



**Minutes of the Community & Environment Committee meeting held on Tuesday,
January 23, 2024 at 19:00 in Old Landscore School, Greenway, EX17 3LP.**

Present:	CLLrs Guy Cochran, Liz Brookes-Hocking, Natalia Letch, Paul Perriman, Joyce Harris, John Downes, Giles Fawssett
Apologies:	Cllr Georgina Stone
In Attendance:	Penni Tearle, Chair of Boniface Allotments Association 2 members of the public
Minute Taker:	Emma Anderson

MINUTES

68 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair opened the meeting at 19.00 and members introduced themselves.

69 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

One member of the public commented on large amounts of rubbish being left around the Barnfield area, particularly following recycling/bin collection days. They asked if the town council can help? Cllr Cochran advised this would be raised with Mid Devon District Council.

Second member of the public:

Question 1 - As a member of the public who regularly watches the recordings of various CTC meetings on Facebook, I can attest to the fact that the sound of the Town Clerk typing often obscures what is being said, either by councillors or members of the public. Would the Council kindly consider placing the owl at such a distance from the Town Clerk as to make the noise from typing less intrusive?

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the owl had been moved further away at this meeting and the sound quality would be assessed afterwards and other options explored if necessary.

Question 2 - At the risk of incurring the wrath of Cllr Fawssett who has accused me of "prattling on" at the last Full Town Council meeting about the potential breach of GDPR which he sees as a mere "technical thing", may I ask if the Council has informed the Boniface Allotments Association, or indeed any of the allotment tenants about that potential breach, or would they rather I did so?

The Deputy Clerk advised that allotment tenants had been contacted, however a response to this question would be sent via email in due course.

Question 3 - Item 72 on the agenda "Climate Emergency" states "To note that decisions will be made with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making". This item appears on the majority of meeting minutes but seems to be little more than a tick box exercise. If the Council are truly serious about this point, and in the hope of clawing back some kudos with Cllr Fawssett, would the Council consider having an item added to the end of each meeting to reflect upon how any decisions made actually reflect this goal?

Members agreed that the Council Affairs & Finance Committee could consider implementing an evaluation of how the Climate Emergency has been considered at the end of each agenda or whether climate emergency considerations should be highlighted during each agenda item.

70 APOLOGIES

It was **resolved** to receive and accept apologies from Cllr Georgina Stone. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

71 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllrs G Cochran, N Letch & J Downes declared that as members of more than one authority that any views or opinions expressed at this meeting would be provisional and would not prejudice any views expressed at a meeting of another authority.

There were no dispensation requests.

72 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Noted.

73 ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes to the order of business.

74 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

75 COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was **resolved** to approve and sign the minutes from the meeting held on 28 November 2023. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

76 ALLOTMENTS

- **To consider the following issues and agree a course of action – Vacant plots, Non-Cultivation Notices and Notices to Quit**

The Deputy Clerk advised that 2 notices to quit had been issued since the last meeting.

- **To consider matters raised by the Boniface Allotments Association and allotment tenants and agree any actions**

The main path on the Barnfield site has gradually reduced in width as some of the adjacent allotment plots have pushed their boundaries very slightly over a long period of time. This has caused the turning circle to become a lot narrower. It was **resolved** to write to 2/3 plots along the path to ask that the bottom of their plot be reduced by approx. 1 metre in order to reinstate the width of the original path. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Penni Tearle left the meeting at 19.18.

77 CREDITON URBAN TASKFORCE (CUT)

It was **resolved** to approve Option 3 in the report. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that at the full council meeting held on 16 January 2024, it was resolved to approve a budget of £1,500 for CUT, with this to be taken from general reserves for the remainder of 23/24, with the town clerk having delegated authority to approve the payments to 31 March 2024. Members were reminded that prior approval is required before any of the budget is spent.

The following was agreed:

- CUT update will be a standing item on future Community & Environment Committee agendas
- The proposed poster requires two amendments. To change the wording to "non-statutory" in the first paragraph and correct the contact email address

78 FLORAL CREDITON 2024

- It was **resolved** to accept the recommendations contained within the report. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)
- It was **resolved** to appoint Contractor A for the floral watering contract for 2024. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

Climate emergency considerations: sustainable planting chosen and less watering required (reduced contractor visits).

79 SCOUT MEMORIAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE

It was **resolved** to appoint contractor A. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

It was agreed to contact the Scouts and ask if they would like to get involved in looking after the small area of garden that they maintained previously.

80 GRASS VERGE CUTTING

Members discussed the requirements of the contract with Devon County Council and the minimum number of cuts being 4 per year. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that these verges are visibility splays and therefore the cuts are carried out to ensure visibility for vehicle users. It was agreed for the Deputy Clerk to circulate the cutting maps to members for review and consider writing to Devon County Council about the requirement to cut them.

It was **resolved** to appoint Contractor B, highlighting point 8 of the draft contract which states more or less cuts could be required throughout the year. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Members also discussed the grass verges at Well Parks Hill and requested further information regarding when these are strimmed and also whether a review of the trees on Well Parks Hill has been carried out as agreed during the development.

Climate emergency considerations:

- *Minimising number of cuts required per year (biodiversity and machinery/fuel usage)*
- *Contractor B is Crediton-based, reducing impact from travel*

81 EMERGENCY PLAN

The Deputy Clerk advised the committee that, since the Emergency Plan was first drafted, 2 members of the original Community Response Team remain. At the recent Snow Warden training, one member of the public attended.

Cllr Cochran explained that he had attended a meeting of Mid Devon District Council's (MDDC) Community Policy Development Group and that a consultation would be taking place soon on the Town & Parish Charter and this consultation could have an effect on how MDDC assist in Emergency Planning.

The Deputy Clerk agreed to circulate the current emergency plan to members and revisit this item at a future meeting, following the Town & Parish Charter review. In the meantime, the Deputy Clerk would start to amend the out-of-date information.

82 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was **noted**. The meeting closed at 20.05.

83 REPORTS PACK

Signed

Dated.....