

District Council report – Cllr Lindsay MacDougall. **December 2019**

BEGINS:

I have attended a number of meetings including two Planning Board meetings this month.

At the **Neighbourhood Services** meeting the renewal of the **Idverde contract** was discussed. South Somerset have now taken the service in house. As a borough council, Glastonbury used to employ 14 ground workers; Mendip District Council (MDC) now use 46 over the whole Mendip area for all grounds maintenance. The MDC glyphosate licence is to be reviewed next year. Currently MDC supply 800m worth of road/pavement hand-weeding in Glastonbury to complement the Foamstream coverage.

A paper re. **Electric Charge points** in car parks will be going to Cabinet next month (January), including whether to include fast-charge points. Tescos in Shepton currently have a rapid-charge (50kW) point, which takes half an hour for a full charge. Tescos in Glastonbury, Wells, Midsomer Norton, Yeovil and Burnham have also installed charge points in the last couple of months. The idea is that drivers should be within 30 minutes of a rapid-charge point. Trickle chargers (7kW, full charge achieved in 8 hours) cost a third of the price at £18-20,000; the grants for this at the moment are limited to the workplace and residents may also apply for the installation of a charger at home (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plug-in-vehicle-grant-portal-guidance>)

Re. **Trees**, MDC is due to carry out a survey of its trees in 2022/23 in Glastonbury. Mendip has 342 Ash trees which are endangered by Ash dieback disease, where a 20% survival rate is predicted. MDC has announced the planting of 100 tree saplings at Tor Hill Lane in Wells to coincide with National Tree Week.

I also attended a meeting of the **Leisure Board**. The Town & Village Green withdrawal document is with Fusion trustees awaiting signature, to happen simultaneously with signing the Fields in Trust agreement. It is expected that this will happen early next year. With the preservation of the whole cricket club ground now lined up, 'the door is open' to discuss further arrangements to revive the club.

Somerset County Council has now announced new dates for their **Climate Emergency Strategy 'Drop-ins'** organised by Somerset Climate Action Network. There are events in Yeovil, Taunton and Bridgwater and Shepton, where the event will be held on 15 February, 10am-4pm at the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council Offices, Cannards Grave Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5BT. The strategy will identify ways for Somerset to work towards being carbon neutral by 2030 and adapt to predicted climate change impacts. Open to residents, businesses, groups and anyone with an interest, the drop-ins will be a chance to discuss the initial thoughts of the five councils set out in a 'framework' document. They will be seeking feedback on whether the work so far focusses on the right areas, covers everything it should and whether there are actions that communities could take forward themselves. An online survey will also be available between 6 January and 19 February.

These events were initially due to take place before Christmas but have been rescheduled for the New Year due to the restrictions on local authority publicity and consultation in the run-up to elections.

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