

# Stone Town Council – Environment Sub-Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 15 August 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. Townsend in the Chair and  
Councillors: J. Battrick, J. Davies, K. Dawson, T. Kelt, B. Kenney, R. Kenney,  
J. Metters, J. Powell and N. Powell

Officers: L. Trigg and T. Williams

By Chairman's Invitation: J. Hood

**ABSENT:** Councillors: A. Burgess

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### **ENV24/012 Apologies**

Councillors: A. Burgess

### **ENV24/013 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None received.

### **ENV24/014 Representations from Members of the Public**

None

### **ENV24/015 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Environment Sub-Committee meeting held on the 20 June 2023 (Minute Numbers ENV24/001 – ENV24/011), were approved as a correct record.

### **ENV24/016 Environmental Sub-Committee Works Update**

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Works Update consisted of the non-contractual projects that the Grounds Maintenance Contractor was currently working on.

The Chairman gave updates on the following items:

#### Reflective Orchard

The Chairman referred the Sub-Committee to the Reflective Orchard on Crown Meadow for which the brass plaques (which had recently been received from the supplier) were ready for installation. These were circulated at the meeting for Councillors to see.

The Chairman confirmed the Sub-Committee was now ready to consider an Opening Ceremony and invited ideas on the arrangements.

The Sub-Committee suggested:

- The Mayor and the Mayor's Chaplain be involved in the occasion with the Mayor's Chaplain leading prayers and a blessing for the orchard during the Ceremony.
- That invitees include representatives from the communities involved in the pandemic such as NHS/health authority representatives, care home staff and residents and Stone Covid-19 Helpline staff.
- The Opening take place by mid-October.

The Sub-Committee explored the possibility of aligning the Orchard Opening with a date or time that was key during the pandemic such as the Thursday evening nationwide clap at 8:00pm to thank NHS staff, although 8:00pm was considered too late in the evening in October.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the arrangements for the Reflective Orchard Opening be put together by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and the Town Mayor.

#### Asbestos Removal

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the arrangements for removing asbestos at the allotment site required a proposal from a contractor on what should be removed and the best method of removing it.

The Town Clerk advised the Sub-Committee that removing the asbestos could be considered a riskier exercise than leaving it undisturbed but there needed to be a slow and steady programme for its removal over a period of several years.

The actions needed to replace the asbestos, which in some areas supported the soil, required consideration and the Chairman said that progress would be attempted in this area.

#### **ENV24/017 Crown Meadow Volunteer Group**

The Chairman advised the Sub-Committee that the Crown Meadow Volunteer Group had been formed with four volunteers but the first meeting at Crown Meadow on August 11<sup>th</sup> had to be postponed because the Grounds Maintenance Contractor recommended the willow sapling removal be delayed as Scrape One was too much in flower due to a late flowering season. The work has been put back by a month and will probably coincide with grass cutting in scrape One in the autumn which is being done to promote new growth and improve biodiversity within the scrape.

**ENV24/018 Reports of Working Groups**

Environmental Working Group

The Chairman invited Councillor Kelt to address the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Kelt provided an update on a meeting of the Stafford Climate Panel, at which Councillor Tony Pearce, Cabinet member for Environment and Climate Change, had also been present.

There were several interesting discussions including the setting up of a community forum which would be initiated by the Borough Council but involve the Climate Panel and possibly parish councils.

Councillor Kelt said there was an interesting meeting of a group called Green Conversations Transformed - Trent Valley, which involved a brainstorming session on how to bring together various areas and specific projects. They are waiting for the results of those discussions.

There is a climate expo and sustainability conference coming up which Councillor Kelt was planning to attend and was open to everyone.

**ENV24/019 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.**

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

**ENV24/020 Allotment Competition**

The Sub-Committee considered a replacement Allotment Competition judge following notice that Mr Martin Robinson, after thirty years of dedicated service, was standing down from the role.

RECOMMENDED: That the Chairman meets prospective Allotment Judge candidates and reports to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

**Chairman**