughts on the introduction of a 20-mph zone starting at The King's Arms at the beginning of Whitecliff Mill Street and ending at Park Road traffic lights at the Badger Cross junction.

48. DORSET COUNCIL HIGHWAYS (cont.)

Cllr Lacey-Clarke explained that it is on the list to be considered and, should the Committee support this, the Town Council needs to have data to evidence that it isn't safe. Any near misses must be reported and Cllr Y Miéville suggested that we ask the schools to support this by collating information.

Cllr L Hitchings suggested other areas that could benefit from 20-mph limits and wondered if a working group could consider all the areas in one go. Cllr Lacey-Clarke reiterated the need for evidence-based information before Dorset Council will consider them.

48.2 To consider a proposal for a zebra crossing at the beginning of Salisbury Street in lieu of the lights further up

The Committee discussed Cllr Holmes' proposal to make the hump at the bottom of Salisbury Street a zebra crossing and to remove the pedestrian crossing lights further up.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr H Miéville, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (5 in favour, 2 abstentions) that

The Committee does not progress the proposal but asks Dorset Council to repaint the white give way lines at each pedestrian crossing.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

49. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR INSTALLATION OF THE TREE AND COLUMN LIGHTS

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED unanimously that

Councillors approve expenditure authority of £8,900 for the installation and removal of the trees and column lights from the Christmas Lights budget line 1025 (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

50. TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR THE MAIN CHRISTMAS TREE IN DECEMBER 2024

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr H Miéville, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED unanimously that

During the closure of the Corn Exchange the sleeve for the Christmas tree is inaccessible due to the hoarding and Councillors therefore approve the proposal for a Christmas Tree to be located in the churchyard and the Woodhouse Gardens this year.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

51. REVIEW OF TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES BUDGETS TO 30TH JUNE 2024

51.1 Analytical Review of Revenue Budget

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

51.2 Review of Earmarked Reserves

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

51. **REVIEW OF TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES BUDGETS TO 30TH JUNE 2024 (cont.)**

51.3 Reserve Accounts

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

The RFO was tasked with producing a way of pulling the budgets down from Sage to save reproducing the reports.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 8:27 pm.

SIGNED: **DATED:**