



**Bradford on Avon
Town Council**



**LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD**

Minutes of the Environment & Green Spaces Committee meeting of
BRADFORD ON AVON TOWN COUNCIL held
on Tuesday 28th September 2021 at 7.00 p.m in St. Margaret's Hall

Attendance – Town Council

Cllr A Kay (Chairman)
Cllr E Franklin
Cllr A Potter (Vice Chairman)
Cllr T Trimble
Cllr K Vigar
Cllr J Vittles
V Baker – Admin Clerk
I Brown (Director of Operations)
C Hogg (Green Spaces Officer)

Apologies: Cllr Gibson & Cllr Bessant

Members of the Public: Louise Weissel, Stevie Edwards, Jes Wire, Kate Nottage Simon Forsyth and 6 others.

15. Declarations of interest- there was none.

16. Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Trimble and seconded by Cllr Vigar and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED**: To accept the Environment & Planning Committee minutes held on 20th July 2021.

17. Chairman's report- this was deferred until after item 25 of the agenda.

18. Climate & Ecological Emergency Fund & to consider changes to the Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (TORs) for EGS had been circulated with the agenda concerning information about the grant process for this committee. Cllr Kay said that the TOR for the E&GS committee approved at the Full Council meeting on the 6th of July differed from the TOR as published on the website. A discussion took place. Cllr Kay recommended that the following two clauses should be added to the E&GS committee and to consider the following proposal:

- under item 2. *Aims the committee can also approve grants to support environmental projects.*
- Under item 3. Delegated Business: Item 3.8 *Encourage and assist in the development of climate projects from individuals, groups or small businesses in the Town which can include approving grants from the Climate & Ecological Emergency Community Fund*
- Existing item 3.8 to be renumbered

Cllr Vigar responded by saying that the Town Council already has a 'grants panel' where grants are submitted; where co-ordination between the Town Council, the Area Board and the CLPET (Colonel & Llewellyn Palmer Educational Trust) are reviewed, adding that the above amendment would contradict this process. She added that if the EGS committee were to continue to approve grants by this method then similarly other committees could follow suit. Cllr Kay responded by saying that the EGS grant system was set up separately and if the Town Council are not prepared to act with urgency on 'Climate Emergency' projects, then it undermines its declaration of CE. A discussion took place.

It was proposed by Cllr Kay seconded by Cllr Franklin and with 3 in favour 2 against and one abstention later changed to against, it was **RESOLVED**: to recommend changing the TORs for the EGS for items 2, 3 and 3.8 as above at Full Council in November.

Cllr Vigar reported that while she supported this, she preferred to approach this with a level of understanding and suggested that there should be a review of the grant awarding arrangements to see how we could increase the frequency of the meetings and address the problems. Cllr Kay explained that this was an entirely separate issue and suggested that this could be raised at Full Council if so wished.

19. Wiltshire Council Climate Emergency & Blue/Green Infrastructure Strategies

Cllr Kay had attended a WC Climate Emergency zoom meeting for the Blue/Green Strategy and a draft response to this as edited by her was circulated today. She encouraged members to respond individually by the 17th October deadline and, asked if the Town Council should submit their own comments and amendments similarly done for the Neighbourhood Plan. Comments were noted, Cllr Kay suggested arranging a zoom meeting prior to the deadline date for interested parties to engage and voice further comments.

20. Green Prescribing Pilot

A project produced by Louise Weissel was circulated with the agenda. Her project covers 'Community Green Space utilisation for the benefit of health & well-being'. She gave some background on how the project had evolved and the benefits of this service. Cllr Trimble asked how she would co-ordinate the various partnerships like WC and the Wiltshire Area Sports Partnerships as this was not clear? Further questions were asked.

Cllr Vittles commended the project but asked that Louise forward her email to Cllrs with her report so that members could review the document to enable them to ask further questions at a future meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Kay seconded by Cllr Trimble and with all in favour **RESOLVED**: that the committee supports this project in principle and requests that Town Council's Officers help with the logistics and other issues related to this to decide whether this is a feasible project or not.

21. Carbon Counting

Simon Forsyth Chairman of Climate Friendly Emergency Group gave a more detailed account of the report (attached) concerning Carbon Counting. Climate Friendly request guidance and support from the Town Council to deliver a detailed carbon counting survey. This would enable them to get more granularity, particularly concerning domestic heating that is used in the diverse buildings within Bradford on Avon. Responses to this survey would provide detail that would validate and generalise the carbon footprint of the town thus help to formulate actions to reduction in the local area. Statistically about a third of the town would be required to respond to the survey. It was **agreed** to send the questionnaire initially to members of this committee so that CF could get feedback about the form.

It was proposed by Cllr Kay seconded by Cllr Franklin and with all in favour **RESOLVED**: that the Town Council support to promote the distribution of the questionnaire.

22. Healthy River Management Project proposal

A report was circulated with the agenda.

Cllr Kay reported that when the Asset Transfer from WC is finally agreed Bradford on Avon Town Council will become the riparian owners of the south bank of the river from Westbury Gardens through to just above the Avoncliff Weir and would be responsible for the trees and water quality therein. A discussion took place.

It was proposed by Cllr Kay seconded by Cllr Franklin and with all in favour **RESOLVED**: That the Environment & Green Spaces committee commits to support and 'cost up' a riverside tree survey and water analysis programme, and for continued development of a Healthy River Project, to bring together appropriate 'user groups' and expertise to manage the river Avon from Westbury Gardens to the Avon Weir (south bank) for enhanced biodiversity, wellbeing and safe use of this beautiful multi-recreational space.

23. CluB update & clarifications

Derrick Hunt the co-ordinator for Clean-up Bradford (CluB) explained that the group was initially set up by the previous Mayor, the Preservation Trust and the CluB group which had migrated into a close working group with the Town Council. He explained that communication between the Group and the Council was good. He added that as long as requests were reasonable, tasks were easily resolved between the Town Council and CluB. A weekly plan of jobs is categorised between the two and this

method of communication works well. Volunteers are very welcome and forms to join this active group can be obtained through the Town Council. Cllr Kay thanked the group for all the challenging work that they do in and around the town.

24. Food waste pilot

A food waste report by Cllr Vigar was circulated with the agenda. She had attended a seminar in January about food waste where it was highlighted how significant food waste was to carbon emissions, contributing nearly a third of emissions. WC do not currently collect food waste and are not required to so until 2023. It was felt that by setting up a pilot scheme, aimed initially at people who live in flats/or have small gardens to compost their own waste would be beneficial for both residents and the Council. The Green Spaces Officer added this was a community based proposed 'trial' and would initially start with composting uncooked vegetable waste. A container would be made available at the Youth Centre where an 'invited' number of people would have access to a combination-locked bin. Ian Brown explained that the project would have an overall cost of £500 which would come out of the 'Operations budget' therefore no additional costs to the Council. Simon Forsythe recommended talking to 'Resource Futures' in Bristol who have been doing this for at least 20 years.

It was proposed by Cllr Vigar, seconded by Cllr Trimble and with all in favour **RESOLVED:** This committee approves this project to measure and address food waste and to raise awareness of composting, and recommends moving ahead with costing logistics, consultation with further information and progress made to this committee at a later date.

It was envisaged that this could have a start update shortly in the new Year.

25. Living Green Wall update

Ian Brown reported that the lease had been received on 27th September and the order was placed by the Town Council the same day. He had spoken to the supplier who will get back to us at a later date with further updates of when work could begin. Stevie Edwards thanked the Town Council for all their help in setting up this project especially to Ian Brown who had sorted out the legalities.

26. Chairman's Update (attached)

Ian Brown reported that the Warden's electric vehicle is now fully registered.

27. Green Spaces update on Management Plan

A comprehensive management plan was circulated with the agenda for land currently owned by the Town Council (attached).

The Forestry Commission through its Local Authority Treescapes Fund is providing £96,252.44 for tree planting in Bradford on Avon. The funding application was made by Wiltshire Council supported by Bradford on Avon Town Council. The overall value of the project using Forestry Commission standard costs is £137,601, but Bradford on Avon Town Council showed a reduction of £47,349. This accounts for staff time to deliver the project, including the ongoing inspection and care of planted trees. Savings will also be made because the planting will be within the town and on land we control. By purchasing equipment, we will also save contractor costs. This saving shows as an in-kind contribution on top of the £96,252.44 grant offered by the Forestry Commission.

28. Correspondence to Note- there was none.

29. Date of next meeting

The next meeting has been arranged for 16th November 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

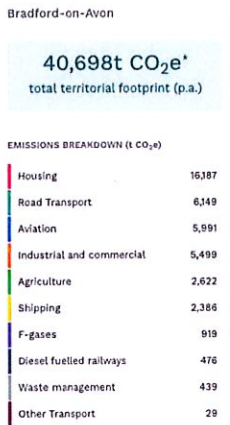
**Carbon counting proposal: Simon Forsyth
E&GS 28/09/21 (Draft AK)**

Climate Friendly Bradford's Energy Group are planning to do a carbon survey of the town and surrounding villages. We feel there is little point planning for net zero unless we can measure what our footprint is now, and whether it is reducing (or not) year by year.

Excellent though the 'Impact' tool from Centre for Sustainable Energy is (image below), it provides at best an estimate based on national and regional databases (*AK: actually has very local input from 'post-code -pixel' consumer databases*). Our view is that we need a bottom-up survey to corroborate the top-down estimate it offers.

To this end, one of our members has drafted a Google Forms survey, designed to be simple enough to fill in quickly but complete enough to provide a footprint estimate for the filler-in. Our thinking is that if we get enough of the households in the town to complete it, it will give us sufficiently many data-points to estimate a meaningful footprint to set against that from the Impact tool. It feels to us that it would form a natural part of the Council's response to the climate emergency - but we are very aware that from your perspective there will be a number of practical constraints to address.

PROPOSAL: Request Town Council support to promote and distribute such a questionnaire. At this stage no funds are requested.



Healthy River Project

AK 28th Sept 2021

The River Avon and its green corridor is what makes BoA the beautiful and vibrant place it is and is key to much of the much-loved wildlife we love to see here. It is a much-used recreational amenity that needs to be the best it can be. I have long felt that in despite its importance, we have not given enough focus to health of our major artery: the river. The imminent Asset transfer, from Wiltshire to Town Council, mean will we take on responsibility for the river from above the Library down to Avoncliff, it is important to get a range of issues resolved or at least planned for, working with Wiltshire Council, the Environment Agency and others as necessary.

1. **Tree Survey in conjunction with WC and EA:** After sending the email about the rowers wanting to do tree-work, I paddled up and down the river between the Barton (Pack Horse) Bridge and the Avoncliff Weir and took a good look at the river side trees and noticed some alarming things, that need addressing for safety, flood-protection, and river infrastructure damage and ecological reasons:
 - a. there are several ash trees with evident ash-die-back and some of these trees are really leaning into the river. As we move into autumn/winter stormy weather, there could be significant risk of these falling;
 - b. there is a considerable arch of healthy ashes but these may need protection;
 - c. other trees and plants management and potential new planting;
2. **Water Quality analysis programme:**
 - a. I have several times been approached this summer to take measures to get some sections of the river to be designated for Wild Swimming;
 - b. recent email (forwarded from Graham Hill today) about massive sewage leaks on 2nd and 6th August into the Lambrok Stream, to the Biss and into the Avon. This is very serious. There are a lot of river users and this raw sewage breach had not been reported. I noticed that it has been quite smelly some days when kayaking, exacerbated by the very low water levels. I know of children who were ill after swimming in the river. Others have reported smells, strange coloration, minor illness.
 - c. regular testing from a couple of places could identify problems sooner and hopefully help get the appropriate authorities to improve cleanliness.
3. **Riparian owner directory of the river through BoA:** for notification, permissions, inform of responsibilities; including weir integrity and sluice-gate management.
4. **Community River Watch & User Group:** engagement, river-user safety guidelines, litter picks, minor plant management, etc.

PROPOSED MOTION: The Environment & Green Space committee commits to TC support to cost and work logistics of riverside tree survey and water quality analysis and for continued development of a Healthy River Project to bring together appropriate user groups and expertise to manage the River Avon through Bradford on Avon for enhanced biodiversity, wellbeing and safe and beautiful multi-recreational space.

Proposal for a composting project

Background

Estimates suggest that around one third of the food we produce globally is wasted. And that around 6-8% of human caused greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced if we stop wasting food. (Source: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/fight-climate-change-by-preventing-food-waste>)

Tackling food waste is something that can be tackled effectively at local level and encouraging composting is one of the ways to go about doing so.

Wiltshire Council does not currently collect food waste, although all Councils will be required to do so by 2023. Meanwhile we can do more at town level and in a way that will have on-going benefits for residents and the council.

Currently, the Town Council purchases compost for use on our own green spaces. The proposed scheme will mean that we will be creating more of the compost we need ourselves.

Proposed pilot scheme

The proposed pilot scheme is for managing composting, including trialling food waste. The intention is to help people who live in flats or with very small gardens to be able to compost their waste. Even once Wiltshire Council do collect food waste, some residents may prefer to use the local scheme.

Physically, the set up will consist of a compost receptor for compostable material to be deposited in, and a separate composting unit.

It will be a free subscription scheme.

The Town Council will install a compost receptor with a combination lock that will be issued to subscribers.

The lock is necessary so that we can monitor the pilot, as well as prohibit the casual deposit of compostable material, which could prove a health hazard.

The receptor will need to be robust, easily cleaned, protected from the weather and vermin proof.

The aim will be to start with a limited number of subscribers to gauge interest, manage capacity and so that we can gain feedback from participants.

The trial will start with uncooked vegetable material.

Further items (cooked food and dairy, meat etc) might be added depending on the performance of composting. It will take some time (months) for the composting process to mature enough to reliably handle the wider range of inputs.

It is proposed that the compost receptor to be located near the Tetra cycle station at the Youth Centre. Therefore, the proposal is to start by inviting participation from householders in flats and properties with small gardens near to the Youth Centre.

Apart from the receptor, the TC will also construct and install a composting unit.

The deposits of compostable material will be moved periodically by TC staff from the receptor to the composting unit.

This will allow the deposits to be inspected as part of the pilot.

The deposits can be mixed appropriately with other material (such as woodchip from the TC estate).

The temperature, humidity, and presence of organisms in the composting can also be monitored.

We will aim to compost at a raised temperature to increase the effectiveness, speed, and quality of compost.

The intention is that the higher temperature will allow the introduction of more items to compost, including food waste.

The unit will therefore be insulated, and of a sufficient capacity to enable the composting to create and retain heat.

Both composting receptor and composting unit will need to be secure, resist vermin, be robust, be easily cleaned and be monitored.

The Town Council will design and build the composting unit. We have considered commercially available versions and they are either intended for household use or very expensive systems designed for large schemes. Many household units are made from plastic (such as the Green Johanna design) and are not reliably vermin proof, or are too small for this trial, particularly as we want to maintain raised temperatures of composting in cooler months. This is a pilot so we can tailor the design to suit our needs and to optimise the composting process.

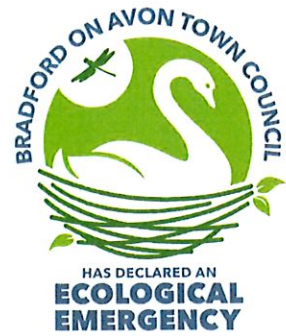
Benefits of the project

To assist residents in properties with small or no garden compost some of their food waste.

To provide a source of compost that will be used by the Town Council on its own land.

To provide an opportunity to further promote the benefits of composting. We can place an article about the scheme in the next Town Council newsletter with additional information on composting.

Note: The Town Council has sent details of the reduced cost 'Green Johanna' offer on Wiltshire Council's website to all allotment holders at Sladesbrook and Bancroft. We can also promote home composting across the town using the Town Council website and social media.



Alex Kay, Environment & Greenspaces Chairman's report for Tuesday 28/09/21

Environment

1. **Big Green Week Sept 18-26: feedback:** the Climate Festival on Saturday 25th was very successful, with many interesting and useful stalls and displays full of hopeful ideas for a lower carbon future; there was vibrant entertainment and passionate speakers, new volunteers signed up. We also had a one-day opening of the community fridge which I hope we can launch properly in near future. The EV charge points were officially opened by the Mayor and the wardens' electric vehicle was on display.
2. **Asset Transfer update:** signage, litter bins, parking, land management....
3. **Climate & Ecological Emergency Display in Library:** set up now; requires constant updating for current events, relevant themes and consultations.
4. **John Pearce list:** Any more takers for topic ownership? Useful source of themes for a program of CE&E events (circulated separately).
5. **Climate Emergency focus sessions** timetable, owners and themes (circulated separately)
6. **COP26, 1-12 November.** Let your government know if you want action on Climate issues.
7. **WC Climate and BGI consultation:** attended online session 15/09/21; responses required by midnight 17th October. (Preliminary AK response circulated separately).

Planning: moved to Town Development