

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

13th July 2022, 7.30pm

The Guildhall

Present:

Cllr Williams
Cllr Henderson
Martin Collins

Cllr Perkin
Cllr Thomas
Matthew Hatchwell

Cllr Reynolds
Cllr Jackson

In Attendance:

Louise Bareham (Town Clerk)

Public Participation

Both Cllr Jackson and Maria Newman expressed their thanks to Joseph Hannah for the Allotment Report and both Maria Newman and Chris Oswald-Jones praised the quality of the Report.

011. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Hook, Ali Corbel, and Grace Couch.

It was noted that Cllr Perkin was in attendance via Zoom and therefore would not be able to vote.

012. Declarations of Interest

None

013. Minutes and Matters Arising

Matthew Hatchwell advised under Development Updates regarding Stonebridge Pond; SBC had indicated they would contribute towards the cost of consultancy works rather than pay the entirety, as recorded in the minutes. In addition, regarding the discussion on wastewater, the wording should be "Concerns were raised regarding waste *from* moored boats".

Cllr Williams discussed the Hedgehog wheelie bin stickers. He had spoken to Wrens Hill Hedgehog Rescue, and they had smaller stickers available. The charity was struggling financially, and Cllr Williams proposed to put a motion for the next meeting regarding possible funding from the Council for these stickers.

Mr Oswald-Jones queried what the current position was on the Project Template. The Town Clerk advised the Policy & Resources Committee had put the Project Template on hold, but it would be revisited for the forthcoming budget.

Cllr Williams proposed, seconded by Cllr Jackson and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Environment Committee dated 8th June 2022.**

014. Development Updates

Community Gardening – Cllr Williams advised the South and South East in Bloom judging for Faversham had taken place. The criteria had changed to focus on sustainability and what efforts the Council were making towards increasing biodiversity. The judge had been impressed and the result would be awaited in September. The Community Gardeners should be commended for the high standard of work undertaken.

European Eels – The monitoring process had continued, very few eels were detected at Oare Marshes due to low water levels. Thorn Creak was more encouraging however due to the poorly installed eel flap, not all were getting through. Monitoring would continue until the end of July before a report would be drafted making recommendations.

Stonebridge Pond – A draft scope of work had been received. This would need to be finalised and funding would need to be sourced for the consultancy. Matthew Hatchell agreed to draft a letter to Swale BC and circulate it to Committee members for comments. Cllr Williams proposed, seconded by Cllr Reynolds and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED for the Committee to send a letter to Graeme Tuff of Swale BC to seek funding for the consultancy.**

Matthew Hatchwell suggested an update be provided at future meetings regarding water and wastewater. Cllr Williams agreed this should be included on the agenda for future meetings.

Following a discussion regarding nutrient neutrality, Cllr Thomas proposed, seconded by Cllr Williams it was **RESOLVED for the Mayor to send a letter to Swale BC regarding how the nutrient neutrality rules were applied within the area.**

015. Biodiversity Leaflet

Cllr Williams agreed to contact Mr Henderson to confirm a draft of the Biodiversity Leaflet. Cllr Perkin agreed to help with this process. Cllr Perkin advised South East Water had been a good source of free items that could be handed out as part of an event for Big Green Week. Cllr Williams agreed to send details of the Hedgehog stickers to the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk stated Hiyacar had requested a table in the Market Place as part of Big Green Week.

016. Watering of Planters

Cllr Thomas proposed, seconded by Cllr Reynolds, and being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to retrospectively agree the quotation of Amyethyst to water the planters during the Summer.**

017. KCC Pesticide Strategy

Cllr Perkin updated the meeting following the recent meeting with KCC. KCC were in a consultation phase due to the weeding control contract being up for renewal. KCC were consulting on the reduction in use of pesticides. KCC were looking at Faversham as being the subject of a trial to encourage residents to sweep within a 1.5m area of their property as this would help reduce the number of weeds and the need for pesticides.

Cllr Perkin agreed to circulate further information to members following the meeting.

018. Benches

It was agreed that Cllr Jackson would liaise with residents regarding any possible concerns regarding the possible placement of a bench in Flood Lane. It was agreed the Town Clerk would consult with Graeme Tuff of Swale BC and a quote would be obtained.

019. Bug Life

Cllr Williams agreed to provide further information to the Town Clerk in order for the Bug Count campaign to be promoted on the Council's social media platforms.

020. Allotment Update

Cllr Thomas provided an update on St Nicks Allotment. New timber fencing would be installed by the developer to help secure the site. A decision could then be made regarding the disposal of the existing metal fencing. The developer had also agreed to dispose of the builder's waste. The developer would be providing details of the management company who would be responsible for the general areas and looking after the gated access.

The Town Clerk referred to fencing at Stonebridge Allotments, the responsibility for the maintenance of boundary fencing was with the Allotment Association. A bridge on Stonebridge also required repair. Millfield required hedgerow to be cut back and the Town Clerk would be looking for the future new Facilities Manager and Joseph Hannah to be undertaking training to carry this out. Cllr Thomas proposed, seconded by Cllr Reynolds it was ***RESOLVED for the future new Facilities Manager and Joseph Hannah to undertake training to cut back the hedgerow.***

Cllr Thomas proposed, seconded by Cllr Williams it was ***RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to write to Stonebridge Allotment Association reminding them of their responsibility for the maintenance of boundary fencing.***

Items for Report

- 021.** Matthew Hatchwell raised issues concerning Glebe Hill and the potential impact from the proposed Solar Cycleway route. The Planning website now had details of the drainage plan. The risks posed from potential fires from battery energy systems and the water used to control such fires and how to contain the contaminated water needed consideration.

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