

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

11th June 2025, 7.30pm
The Guildhall

Cllr C Martin	Present	Cllr Perkin	Apology
Cllr Coniam	Present	Cllr Saunders	Present
Cllr Cook	Absent	Cllr Rowlands	Substitution
Cllr Gibson	Present	Martin Collins	Present
Cllr Golding	Present	Matthew Hatchwell	Apology

In Attendance:

Louise Bareham (Town Clerk)
Stacey Woolf (Facilities Manager)

Public Questions

See Appendix One

177. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Cllr C Martin was nominated by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Coniam. Cllr C Martin was duly elected Chair.

Cllr Coniam was nominated by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr C Martin. Cllr Coniam was duly elected Vice Chair.

178. Non-Councillor Members

It was noted that Martin Collins and Matthew Hatchwell had yet to complete their application forms to be co-opted to the Committee.

179. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Perkin, substituted by Cllr Rowlands, and Matthew Hatchwell.

180. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Gibson DNPI as an allotment holder.

181. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

It was proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Coniam, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Environment Committee dated 11th June 2025.**

Cllr C Martin queried whether the dog waste bag dispensers were in place. The Facilities Manager advised they were on order. Artwork including the FTC logo had been received.

Regarding the bench near the Almshouses, the Facilities Manager advised he was awaiting a response from KCC. It was noted a bench was due to be

installed as part of the North South Walking Route and should be funded by KCC.

182. Terms of Reference

It was proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Rowlands, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Terms of Reference.***

183. Annual Action Plan

It was proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Golding, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Annual Action Plan subject to the additions of:***

- 1) Land at Water Lane – to include a consultation with local residents.***
- 2) Include an item on creating a community woodland.***

184. Facilities Manager's Update

Stonebridge Allotments – No issues currently. The waiting list stood at 74.

Millfield Allotments – There were currently 33 people on the waiting list. Some vacant plots were being prepared for potential tenants.

St Nicholas Allotments – The waiting list was starting to increase. There were some vacant plots on the site.

Perry Court Allotments – The new site was starting to take shape and plots were looking good. Knee rail fencing is due to be installed along the front of the site in June. It was anticipated this would take two weeks to complete.

There were currently 21 people on the waiting list at Perry Court.

The grass and walking trail required cutting and a lawn mower would need to be sourced for the job. The sourcing of a lawn mower was discussed.

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Coniam, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Town Clerk and Facilities Manager to source a lawn mower either through hire or purchase.***

It was agreed to include in the budget for next year the cost of purchasing a water bowser.

North Preston Allotments – Work was required on the noticeboard. Plot holders had requested the bonfire area be moved and two burning bins be put by the gate. The compostable toilet required some repair work.

The waiting list at North Preston stood at 5.

Pumpkin Competition – Four plot holders had signed up for the competition.

Benches – The bench at Bank Street had been removed and reinstalled following repair and the area having a general cleanup. The bench at Stone

Street was the next inline for restoration. A new bench was due to be installed at Stonebridge Pond, in memory of Anita Walker.

Cllr Saunders requested a planter be placed at the junction with Lower Road, Ospringe Road, and South Road. It was agreed that the Facilities Manager would investigate options for planters and check the size required.

185. Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Plan

Cllr Gibson referred to item 13 and advised the Town Council was already sourcing plant-based produce when providing food and drink at its events.

Under item 9 it was noted that there was engagement with young people through the sunflower competition and this provided a good starting point.

Cllr Saunders felt the Plan referred to the Plan's crossover with other Committees' work. The Town Council should be looking to reduce emissions such as from buildings and vehicles through the plan and it needed measurable outcomes and target dates to be included.

Martin Collins discussed the Committee could be more pro-active and go into schools to raise awareness.

It was proposed by Cllr Saunders, seconded by Cllr C Martin, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to set up a Working Group to update and develop the Climate and Biodiversity Annual Action Plan 2024-25. The Working Group to consist of the Chairs/Vice Chairs of other Committees, who also sit on the Environment Committee.***

186. Events

Updates were provided on:

- Sunflower Growing Competition
- Great Big Green Week – The Town Ranger was leading litter picks and environmental activities during the week.

Future Projects:

- A Climate Fresk
- Bat Walks
- Tree Giveaway in November

187. Stonebridge Allotments – Boundary Walls

It was noted that the Heritage, Buildings and Creek Committee were arranging a survey of the entire length of the boundary walls and were in dialogue with KCC regarding some damage that had taken place.

It was agreed that the Flood Lane stretch would be surveyed by Cllr C Martin and the Facilities Manager, and a report be provided at the next meeting.

188. Items for Report

- Tree Giveaway
- Nature Towns and Cities

- Nature area funding for schools

The meeting closed at 8:59pm

APPENDIX ONE

A member of the public noted that the large tree behind Multisave had shed some branches and these were awaiting removal.