

Dear Town and Parish Councils

Looking Ahead To 2017/ 18

Due to the elections in May, the annual Town and Parish Council Highway Evening Meetings have been moved to the middle/ end of May 2017.

Draft dates for your diary are:

- 15th May 2017 – County Hall, Trowbridge
- 17th May 2017 – Monkton Park, Chippenham
- 23rd May 2017 – City Hall, Salisbury
- 24th May 2017 – Kennet House, Devizes (Apologies in advance will be cramped)

The times are likely to be 1900hrs to 2100hrs.

These evenings are for you to come along and find out more about the Highway and Streetscene Service.

If you want a particular service or topic covered in the presentation, please email Adrian Hampton and he will be pleased to include the matter in the presentation.

Bill Parks and Adrian Hampton, the Heads of Service, will discuss the issues. We hope to have Cabinet Member in attendance but this will be subject to the outcome of any result from the election.

Highways will try and do a bit of 'Crystal Ball' gazing into the future, to assist everyone with what to think about in the next coming years.

However, this month, whilst the Council's budget setting process means that the allocation of spending will not be known until the end of February, the general thrust of any new budgets is clear, as the:

- reduction in Central Government Grant funding is known;
- cap on the Council's precept remains; and
- the limited options on increasing income

Will mean that there will not be mountains of new cash to increase service levels in Highways.

Also the situation on the ground has not improved.

Fly tipping

You are probably aware that I write these Newsletters a month in advance, and I am writing this one over the Christmas period. Having just travelled south to north in the county this week and seen:

- the mattress dumped on the A360 by the new development just north of Salisbury;
- the sofa, mattress and fridge dumped just before Lacock on the A350; and

- returning home through Great Cheverell seeing the carpet in the lay bye just off the A360.

I remain frustrated. I have reported all the matters on the MyWiltshire System and have received confirmation they have been resolved.

Litter collection

If you have not already done so, you will all shortly be advising me of the litter in the verges, as I too have seen this.

The A350 is a particular concern and causes me much upset simply due to the amount of litter deposited since our last clean in the autumn. Not just because the litter is there (yes we will schedule traffic management and get it collected), but because anecdotal evidence suggests 90% of this is dropped by Wiltshire residents.

The £2.5million I spend on litter collection represents more than half of my total statutory spending on the Local Highway Services.

I could double the provision of the below services, or double the service level of grounds maintenance (grass cutting/ shrub maintenance etc.) with this spending:

Service	Spend (£,000)
Cyclic Maintenance (Pavement and Kerb repairs)	500
Drainage Works (Gulley emptying)	800
Verge Maintenance (Annual verge grass cutting)	200
Tractor (Safety work – verges/ grip cutting etc.)	250
Park Inspection & Maintenance (Equipment replacement)	10
Weed Control	140
Line & Signs	100
Total Spend	2,000

But sadly whilst the culture exists that dropping litter or dumping waste is acceptable, the challenge will continue and I have to continue to prioritise litter collection above all those other services you would like to see improved.

More worryingly this culture of irresponsible waste management will mean greater challenges lie ahead unless reversed!

We have already issued an instruction for the collection of litter where the road requires special traffic management. These are the high speed and trunk roads with no safe areas of

work. This will be undertaken in the spring to coincide with the Great British Spring Clean. We have to group this litter picking as traffic management costs are considerable and to maximise the benefit of our funding we undertake this work in one main litter pick every few months.

This Newsletter also explores some of the innovative working that the communities are undertaking. I regret to say I am not able to capture them all, as there are so many good works going on. But I list the one that I hope will aid you in deciding if you can work in partnership with Wiltshire Council to improve your local area.

Great British Spring Clean

Please find attached the Great British Spring Clean information and we hope you will all join us in supporting the event. Wiltshire Council's Spring litter pick of main roads will be coordinated around the event and we will be picking up some of the litter collections made on highway land by volunteers.

Wiltshire Council's grass cutting of amenity land will commence in early March. All the six million square metres of grass will be litter picked over the following month.

The council's contractor 'Id Verde' is also supporting the event.

Can I just remind all to follow the collect procedures when collecting waste from the highway and other land. We continue to receive reports of volunteer litter pickers collecting waste without the required protective equipment and legal signage.

Wiltshire Council cannot give permission to work on the A303 or A36, even in the residential areas, as these roads are trunk roads and controlled by Highways England (HE). Permission needs to be sought from the HE for any works. We have received reports that volunteer litter pickers have been collecting litter on these areas without reflective jackets and with no signage. This is dangerous and we ask any volunteers to contact the HE to check their arrangements before any works are undertaken.

Litter disposal, where litter picking has taken place from parish, town and city responsible areas cannot be collected by Wiltshire Council. The volunteers will need to seek agreements with the relevant local council. If the Salisbury City transfer takes place before the event, this would include litter collection from within the city boundary. In Salisbury if you contact the Community Engagement Manager (Karen Linaker) and the council will give advice on any action to follow for collections.

Grass Cutting

The council in April and early May will undertake an additional cut of the amenity grass to minimise the impact of the spring grass growth. The decision to undertake the additional grass cut at this time is that the ground in March can be challenging due to the wetter conditions and this has previously slowed the cutting crews. We will review the 2017/ 18 arrangements in the autumn to learn any lessons from the new arrangements.

Parish Steward March Considerations

We would ask you think about activities for the Parish Steward that support the Great British Spring Clean. This could be simply tidying up highway areas. Such as:

- Cleaning/ painting over graffiti (will need to know in advance paint colour if painting required)
- digging back highway verges
- removing weeds from the highway
- sanding and painting barriers etc. (weather permitting, there are special arrangements needed for painting at height or over water courses)
- Cutting back highway vegetation
- Cleaning signs
- Etc.

I note some parishes and towns are waiting for their updated Parish Steward Schedule of visits. I apologise for any delay and this will be issued shortly.

Successful Partnership Schemes in 2016

Melksham Without Parish Council Investment In Play Areas

Melksham Without Parish Council took devolved service for play areas from Wiltshire Council on 30th September 2016.

The play area surfaces and equipment have already been cleaned, safety surfaces replaced or repaired, equipment repaired and painted at Berryfield. Work starts at Kestrel Court, Bowerhill in January which will include the addition of some new equipment as requested by the local children.

Photos of the improvements are attached.

The Parish Council await the transfer of asset of Hornchurch Road Play area to the parish council from the developers asap so the refurbishment work can be undertaken there too.

The Parish Council put up their Precept by 30% in 2016/17 to take on Wiltshire Council's play areas and contribute to the running of public toilets in the town. It has also committed to take on any equipped play areas in new housing developments.

Wiltshire Council thank the Parish Council and wish them every success.

Warminster Town Council celebrates taking ownership of the Town Park

Warminster Town Council was delighted to receive the news on 21st November that the community asset transfer of the Town Park from Wiltshire Council had finally taken place after a complicated legal process because of the number of individual assets within the park. The 'official' handover took place on Monday 12th December with councillors and officers from Wiltshire Council and Warminster Town Council, plus representatives from Id Verde and a user groups, gathered at the bandstand to celebrate this momentous occasion.

The support and funding from Warminster Town Council in undertaking improvement work during the interim period has been much appreciated, but now Warminster Town Council can begin work in earnest.

The Town Council have already seeded wild flowers, painted the band stand and various buildings to play equipment enhancements. They also agreed the appointment of a park keeper who will be employed full time, ensuring standards are maintained and continue to improve.

Wiltshire Council thank the Town Council and wish them every success for the future.

Friends Of Abberd Brook

The Friends of Abberd Brook was established at the beginning of 2010, as a direct result of two of its members attending a Calne Area Board meeting in August 2009. At that meeting the issue of the neglected state of Abberd Brook was raised. This concern was taken up by the Wiltshire Councillors and a Task Group set up to identify in detail some of the problems and the best way to overcome them.

The volunteers continue to assist in projects relating to the brook and local area.

Salisbury BID

Salisbury BID have replaced up to a quarter of the public bins in the city centre after £30,000 was committed to a venture which is hoped will reduce the amount of litter on Salisbury's streets.

Salisbury BID is launching a cost effective and environmentally friendly waste and recycling scheme to help businesses in the town save money and receive better service. Too often bags of rubbish were left lying around on the streets, the BID wanted to change this.

A BID, 'Keeping Salisbury Clean' service (vehicle and pressure washer) with operator(s), available to BID businesses and aimed at developing a clean and proud city. This is both a planned and responsive service to BID businesses and key areas of the city.

The BID provides two fully-trained and uniformed City Rangers working across the city, interacting daily with retail and professional service businesses, identifying key issues and reporting them to the appropriate local authorities or organisations.

Etc.

Enhanced Service Levels

Many town councils, including Devizes and Melksham, funded enhanced services level in 2016. Melksham Town Council funded additional grass cutting in churchyards as just one example.

Salisbury City Council Transfer

The transfer of all the Salisbury Street Scene Services to the City Council was agreed in 2016, which saw Salisbury City Council funding the provision by 2020.

2017/ 18

There are already a number of new initiatives. Westbury and Trowbridge Town Councils want to take on their local play provision. The CAT Programme is gathering some pace.

Many areas are looking at what they can do to support their local community. But I am also aware that a number of local councils have not engaged in this debate and I ask them to consider the above initiatives or any new ones that they see fit.

Parish Steward Programme of suggested work/ considerations:

Month	Activity	Consider
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Digging back encroachments on footways – Hand removal of weeds from footways – Sanding and painting barriers – Clearing Graffiti hot spot areas 	Identify access issues over footways etc. before drier weather and increased use of footways
Mar 1	– St. David's Day	Event Planning
3-5 March	– The Great British Spring Clean	Event Planning
Mar 17	– St. Patrick's Day	Event Planning
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hand cutting small visibility areas – Trimming encroaching treatment/removal of weeds 	Review the visual aspects of the area that could be improved by the PS.
Apr 14	– Good Friday	Event Planning
Apr 16	– Easter Sunday	Event Planning
Apr 23	– St George's Day	Event Planning
May	– Local Elections	Event Planning
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Weed Control – Grass strimming at road junctions and other sensitive locations 	Control of vegetation during growing season
May	– Highways Parish and	Event Planning

	Town Evening Meeting	
June	– Ragwort Pulling	Control of Ragwort before Seeding
July	– Ragwort Pulling	Control of Ragwort before Seeding
August	– Weed Control – Painting hand rails, bollards, parapet rails and ancient mile posts	Control of vegetation during growing season
September	– Hand clearing, and cutting of growth from drainage grips and drain gully covers – Hand clearing of blocked gullies – Rodding of drainage systems – Clearing of small culverts, pipes and pits	Before Autumn Rain
October	– Hedges and vegetation from around road signs and railings – Clear vegetation growth over signs – Wash and clean signs	Identify hedge etc. work after growing season
Oct 31	– Halloween	Event Planning
November	– Clear leaves from footways – Bus shelter maintenance – Graffiti hot spots	Winter maintenance
Nov 5	– Guy Fawkes Night	Event Planning
Nov 11	– Armistice Day	Event Planning
Nearest Sunday to Armistice Day	– Remembrance Day	Event Planning
Nov 30	– St. Andrew's Day	Event Planning
December	– Clear leaves from footways – Bus shelter maintenance	Winter maintenance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graffiti hot spots 	
Dec 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christmas 	Event Planning
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand clearing, and cutting of growth from drainage grips and drain gully covers - hand clearing of blocked gullies - rodding of drainage systems - clearing of small culverts, pipes and pits 	Drainage work before spring rain fall
Jan 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Year's Day 	Event Planning
Jan 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burn's Night 	Event Planning
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cutting hedges and vegetation from around road signs and railings - Clear vegetation growth over signs - Wash and clean signs 	Identify hedge etc. work before bird nesting season