

Appendix 5:



**Information Round-up for
Members – May 17, 2017**

Compiled by Claire Faun, Corporate Relations Manager

Housing, Health and Wellbeing

Environmental Health

The Food Safety Team completed 100% of their scheduled food inspections at the end of March for 2016/17. This was approximately 700 inspections for the year. This is a significant workload and a very positive achievement.

The Food Team have also agreed to enter into a Primary Authority agreement with Somerset Larder Ltd to provide assured food safety regulatory advice to the business for all of their premises including the facilities at Hinkley Point C. The advice will be provided on a chargeable basis. A second local business is also seeking to enter into a Primary Authority agreement with the food team.

In terms of reducing nuisance from seagulls, a programme of gull egg replacement is being carried out during May in Bridgwater and Highbridge, whereby eggs from nests are replaced with false eggs to reduce bird numbers and reduce the aggressive gull behaviour associated with protection of their young. This is having the desired impact of reducing the number of nests in the town centre area.

Following service of an enforcement Notice, a verminous empty house in North Petherton has been accessed with the owner's permission so that treatment, pest proofing and clearance can be carried out. The owner has been persuaded to investigate the options available under the Councils Empty Homes Strategy.

Environmental Protection Officers have been particularly busy responding to consultations from Development Management on a range of developments including housing, hotels, entertainment, retail, a school and ongoing EDF requirements. It is also a busy time responding to licensing consultations to ensure adequate but fair controls are put in place on likely noise from premises wishing to hold outdoor events.

Dog wardens have been actively patrolling and have issued fixed penalty tickets.

Licensing

There have been several Licensing Panel Hearings triggered by representations that were subsequently cancelled because agreement was reached between the applicants and objectors. These objections were received from a range of bodies including EHOs, Police and local residents. This demonstrates the system is working well.

Simon Bawler has joined the Licensing Team from Community Safety and is undergoing the requisite training.

The Licensing Manager has been undertaking joint visits to all Gambling Operators in the district with an officer from the Gambling Commission, and this has been very beneficial in developing a partnership approach to this sector.

Growth and Infrastructure

Huntspill Enterprise Zone – The S106 has been finalised and awaits completion of ecology reports taking place on site. It is anticipated the work will finish by June and a decision notice will be issued.

£4.12m has been secured from GD3 fund towards building an access road to the site. SDC is now working closely with SCC, the Local Enterprise Partnership and site owners on developing a business case.

Once the decision notice has been issued, a Compulsory Purchase Order process for the land needed for delivery of the access road will start. SDC and landowner are working with Bevan Brittan preparing for the Compulsory Purchase Order – this process is estimated to take around 12 months to complete.

The Final Implementation Plan has been submitted to Department of Communities and Local Government.

The order has been laid before Parliament in March and Huntspill Energy Park has become an operational enterprise zone as of 1st April 2017.

SDC is working with the landowner and the Local Enterprise Partnership on marketing of the site, which is already generating some interest.

Hinkley Point C – Works are progressing with approximately 1,900 workers on site. Work is continuing on the construction of the jetty and the on-site campus. Early site enabling works are taking place on the accommodation campus on Bath Road (BriA).

The Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership campaigns #Secret Somerset and 'Wild West' are being well received.

Accommodation – Officers are aware of a number of caravan sites being occupied and or considered by EDF Energy as well as a number of hotels and B&B businesses. The planning team are assessing sites and are working with EDF to 'way find' workers to the most appropriate locations or take enforcement action. An approach to accommodation / caravan / tourism management was considered at DM committee.

EDF Energy will produce a leaflet to advertise accommodation options and will encourage owners to ensure they have the appropriate consents and licenses in place.

Further planning applications are to be expected and each will be considered on their own merits.

CIM project update: Bridgwater Town Centre Bid

Bridgwater Independent Retailers Training Scheme – A four year programme of business support to independent retailers / traders in the town centre. They have given the scheme the name Bridgwater Independent Retailers Training Scheme (BIRTS). As of the end of March they had visited 156 of the 185 businesses identified within the town centre to benefit from the scheme.