

Town Managers Report

Office Operations

Since July, the office has been manned for five days a week; two to three Officers are in the office at any one time (including Facilities Manager).

The doors will remain locked and only one member of the public allowed at reception at any one time.

Hand sanitisers are available and signs asking people to wash and sanitise their hands upon entry will be in place.

A contact sheet for the signing in and out and a telephone number is in place, this covers both Covid-19 and fire regulation responsibilities. The police are also participating in the signing in and out when accessing their common room.

Room hire queries and adjustments have taken up a lot of Officer time this month, for all of us.

Facilities Manager

Jason Green has been extremely busy and has submitted his own report included in this one.

Welcome to temporary Groundsman, Josh Sandhu-Bolton, who is working for five days a week across all parks and cemeteries.

Public Toilets

Now open at Melton Road Car Park and Central Park. STC cleaner, Bev Sheffield is carrying out mid-day cleans Monday to Saturday. FM has written up Risk Assessments and provided PPE. Toilet cleaning contractors are doing the morning clean and have provided their own risk assessments. This is working well, mens toilets had to be closed for half a day in August whilst a drain blockage was cleared.

Central Park Spring Bedding 2021.

Spring bedding plants have been ordered and will be planted according to plans provided by Ideverde.

PDRs

Staff PDRs continuing, three members of the Estates team have now been completed.

Councillor Vacancies

There are four vacancies at the Council in wards:

- Merton Ward
- St Peters West Ward
- New Barkby Ward

Potentially another so-option will have taken place at this meeting.

Please continue to promote the Councillor vacancies to any of your Syston-based friends and family.

Syston and District Cemetery

- There is a problem with the broadband line for the CCTV; I need the assistance of ADT to be on site whilst testing of the line with BT can take place; this is now on-hold until ADT are allowed to work on sites (I am not sure if this is due to furlough or protection of their staff). The CCTV cameras are still being monitored but are not on a continuous loop at CBC as it is slowing all their other camera links down. The camera views can also be viewed at the STC office.
- The first row of burials is now full and the second row started.
- Hawthorn whips for the hedging have been planted, some have been lost due to the hard and infertile ground, but there are still enough to provide a shield between the houses on Drovers Road and the cemetery. Tindle Tree Care are about to dig in some supporting canes for each tree to enable it to establish itself.
- The COSHH cupboard is located in the garage.
- The next cemetery meeting is on Monday, 21 September to discuss the provision of a cleaners sink and possibly hot water; and also to review the ash interment options as well as the final assessment of the budget to determine how much can be invested and saved for Phase Two of the construction.

Cemetery rules in terms of attendance at funerals have been updated by Government to allow up to 30 people only, due to the noticeable rises in the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Local funeral directors have been informed and asked for compliance. Caretaker is stewarding toilet usage at Barkby Road Cemetery (one in the area at one time) and Cllr DP is stewarding the Syston & District Cemetery toilets.

FM has written up risk assessments for toilets and attendance at funerals at Council cemeteries.

Pavilion

The invitation to tender was posted on the Government Contracts Finder website on 12 August. Closing date for receipt of tenders was 11 September. Only one tender application was received. This is not sufficient to satisfy our own Financial Regulations or those of the FA for their funding provision. The Panel met on 15 September and agreed to re-promote the tender invitation as well as actively source local companies that they thought might be interested in the work. The company that have already submitted their tender have been informed of the delay and have confirmed their acceptance of the situation. We have now received four expressions of interest in the works and the revised timeline is:

Date	Activity
17 September 2020	Issue of Tender Invitation and TQQ
8 October 2020	Deadline for clarifications
Mid-day 30 September 2020	Tender and TQQ Return Date
W/C 2 November 2020	Evaluation of TQQ and Tenders completed
16 – 20 November 2020	Provider pre contract interviews
W/C 23 November 2020	Contract Award

Syston Allotments

Utilities works have been taking place on Upper Church Street, the contractors left the area in front of the allotments in an unsatisfactory condition. The pavement at the entrance to the allotment site was not re-tarmacked; the grass verge alongside the allotments which had been mown by an allotment holder to a lawn standard had been dug up and left as piles of earth and rocks and the soil and rocks had also covered the first rung of the whole length of the new fence, which would have caused the fence to rot.

The pavement has now been tarmacked, the fence area has been cleared but the grass verge remains in a mess. Contractors have been chased up on this and have advised that they will be returning to the site to install further cabling and after this has been done, they will be re-turfing all along the grass verge.

An allotment plot inspection took place in September, most plot holders have not changed the managing their plots, there has been some leniency for those being forced to self-isolate or key-workers. However, some caution letters have still been posted.

Tree Panel

A meeting has been held and reported to Amenities.

VJ Day

A small ceremony was held and was attended by our Chairman, Cllr Tom Barkley.

VE Day Commemoration

The flower bed in Central Park has been planted and is an excellent tribute to this celebration; it continues to flourish and will certainly last for the summer season.

Memorial Day, 8 November 2020

I have met with members of the Syston RBL. The national RBL have forbidden any local branches to arrange a memorial procession or sell poppies.

They have discussed with me how they would like the Memorial Day to be commemorated and I will report this through Development Committee. Since we had the meeting the Government guidelines have changed on the meeting of groups of people, therefore we have to be ready to adapt any plans at short notice.

Syston Transfer Liaison Panel

Reports of an increase in rats in the area around BiFFA have been reported and are being dealt with. CBC have also had involvement in this.

Complaints

Three complaints from members of the public have taken up some time but appear now to have been resolved.

Fly-posting

Fly-posting around the areas of Pembroke Avenue, Goodes Lane and Pine Drive have been reported to CBC.

External Audit 2019/20

Awaiting External Auditor report.

Syston Topic

September edition out. Please let me know if you have not seen one. October is currently being prepared. We would not normally do a monthly bulletin but the fluid situation of Covid-19 is making our news out of date quick enough to justify the need for a monthly one for now.

Friends of Barkby Road Cemetery – Barkby Road

A meeting has been held, there are a number of actions in progress which are being reported through the Amenities Committee.

CCTV Melton Road, by the Railway Station

A delay to this has occurred because after having issued a licence to allow the installation of the CCTV camera, LCC have realised that they did not request a structural testing of the lamp post. This is now being arranged.

Local Council Award Scheme – Gold Award

This was submitted in July. Since its submission, the Panel have been unable to meet and have also changed their procedure. The outcome date keeps being put back, the latest date is now end of September.

Spring Clean

As CBC have decided not to hold a “September Spring Clean”, we have also halted plans to hold one. The changing situation regarding the Pandemic would make the organisation very difficult.

East Midlands in Bloom 2020 - cancelled

I am working on the route for 2021 – taking in Syston heritage, as was planned for 2020.

Monthly Councillor Surgery

These are still being held, the next one is Saturday, 3 October at 10 am via Zoom. Cllr Tom Barkley is in charge of arrangements for this.

Diary Dates

3 October 2020, Councillor Surgery by Zoom 10 – 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

Deputy Town Manager's Report

Churchyard Panel

A long border by the Church has now been dug by some members of Syston in Bloom. It has been weed sprayed by STC Groundstaff and will be ready in a few weeks for the planting of shrubs. The bench will be installed on the grass when the border has been planted.

Classes at the Community Centre

It has been time consuming organising groups trying to re-start at the Community Centre making sure all the necessary extra paperwork is in place for Covid restrictions.

Summer Bedding

I am still working on the plans for the summer bedding in Central park, Melton Road, Brookside, War Memorial, The Green and Barkby Road Cemetery. This is a large project as there are so many areas to consider but I hope to be in a position to obtain quotes next month.

If we do go all out next summer for Gold in the East Midlands in Bloom an increase in the budget would be required.

Summer Hanging Baskets

I have been speaking to shopkeepers and obtaining sponsorship for hanging baskets in the town for next summer to help in our mission for Gold in East Midlands in Bloom competition. Some new companies have come on board but some of the long- standing shops are struggling too much to be able to sponsor us next year.

Structural testing of lampposts

This has now been carried out by Kiwa and I will be applying shortly to LCC Highways for a licence to erect our Christmas lights. This has taken up a lot of time but Highways have finally confirmed that the metal posts along the Brookside do not require a licence or formal testing as they are not in the Highway.

Quotations for Christmas Lights

I am trying to obtain three quotes for the installation of our Christmas lights starting in 2021 for a two- year contract. So far, I have received two quotes, one company has declined and three more were not interested.

Tree Panel

I have taken over the Tree Panel work temporarily and I am obtaining quotes for certain tree work. I have also asked for a quote for a full tree survey which is required every twelve to eighteen months. A Tree Panel has been arranged for 24 September at 2.00pm.

Employee Contracts

I have been working on updating employee contracts in line with our HR recommendations.

Iconnnect Pension Spreadsheet

This is a new spreadsheet of data required by LCC Pensions and I have been carrying out amendments asked for by LCC.

Annual Town Reports

I have been working on reports for each Committee to assist the Chairman for the Town Meeting.

The above work is in addition to my normal work duties.

Facilities Manager Report

Community Centre

- All relevant building safety checks completed such as fire alarm, emergency lighting, fire extinguisher and water flushing everything in order.
- Gas boilers x 2 and Pressurisation unit x 1 serviced by gas safe engineer
- Fire / Intruder alarm servicing booked in for October.
- Risk Assessment completed for Community Centre room hire – new style risk assessment produced to help users understand it easier. Room capacity limits set with regards to social distancing.
- Hand sanitiser stations are now located in every room.
- Cleaning regime enhanced before and after room use. Touch surfaces cleaned with sanitiser.
- De-fib at community centre has had the battery changed.
- Community centre room hire has started up, however currently in review regarding numbers after updated guidance.
- Persons hiring rooms to supply their own covid-19 specific risk assessment, folder set up in office.
- Have dealt with complaints that have now all been resolved.
- Setting up rooms ready for use has started again.

Pavilion / Memorial Park / Football

- Risk Assessment completed for the management of the Pavilion during match days, this along with guidance for teams sent out to Syston Town juniors, Kirklands and Brookside. All returned signed agreeing to the terms and conditions regarding use and payment.
- All teams have provided their own risk assessments.
- Covid-19 signage put up at Pavilion, sanitiser station set up. All soaps, paper towels and cleaning products now onsite.
- Staff working at the Pavilion on match days have all PPE, they have been given a job description and a plan of what is required.
- Anti-Social Behaviour an issue. I have liaised with Police. They have attended the park on several occasions now due to this. Youths climbing on container and roof of Pavilion. I have used anti-climb Paint on container, refitted the razor wire and put up signs pointing out the risks.
- After a meeting with Police and residents I have now arranged for 2M high Heras fencing to be erected around the container, also blocking off the side entrance to Pavilion. Awaiting the date for the fencing to be put up. Purchase order sent.
- Set my self up as central point of contact for all teams, a lot easier to deal with any issues that may arise this way.
- Gas boiler x 1 and pressurisation unit serviced by gas safe engineer.
- Fire alarm servicing booked in for October.
- Litter picked several times due to youths drinking and setting up bonfires.

Cemeteries

- **Barkby Road** - New COSHH cabinet supplied and all cleaning materials all locked away now. This is stored in room off the chapel. Health & Safety compliant. All cleaning utensils moved into maintenance office to clear out the room. Sanitiser station set up in chapel and the toilets.

- 2 x sets of keys cut for friends of Barkby Road cemetery.
- New Maintenance contract set up along with works specification. All signed and relevant checks completed for Barkby Road cemetery.
- All relevant risk assessments completed and supplied to contractor.
- 2 x Gas heaters serviced by Gas safe engineer.
- Signage put up regarding uneven surface be careful
- Chapel now opened Tues, Wed, Thur.
- Attendance for each funeral is now in place and toilets managed re: Covid-19
- Risk Assessments reviewed and attendance capped at 30 for outside in line with guidance.
- **System & District** – Sanitiser stations and signage put up regarding social distancing. Access to toilets now available for persons attending funerals.
- Risk Assessments reviewed and attendance capped at 30 for outside in line with guidance.

Parks

- New Temporary Estates Staff member recruited – Josh
- New Estates Staff Job description completed
- Ordered slabs, cement to fit benches that have been donated. There has been a problem ordering slabs due to stock levels. We hope to get all the benches fitted over the next month.
- All Park checks completed weekly.
- Deville Park – Issue with litter, now all ok. Maybe due to children being off school. Strimmed all weeds on cycle track. Repaired fence to Brook.
- Central Park – Have replaced light fitting in estates garage due to old one letting in water due to condensation. This was raised on H&S audit. This was vastly cheaper than insulating the metal roof.
- We have been running with only 1 x estates staff for the last 2 months due to sickness, we now have Josh, so we are starting to catch up on jobs for example maintain the church yard. We have also helped to assist at Barkby cemetery since reducing the maintenance contract hours.
- Melton Road toilets now opened, extra cleaning in place and all covid-19 signage put up. Risk assessments completed.

Senior Administrator

Allotments

I have recently arranged for two new people to take on available plots at the allotments. After the allotment inspection on 12 August I sent out eleven warning letters to tenants of plots that were not up to satisfactory standard, the letter contained an additional line asking them to let us know if the reason for them not attending to their plots was COVID-19 related. Five responded that it was COVID-19 related, one resigned and a further four have not responded yet. Those that didn't respond at all have been sent second letters.

Cemetery

There had been several enquiries about ash and burial plots before last Council in July, at Barkby Road Cemetery, some had required in-depth research to establish ownership. One of these has now booked an ash interment at Barkby Road on 25 September. Two deed transfers were carried out in August. There have been a further four enquires, one of which has been sent the risk assessment and application form to organise an ash interment. I have sent all the funeral directors we deal with a copy of the updated risk assessment which limits attendees at 30 for an outdoor interment and noting the responses on a spreadsheet.

Facilities

I have been in touch with some existing regular room hirers to update them of with the room limits at the Community Centre, which changed on 14 September.

Football

I have been issuing football teams with weekly invoices for pavilion staffing. These have to be paid in advance and I am checking to make sure this happens. I will issue the pitch hire invoices on a monthly basis.

Telephone System

I am liaising with the new provider to agree a start date.

Photocopier Lease

I continue to work on the photocopier lease quotations, the current one expires in January 2021, a booklet finisher option is available to produce booklets, so this option is now being explored for printing Syston Topic.

Working from Home

I am attending the office more frequently as required, but still also working from home.

Assistant to the Town Manager Report

Allotment Inspection Spreadsheet

I have been working on a spreadsheet for Catherine to assist with the allotment inspections that take place over the year. This is to help them to establish who has had first letters and who hasn't as well as other details on plots whilst they are going round the allotments.

Room Bookings

Since the rules have changed on social gatherings, we have been getting more and more requests for room bookings which I have been dealing with. A few U3A groups have returned as well as yoga classes.

Social Media & Policy

I have been working on a Social media policy for users of Syston Town Council's social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) this will assist in knowing what is appropriate and what is inappropriate when it comes to people commenting and sharing our posts.

I have also been keeping up to date with our social media pages. Making sure that all messages are dealt with and sharing relevant content for residents.

Syston Topic

I have started the next edition of the Syston Topic as there are a few things we can put in. If anyone has any suggestions of what we can include in this issue or in future issues, please send me an email.

Training

I took part in a Report Writing Webinar with SLCC on Friday 4th September which was very helpful and informative. I gained 1 CPD point and a certificate for attending.

Office Working

Due to the amount of room booking enquiries and other enquiries coming through to the office, I will be working in the office full time from 21st September 2020.

Assistant to the Town Manager