

**Emergency Expenditure
Town Council 15 December 2015**

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council approves the expenditure of £552.05 for ground reinforcing mesh to form a path from the lower part of the incline into Britten's Field

Introduction

1. The Town Council's Financial Regulations (No 3.5) permit the Town Clerk to authorise revenue expenditure in an emergency subject to a limit of £500.00 provided that such action is reported to the Chairman as soon as possible and the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

Contextual Information

2. It has been necessary for some time to fence off the steps between Britten's Field and the lower part of the Incline (near the canal) as the badgers have extended their sett into the area and there were a number of very large, deep holes.
3. The route between the lower part of the incline and Britten's Field is well used, in particular by people walking dogs; as the steps were not available, people were walking up and down the slope a little higher up and cutting through a gap in the fence by the garage area
4. On 9 November 2015 an email was received by the Town Clerk, from a member of the public advising that they had slipped on part of the route.
5. The Town Clerk and Open Spaces Team were monitoring the ground condition on a regular basis. The area that had been cordoned off after the firework event recovered well with the grass quickly getting re-established however the route near the garages continued to deteriorate.
6. On 30 November, the contractor appointed to undertake the work to prevent further land damage by badgers telephoned the Town Clerk and asked her to contact Natural England regarding the licence to do the work as there were a couple of things Natural England would like to clarify and then they had indicated they would be prepared to issue a licence and the work could be done at the end of the week i.e. 4 December.
7. The Town Clerk telephoned Natural England who said they were prepared to issue the licence but wanted assurance regarding the Town Council's media handling proposals and also as the work would involve ground disturbance and given the recent wet weather what could be put in place to prevent walkers traversing the disturbed area until the ground dried out and settled.
8. The Town Clerk spoke to the Chair of the Open Spaces Committee and explained Natural England's concerns and the possibility of the work being done at the end of the week. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would investigate the cost and delivery time for obtaining grass matting.
9. The Town Clerk and Senior Open Spaces Warden agreed and measured the area where a matting path could be laid – approx 2 metres wide and 25 meters long.

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10. Three companies were contacted by telephone and the location / ground condition explained; they were asked to give their recommendation for a suitable product, prices and delivery times.
11. The product from Gridforce was selected for the following reasons:
 - Competitive price
 - No delivery charge
 - Delivery on the morning of 4 December
 - 10 year guarantee
 - Product suitable for walkers, wheelchairs and light vehicles
 - No special base needed
 - No special tools needed for installation
 - Simple dig, lay and backfill installation advised by supplier
 - Grass can grow through and be cut as usual
12. The quotation cost of the plastic paviors, as described above, was £552.05. The Chair of the Open Spaces Committee was advised of the cost and had no objection to the order being placed and the work to lay the path coinciding with the work to restrict the growth of the badger sett.
13. The order was placed on 9 December, the paviors were delivered on the morning of 11 December and work on the pathway commenced.

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For Further Information contact the Town Clerk, Tel: 01460 5219 or
email: town.council@ilminster.gov.uk