

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council’s
Environment Committee held on Monday 12 October 2020 at 6.30 pm
 (Due to the current COVID-19 situation, the Town Council met virtually
 as authorised by the Regulations set out in Clause 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020.)

Councillors present: Denise Bickley (Chair)
 Chris Lockyear (Vice Chair)
 Ian Barlow
 Marianne Rixson

Invited Reps: Diana East (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Richard Eley, Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce
 Di Fuller (Sid Vale Association)
 Jeremy Woodward (Vision Group of Sidmouth)

Also Present: Jo Earlam, Author of Rosa’s Footprint
 Richard Allen and Aileen Heal of SAVE Food Hub

Apologies: Jon Ball, Dave Bramley, Charissa Evans, Emma Murdoch, Rachel Perram,
 Richard Thurlow,

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.30pm

PART ‘A’

43 Minutes

The minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 13 July 2020 were confirmed and agreed as a true record.

44 Declarations of Interest

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

45 Matters of Urgency and Report

There were no matters of urgency or report.

46 Exclusion of the Public

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

47 Think Footprint website and Rosa’s Footprint by Jo Earlam

Following her presentation to Council, Jo Earlam updated the Committee on the website ‘Think Footprint’ and launch of her book ‘Rosa’s Footprint’ that imagines the character of the reptile that left it, as a deliberate message about treating the environment with care and for whoever saw it, to “think” about their own footprint they will leave.

47 Think Footprint website and Rosa's Footprint by Jo Earlam (cont'd)

The book would be launched on Saturday 17 October 2020. Jo asked Members to think of other ways to help engage the public in the message of the story. Members suggested that a series of real footprints laid into pavements or painted onto certain buildings could work well. It was agreed that the reopening of Sidmouth Museum would be a key factor in helping to engage visitors and residents.

RESOLVED: that the presentation from Jo Earlam be noted.

48 SAVE Food Hub

Aileen Heal and Richard Allen gave a brief presentation of the work of SAVE Food Hub, which was set up in March initially in Seaton, to collect surplus food from local supermarkets. Its volunteers collect and share edible, in-date food with local food banks, community food projects and local people. Set up at the start of lockdown, the group rescues what shops and supermarkets have to, by law, throw away. Members noted that SAVE Food hub sends a lot of food it collects to local food banks in Seaton and Axminster but it was stressed that they are not a food bank.

RESOLVED: that the presentation from Aileen Heal and Richard Allen be noted.

49 Biodiversity Group

Jeremy Woodward gave a brief update on the work of the newly formed Biodiversity Group which had been carrying out numerous surveys as it gathered data and information on the biodiversity of the area.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

50 Allotment Provision

Councillor Lockyear reported on the progress of a potential project to provide allotments on land at St John's School. It was noted that though provision could be made, additional fencing and ball stop netting to protect both students and allotment tenants would be needed which would incur additional costs. Costs would be examined in the near future to examine and determine if this would be viable. It was hoped that if provision could be made, it would be managed by East Devon District Council's existing administrative process.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

51 Beehives

Councillor Lockyear reported that the Council had been liaising with the local Beekeeping groups about the possible locating of beehives on Council land including Alma Field. It was noted that this project was at an early stage and would be updated on at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

52 Ash Dieback

Councillor Lockyear reported that the Council would shortly be carrying out tree felling at Long Park to remove diseased Ash trees suffering with Ash Dieback. It was intended to replant with suitable species working with Sidmouth Arboretum. Further work to trees in Manstone Recreation Field would be carried out in 2021.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

52 'Rewilding'

Councillor Bickley reported on the project to introduce some wild flowers and wild habitat management on the verge at the Bowd. Councillor Barlow asked if the District Council could work with Sidmouth in Bloom and the Town Council to plant the raised bank at Arcot Road.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

53 Future Pedestrianisation of Sidmouth

Councillor Bickley asked the group for their views on the reduction of traffic in Sidmouth ahead of discussions with Devon County Council Highways Road Table meeting. Councillor Bickley asked members to look at Waltham Forest and the work that they had carried out to accommodate pedestrians in more open and safer streets not clogged by cars. It was though that such a scheme tailor made for Sidmouth could work in the town with careful consideration and management. It was also agreed that such a scheme would need to listen to feedback from residents and visitors and not just businesses. Members agreed that the temporary Covid-19 safe streets related restrictions were the perfect time to try additional ideas.

RESOLVED: that the thoughts from the Committee be passed on at the Devon County Council Highways Round Table meeting when it convened.

54 Report on energy usage by Sidmouth Town Council

Councillor Lockyear reported on Council property energy usage over the past year. He explained that this was a baseline figure which in itself, would not be particularly easy to compare again in future years because of the COvid-19 restrictions and home working. There were however unusual readings relating to the Manstone Youth Centre which were being investigated.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

55 Awards for Sustainable Sidmouth

Councillor Bickley and Jeremy Woodward explained how they would like to introduce awards for businesses and individuals who had made a positive contribution to the environment. Ideas for awards were being developed and it was hoped that an awards system and ceremony could be included in the project in the future working with businesses and Chamber of Commerce.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

56 Budget Planning

Councillor Lockyear gave a brief report on the spending that the Committee had carried out to date and possible spending in the next financial year.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

57 Items raised by invited representatives

There were no items raised by invited representatives.

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CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE