



OYEZ!

January 2015

News from your Town Council

Vonnie Chamberlain MBE

The council formally congratulated Mrs Chamberlain on her award of MBE in the New Year's honours list in recognition of her long service to the local community.

Civic Awards and Service 2015

Civic Awards will be presented at this year's Civic Service to Mary Bratt and to Graham Page for their service to the community. There will also be a special award to Vonny Chamberlain to mark her retirement after 40 years as Axbridge's Town Crier.

The service will be held at 3.00pm on Sunday 1st March in Axbridge church and afterwards in the Town Hall. All residents are invited to this celebration of the community.

Sea Cadets

The Axbridge Sea Cadets, which began operating under the sponsorship of Weston-super-Mare, is to become an independent unit, having passed a series of inspections. Membership is growing, and it is about to launch some specialist courses. It is also planning to start a junior section.

Quarry blasting

District Councillor Mrs Scott had received complaints regarding a large blast from Callow Quarry on 26th November 2014. The quarry had been informed. Mrs Scott will seek an update at a quarry liaison meeting in March.

Town maintenance contractor

The town maintenance contractor worked 6 hours in November and 16.5 hours in December. Tasks included:

- Litter clearing, strimming and hedge work on the Furlong
- Work on the Church Steps
- Assembly of new office furniture
- Litter removal from the car park

Hearing problem in Council meetings

A formal complaint was made to the council by a resident concerned that it was sometimes difficult for members of the public to hear what councillors are saying in meetings. The council undertook by trial and error to try to achieve improvement in a situation

made difficult by the shape and accoustics of the hall. It was suggested that the folding screen may be used to reduce sound from outside, that a notice be placed in the public area to encourage members of the public to indicate if they couldn't hear, with the Chairman checking on regular intervals that the public can hear, and experimenting with table layout and seating arrangements.

Christmas trees & fireworks

Council agreed a donation of £1,350 to Axbridge Sports and Social Community Association, being the cost of the town Christmas Trees, with a further donation of £100 being made towards the cost of the New Year fireworks.

Shredding of Christmas trees

Council thanked Richard Tilley of *A1 Gardening & Tree Surgery* for shredding the town Christmas trees again this year. It is possible that this service may be extended to residents next year in return for a small donation to charity.

Recycling litter

Further concern has been expressed at the litter left by the recycling contractors and that boxes were not put back in front of the properties they were taken from. The Clerk was asked to contact Somerset Waste Partnership accordingly. Residents with concerns are advised to complain to Sedgemoor Council at:

customer.services@sedgemoor.gov.uk

or 0845-408 2543

LED lighting

The new LED street lighting has been generally well received. Some lamps still need to be replaced, but the council was assured that this will be done. Lighting of The Square is still being discussed. A new lamp is to be installed by the bench in West Street. The change to LED lighting will result in a considerable reduction in running costs.

Police

A new beat manager, PC Tracey Stiles, has been appointed for the Cheddar Valley area.

Reservoir update

It was reported in the last Oyez that full planning permission had been granted for Bristol Water's proposed second reservoir. Since then OFWAT, the water industry regulator, has disallowed the expenditure for the first phase of construction. The future of the project is now unclear, but no work can be expected in the foreseeable future.

The well at the Church Steps

The well under the Church Steps which was blocked is now flowing freely. Its source is still uncertain, and further researches will continue.

Use of the community stall

Council considered draft guidelines which had been prepared in conjunction with the market management on the uses of the community stall at the Farmers' Market. Whilst a little concern was expressed that the rules may be too restrictive, the intention was to have some control over the use of the community stall so that the spirit of the market could be maintained, giving customers and traders the chance to meet and to enjoy products and to avoid conflict. The guidelines could be reviewed in light of future experience. A copy of the guidelines would be given to those using the stall.

Precept for 2015/16

As reported in the November Oyez! the Council has set a budget for 2015/16 with an increase of 1.34% from last year, but awaited notification of Sedgemoor's grant contribution before confirming the precept. The grant figure has now been received and deducting it from the budget requirement leaves the need for a Council Tax precept of £70,433 for the coming tax year.

Speeding

There is continuing concern about driving speeds in the town. The possibility of using the Speed Indicating Device, currently used from time to time in Cheddar Road and the by-pass, in one of the streets in the town centre with a 20 mph limit is to be investigated.

Care of the War Memorial area

Many thanks to the Axbridge Guides group which is taking on the task of looking after the area around the War Memorial.

Carnival consultation

At the request of the Carnival Committee the Council is to hold an informal meeting with them to understand their concerns about the future of Axbridge Carnival.

Free dog chipping

The Dogs Trust is offering free micro-chipping of dogs on Thursday 26th February from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm in the car park of Winscombe Community Association - look for the Winscombe Thursday Market signs. No appointment necessary - just turn up.

Other items

Some other items discussed or mentioned at Council in December and January included:

- Membership of the Somerset Playing Fields Association and the Society of Local Council Clerks
- A grant to the Teenage Cancer Trust
- The Town Clerk's hours and pay award
- Use of the maces by the council
- Location for the Honours Board in the Town Hall
- Local implications of the Hinkley Point C plans
- 'Drifting' of cars on the Furlong car park
- Yellow line enforcement
- Bollard repair at Townsend and The Square
- Pot holes on the A371

Residents are invited to attend Town Council meetings to raise issues or just to listen. Matters may be brought to the Council's attention via the Town Clerk.

**Meetings are usually held in the Town Hall on the 3rd Monday each month at 7.30 pm
The next meeting will be on Monday 16th February.**

The agenda is displayed in advance outside the Town Hall and on the website

The Town Clerk, Vicky Brice, can be contacted by phone or e-mail:

07884 264033 vicky.brice@axbridge-tc.gov.uk

or by post to PO Box 1184, Axbridge, BS26 2WJ

The Town Council's website is at: www.axbridge-tc.gov.uk