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WEEKLY COLUMN – 08 October 2020

Having recently been joined by two new councillors, change is once again afoot at Shepton Mallet Town Council. For those of you not familiar with the ways of the council, it's important to know that a lot of council business actually takes place during committee meetings rather than full council meetings. A committee is formed by a sub-group of councillors who have delegated authority to make decisions regarding particular areas. Every aspect of council business should have a home within a particular committee. Some of the committees serve very specific purposes such as the Collett Park Management Committee which, as you will have guessed, is responsible for the management of our park. Other committees have quite broad remits, such as our Open Spaces committee which until now has been responsible for everything from the location of bins, to community projects, from signage, to tourism and more. It was recently decided at a full council meeting that this committee should be restructured alongside the creation of a new committee.

There are now two new committees with more specific areas of responsibility: People and Promotion Committee, and Place-Making and Protection Committee. The names correspond to the areas of priority identified in our Town Plan which was adopted earlier this year. Broadly, the People and Promotion Committee now has responsibility for things such as promoting our town, its heritage and culture; supporting and working with local clubs and societies; developing opportunities for volunteering and working closely with those groups who do charitable and community-focused work locally. On the other hand, the Place-Making and Protection Committee has responsibility for managing our town's physical infrastructure; improving the appearance of our town centre and protecting both its heritage and (importantly) its environment. By creating a new committee and splitting up the Open Spaces committee, we hope this will enable councillors to give more attention to the areas of responsibility in the two new committees. As ever, members of the public are welcome to attend committee meetings and all meetings are currently being held online. To find the details and agenda for upcoming meetings, please visit the town council website under 'Council info' and 'Meetings and Agendas'.

Finally, as most of you will know, we were sad to miss our floral displays on market cross this year because of the pandemic. We decided to think of a different way of bringing some colour and cheer to our town centre instead. We approached the team from the Rubbish Art Project (best known for the Art Bank) and commissioned them to design a series of public art works. We won't reveal the theme just yet but residents should be able to 'flock' to the town centre this weekend where there may be some 'clamour' when the 'charm' of the display is seen by all. No more of that now, we promise...

Until next week!

NOTES TO EDITORS

Shepton Mallet Town Council, Town Clerk – Ms Charlotte Starkie
Shepton Mallet Town Council Chairman – Councillor Edric Hobbs