

## **BAWTRY TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2007**



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### Gainsborough Road Toilets

All will know of the closure of the above toilets since around November of last year (2006). This was first reported as being due to misuse, but later the true reason of finances was apparent from DMBC, with the closure of Tickhill public toilets also included. At a meeting with the Area Manager for DMBC, Ward Cllr Barbara Hoyle and the Town Mayor of Tickhill, we were advised by the Area Manager that a reduction in funding had been agreed as far back as April 2006. However, the implementation of such reduction had only taken place, conveniently, at the end of the DMBC in-house cleaning contract for Bawtry which was October 2006. Tickhill already arranged to have their public toilets opened and closed, for which they as a council paid.

The cost to DMBC for both toilets was around £11k p.a. and the Area Manager advised that monies had been taken out of the budget permanently as far as he was concerned, but that the ward councillors had a 'pot' of money which they could use for their agreed purposes. (Perhaps these monies were derived from the now defunct Community Fund).

A 500 name petition *Open our Loos*, with names from elsewhere in the borough and as far afield as Aberdeen and Australia, was presented to Bawtry Town Council and this will be sent to DMBC. DMBC has again agreed to look at the closures and report back, but declined to put a time scale on the situation. It may mean that, if all else fails, the re-opening of these toilets may come down to town council level for a decision. Currently, businesses are being disadvantaged by the closure in some respect, but help and co-operation for the future of the toilets is something which the businesses and the town council will have to work on together.

### Pay & Display (Market Hill)

The new five year contract with Excel commences in November of this year and, from November, Bawtry Town Council will receive a 50/50 split of all revenue from the pay and display car park. (Last year's income received by the town council was in excess of £27k based on the previous contract terms, ie a 25/75 split to the town council on revenue up to £65k and a 50/50 split thereafter for that year).

Between now and November market hill will be re-lined, all the disabled bays will be positioned together near to the pelican crossing, the bollards on the corner of Tickhill Road will be completed and the old sign on the car park to the front of the Crown Hotel will be removed. Unfortunately requests for it to be brought up to standard have not materialised. The long awaited 2 hour parking slot will come into operation with the new contract. It should be noted that the fruit and vegetable stall on market hill does not form part of the car park operation, and the long term leaseholders of this facility pay rent and rates for its use and have always been model tenants.

### Grass Cutting – Highways

The standard of grass cutting in Bawtry this season has been very poor compared with previous years. Residents may wrongly assume that this is the responsibility of the town council, but it is in fact the responsibility of DMBC. The floods will have caused problems with services but, nevertheless, residents of Bawtry have the same entitlement to such services as other parts of the Borough.

### Budgets

Bawtry Town Council will be conducting its budget exercise later in the year with a view to determining the precept for 2008/09. For the past four years this has remained constant at £26k as previously pledged. What would you like to see money spent on locally and what don't you think we should be spending it on? However, the point needs to be made that, without the pay and display income, the parish precept would be greatly increased.

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