



OYEZ!

January 2017

News from your Town Council

Dates for your diary

Monday 20th February -

Sedgemoor Local Plan consultation (see below)

3.00 - 6.00pm Drop-in event

6.00 pm Public meeting

Sunday 26th February -

Civic Service (see below)

3.00pm in Axbridge Church

Monday 13th March -

Annual Assembly

8pm in The Town Hall (This is a meeting of the electorate, not a council meeting).

Monday 8th May -

Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making

7.30pm in The Town Hall

Civic Service

The annual Civic Service will be held at 3pm on Sunday 26th February in St John the Baptist Church, and afterwards in the Town Hall. All residents are invited to this celebration of the community.

A Civic Award will be presented at the service to Wendy Mace in recognition of her service to the community which has included acting, directing and backstage work for Axbridge Community Theatre, running Young ACT which has given opportunities to many young people, work with the Christingle performance and the Blackberry Carnival.

Also at this service there will be a presentation of Honorary Freeman to Mr James A Lukins in recognition of his many years of outstanding service to the community.

Town Crier

Axbridge has a Town Crier again. The post, vacant since the retirement in 2015 of Vonnie Chamberlain and the sad death of Brian White, her intended successor, has now been taken on by Nigel Scott.

Youth Award

Council has agreed in principle to establish an annual youth award to mark outstanding achievement. Details are to be further considered by committee.

Sedgemoor Local Plan

All planning authorities have to produce a local plan which sets out all the policies intended to guide future planning and land-use decisions. Sedgemoor District Council is about to undertake a six week public consultation on its new local plan which is intended to be the basis of planning up to 2032, and will replace the existing document known as the Core Strategy.

Axbridge is currently working to produce a Neighbourhood Plan which gives the local community the opportunity to influence planning and development in the town, but this cannot conflict with Sedgemoor's Local Plan. This means that the Local Plan is a very important document which will shape the future of Axbridge for years to come.

The proposed Local Plan document will be available on the Sedgemoor website from January 30th, and a copy will also be available in Cheddar Library. There will be a public drop-in event in Axbridge Town Hall from 3.00-6.00pm, on Monday 20th February, followed by a presentation on the plan to both Council members and residents, giving an opportunity for questions and answers. Residents are encouraged to attend and respond to the consultation.

Streets of Axbridge project

The Council has agreed to a proposal from Axbridge Community Partnership that the trial changes made to the Square, and in place now, should remain. Members considered a summary of the activities undertaken during the process to ascertain support and noted that the other organisations had wished for the changes to remain.

Christmas & New Year

Father Christmas Night and the New Year festivities were a great success and there was a lot of support in removing the trees. Council expressed thanks to the Sports and Social Association for its hard work with the trees and lights, to the manager of The Lamb for his support in the provision of the excellent fireworks, and to Richard Tilley of A1 Gardening and Tree Surgery for his time shredding residents' Christmas trees.

Road works due

Please keep a watch for road signs appearing at short notice to give notice of the following work:

Moor Green is due to be resurfaced in the week commencing 13th February 2017. Residents are asked to move their cars from this area, to enable the works to take place.

Meadow Street - a further closure is expected to complete repairs in Meadow Street

Council vacancy

Members noted that Councillor Trotman had offered her resignation with effect from 17th January 2017. Members expressed their appreciation for all her hard work, valuing her input, both as a councillor and twice as Mayor.

Council resolved that the Clerk notify Sedgemoor District Council to declare the vacancy and, if appropriate, proceed with the co-option process in due course.

Broadband provision

A representative of BT gave council members a presentation about problems with broadband provision in the Town. The Council will maintain dialogue with the officer to try and establish options for extending superfast broadband for areas of the Town unable to access it.

Hinkley Point

County Councillor Mrs Dawn Hill advised the Council that Axbridge and Cheddar were now included in the area affected by the Hinkley Point development. This might

enable progress in a search for funding for road improvements at Townsend, Cross and the Shipham Hill 'Magic Roundabout'.

Houlgate Way planning application

Council used an extended consultation date of 16th December to reiterate its objections to the planning application for land south of Houlgate Way and also to list further objections based on recent surveys and responses which had been placed online. The points raised included layout proposals, maintenance costs which might devolve onto the council, the odour baseline assessment and a number of environmental studies.

This matter is now under consideration by Sedgemoor District Council. Should the application be referred to the Development Control Committee, the Clerk would register the Mayor, or another Councillor if unavailable, to address the Committee on behalf of the Council.

2017-18 Budget

At its December meeting Council received the fifth draft of the budget which had been prepared taking into account views expressed at the last meeting and more up to date estimates. The budget was approved and the precept for 2017-18 agreed as £76,500

Open Spaces Maintenance

The Council is seeking quotes for open spaces maintenance works within the town (grass and hedge cutting, litter picking and boundary maintenance). A schedule of works and further details are available from the Clerk (*contact details below*). The deadline for receipt of quotes is Friday 24th February 2017.

Axbridge Town Trust

A vacancy exists for a Trustee on the Town Trust. An election will take place on Monday 6th February at 7.15pm in the Church Rooms. Anyone interested should contact the Trust Clerk for details - Alan Mortimore, 30 Mendip Close (732687 or alanmortimore@btinternet.com).

Rural crime initiative

New text number to combat rural crime - 81819

The police have launched a new text service to help prevent and detect rural crime. They are asking rural

communities to help by providing information and intelligence about suspected crime in their area. The new number will allow the public to text information directly to the Rural Crime Team, who will be able to assess and action the intelligence quickly and efficiently.

Fostering in Somerset

The County Council is looking for people from all walks of life to foster. Foster carers are needed for children of all ages and backgrounds. The Council offers excellent training and a competitive weekly fee that increases over time. Find out more about fostering in Somerset, read stories from real foster carers and book to attend an event - visit www.fosteradoptsomerset.org.uk, or phone 0800 587 9900.

Avian Flu

Because there have been outbreaks of avian Influenza (*bird flu*) a Prevention Zone was declared in December covering the whole of the UK at least to 28th February. Poultry keepers - whether on a commercial scale or simply a small backyard flock - are legally required to house them under cover or otherwise keep them separate from wild birds. Further information and advice for poultry keepers can be found at:

<http://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>

Other matters . . .

Other matters raised or discussed in Council in December and January include:

- Insurance of benches & bike racks in The Square
- Traffic management during the by-pass roadworks
- Membership of the Community Council for Somerset
- Police report
- Winding up of *The Voices of Axbridge*
- Maintenance, cleaning & locking of public conveniences
- Problems with street lighting
- Calendar of meetings for 2017
- Proposal for three-weekly refuse collections
- Review of council office accommodation
- Graffiti on Townsend flyover
- Donation to Sports and Social Association towards Christmas trees & fireworks

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 normally held in the Town Hall on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7.30 pm.
The next meeting will be on Monday 20th February at 7.30pm**

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

If you would like to respond to anything published in Oyez! you can do this by letter or e-mail to the Town Clerk or by going to the Council website and clicking on the 'Contact us' button in the left-hand menu