



Environment and Green Spaces committee minutes

Minutes

From the committee meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 5 December 2023

At St. Margaret's Hall, Bradford on Avon

Decision making

The **decisions** made by the committee at this meeting are at minutes [49](#) & [53](#).

Present

Councillors:

- Kate Bessant
- Alex Kay (Chair)
- Alison Potter
- Tim Trimble
- Katie Vigar
- Jack Vittles

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown - Chief Executive & Town Clerk
- Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer
- George Tomlinson – Community and Engagement Officer

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Emma Franklin
- Sarah Gibson (Vice-Chair)
- Jennie Parker



48. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

49. Minutes from the previous meeting of the committee

Proposed by Councillor Kate Bessant

Seconded by Councillor Tim Trimble.

And with all in favour it was **resolved**: that the Minutes of the last committee meeting held on 17 October 2023 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

50. Matters arising

None.

51. Agenda item 6 – Chair’s Update

The Chair summarised her update which was supplied with the agenda. Additionally, she added:

- the Eco:Fest event at the Wiltshire Music Centre on the 18 November was very well attended with around 650 festival goers. Councillor Kay thanked the Wiltshire Music Centre for hosting the event and all the team for their assistance
- the Low Energy Cooking initiative is looking to provide cooking demos ‘on the road’ so a portable induction hob has been purchased to facilitate demonstrations
- the Living Green Wall sign is finally up alongside a notice board for community posters
- the council’s Green Roadmap (compiling the Environmental projects since 2017) is available to view online on the town council’s website and on social media. A poster is also available to view in the council offices and a floating one can be taken to events.
- Wessex Water provided a tour of their works in Victory Field and several councillors attended. The works should reduce bad weather overflow/spills from around 58-59 per year to around 8 (any overflows would be reduced in severity) per year and the works should be completed around the end of March 2024
- The Chair thanked Councillor Potter for her collation and compilation work with the town council’s response to Wiltshire’s Local Plan.



52. Agenda item 7 – Healthy Rivers Project

The River Detectives Project is organised by Bristol Avon River Trust (BART) is an annual river analysis project where monthly samples are taken at several points along a chosen stretch of river. Bradford on Avon has now been added to the River Detectives project fully funded by Wessex Water for 24 months and volunteer samplers are needed beginning with a training session on 18 December. Please contact Councillor Kay if interested. The results from the sampling episodes go into a national database.

Councillor Trimble added that a potential pollution problem recently at the Packhouse bridge was swiftly dealt with and resolved by Wessex Water as it was their ongoing works which was causing some additional turbidity. Councillor Trimble believes along with the Chair that Wessex Water do have an effective helpline for reporting potential pollution issues:

Wessex Water emergency contact (staffed 24/7) 0345 600 4600.

For urgent environmental incidents please call the Environment Agency's incident hotline 0800 80 70 60.

53. Agenda item 8 – Tree Wardens Scheme

Wiltshire Council have signed up with the Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme which provides funding to train volunteers who can then be assigned to work with local town and parish councils. It would be the job of the Town Council to direct and insure volunteers. Two applicants have come forward so far to operate as Bradford on Avon tree wardens. It was agreed that this was a great idea to look after vulnerable, newly planted young trees and provide assistance with the planting of new trees. It was also confirmed that Wiltshire Council has no ongoing supervisory role and the tree wardens would liaise with the Green Spaces Officer.

The Town Clerk therefore proposed that the town council take on the responsibility and supervision of 2 tree wardens having received training from Wiltshire Council.

Proposed by Councillor Alex Kay

Seconded by Councillor Tim Trimble

And with all in favour it was **resolved** to take on the supervision and responsibility for 2 new tree wardens.



It was agreed that Officers would report back with a progress report every 6 months or so.

54. Agenda item 9 – Low Energy Cooking Initiative

As mentioned in the Chair's Update, a new portable induction hob has been purchased to assist with low energy cooking demos.

55. Agenda item 10 – Green Spaces Officer Update

The Green Spaces Officer referred to his update as supplied with the agenda. Additionally, the Nature Volunteers are meeting this weekend in Barton Country Park on Saturday to complete a wildflower meadow. On Sunday there is another session to plant holly up at the Strips. The Chair congratulated the team on the excellent display this year and sought clarification on the delightful and popular riverside lights and how long the display will last. The Town Clerk confirmed they are in place for the Christmas season only.

56. Agenda item 11 – Grow BoA Update

The Chair referred to her report as supplied with the agenda. There is a seed swap station at the 'phoney' box at the top of Whitehill which has been going well. Unfortunately, garden waste such as black plant pots and compost bags have now appeared in the box and general rubbish is accumulating. Black plant pots cannot be recycled and can only be returned to the garden nursery from where the plants were sold. So, the message is to try not to buy black plant pots and the phoney box is not a recycling point or litter bin.

It was agreed that a sign should be put in the phoney box explaining this is not a recycling point with details regarding appropriate recycling options and a message on this matter added to Snippets.

It was confirmed the town wardens have removed the waste items from the phoney box for now and any further issues should be reported to the Green Spaces Officer.

57. Agenda item 12 – Have your say on Poulton Park play area

The Community and Engagement Officer referred to her report as supplied with the agenda and asked members if they had any questions. Councillor Vittles asked what the next steps should be, will there be any additional funding and how will the project be phased. The Engagement Officer stated that, from the responses from the consultation, there are mixed feelings amongst the Officers over whether to quickly get on with renewing the existing



equipment as originally planned according to the proposed design with a few tweaks or should the town council be more ambitious, apply for more funding and expand the original plan to include additional requested facilities and ideas. The proposed design from Wicksteed used existing ground works to keep the costs down and remain on budget however the consultation has produced a wish list of additional items such as sandpits and monkey bars as well as a general feeling amongst some that the play area should be on a larger scale than replacing like for like. The like for like design will spend in full the current £60,000 budget.

It was suggested that the stakeholders should be contacted to help with the next stage in the process regarding design and whether to fundraise to improve the final design and layout. It was mentioned that the Environment and Green Spaces committee meeting was a public meeting and stakeholders could attend if they wished to engage with the process. It was also pointed out that Officers have just completed a large engagement process with stakeholders amongst others, with some comments suggesting the design is lacking but also lots of positive comments on the design too. However, explaining the decision-making process in light of the consultation would be a good idea. Decisions, however, do need to be taken fairly swiftly as if nothing has happened by the Easter holidays that would be very disappointing for all concerned.

The Chair then summarised the discussion concluding that by way of compromise perhaps broken equipment should be urgently replaced with a strong message that there are cost restrictions to doing any more but that with additional funding and fundraising a phase 2 is planned.

It was also asked if the council will remove the broken equipment ahead of any refurbishment. The Green Spaces Officer confirmed that would be unlikely for safety reasons.

It is hoped the revised design, with the original budget, from Wicksteed will be available very soon and Officers are trying to arrange a meeting in the next couple of weeks.

The Chair thanked the Engagement Officer for her work so far.

58. Next meeting

The next committee meeting is arranged for Tuesday 20 February 2024.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 7.45 pm



Appendix A: Comments and questions from the public

There were no questions from members of the public at the meeting. There were 3 members of the public in total.