

Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 13 August 2019

PRESENT: Councillor P. Leason in the Chair and
Councillors: T. Adamson, K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess, M. Green, M. Hatton, T. Kelt,
R. Kenney, J. Powell and R. Townsend

By Chairman's invitation: I. Fordham, Mrs J. Hood and J. Hickling

ABSENT: There were no Councillors absent

ENV20/009 **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

ENV20/010 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None received

ENV20/011 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

ENV20/012 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

That the minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on the 18 June 2019 (Minute Numbers ENV20/001 – ENV20/008), be approved as a correct record.

ENV20/013 **Item Referred from General Purposes Committee on 2 July**

The Sub-Committee considered an item raised at the Annual Public Meeting on 16 April, and referred from the General Purposes Committee on 2 July 2019 (Minute Number GP20/045).

Local estate agents are erecting 'For Sale' signs on Crown Meadow at the entrance to Trent Close and Trent Court in order to advertise homes to passing traffic on Stafford Street.

The Sub Committee confirmed that it did not wish to see 'For Sale' signs sited on Crown Meadow land.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council writes to all estate agents in Stone informing them that they do not have permission or authorisation to install 'For

Sale' signs on Crown Meadow land, at the entrance to Trent Close.

ENV20/014 **Working Groups**

The Sub Committee considered splitting the current Plastic Free Community and Environmental Issues Working Group into two groups to deal with 'Plastic Free Community' separately from 'Environmental Issues'

RESOLVED: That the Plastic Free Community and Environmental Issues Working Groups are split into two groups and that memberships are confirmed as:

Plastic Free Community/Single Use Plastics Working Group

Councillors: T. Adamson, Mrs A. Burgess, M. Hatton, T. Kelt, P. Leason and R. Townsend
Co-opted non Councillor Member: Mrs T. Lindop

Environmental Issues Working Group

Councillors: T. Adamson, Mrs A. Burgess, M. Hatton, T. Kelt, P. Leason and R. Townsend

ENV20/015 **Updates**

To consider updates on matters from previous Minutes:

a) Leaflet on the Meadow

Minute Number ENV19/005 & ENV19/018:

That the costs of producing an information leaflet be investigated by Councillor Leason, and the findings reported back to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that he is planning a meeting with the person working on the leaflets.

b) Community Planting Exercise

Minute Number ENV19/012 & ENV19/018:

That a community planting exercise is considered for the planting of new wild flowers on Crown Meadow

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that the Environmental Issues Working Group could look at the arrangements for organising a Community Planting Exercise.

It was suggested that advice is obtained from the arboricultural officer/tree officer at Stafford Borough Council.

It was agreed that an on-site meeting be arranged between Sub-Committee members, the Town Council's Grounds Maintenance

Contractor, a Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Officer and Stafford Borough Council's Biodiversity and Ecology Officer, to discuss the execution of tree and hedge planting, and organisation of a community planting exercise on Crown Meadow. A report would be provided to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

c) Tree & Hedge Planting – Charter for Trees Campaign

Minute Number ENV19/013 & ENV19/018:

That the location identified in Crown Meadow is recommended for tree planting and that this is undertaken through a community tree planting project

The Sub-Committee agreed that an on-site meeting would be arranged between Sub-Committee members, Grounds Maintenance Contractor and an officer of Staffordshire Wildlife Fund and Biodiversity and Ecology Officer to discuss tree and hedge planting.

It was suggested that there were a number of grant aid opportunities available for projects relating to the planting of trees, and the town would benefit from a tree and hedge planting exercise on the northern side of the town at Tilling Drive.

It was noted that HS2 Ltd are also making provision for the planting of trees and offering funding opportunities to communities and businesses disrupted by the construction of Phase 2a.

RESOLVED: To note the updates on matters brought forward from previous Minutes.

ENV20/016 Members Motions Under Standing Order 4

Councillor Mrs A. Burgess

'I would like to set up contact lens recycling in Stone, hopefully involving the opticians, hotels, B&B's and AirBNB places in the area. I have some facts and figures about the number of contact lenses worn each year etc and am hoping to speak to the opticians in the town to ask whether they currently are involved in recycling contact lenses, and/or if they are interested in being involved, and also asking for some advice and help to enable this scheme to work.

The Sub-Committee is asked to support this initiative'.

Councillor Mrs Burgess informed the Sub-Committee that disposable contact lenses, if not recycled appropriately, are having a cumulative negative effect on the environment. 80 million of them were worn worldwide in 2018 with a 4% increase in their use. She would like to speak to opticians in the town to find out what their recycling arrangements are, if any. She would then like to explore the possibility of introducing or expanding a contact lens recycling facility to hotels and bed and breakfast establishments.

Councillor Mrs Burgess confirmed there was no cost implication to the Town

Council.

The Sub-Committee suggested that packaging and contact lens solution could be included in the recycling opportunity, and publicity for the initiative generated through the Town Council's website.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs Burgess is authorised to investigate the arrangements for the disposal of contact lenses in Stone and that she reports her findings to the Single Use Plastics Working Group.

ENV20/017 Reports from Working Groups

To receive a report from the Chairman of the Sub-Committee and working groups:

Plastic Free Community & Environmental Issues Working Group

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that a Plastic Free Community & Environmental Issues Working Group meeting had taken place and referred to the report* that had been issued with the agenda for this meeting.

The Sub Committee considered the report of the Working Group, which discussed the topics of 'Stone achieving plastic free status' and 'declaring a Climate Emergency in Stone'.

Working Group members expressed concern that the report had been produced after the meeting had taken place and there had been no opportunity to consider and discuss its content further.

The Sub Committee expressed support for the initiative but concluded that it needed to consider the implications more fully before submitting a recommendation to the General Purposes Committee.

The Sub Committee suggested that more groundwork was necessary to devise an action plan and proposals for change. Identifying what a declaration of a climate change emergency means for Stone, what actions can realistically be taken by the Council and identifying resource requirements were considered essential preparation.

The Sub Committee shared examples of other Councils who had already declared a climate emergency but hadn't determined the actions that needed to follow. Positive, defined and properly resourced actions would enable Stone Town Council to say clearly what it was planning to do, and provide a clear strategy that everyone would understand.

The Sub-Committee made clear that it expected to be able to fully understand what it is voting on.

RESOLVED: That the climate change emergency proposal issue is returned to its

working group for further development and report back at an appropriate future meeting.

Chairman