

REPORT of the Meeting of the
Environment Committee held on 14 January 2020

- Present: Cllr Matt Stringer (Chairman)
Cllr Clare Fardell
Cllr Guy Rawlinson
Cllr Angela Symonds
Cllr Pam Shipp
Cllr Jayne Stansfield
- Brett Harrison (Composting Site, Filnore Allotments and Woods)
Felicity Harrison (arrived late due to another commitment)
Jeff Pead (Thornbury Ramblers)
- Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)
Hannah Cornford (Minutes)
- Cllr Clive Parkinson (non-committee member)
- Absent: Cllr Martin Trueman
Cllr Eva Fielding
-

1. TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Judith Hurford – Tree Warden

2. TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were none present.

3. TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

5. TO CONSIDER NEW ITEMS OF BUSINESS

5A. REVIEW OF SOUTH GLOS COUNCIL GRASS CUTTING (taken out of order)

Cllr Parkinson wished to address the committee regarding grass cutting, which had been reviewed as part of the budget setting process. It was agreed it would be investigated whether the grass cutting could be reduced from 10 times a year, which would be better for biodiversity in those areas and would save costs. There could not be changes made before 2021, so it was agreed this subject would be put on the agenda in June 2020.

4. TO DISCUSS MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Cllr Fardell had attended an event by CATS where she had explained how Council works and listened to their future plans, which was very useful. They were focused on issues such as tree planting and protecting the composting site. They wanted Thornbury to be a model town and set an example for other places. They were interested in becoming a co-opted member on the most appropriate committee and this would be looked into.

The Deputy Clerk reported that there was now a bin outside the Armstrong Hall, which the public had been requesting.

Jeff Pead noted he had found a damaged bin near the A38, which he was advised to report to South Glos Council, as they were identified as the owner.

The Biodiversity Officer from South Glos Council had been invited to attend a future committee meeting, as unfortunately she had to miss the previous one she was invited to.

5B. AGREE A NEW DATE FOR THE NOVEMBER 2020 MEETING

Due to a clash with a major town event, the November 2020 meeting needed to be rescheduled. It was agreed it would move to 19.11.2020. A revised schedule of meetings would be circulated.

6. TO CONSIDER MATTERS IN PROGRESS AND RECEIVE UPDATES WHERE APPROPRIATE

(a) Perennial planting in Pullins Green raised beds

There was no progress on this issue.

(b) Installation of drinking water fountain in the Mundy Playing Fields

The Deputy Clerk updated Committee that there was money in the budget, but there was uncertainty over the timescale of works to the splash pad, which would share a water supply. Cllr Rawlinson was keen to move this proposal forward so asked the Deputy Clerk to continue working to get this in place.

(c) Installation of new recycling bin at the Mundy Playing Fields

The bin was now in, a photo had been taken and some publicity had been done.

(d) Poulterbrook environmental area

14 trees have now been planted, comprising of 7 oak and 7 birch. The Deputy Clerk was getting quotes for wildflower seeds and benches.

(e) Lease for area of land in Thornbury

The Deputy Clerk had been in touch with the resident and instructed a solicitor to finalise the licence. The solicitor had raised a couple of issues that were being investigated.

(f) Update on seating in the town

(i) Moving of seat at junction of Oakleaze and Gillingstool

There was no progress on this matter due to staffing issues. We had taken on two more members of staff in the last week and were now back up to full capacity.

(g) Schedule of tree works

(i) To note progress on the works

Noted.

(ii) To note additional works

The Deputy Clerk drew the Committee's attention to the additional works that had been added to the schedule of tree works. The Committee acknowledged these additional works.

(iii) To note information on Ash tree die back

The Deputy Clerk circulated details received from South Gloucestershire Council regarding Ash die back and confirmed that she had asked the tree surgeon to quote for any potential future works on a "worse case scenario" basis to inform future budgets. The tree survey would be carried out every three years which should pick up any diseased trees.

(h) Schedule of Minor Matters

There was one new action on the list and the rest were existing. Cllr Rawlinson highlighted one item (repairs to the pavement on Castle Street) that he had previously reported 3-4 years ago and had not been dealt with. He felt the time scale taken to sort out this particular issue (which remained unresolved) was unacceptable. The Deputy Clerk would pass these comments on to South Gloucestershire Council.

(i) Fairtrade

Cllr Fardell reported that little had progressed with this issue due to South Glos Council being in purdah. Fairtrade Fortnight would be during February and work was now underway to prepare for this. A Fairtrade Farmer would be visiting and would be taken to a planned event. South Glos Council would help with providing items for a stall. It was suggested that chocolate was a good way to get people to try Fairtrade produce and it was confirmed that there was money in the budget that could be used for this. The Fairtrade Leaflet was to be revised.

7. TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

(a) Operational Matters – Volunteer Evening

The evening was scheduled to be on Monday 17th February. There was discussion over who might be invited to speak and the Deputy Clerk was asked to progress this. If a speaker could not be confirmed, it was agreed that the evening would be postponed until March so that it could be discussed again at the next meeting.

(b) Councillor Surgeries – consideration of any issues raised

There were no issues relevant to this committee.

(c) Community Composting Site Report

Brett Harrison reported that the composting site was now closed as they had nothing more in their funds to run the site. There was uncertainty over what would happen to it, as there are potential plans to develop the woodland, which could include the composting area. They were working hard to fight this.

(d) Filnore Allotments Report

The allotments were currently waterlogged after sustained bad weather.

(e) Filnore Woods Report

A report from Jerry Dicker had been circulated and the report was noted.

(f) Tree Wardens Report

The Tree Warden was unable to be in attendance but had left a report and this was noted. It was noted there had been several complaints about the whips that had been planted as part of the South Gloucestershire Council tree planting project, regarding their locations and lack of consultation by South Glos Council.

(g) Sustainable Thornbury Report

There was nothing to report.

(h) Footpath Warden's Report

Cllr Rawlinson had been monitoring some of the footpaths located on the new housing estates in Thornbury. As a result of temporary footpath closures, the landowners had been suffering from the public trespassing over property with no public right of way. He queried if there had been any update on the request for closure at the Sheilings/Castle School. The Committee were not aware of an update.

(i) Thornbury Ramblers Report/Walks Booklet

Jedd Pead reported that the work was ongoing and the committee was active.

(j) Thornbury Litter Busters

The group was very active and covering a wide area.

8. TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

None.

9. TO RESOLVE UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS AS PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST BECAUSE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

Item 10 was to be deferred to the next meeting, so item 9 was redundant.

10. TO CONSIDER QUOTES RELATING TO THE POULTERBROOK ENVIRONMENTAL AREA

To be deferred to the next meeting.