



SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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21 October 2022

To: All Members of the Environment Committee
(Cllrs: Ian Barlow, Denise Bickley, Charissa Evans, Stuart Hughes, Chris Lockyear, Emma Murdoch,
Marianne Rixson)
Invited Representatives

For Information:
Other Members of the Council
Town Clerk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Virtual Meeting of the Environment Working Group Monday 31 October 2022 at 6.30pm

You are called upon to attend the above meeting where it is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered and resolution made or recommendations passed to the Town Council as appropriate. The Working Group will meet virtually via the Zoom software platform.

Members of the public wishing to view the meeting or speak on an agenda item are required to register by emailing towncouncil@sidmouth.gov.uk at least 24 hours before the start time of the meeting, after which virtual meeting details will be sent out to speakers/attendees.

The Chair of the Working Group has the right and discretion to control questions to avoid disruption, repetition and to make best use of the meeting time. Individual contributions will be limited to a maximum period of three minutes.

Yours faithfully,

Christopher E Holland
Town Clerk

A G E N D A

PART 'A'

Page/s

- 1 **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence.

2	Minutes To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 11 July 2022.	3 - 5
3	Declarations of Interest To receive any Members' declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda. Note: You must also declare the nature of any personal or prejudicial interests in an item whenever it becomes apparent that you have an interest in the business being considered.	
4	Matters of Urgency and Report To consider any items that in the opinion of the Chair should be dealt with as matters of urgency because of special circumstances. (Note: such circumstances need to be recorded in the minutes)	
5	Exclusion of the Public To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded.	
6	Natural Environment	
6.1	Update to be given from the Working Group by Ed Dolphin.	
7	Built Environment	
7.1	Update to be given from the Working Group by Richard Thurlow.	6
8	Sustainability	
8.1	Update to be given from the Working Group by Richard Thurlow.	7 - 8
8.2	Update to be given from the Working Group by Denise Bickley	
10	Engagement	
10.1	Update from the Working Group by Denise Bickley.	
12	Alma Field	
13	Update on the IRF bid following up on last meetings presentation by Louise Cole	

Forthcoming Council and Working Group meetings:

- 2 November Planning Meeting
- 7 November Council Meeting
- 16 November Planning Meeting

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council's
Environment Working Group held on
Monday 11 July 2022 at 6.30pm

Councillors present: Ian Barlow (Chair)
 Denise Bickley
 Richard Thurlow
 Deidre Hounsom
 Rachel Perram
 Louise Cole

Invited Reps: Ed Dolphin (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Dave Bramley (Sidmouth Science Festival)
 Diana East (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Jon Ball (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Jeremy Woodward (Vision Group of Sidmouth)
 Catherine Causley (EDDC Climate Officer)
 Richard Eley (Chamber of Commerce)

Apologies Cllr Chris Lockyear, Cllr Clarissa Evens

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.55pm

PART 'A'

1 Minutes

The minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 25 April 2022 were confirmed and agreed as a true record subject to the following amendments:

2 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 Extinction Rebellion, Member of Friends of the Earth, Member of Greenpeace, Chair of Sidmouth Plastic Warriors Member of Sidmouth Biodiversity Group
Cllr Rachel Perram	All items	Personal	Remained in the Meeting during discussion and voting.	Member of Sidmouth Plastic Warriors

3 Matters of Urgency and Report

There were no matters of urgency or report.

4 Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED: that the classification given to the documents to be submitted to the Council, be confirmed, and that the reports relating to exempt information, be dealt with under Part B.

5 Natural Environment:

The Working Group considered a new ambitious target to plant 14,000 trees (1 for every person that lives in the Sid Valley)

A group was setup consisting of Ed Dolphin, Diana East and Ian Barlow to look at the feasibility and of 1,000 trees being planted by April 2023. The group would approach farmers, landowners and others looking to find suitable areas to plant the trees. They would look to plant the remaining 13,000 trees within 4-5years.

6 The Working Group considered funding tabards for Friends of Glen Goyle

Jeremy Woodward requested £160 for 20 tabards for the Friends of the Glen, this was to make them look more official when they were out working. This was agreed. The group asked that Sidmouth Town Council be printed on the tabards along with FOG. (Friends of Glen)

7 Built Environment

The Working Group considered setting up a small Sub Working Group, to investigate how to reduce the cluttering of the town centre with unnecessary signage and to the possibility of additional planters within the road layout to help improve the appearance of the town centre (including the repurposing of the telephone boxes) to add interest and vibrancy to the town centre whilst having particular regard to improving the environment and benefitting the economy.

The sub-working group was set up to include Richard Thurlow, Richard Eley and Deidre Housom. It was agreed that they could work on the issue as one item or split it in to 2 parts if this was deemed necessary.

8 Sustainability

The Working Group considered setting up a small Sub Working Group, to look into the long-term production of electricity in the Sid valley including solar, wind and hydro and other means of production to help make Sidmouth more sustainable.

A sub working group was set up to include Richard Thurlow, Dave Bramley, Jon Ball and Chris Lockyear. It was agreed that the group would also examine providing charging points at the Knowle car park, which was currently owned by East Devon District Council, but which would be transferred to the Town Council.

9 The Working Group considered setting up a small Sub Working Group, to include a member of the Chamber of Commerce, to produce a investigative report showing how Sidmouth could be made more 'plastic aware' and how reduce unnecessary plastic packaging in local businesses.

The group would look at how it could be achieved, implemented and what, if any, financial resources would be required.

A sub-working group was set up to include Denice Bickley, Rachel Perram and a member of the Chamber of Commerce (Dan Lakeman).

10 Engagement

The Working Group considered setting up a small Sub Working Group, to examine how to better engage with groups and the population to encourage them to better engage with the green agenda locally.

A sub working group was setup of Denice Bickley and Dave Bramley and given the challenge to get local people more engaged in the green agenda.

11 Items raised by invited representatives

Innovation and Resilience Fund (IRF) bid presentation

A short presentation from Cllr Louise Cole about the successful IRF bid was given and a short discussion resulting focussing around sustainable tourism and the part this committee can play in its success.

12 Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED: That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of its contents.

PART 'B'

13 School Weir Fish Pass project

Councillor Thurlow gave a project update as the Town Council's representative on the group.

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CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

REPORT OF SUB GROUP ON TOWN INFRASTRUCTURE.

The sub group has been asked *to investigate how to reduce the cluttering of the town centre with unnecessary signage and to the possibility of additional planters within the road layout to help improve the appearance of the town centre (including the repurposing of the telephone boxes) to add interest and vibrancy to the town centre whilst having particular regard to improving the environment and benefitting the economy.*

1. **Proliferation and excess signs.** We started a review of signs and street furniture in the central area and main approach roads. This will be continued and a review undertaken with EDDC and DCC. In due course. Discussions will be held with Chamber of Commerce on the use of A boards and other signs, particularly in the Conservation area.
 - a. **Cleaning of signs.** Most signs are dirty and create a poor impression of the town to visitors. It was felt that cleaning of signs should not be a volunteer activity. Cleaning should be undertaken once per year. An estimate for a firm to clean 250 signs in the town centre and approach roads was £2500,
2. **Street Infrastructure in public realm, (Bollards/Lamp-posts etc).** Many look dilapidated, some are missing. Discussions to be held with EDDC and DCC.
3. **Gullies;** Many appear not to have been cleaned for a number of years despite DCC schedules stating that they have been. Overflow leads to flooding and possible danger to road users. Discuss situation with DCC once significant problems have been identified.
4. **Telephone boxes.** We are considering the use of these.

The sub group has been asked to look into the *“Provision of long-term production of electricity in the Sid valley, including Solar, Wind, Hydro or other means of production to make Sidmouth more sustainable. The sub group was also asked to examine the provision of EV charging points at the Knowle car park the ownership of which will be transferred to STC.*

1. Energy Production

a. Background.

- i. The area around Sidmouth is an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and a Coastal Conservation area. The coast line is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Lyme Bay, (the water surrounding Sidmouth) is a Marine Conservation area. This makes any proposal for any large-scale development very contentious.

- b. **Hydro generation.** Based on knowledge of the coast, tidal and other factors, waters in the Sidmouth area are not in any way suitable for the generation of hydro power. Sidmouth wave or tidal conditions are not suitable for energy production. Tidal devices need a location with a good tidal race e.g., Anglesey, Scotland, Scillies.

- c. **Wind generation.** The high cost, locations constraints and lack of wind make Sidmouth a very unlikely location for Wind energy. It may be worth exploring the services provide by “Ripple Energy” which builds wind turbines in suitable locations on a co-operative funding basis, investment proving electricity at reduced prices to co-operative funders.

- d. **Solar generation.** Earlier research work by the now defunct “Sid Vale Energy” group, established that only one site in the Sid valley was suitable, (and available?) for a solar farm. This was near East Hill strips, and is 5 acres in size. This are is very small, as a commonly accepted output is 6-8 acres is needed to produce 1 megawatt. A major factor is the “upstream” capacity of Western Power to incorporate any power so generated. We have been told that this is a major constraint at the present time. However, we will continue to investigate this option.

- e. **Kelp farming,** Kelp, (Seaweed) farming can provide a source of natural a material for energy production. We will investigate this further

- f. **Proposal.** The sub-group will continue to investigate the issues and report back on any progress at the next meeting of the Environmental Working Group. We seek a budget of £1000

2. EV charging at Knowle car park

- a. We have discussed this with EDDC who are providing EV points at some of their car parks under a government subsidised installation scheme. It is unlikely that STC would be eligible for this. We have researched providers of the units and have had a meeting with an electrical contractor to discuss supply options. Installation is not difficult.

- b. A constraint is that there are a number of providers, who offer equipment but standards are still being developed.
- c. Total cost of this is likely to be in the region of £4500, (Supply and installation of units), plus £XXXXXX (still awaiting quote from electrical contractor).
- d. STC could set the tariffs providing a small payback on provision costs.