

Full Council Meeting – 5 October 2021

Report of Councillor Andy Sully – Environmental Services

It gives me great pleasure to present my report to Full Council on the varied activities of the Environmental Services Portfolio.

Parks and Open Spaces

Programme of work

The summer grounds maintenance programme is due to be completed in the coming weeks as scheduled. Summer bedding plants will be replaced with the winter bedding during September across all our parks.

Street Cleansing

Town Centre Pavement Cleaning

Worked commenced on power washing pavement areas in our town centres in September. This will be a three-month programme and will include Taunton, Wellington, Watchet and Minehead.



Litter and Dog Bins Replacement

Over 130 replacement bins to include recycling have now been ordered and are due to be delivered in December and January for installation. Communication with town and parish Councils and ward members will now start to agree the locations proposed in their areas.

Refuse (Somerset Waste Partnership)

- Collection Service Issues

Following a very challenging period and a six-week suspension of the garden waste service, SWP are now starting to see the household collection services returning to normal. Garden waste collections restarted on the 13th September. Customers were given an eight-week extension to their annual subscription as compensation for the service disruption. The underlying issue of driver shortage remains and is affecting most authorities across the country. Suez as the contractor have taken a number of initiatives to address the issue.

- RecycleMore

The new service will start being rolled out in the coming months to Taunton Deane with a service start date of the 1st November. The remaining SWT areas will be part of the fourth and final phase being rolled out in quarter four of 2021/22. The new kerbside service adds new materials to weekly recycling collections (household and food plastic pots, tubs and trays, food and drink cartons, small household batteries and small electrical items) and reduce residual waste collections to three weekly. This will both reduce the cost of the service and increase recycling rates.

East Quay Marina Wall – Watchet

Works to undertake the replacement of the central section of the East Quay Marina Wall, Watchet are now complete. The wall was completed in mid-August, the section of road by the new wall on the East Quay will be constructed soon, following which the top of the sheet piled wall will be cut down to sit level with the road.

The project was managed by Kate Marks from the Environment team.



Other Projects

We have secured a £50,000 grant from the Somerset Rivers Authority to undertake preliminary works in connection with the replacement/repair of the **Dulverton Weir and Leat**. These are historic structures which are owned by SWT and in need of repair. We are working closely with the Dulverton Weir and Leat Trust to seek funding for the works. This year we are undertaking ecology surveys and updating designs and costs in preparation for restoration works in 2022/23 if funding can be secured.

A tender for repairs to an area of the River Bank on the **Donniford River at Sampford Brett** was posted on the Council's procurement portal in July 2021. It is anticipated that this work – to strengthen a riverbank damaged by scour - is required

to prevent the possibility of flooding in the village and will be carried out in the late summer of this year and be funded entirely by the Somerset Rivers Authority.

The new Marina Operator (The Marine Group) is making significant progress in removing silt from the **Watchet Marina** through Water Injection Dredging with approximately one third of the vessels in the Marina now able to float at low water as a result of the actions. This is real positive progress given that the Marine Group only started in April 2021.

I would like to give my personal thanks to all the officers in the various teams that make up the portfolio who are delivering exceptional services in challenging times.