

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's
Environment Committee
held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth,
on Monday 30 September 2019 at 6.30 pm

Councillors present: Denise Bickley (Chair)
Chris Lockyear (Vice Chair)
Emma Murdoch
Marianne Rixson

Invited Reps: Jon Ball, Sidmouth Arboretum
Dave Bramley, Sidmouth Science Festival
Diana East, Sidmouth Arboretum
Richard Eley, Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce
Di Fuller, Sid Vale Association
Graham Hutchinson, Sidmouth Arboretum
Richard Thurlow, Sid Vale Association

Also present: Councillor Kelvin Dent
Councillor Deidre Hounsom

Apologies: Ian Barlow, Charissa Evans, Stuart Hughes, John Rayson
Rachel Perram, Sidmouth Plastic Warriors, Peter Endersby & Lynette Talbot
(Sidmouth in Bloom), Jeremy Woodward (Vision Group of Sidmouth)

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.07pm

PART 'A'

21 Minutes

The minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 8 July 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record.

22 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr Denise Bickley	All items	Personal	Remained in the Chamber during discussion and voting	Sidmouth Extinction Rebellion Member, Surfers Against Sewage SW Representative and Chair of Sidmouth Plastic Warriors

23 Matters of Urgency and Report

The Chair of the Committee announced a number of items of report;
East Devon District Council had a limited fund available for the building and planting of boxes for areas of towns and villages which needed 'sprucing up'. Sidmouth in Bloom would be asked to liaise with the Chair of the Committee and East Devon District Council on this.

Sidmouth Primary School would be carrying out fund raising for the Australia Relief fund on 24th January.

An anti-litter signs campaign, with signs to be designed by young people and awards for the best design, made possible through funds and sponsorship obtained by the Chair of the Council, Councillor Ian Barlow was being worked on with Sidmouth Plastic Warriors.

24 Exclusion of the Public

There were no items required to be dealt with under Part B.

25 Devon County Climate Declaration – submission to Devon County Council Net Zero Task Force

Members considered a draft of the Council's response to the Devon County Council Net Zero Task Force which had been formulated following feedback from the Committee and circulated at the meeting by the Chair. Members were reminded that Council had given the Environment Committee delegated authority to respond and pass the submission directly to the County Council. Following discussion, a number of additions and refinements to the draft document were suggested and agreed.

RESOLVED: that the draft submission be approved to send to Devon County Council with the following additions and amendments:

- Suffix any relevant points and issues with references from the Neighbourhood Plan
- Include a point on converting older residences to separate foul and rainwater management
- Move point 11 into the 'mobility' section
- Add a note to the item relating to home working stating that the potential barrier to this in some areas is slow broadband.

26 Climate Declaration

Members and representatives discussed the possibility of declaring a climate emergency by Sidmouth Town Council. It was considered at a previous meeting, that as Devon County Council had declared a climate for Devon, there was no requirement to do so for the town of Sidmouth. Though all Members acknowledged the seriousness of climate change, it was agreed that the Council had to lead by example by encouraging and influencing rather than making gestures such as declaring a separate emergency, which could be misinterpreted and encounter backlash from the public who often feel overwhelmed. It was felt that a declaration could be counterproductive.

RESOLVED: that a climate emergency is not declared, and that the Council continues to support the efforts of Devon County Council in its Climate Declaration.

27 Implementation Working Group

Members considered the proposal of the Vice Chair, Councillor Chris Lockyear, that in order to help achieve and deliver some of the objectives of the Environment Committee, a small Working Group be convened which could draw on specialist knowledge and skills as necessary. It was agreed that focussing simpler more easily achievable objectives would be a sensible approach for Working Group initially.

RESOLVED: that a Working Group consisting of Councillor Denise Bickley, Councillor Chris Lockyear and Dave Bramley be formed to initially focus on the following two initiatives:

- Encouraging the Public to adopt 10 things you can do to help reduce your impact on climate change.
- Provision of Car and Bicycle charge points in the area.
- that Cllrs on the Committee but absent be asked to consider being part of the Working Group.

28 Update on Tree Planting project

Jon Ball update the Committee on the work being done to plant a significant number of trees in the Sidmouth area. It was noted that 30 sites had been identified for planting which had already been carried out at the Bowd and further planting would be undertaken at Stowford Rise and Stowford Community Centre. More trees would then be located in the next planting season.

RESOLVED: that the volunteers be thanked for their work to date and the report be noted.

29 Update on Blue Flag Accreditation

The Committee received an update from the Chair and Vice Chair regarding work being carried out towards an application for a Blue Flag award for the town beach. It was noted that the East Devon District Council Beach safety officer had worked on the areas identified and that an application was imminent. Progress on the town lifeguards was not known at this stage and this would be needed to achieve full blue flag status. It was also noted that a Seaside Award was being applied for at the same time.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

30 Seafront drain painting ‘To the Sea’ scheme

The Committee considered the report of the Chair which highlighted schemes in other areas where an educational stencilled message was painted around drains stating that “this leads to the sea” and similar. It was agreed that drains particularly along the esplanade would benefit from this. Devon County Council Highways would need to agree with where the drains were painted but it was agreed in principle that this be carried out in the town area.

RESOLVED: that the principle of a “to the sea” paint scheme on town drains be carried out for 2020 in consultation with Devon County Council Highways.

31 “2 Minute Beach Clean” board

The Committee considered the siting of an additional ‘beach clean’ board at the eastern end of the Esplanade. An existing one was well used at the Western end and it was hoped an extra board would encourage further cleaning.

RESOLVED: that an additional 2 minute beach clean board be purchased and located at the eastern end of the esplanade.

32 Items raised by invited representatives

Members heard from Dave Bramley that the Science Festival would be running a number of events in February to help further the understanding of a ‘clean growth’ economy. He asked if the Council could help publicise this and Members agreed that they would help wither they could.

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CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE