

Town Clerk's Report November – December 2021 For Information**Outdoor Maintenance Work**

Throughout the month, in addition to the Dog Waste collection service, the Outdoor Maintenance Team have been working on:

- Clearance of leaves and moss on steps and paths within the wards
- Removal of litter and waste from grit bins within the wards
- Cutting back overgrowth at the Randall Memorial
- Cleansing BTC street furniture
- Graffiti cleaning and clearance of overgrowth around the base of BTC picnic benches and seating at Newbridge Fields
- Ruhamah burial ground litter pick and path clearance
- Clearing debris from the guttering around the Town Hall

Winter plants have been ordered and the planters on the 'Welcome to Bridgend' signs will be cleared of weeds and re-planted this week.

Staff Resource

Unfortunately, due to illness and bereavement there have been office staff shortages across the team throughout the month. Thanks is extended to all staff that have helped cover other roles and who continue to provide cover and support during these difficult times.

BTC Newsletter - 3rd Edition

The third edition of the Town Council newsletter has been distributed and we have received positive feedback from members of the public.

Christmas activities

The Christmas Elf HQ was set up at Carnegie House at the end of November and the Bridgend Reindeer Trail is now up and running. Due to exceptionally high winds, one of the illustrated panels blew off the railings at Carnegie House and is badly damaged. A quote was sought to replace the board however the replacement could not be arranged until next week. In consultation with the Chair of Finance Committee, it is recommended that a replacement panel is not arranged.

Unfortunately, due to storm Arwen, the Town Centre Christmas event planned for Saturday 27th November was cancelled. The budget allocated by BTC for this event will therefore not be spent.

Website Project

Work has been on-going to prepare content for the development of the new Town Council website which will be launched next Spring.

Town Hall Project

Work has been ongoing on revised priorities for the refurbishment works to the new Town Hall. Several meetings have been held to review information provided by the architect and Quantity Surveyor and a recommendation is included for consideration under agenda item ** along with revised estimated timescales for this project.

Draft Budget for 2022/23

A significant amount of work has been carried out this month to prepare the forecast spend to 31st March 2022, calculating forecast general reserves for the end of the financial year and preparing a draft budget for 2022-23 for Council consideration. Thanks is extended to the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO for her careful and persistent work to ensure that these documents are provided to Council on time given the difficult staffing situations we have faced.

HMS Urge

We have received advance notice that the HMS Urge Memorial event originally planned for April 2020 in Malta has been officially rescheduled for 27th April 2022 to mark the 80th anniversary of the loss of the HMS Urge submarine. We have been advised that a formal invitation from Heritage Malta and Mr Francis Dickinson will be extended to Bridgend Town Council in the new year to request attendance at this event to represent the town of Bridgend.

Christmas break

As agreed previously by Council, staff have been permitted to take an extended Christmas break to use up annual leave balances. For this reason, the staff office will be closed at the end of day on Tuesday 14th December and will re-open on Tuesday 4th January 2022.

Provision has been made for the dog waste collection service to continue during the Christmas period.

As we are approaching the end of the calendar/leave year I would like to remind Council of The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. These regulations enable workers to carry holiday forward where the impact of COVID-19 means that it has not been reasonably practicable to take annual leave in the leave year to which it relates. This means that the untaken amount of annual leave may be carried forward into the following 2 leave years.

Upcoming Town Council meetings

The next monthly meeting of Bridgend Town Council is scheduled to take place remotely on Monday 17th January 2022 at 6.30pm.

A calendar of meetings for 2022 will be produced and circulated in the New Year.

Finally, the staff and I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New year

Leanne Edwards
Town Clerk