

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	Finance, Governance and Asset Management
Meeting date	9 January 2024
Report author	Cemetery and Outdoor Services Manager
Agenda item	10

Report on proposed storage unit

1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To inform committee of the council's position regarding storage and the budgetary requirements for these changes.

2. **Summary**

- 2.1 The town council's long-standing supplier of plants is facing uncertainty over the future use of their nursery and land at which a large amount of town council equipment is stored. The space is also used by the works team when preparing floral displays. With the town council's storage units already at capacity it is necessary to seek solutions elsewhere.

3. **Action required and recommendations**

- 3.1 Members are requested approve the increase in budget to enable these changes and the continuation of the service provided by the outdoor services team.

4. **Link to strategic plan and objectives**

- 4.1 The outdoor services team's activities impact positively on the council's four key objectives.

5. **Background**

- 5.1 The nursery that has supplied Abingdon with floral displays for many years may lose their nursery space at the farm where they're based. Without them having any other land to move onto this will leave us with a problem going forward. The nursery has very kindly, without charge, stored around 250 tubs/baskets of various sizes along with the various poles, brackets and spares needed for the displays. This is also where we tip several lorry loads of flowers at the end of the season

Item 9

and source our muck/compost for the beds and tubs. We have also used the polytunnels to bring on the displays before installing them to give an instant impressive display.

- 5.2 Moving forward, this Spring we will prepare for this by ordering in plants from a national supplier and using the nursery to plant the stored baskets, etc. The baskets etc will then be installed as soon as they are planted as is the norm in other towns. Beyond the Spring, we will need to have storage organised elsewhere as the tubs etc will likely not be able to be returned to the nursery.
- 5.3 The town council currently has no space elsewhere. Our yard at the cemetery is at full capacity with seasonal rotation of machinery already necessary.
- 5.4 We rent a storage unit for machinery and equipment that is at full capacity as is the small, rented yard on Stert Street that is used for event road closure signage, cones and barriers.

6. **Key information and options**

- 6.1 My recommendation to the Environment and Amenities Committee (12 September 2023, minute E43/23) was to budget for the rental of one large unit/yard in or close to town that will house all of the above equipment in one location with space to receive delivery of flowers and carry out the necessary planting up.
- 6.2 The committee resolved to add £24,000 to the 108 Property budget to enable the rental of a new space.

7. **Climate change/green implications**

- 7.1 Some aspects of the works team activities will have an adverse effect whereas others have a positive effect.
- 7.2 All actions taken by the works team are carried out in a manner considerate of sustainability and environmental impacts.

8. **Financial/budget implications**

As described above.

9. **HR implications**

No additional HR implications from this report.

10. **Supporting papers and appendices**

None.