

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

6th December 2023, 7.30pm

The Guildhall

Cllr Perkin (Chair)	Present	Cllr Newman	Apology
Cllr Cook	Present	Martin Collins	Apology
Cllr Eyre	Present	Matthew Hatchwell	Present
Cllr Golding	Present	Simone Stolton	Present

In Attendance:

Louise Bareham (Town Clerk)

038. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Cllr Newman, and Martin Collins.

039. Declarations of Interest

None.

040. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

It was proposed by Cllr Cook, seconded by Cllr Eyre, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Environment Committee dated 19th October 2023.**

It was noted the Dog Poo Bag Dispenser in South Road had been relocated. The Town Clerk agreed to provide an update via email regarding this. In response to a query on the cost of Dispensers, the Town Clerk confirmed they were approximately £200 each.

Cllr Perkin thanked former Councillor Williams for his efforts as Chair of the Environment Committee.

041. Environmental Improvements for North Preston

Cllr Cook provided a summary of work he had carried out to date regarding consultation with residents on possible environmental improvements for the North Preston Estate.

The Town Clerk reported that the Facilities Manager, Stacey Woolf, had met with Rob Lucas, SBC Greenspace Technical Officer, and the response from SBC was attached to the Agenda as an Appendix.

Cllr Cook advised he would consult with the North Preston Residents Association to see if they would participate in the project in terms of maintenance and consult with the Facilities Manager. Cllr Perkin referred to the need to consider possible external funding sources and asked to be kept informed on progress.

042. Areas for Improvement

Trees in Central Car Park

Cllr Perkin agreed to write to SBC regarding ways to increase irrigation to the trees in Central Car Park. The state of the brick wall bordering the footpath, which was leaning, would also be included in the letter.

Rear of Poundland, Bank Street

The Town Clerk agreed to write to the landowner regarding clearing of the site and to consult with Poundland on the same issue. Cllr Cook suggested checking the original planning application, stating his belief that the land was always intended to be a community space.

Sheerways

The Town Clerk advised she had contacted Taylor Wimpey, and they had referred the issue to their South Eastern division. A response was awaited.

043. Graffiti

Draft Action Plan

Cllr Perkin referred to discussions she had had with SBC Cllr Rich Lehmann and Martyn Cassell, Head of Environment and Leisure, who had informed her the budget for graffiti removal had been reduced. Graffiti would be removed if it was deemed to be offensive and on public land.

The possibility of the Town Council using SBC's Graffiti Buster was discussed. The issue of insurance against damage to residential property needed to be confirmed and training for Facilities staff also needed to be addressed. There would also need to be some recompense to the Town Council for carrying out work on behalf of SBC.

It was agreed to check with SBC's Conservation & Design Manager, Simon Algar, regarding the possible use of graffiti proof paint on property within the Conservation area.

Cllr Perkin referred to work undertaken so far on graffiti on utility boxes, she had obtained permission to paint the box outside the former Natwest building but a map would need to be developed of boxes in the area, as permission had to be granted for each box. Cllr Golding suggested approaching the utility companies for possible funding.

In response from a point made by Cllr Golding, Cllr Perkin agreed to add consultation with local companies over graffiti removal on commercial property. It was agreed this could be included within the Discover Faversham Working Group.

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Golding, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Graffiti Action Plan, subject to the amendments discussed.***

FTC Staff responsibility for the removal of graffiti from private property and the charging scale & Draft Graffiti Policy

It was agreed to have further discussions with SBC regarding insurance and staff time and costs, before recommending the draft Graffiti Policy to the Town Council.

044. Siltation at Stonebridge Pond

Matthew Hatchwell provided a report on siltation at Stonebridge Pond. SBC had provided £10,000 towards the proposed £30,000 required for consultancy work.

It was agreed that Matthew Hatchwell would provide a summary of the project in order for letters to Kent Highways and Southern Water to be drafted.

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Cook, ***and on being put to the meeting it was agreed that up to £10,000 should be included in the budget towards this work for discussion with Full Council.***

045. Nutrient Neutrality

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Cook, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to send a follow up letter from the Mayor.***

046. World Heritage Nomination

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Cook, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to support RSPB in its idea of a World Heritage nomination for a UK East Coast flyway “serial site” that would include Oare Marshes and other wetlands along the Swale.***

047. Strategic Pillars and Ambitions

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

048. Environment Events 2024

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

049. Bat Boxes

It was agreed to reach out to the Kent Bat Group regarding appropriate places to locate bat boxes.

The remaining items were deferred until the next meeting.

050. Planters

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

051. Flooding

Cllr Perkin referred to her compiling of a list of flooding issues within the town and encouraged others to submit any issues they were aware of.

Cllr Cook queried whether the Town Council could bid for funding through the Flood Defence Grant in Aid. The Town Clerk agreed to look into the criteria.

052. Perry Court

The Town Clerk advised there was no update at the current time.

053. Budget 2024/2025

It was agreed to discuss the budget requirements at the budget meeting on 6th January 2024.

054. Allotments

The Allotments report was noted and received.

The Town Clerk reported that she had written to KCC twice regarding the issue with the wall at Stonebridge. KCC had offered to send Structural Engineer(s) to survey the issue, but this had not happened, and she had not received any response to a follow up email. Cllr Cook agreed to look at the wall and suggest possible Engineers, if required.

Cllr Perkin thanked the Facilities Manager for his report and work on the Allotments.

055. Items for Report

None.

Appendix One – Questions from Members of the Public

Victoria Dickensen provided an overview of Faversham Trees Week.

It was agreed that a Trees Policy should be developed in co-ordination with David Carey and the Tree Wardens. This would be added as an item for next meeting's Agenda and David Carey and Victoria Dickensen would be invited to attend.