



SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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4 July 2023

To: All Members of the Environment Committee:
Councillors: Ian Barlow, Bernie Davis, Mike Goodman, Chris Lockyear, Rachel Perram, Kevin R Walker

Invited Representatives

For Information:
Other Members of the Council
Town Clerk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Meeting of the Environment Committee Monday 10 July at 6.30pm

You are called upon to attend the above meeting to be held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Woolcombe Lane, Sidmouth. It is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered at the meeting and resolution or resolutions passed as the Council considers appropriate.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and speak at this meeting. The Chair of the Committee 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

	<u>Page/s</u>
<u>PART 'A'</u>	
1 Apologies To receive any apologies for absence.	
2 Minutes	3 - 5

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Working Group meeting held on Monday 24 April 2023.

Page/s

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. There is one item which the Town Clerk recommends should be dealt with in this way.

6 Natural Environment

- 6.1 Update on the River Sid partnership project.
- 6.2 Kelp Farm proposal – Councillor Chris Lockyear.
- 6.3 Update on South West Water – Councillor Chris Lockyear.
- 6.4 Update on the 14,000 tree project by Ed Dolphin.

6

7 Built Environment

- 7.1 Sign cleaning - Councillor Ian Barlow.
- 7.2 Infrared camera project update – Councillor Chris Lockyear.
- 7.4 Prospective new housing to come with solar panels and bird boxes, Councillor Ian Barlow.

8 Engagement

- 8.1 Caps project – Update from Councillor Chris Lockyear.

Forthcoming Council and Working Group meetings:

- 12 July Planning Working Group
- 26 July Planning Working Group
- 7 July Council Meeting
- 9 July Planning Working Group

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Sidmouth Town Council's
Environment Committee held in the Council Chamber,
Woolcombe House, Woolcombe Lane, Sidmouth
on Monday 24 April 2023 at 6.30pm

Councillors present: Ian Barlow (Chair)
Marianne Rixson
Rachel Perram
Chris Lockyear
Denise Bickley
Hilary Nelson

Invited Reps: Ed Dolphin (Sidmouth Arboretum)
Jon Ball (Sidmouth Arboretum)
Diana East
Catherine Causley (Climate control EDDC)
David Cook

Apologies: Cllr Evans, Cllr Murdoch, Stephen Blakeway, Dave Bramley, Ian Gregory and Jeremy Woodward.

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.35pm

PART 'A'

31 Minutes

The minutes of the Environment Working Group meeting held on Monday 13 February 2023 were confirmed and agreed as a true record subject to the following amendments:

32 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr Chris Lockyear	Part B	Personal	Remained in the Meeting during discussion and voting	Member of Sidmouth Biodiversity Group

4 Matters of Urgency and Report

None reported.

33 Natural Environment:

33.1 Cllr Barlow gave an overview of the River Sid partnership project. £70,000 plus monies given to Charity will pay for the whole river project.

RECOMMENDED: Council to meet with Sir George Cave to discuss river project. Report back at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Chair thank Rupert Keeley for his donation to the project and have sent a letter.

33.2 Cllr Chris Lockyear gave an update regarding his dialog with South West Water. They are continuing to find E Coli particularly in Bickwell Brook and Bedford steps. There is a suggestion that the cause for Bickwell Brook is the cattle, they are still investigating Bedford Steps. Cllr Lockyear gave an overview of South West Water's short and long term actions and time scales, they are prioritising Sidmouth and have increased their budget to £8.1 Million going forward at the meeting. The Misconnections team are trying to understand the rain water gully's and map misconnections to locate the sewage. There may be a potential need to change the tank at the Ham, this will need to be coordinated with care to ensure limited disruption to the town's tourism.

33.3 Ed Dolphin gave an update to the Working Group on the project to plant 14,000 trees. He is pleased to report that we are well ahead of schedule and we planted or facilitated more than 5,000 whips in the first planting season. Those planted on private land will contribute to local biodiversity and mitigate potential flooding by attenuating rainwater run off at the head of the valley. This beneficial aspect will be a particular focus of the project in the next two years. Mr Dolphin would like to ask the Council to match fund a grant application to the AONB to pay for the Queen's Canopy planting. The total cost is likely to be in the region of £2,000 split evenly between the two organisations. This will come out of the annual £5,000.

RESOLVED: That the funding application be approved.

34 Built Environment

34.1 Sign cleaning –Cllr Barlow gave an update and confirmed he had received a quote for the cleaning of the signs from a local handy man at the cost of £50 per month. This will be reviewed in 6 months and will help keep the Town looking well kept. Cllr Perram asked if he could report back about the metal signs that need repainting. The Town Clerk will run it past the EDDC.

RESOLVED: That the funding application be approved.

34.2 Cllr Chris Lockyear gave an update on the infrared camara survey saying they have had 22 people this Spring as opposed to 90 last year taking part in the survey. Cllr Bickley asked what happens after a survey has been completed. Catherine Causley advised that they are working a trusted supplier database that will be able to help homeowners take the next step after the survey. Currently Energy Saving Devon offer a consultancy service. It was suggested that businesses would benefit from this greatly and a simple 1-2 page guide would be helpful.

34.3 Phone boxes – Due to Cllr Louise Cole being unable to attend the meeting, the chair gave an update. Sidmouth School of Art working with Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub have done a first meeting to explore the refit – arranging a 2nd meeting to finalise plans to repair, repaint, fit with shelving, fixtures and fitting and lighting to repurpose the space to host two Micro Museums: Micro Museum of Antiquities (old) and Micro Museum of Contemporary Art (new). Both telephone boxes will retain iconic traditional red box colour and designs.

New signage and installations to exhibit artwork and curios will be sourced working with Barabara Farquharson – Professor of Anthropology and Author and lead on the Branscombe Project and Artist David Shrigley. Initial exhibitions are being worked on for presentation in June (all being well) these will be public exhibitions for the benefit of local residents and visitors – innovative uses and we will do publicity to bring them to notice e.g. using Visit

Sidmouth and local press. We will be having conversations with Sidmouth Toy Museum and Sidmouth Museum to contribute.

The ambition is then to create a series of exhibitions possibly led by other groups once the initial refit and test pilot has been achieved. A donation of £1000 has been requested to go towards the fund.

RESOLVED: That the funding application be approved.

35 Sustainability

35.1 CAPS project were looking at getting residents more engaged in their personal carbon footprint. A volunteer from Exeter university will be assisting with the project. He has written a proposal/dissertation. He will be looking at the survey results and social media account and hold sessions with the Scouts, School and Youth Club to get a younger demographic. At the moment it is mainly 45 plus that have been taking part in the survey.

36 Engagement

36.1 Making Sidmouth Sustainable.

36.2 Update on the IRF project – Due to Cllr Louise Cole not being able to attend the meeting, no update was given.

37 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'

38 Grant applications

RECOMMENDED: that grant applications be allocated as agreed by the elected Members at the meeting, to Sid Valley Biodiversity group, Sidmouth Arboretum group and Vision group for Sidmouth.

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CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Dear Town Council,

We have had a brief discussion on the proposal of a seaweed (kelp) farm at the Port Royal end of town to reduce wave activity. As an initial brief we have highlighted some of the key advantages to using a seaweed farm to assist in the beach management plan. We have previously worked closely with Plymouth university on several projects and we would propose doing so again.

Installing a wave attenuation seaweed farm has the potential to dampen wave energy by up to 30 to 50 %. Thereby protecting the local coastline against erosion and help stabilise the shoreline.

The offshore farm would consist of ropes, barrels anchors and spores on suspended offshore longlines in an area of six football pitches offshore of Port Royal.

The farm would not be harvested commercially but maintained in a condition to enable a reduction in wave energy. The farm would not require inputs such as pesticides, phosphates or nitrates.

This venture would not only give costal protection but also employ local people in the maintenance and harvesting of the farm.

Seaweed farming is renewable, sustainable and versatile with a growing number of industrial applications to help grow the local blue economy.

Some of the applications of seaweeds include.

A high nutrient food source to assist with food security. Bio fuel, cosmetics, furniture, packaging, animal feed. When fed to cows and sheep there methane emissions are reduced by 80%

Fish, invertebrates marine mammal species would use the farm as shelter increasing diversity of species and greater recruitment. Also a plus for local fishermen.

The site would also act as a carbon sink. Seaweeds capture 20 times more carbon than terrestrial forests. This has the potential to be used as a carbon offset.

Seaweeds release more oxygen than all the rainforests on the planet.

Seaweeds reduce nutrient pollution.

Seaweeds buffer against Ocean acidification.

These are just some of the many benefits of seaweeds. Local benefits include.

Costal Protection
Employment
Environmental Protection
Greater species diversity and recruitment

If you feel the above information is of interest to the town then we would like to have a chance to either send a presentation to the council or come and present a plan of how we can be part of the Beach management plan. We would be looking at EA funding as part of the beach management plan.

Regards

John Hammond
Director Ebb Tides Seaweed