

Report of the meeting of the Environment Committee  
held on 19 November 2020 at 8.00pm via video conference

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Present: Cllr Matt Stringer (Chair)  
Cllr Guy Rawlinson (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Chris Davies  
Cllr Benj Emmerson  
Cllr Pam Shipp  
Cllr Angela Symonds  
Cllr Martin Trueman

Jerry Dicker (Filnore Woods)  
Cilla Farquhar (Filnore Allotments)  
Joy Farrimond (Community Composting Site)  
Judith Hurford (Tree Warden)  
Jeff Pead (Thornbury Ramblers/Walks Booklet/Litter Busters)

Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)

(Cllr Eva Fielding – absent)

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### **1. TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Jayne Stansfield – another commitment

### **2. TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Martin Trueman declared an interest in any matters related to Thornbury Town Football Club as a member of the Club.

### **3. TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The Chair welcomed a member of the public who had joined the meeting in relation to item 6 (d) of the agenda – “Butterfly Area”. It was agreed to bring forward discussion of this issue.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that following the last Committee meeting she had contacted South Gloucestershire Council to obtain information on their mowing regime of the butterfly area. Their response had established that the area was not being mowed as originally requested when the area was set up and the Biodiversity Officer had committed to remapping the area to ensure that it was being looked after as originally agreed. The Deputy Clerk had not had any further feedback since then however, despite chasing it up. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should continue to chase this to obtain an update on the remapping. The size of butterfly area was discussed. Originally this had stretched from Gloucester Road to the subway entrance, but it was agreed that it would be good to extend this along to the Grovesend roundabout. The new development (Cleve Park) may affect this and it was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should also contact South Gloucestershire to explore this. The trees in that area were also discussed, in particular some saplings that had been cut down during some recent work carried out by South Gloucestershire Council. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should also raise this issue with them.

The Chair thanked the member of public for joining the meeting. The member of public left the meeting at this point.

**4. TO DISCUSS MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2020 NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

The report was noted. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that she had not yet checked the date when the last version of the Fairtrade leaflet was produced. She would do this and inform Cllrs Stringer, Shipp and Symonds.

**5. TO CONSIDER NEW ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

(a) Cancellation of billing for water supply to Hector MacLaine water fountain

The Deputy Clerk reported that the water supply to this water fountain has been turned off quite a few years ago, but we had continued to have an account with the water company which included paying some small standing charges. It was agreed that this account should be cancelled.

(b) To note Thornbury Town Council's response to South Gloucestershire Council's Green Places Consultation

Council's response to this consultation had been circulated and was noted.

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

(a) Poulterbrook environmental area

The Deputy Clerk reported that the concrete bases for the picnic benches and recycling bin had been laid. The sewing of the wildflower seed would take place in the Spring.

(b) Request for a dog waste bin in Milbury Heath

The Deputy Clerk reported that a combined litter and dog waste bin had been ordered through South Gloucestershire Council. It would be installed near to the grit bin on the small grass triangle.

(c) Perennial planting in Pullins Green raised beds

The Deputy Clerk reported that South Gloucestershire Council had been asked to provide plans and costs for planting up and maintaining beds 1, 2 and 6. These were awaited. There was also a licensing issue that would need to be resolved between South Gloucestershire Council and Thornbury In Bloom. The resident who had got in touch with an update on the beds had also very kindly offered to join some future Committee meetings to update the Committee on the situation. It was agreed that once arrangements were finalised with South Gloucestershire Council, it would be very useful for the Committee to be updated on an annual basis by the residents.

(d) Butterfly Area

Covered under item 3.

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

The Deputy Clerk reported on progress that had been made. She had met with a plumber who had installed a water fountain for a neighbouring parish council. He had confirmed that it would be feasible to install a water fountain on the outside of the Pavilion, fixed to the wall, and that he would provide a quote for the works. The Deputy Clerk had confirmed that it was unlikely that planning permission would be needed for the installation, but that she would need to submit an Enquiry Form to South Gloucestershire Council Planning Department to confirm

this. The cost of the enquiry was £180 and it was agreed that she should proceed with this. The Deputy Clerk also confirmed that she had investigated different types of fountain and established that there were far more cleaning issues and risks associated with those that had drinking spouts and dog bowls and that it may therefore be better to purchase a bottle filler fountain. Further details and quotes would be brought to future meetings.

(f) Update on seating in the town – Allan Burberry’s memorial bench

It was likely that the dedication ceremony would take place next year in the Spring or Summer when the ground had had chance to recover and hopefully restrictions would allow for a larger gathering.

(g) Schedule of Tree Works

The schedule of tree works had been circulated and was noted. Progress continued to be made and the only outstanding works are bracing works, some of which were being queried with the tree surveyor, as well as some new issues that had been identified (outlined in a separate section of the spreadsheet).

(h) Schedule of Minor Matters

The schedule of minor matters had been circulated and was noted. This included all recent updates received from South Gloucestershire Council. The Deputy Clerk will continue to chase up outstanding matters.

(i) Effects of COVID-19 on the Committee’s budget

It had been confirmed that the Green Projects budget this financial year was not from CIL funds. It was likely that £4000 would remain unspent due to the COVID-19 restrictions and that this would go into general reserves at the end of the financial year. It was hoped that a similar amount would be available in 2021/2022 budget.

(i) Fairtrade

There was nothing to report under this item (aside from the issue raised in item 4 above).

**7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS AND REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES**

(a) Operational Matters – Volunteer Evening/Hanging Basket Scheme

The Deputy Clerk reported that there were not any operational matters to update the Committee on.

(b) Consideration of any issues raised at Councillor Surgeries

As Councillor Surgeries are not currently taking place due to COVID-19 restrictions, there are no issues to consider.

(c) Community Composting Site

The Chair welcomed Joy Farrimond to the meeting as a representative of the Thornbury Community Composting Site. Joy reported that the site was currently closed due to lockdown restrictions. They hoped to open in December. Wood, compost and chippings were being offered by arrangement, but there had not been a huge demand. The financial situation of the organisation had improved. The fencing off had worked well as less large amounts were being left by contractors.

(d) Filnore Allotments Report

Cilla Farquhar reported that there was a lot of activity at the allotments, including clearing of brambles and debris from some of the plots. Plenty of food was being produced. Problems continued with deer, rabbits and moles.

(e) Filnore Woods Report

Jerry Dicker had produced an update report in advance of the meeting which had been circulated and was noted. This included an update on the woodland off Vilner Lane, two recent work mornings and also difficulties in making contact with South Gloucestershire Council tree officers.

(f) Tree Warden's Report

Judith Hurford reported that she was also experiencing problems with making contact with South Gloucestershire Council tree officers. She had, however, had contact with the consultant responsible for managing ash dieback who will be providing her with information on sites where ash trees had been removed so that these could be considered for future planting. He had also confirmed that the recruitment of a Tree Planting Officer was planned which was encouraging. Judith updated on plans for planting in the Mundy Playing Fields, hopefully in early December, including some memorial trees and the replacement of a vandalised tree and some other trees that had died. One of the planned memorial trees was for Cllr Clare Fardell, possibly a crab apple tree. It was agreed that Judith and Cllr Chris Davies would liaise to find out if the family had any preferences for the tree species. The issue of the replacement of small trees that had failed from the South Gloucestershire Council tree planting scheme was discussed and it was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should contact the relevant council officer again to clarify if there were plans to replace these trees.

(g) Sustainable Thornbury Report

It was agreed that this item could be removed from the agenda. The development of a climate change policy for the Council was being covered by the Finance and Policy Committee and any actions or issues that arose from that could be picked up by the relevant Committee as and when required.

(h) Footpath Warden's Report

Cllr Guy Rawlinson highlighted the Don't Lose Your Way campaign which aimed to ensure that footpaths are not lost because they are not identified/marked anywhere. The issue of footpaths being lost in Thornbury and surrounding areas due to housing development not properly identifying and marking them was discussed in detail and it was noted that concerns about any footpaths being lost in these circumstances should be reported.

(i) Thornbury Ramblers Report/Walks Booklet

Jeff Pead reported that COVID-19 restrictions were affecting the Ramblers being able to meet up. The walks in the Walks Booklet had been checked and a number of problems had been identified with most of the walks, often related to new housing developments. He would continue to work on this.

(j) Thornbury Litter Busters

Jeff Pead reported that again COVID-19 restrictions were affecting the Litter Busters being able to meet up.

**8. TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

Cllr Guy Rawlinson highlighted a recent email from parties involved with looking after the Medieval Fishponds. This included an update on the Management Plan for the Fishponds and the formation of a CIC to deal with this and other issues relating to Park Farm. It was agreed that this email would be circulated to all Councillors for their information and discussed at the next Environment Committee meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be on 19 January 2021. It was agreed that the schedule of meetings for 2021 would be circulated to all Committee members.