



Environment and Green Spaces committee minutes

Minutes

From the committee meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 17 September 2024

At St. Margaret's Hall, Bradford on Avon

Decision making

The **decision** made by the committee at this meeting is at minute [24](#), [28](#) & [29](#).

Present

Councillors:

- Emma Franklin
- Alison Potter
- Tim Trimble
- Jack Vittles (Chaired the meeting in capacity as Mayor of the Council)

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown – Town Clerk
- Chris Stringer – Deputy Town Clerk

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Kate Bessant (Vice Chair)
- Sarah Gibson
- Alex Kay (Chair)
- Katie Vigar



22. Agenda item 1 – Showing of short film ‘Stepping Forward into Nature’

The meeting began with a viewing of the short film ‘Stepping Forward into Nature’ commissioned by Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon which is available on You Tube on the ‘oneminutetomidnight’ channel. This was well received by councillors and public alike. Former Councillor John Potter, who has a producer credit on the film, indicated that whilst this film deals with the improvement green spaces can made to one’s mental health, those responsible for producing the film now wish to make a second film asking the question: why green spaces improve mental health?

23. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24. Minutes from the previous meeting of the committee

Proposed by Councillor Emma Franklin

Seconded by Councillor Alison Potter

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved**: that the Minutes of the last committee meeting held on 25 June 2024 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

25. Matters arising

None.

26. Agenda item 7 - Chair’s Update

The Chair referred to Councillor Kay’s report as supplied with the agenda.

27. Agenda item 8 – Environment Agency (EA) Bradford on Avon Flooding Update

The Chair read out excerpts from the update, supplied with the agenda, which sets out an understanding of the flood risk and possible options to help over the years, why the temporary barriers were removed and finally that a review is underway in consultation with local relevant groups such as Community Emergency Volunteers (CEVs) for a safe, permanent solution.

The Chair commented that he would email the Environment Agency to try and obtain a timescale for the publishing of the outcome of the review. Councillor



Trimble confirmed there has been discussions between the town council, CEV's and the EA. Also, that the CEVs are well prepped to help with those affected by the flooding and he wasn't impressed with the old temporary barriers when they were in use, seemed too flimsy. He added that, although not ideal, the local business most affected are resilient and do know how to recover when flooding events occur.

28. Agenda item 9 – Draft Tree Inspection Policy and Guidance

The Chair asked for comments and then moved to approve the draft policy as supplied with the agenda.

Proposed by Councillor Emma Franklin

Seconded by Councillor Tim Trimble

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved** to adopt the Tree Inspection Policy and Guidance prepared by the Green Spaces Officer.

29. Agenda item 10 – Draft Vegetation and Hard Landscaping Guidance

The Chair asked for comments and then moved to approve the draft policy as supplied with the agenda.

Proposed by Councillor Jack Vittles

Seconded by Councillor Alison Potter

And with **all in favour** it was **resolved** to adopt the Vegetation and Hard Landscape Guidance prepared by the Green Spaces Officer.

30. Agenda item 11 – Healthy Rivers Project Update

The River Detectives Project organised by Bristol Avon River Trust (BART) is a river analysis project where monthly samples are taken at several points along a chosen stretch of river. 5 sites are currently being sampled in and around Bradford on Avon. The sampling equipment (litmus style test vs. a digital tester) issues have been resolved and testing is continuing reliably. The Chair read out elements of Councillor Kay's report as supplied with the agenda. The muddy look of the river at times is related to run off further upstream and a foul smell detected just downstream from the rowing club has been reported to Wessex Water and the sewage team have checked it out with nothing sinister to report. The new storm overflow system should help reduce sewage



output into the river this winter. However, anyone entering the river and then feeling ill should report to Wessex Water or the EA. The report ended with a selection of numbers to call if river related problems arise. It was agreed to make these available on the Barton Country Park Noticeboard.

31. Agenda item 12 – Tennis Courts Refurbishment Update

The Town Clerk provided an update stating that the tarmac has been re-laid and the painting of the courts and lines will be added later this week. Then the key code equipment and nets will be added hopefully next week, and the courts should reopen for the beginning of October. The newly introduced charging structure will be £40 per year for a household or £6 per hour pay and play. The booking system will provide the access codes needed to unlock the courts.

32. Agenda item 13 – Community River Festival

The Chair and a resident of Bradford on Avon summarised the report written by Councillor Kay as supplied with the agenda. The project is for all parishes between Bradford on Avon and Bathampton to hold a community river festival next June 2025. Each parish is to stage 3 events minimum of an eco- and biodiversity friendly nature exploring mediums of art, music and science. Rebranding existing or planned events (eg. Great Big Green Week talks and walks) of a suitable nature is suggested as well as ideas planned specially for the event, eg. wildlife themed fancy dress using recycled materials. The next planning meeting is in Winsley on 30 September 2024 for anyone who wishes to get involved.

The local planning group is looking for help from the town council. It is hoped St Margaret's Hall, Westbury Gardens, Barton Country Park could be made available as well as some funding and promotions resources.

The Chair and other councillors thought this was an exciting idea and fully support the initiative. The Chair reiterated that anyone who wishes to take part or help plan should speak to Councillor Kay.

33. Agenda item 14 – Poulton Play Area Phases 1 & 2

The Town Clerk confirmed Phase 1 is completed, opened to the public and thoroughly being enjoyed. Phase 2 has match funding of £25,000 and another £10,000 grant so crowd funding of £15,000 is underway.



The Chair confirmed that Phase 1 has been very successful and the equipment has been very popular. He also confirmed there is a plan to hold a fete next spring to fundraise and anyone who would like to help should contact the town council.

34. Next meeting

The next committee meeting is arranged for Tuesday 19 November 2024.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 7.35 pm

Appendix A: Comments and questions from the public

There were 3 questions from members of the public at the meeting. There were 8 members of the public in total.

[Q1] Culver Close footpath has Russian vine growing across it which needs managing not just cutting back now and then.

[Q2] There is a lot of green growth in the river, will this cause a green sludge which will add to the flooding risk?

The Chair confirmed that Officers will speak to the Green Spaces Officer to respond to these queries upon his return from Leave.

[Q3] An orange paint spot has appeared on a tree up on the Strips. The tree is on an area of land that Wiltshire Council said it didn't own. Who owns the land and what is the orange spot for?

The Town Clerk confirmed that the town council do own the piece of land (near the Scout hut) but had not added the orange spot and again will ask the Green Spaces Officer to investigate upon his return from Leave.