

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No. 12

meeting date: 7 January 2020  
 title: GENERAL REPORT  
 submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
 principal author: MARK BEVERIDGE, HEAD OF CULTURAL AND LEISURE SERVICES

### 1 PURPOSE

To update on developments in Community Services.

### 2 GRANTS FOR CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Grants Working Group met on 7 November 2019 to give consideration to the applications received under the Christmas Lights Grant scheme. All parishes were reminded by email that these grants were available from the Council. The budget allocation was £1,100. The grants are paid out following proof of expenditure and are given to parishes purchasing lights to enhance their community. The working group made the following recommendations :-

PARISH/TOWN	GRANT £
Barrow	240
Gisburn	55
Slaidburn	50
Grindleton	189
Longridge	170
Clitheroe	396
	<b>1100</b>

### 3 REFUSE AND TRANSPORT MANAGER

A candidate has accepted the above post with an expected start date of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020. He already has achieved the WAMITAB qualification and he will be able to expedite the Council's Waste Management Officer achieving the same qualification. Training for the Transport Manager qualification will continue with a view to the associated exam being taken as soon as possible. In the meantime the Council is still covered by the part time transport manager.

#### **4 KESTOR LANE PLAY AREA**

This play area will be significantly enhanced in 2020, as a result of planned investment from the Borough Council. Although all play areas are inspected regularly and maintenance work is carried out based on these and insurance inspections, capital investment on new equipment is based on the amount of budget available once this essential work has been carried out.

To try and improve some of the largest and busiest play areas it is proposed to retain budget from one year to add to some from the following year, thus allowing a scheme to be drawn up which add much better play value for children, than would be the case by simply trying to occasionally adding s new piece of equipment.

As a result, Longridge will be the first to benefit from this strategic approach to investment, play equipment suppliers will be asked to draw up some schemes which fit with the existing equipment and the one which offers the best combination of quality, price and play value will be given the order.

Play equipment is notoriously expensive, due to the stringent test that it has to pass and the nature of the environment in which it has to survive. Therefore, even a small-scale scheme can cost tens of £1000s. nonetheless it is anticipated the new equipment will provide an enhanced play experience for the local children.

#### **5 CASTLE GROUNDS WINTER WORK**

The winter period provides an opportunity for the Grounds Maintenance staff to carry work to improve our open spaces which is not possible during the growing season when keeping on top of the vegetation growth and planting takes precedence.

Last year a lot of work was done to open up areas of the Castle grounds which had become overgrown and remove some of the dead trees and bushes. A new hedge was also planted along from the bandstand.

This year that work has continued, with an extensive thinning of the banking above the field area, to allow better views from the paths above and below the field and also from the labyrinth. A number of self-seeded and dead shrubs have been removed. The response from people passing as the work has been undertaken has been very favourable. Some selective replanting of shrubs will be undertaken to give some all year round vegetation colour to the area.

#### **6 CONCLUSION**

Further developments will be reported to future committees.

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For further information on Grants for Christmas Lights,  
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Community Services / 7.1.20 / MB / KR