

Town Managers Report Current Projects

Syston Regeneration Project

This is currently being circulated for consultation.

CCTV Coverage – Central Park

The installation of three CCTV cameras at Central Park as approved by Council is complete. Signage is currently being arranged whilst links to CBC are finalised.

CCTV Coverage – Melton Road, by Railway Station

This has been held up due to security concerns by the credit card terminal supplier and The Mace shop over sharing a broadband line. I am now arranging for a separate broadband line. The connection costs for STC will only be for the new separate broadband line.

Replacement Windows and Fire Door at the Community Centre

Applications for Climate Change funding for three replacement double-glazed UPVC windows and one UPVC replacement fire door are under consideration by LCC. The maximum grant allowed is 20% of the cost for each project.

High Street Lorry Problems

Two bollards are now in place on the pavement outside Gambles.

Councillor Recruitment

Syston Town Council have five vacancies for Councillors in the following Wards:

- Merton Ward
- St Peters East Ward
- New Barkby Ward

An Open Evening was held at the Queen Victoria pub on High Street on Wednesday, 13 February. Thank you to those Councillors in attendance, Cllrs Henry, Barkley, Knight, Pacey and Vardy. Attendance was low, but we do have one very interested person, who has since attended the Resources Committee meeting to observe a council meeting.

St Peter & St Paul Churchyard

As you are aware, we have formed a working panel to look at ways to improve the St P & P Churchyard. Landscaping has greatly improved the area and clear but discreet signs asking people to make sure that they clear up after their dogs have been displayed. Unfortunately these signs have been defaced and vandalised on several occasions which is extremely disappointing to the Panel and also to Syston Town Council. We have informed the Police and asked them to be extra vigilant in this area. We will continue to work towards making the St Peter & St Paul churchyard a pleasant and peaceful place that Syston can be proud of and hope that the Syston community will support us with this.

Allotments

The Water Bill of £5900 was reduced to £651 after Water Plus acknowledged a meter reading mistake on their part.

Civic Reception 2019

Invitations have been circulated. The Mayor of Charnwood has already confirmed her attendance.

Letters to Leicestershire businesses, requesting raffle prize donations have been posted and prizes are being received.

Citizen of the Year Award

An advertisement for nominations for the Citizen of the Year Award and the Young Citizen of the Year Award was been placed in the December/January edition of Syston Town News, around the town and at the Community Centre. Councillors are also encouraged to nominate.

Notices have been placed around the community centre, on the STC website on social media.

Invitations for nominees have also been posted to Wreake Valley Academy and Roundhill Academy.

Nominations for Citizen of the Year have been received but we haven't received any nominations for Young Citizen of the Year in spite of writing to both secondary schools.

Skate Park Lighting

The householder living opposite the Skate Park has objected to the lighting of the area until 8 pm. His objection is regarding the problems with youths on the park after dark. I have replied and politely suggested to him that by lighting the area until 8 pm would potentially reduce this problem. He has not replied to my email.

I have now obtained a quotation from a skate park lighting specialist which will be brought through Amenities.

Fields in Trust

I am currently progressing protection for more of our parks with this organisation (to be approved by Council).

Meeting of Chairs

The next monthly meeting of Chairs of Committees and the will take place on Friday, March at 11 am.

PDR

The Chairman has carried out my PDR with me, using a new form that I obtained following an appraisals training course I attended at LRALC. All staff will now be undergoing their PDRs.

New Volunteer

We welcome a new parks volunteer, Nathan Marlow, who will be working for two to three mornings per week with David Smith.

Panels – updates since Amenities Committee Meeting

New Cemetery

Work progressing very efficiently. On course to complete in April 2019. Amenities Committee and Resources are being kept informed of progress and finance. Broadband has been ordered and CCTV installation for the building is beginning. The building shell is almost complete.

Cemetery Burial Spaces Review

The existing cemetery spaces left are as follows:

Three double spaces left in the current row.

Three double spaces potentially available at the top of the cemetery near the triangle.

Four single plots in J section.

There are possibly five spaces near the children's burial area but this is a less desirable option.

Council have already (some time ago) agreed not to allow burials from deceased whom lived outside of Syston; in view of the reducing amount of plots currently available, Officers would recommend that STC continue with this policy. New Cemetery scheduled for completion in April 2019.

Fencing at Deville Park

I have met with three contractors to obtain quotations for replacement fencing along the brook where the fence has been vandalised. All three contractors recommended replacing the current mesh fencing with Palisade as in other parts of the boundary.

Tree Panel

Tree Panel agreed to follow up the recommendations from the Tree Survey. Clive Summerfield and Cemetery Contractor, Andy Kirk have carried out the low-level works. Contractor, Richard Hallahan will be carrying out maintenance on fourteen medium level tree works, utilising the Cemetery Groundsman w/c 25 February.

Major works in "no mans land" Deville Park will be in progress w/c 25 February by Swinton Aerial. Tree surveys for Archdale Park and Winfield Park have been arranged with Swinton Aerial. Quotations for high level tree maintenance at Central Park and one at the Cemetery are in progress.

The Tree Policy is due for review at the next Tree Panel meeting.

Pavilion Panel

Plans have now been finalised for submission for planning permission at CBC.

Line marking machine has been ordered in accordance with FA recommendations.

Quantity Surveyor has been appointed to ascertain costings for the refurbishment project at a cost of £500.

I have written to Kirklands FC to enquire if they had any objection to Brookside FC replacing the temporary goalposts with new and FA approved goal posts. To date they have not replied, the next communication will give a deadline for a response

with a “non-response will be deemed as acceptance” clause. – *no further update on this to date.*

Ride on Mower

A John Deere ride on mower will be delivered imminently. This was approved by Amenities following a major repair costing well in excess of the value of the existing vehicle, rendering the repair untenable.

Diary Dates

- Saturday, 2 March 2019 – Councillors Surgery 10 – 11 am
- Friday, 15 March – Chairs meeting – 11 am

Please remember to join up to our Facebook page for further developments at Syston Town Council:

social@systontc.org.uk

Website: www.systontc.org.uk

Twitter: @Syston_TC

Catherine Voyce - Town Manager

Deputy Town Manager's Report

St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard

Quotes have now been received for extra lighting in St Peter & St Paul's churchyard which will be discussed at the next Panel meeting.

Re-seeding of some of the bare grassed areas below trees have now been carried out.

Wild flower turf has been suggested as a way forward for an instantaneous display close to the entrance of St Peter & St Pauls churchyard.

Christmas Event

The 2019 Christmas Event has been advertised on Stall finder and nine stalls have already booked for the event; nearly all came last year and enjoyed it so much. We are hoping to increase the number of stalls to 60 this year. The date for this year's event will be Sunday 1 December 2019 from 1.00pm – 5.00pm on Melton Road, Syston.

Summer Hanging Baskets

These will be collected to fill with summer bedding plants on Monday 25 February. Letters have gone out to local retailers in order to obtain sponsorship for these baskets.

STC Policies

10 of STC's Policies have gone to this month's Resources meeting for a review, and I am currently working on a Flexible Retirement and Ill Health Policy. Internal Controls and Financial Risk Assessment are being reviewed at Resources this month.

Park Contracts

Contracts have been sent out for events on Central Park this summer. These include a Family Fund Day, a three- day Funtopia event, and Harris & Aspinall Circus.

Extension of Christmas Lights on Melton Road

A quote has been received from Metric for extension of the Christmas lights from Bargain Booze down to Leicester Circuits.

Cemetery

Quotations for a new notice board have been sought from two companies as the old one looks very dilapidated. As STC are entering the Cemetery of the Year competition this year a new notice board would be desirable.

We are looking to purchase a hard cover Burial book for the new Cemetery and this is currently being investigated.

Painting of Railings on Central Park

Quotations for sanding and painting of the wrought iron railings which run along St Peter's street from the Skate Park to the Bowls Club have been sought. However, the quotes could be extremely high due to the length of railings involved.

New white lining machines

Following a recommendation by the Football Association (FA) for an updated line marking process, Groundstaff have requested two new white lining machines for marking out the football pitches. Quotes are being obtained.

Checking of Driving Licences

A spreadsheet has been set up to check employees driving licences annually, a recommendation by Ellis Whittam.

Fixed Assets

The Fixed Assets have been updated for 2019/20 in readiness for the year end.

Insurance Schedule

The insurance schedule has been checked and assets added and removed as necessary. This is the final year of insurance with Zurich and Council will go out to tender next year.

Cemetery Register Spreadsheet

I have been working on a Cemetery Register Spreadsheet together with the Senior Administrator, adding burials since 1944 and we are currently up to 1997. This is in addition to the Burial Book that we keep manually.

Ursula Southan – Deputy Town Manager

Kay Liquorish, Senior Administrator

Room Bookings

Room booking enquiries have been very busy so far this year. Party bookings and general enquiries have been increasing. I have been dealing with an enquiry from the Locality Engagement Co-ordinator (East) of the Leicestershire Adult Learning Service department at LCC. He is based in Thurmaston and visited the Community Centre to have a look around at the facilities we have to offer. I am hopeful that he will contact me shortly to book in some seminars. We already provide regular room bookings for the Early Learning & Childcare department at LCC, and it is good to have received interest from another LCC department.

Room Hire Fees - Charities

I have distributed letters to all charities letting them have prior notification that the room hire fees will increase on 1 April 2019, the letter includes details of the amendment to cap hire fees for charity groups with five attendees or less.

Allotment Fees

Almost all allotment fees have been paid now. Reminder letters were sent to eight plot holders that had not paid by the end of January. Of those, five have since paid, one has cancelled and two remain outstanding. The two remaining plots will now be re-let to the people at the top of the waiting list (the previous plot holders will be notified of this officially in writing).

Cemetery Records

Along with the Deputy Town Manager, I have been continuing work on the Cemetery register spreadsheet which will show entries from the past 75 years. So far we have input burial details from 1944 up to 1997. Once all burial details are logged, the ash interment records will then be listed.

Water Plus

I have contacted Water Plus to register all our seven locations for online reporting of meter readings etc. It will take up to 14 days for them to contact me back with a reference number so that I can begin setting up our account. I will then enter all details on to one information sheet which will be placed on the shared data computer drive for all officers to access.

HMRC

I have been in contact with technicians at HMRC regarding the VAT online submission for January. There had been problems with logging on to our account and it took two lengthy phone calls to finally sort it out. The submission has now been successfully sent and the monthly VAT refund will be received as normal. While speaking to HMRC they confirmed that digital VAT submissions by STC have been deferred until October 2019 as we are a local authority.

Assistant to the Town Manager Report

Currently on holiday.