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KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- 2023/062

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| Committee:- | Council |
| Date:- | 13 th December 2023 |
| Author:- | Martin Hammond, Town clerk |
| Report Title:- | Town Planting and Flower Displays |
| Wards Affected:- | William Knibb |

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval to pay for the continuation of the town planting and flower displays.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to agree a budget of £28,000 for town planting schemes as set out in this report, with a review of the service by September 2024.

3. Information

3.1.NNC has decided to disinvest in the provision of flower displays on highway sites in town centres across their area. They will continue to provide flower and planting schemes in parks and open spaces, and will maintain the new planters in Kettering town centre, which are filled with perennials. This change comes into effect on 1st April 2024 and will impact other towns. The displays in Kettering are the most extensive in North Northamptonshire and reflect the legacy from the previous KBC. They are very popular with the public, and the Town Council receives (and passes on) a large number of complements from individuals every year, on top of those which presumably go direct to NNC.

- 3.2. On the basis that these displays enhance the town centre, members agreed in principle to include a sum in next years' draft budget, in order to continue the service, subject to this report being submitted and a way forward agreed.
- 3.3. The service costs NNC £26,700 for Kettering, which includes materials, plants, watering costs, and associated management and administrative time. The following table shows the extent of the service.

| Feature | Number | Price (£) | Total (£) |
|------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Baskets | 30 | 125 | 3750 |
| Barrier planters | 84 | 125 | 10500 |
| Towers/planters | 31 | 300 | 9300 |
| Beds | 9 | 350 | 3150 |
| | total | | 26700 |

Baskets are hanging baskets sited on lamp posts etc, planters are those troughs sited on highway railings, and towers are the multi-tiered displays included in various locations throughout the town centre.

Hanging baskets: baskets across this area are made up of multiple basket styles some are singular baskets while others are multi compartment styles thus meaning the total number of plants per basket will vary from basket to basket.

Planters: There are a plethora of planters populating Kettering town centre Some are 3 layered tower styles and other are singular box style planters. Plant numbers used will be appropriate for the style of planter that is used.

The schedule below shows the location of all these elements.



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| Location | Planter | Beds | Barrier planter | Hanging Basket |
|-----------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| Hospital Hill Roundabout | | | 62 | |
| Northampton Road | | 2 | 5 | |
| Bowling Green Road Pen beds | | 4 | | |
| Kettering town centre | 31 | 3 | | 27 |
| St Marys Road | | | 17 | 3 |
| Totals | 31 | 9 | 84 | 30 |

- 3.4. Planters and beds are filled each May and the plants are generally there until the end of October. There is watering regime or two or three times a week, depending on weather conditions. The displays each year are themed – 2024 will mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day and the Olympics.
- 3.5. There are no immediate capital requirements associated with the service; the planters, troughs and baskets are relatively new (2019) and will last at least five-ten years longer and the bowsers and other equipment are already in use by NNC for a variety of tasks.
- 3.6. It is suggested that the service is continued in 2024 by paying NNC to do what they have done to date, and to conduct a review, with them, in September 2024.
- 3.7. NNC would be happy to brand the baskets and troughs as “NNC and KTC working in partnership” and to retain the *Thanking the NHS rainbow* branding on those troughs on Northfield Avenue and Hospital Hill/Rothwell Rd. There is also the potential to put a joint entry into Britain in Bloom in 2024 and members are asked to endorse work on that as well.

4. Consultation and Engagement

The issue was one of the questions posed in the consultation in the Town Council's budget for next year. The responses are summarised in the separate report on this agenda but can be summarised as an overwhelming desire to retain the scheme.

A separate conversation with Just Pizza, who have installed 6 planters on land at Silver St has taken place, to understand how these planters are managed – this land is the subject of a pavement licence, although it has not been used as such, and runs the risk of being increasingly unkempt. A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

5. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

It is proposed that a budget of £28,000 be included in the Council's estimates for 2024/5, to allow for these costs and a small addition for contingencies and signage. This is £3000 more than was initially included in the draft budget for 2024-5.

6. Climate change implications

There is a cost to growing the plants and watering them each year in terms of carbon consumption but this is arguably offset by the horticultural benefit of the plants grown and consuming Co2, whilst producing oxygen

7. Policy Implications

The Council's policies include

- Supporting the town centre as a place to work, shop and visit
- Improving the environment
- Improving mental health and wellbeing

Background Papers

Material supplied by NNC