

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Sidmouth Town Council's
Environment Committee held in the Council Chamber,
Woolcombe House, Woolcombe Lane, Sidmouth
on Monday 9 October 2023 at 6.30pm

Councillors present: Ian Barlow (Chair)
 Bernie Davis
 Chris Lockyear
 Hillary Nelson
 Rachel Perram
 Kevin Walker

Invited Reps:

Ed Dolphin (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Jon Ball (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Jan Metcalf (Sid valley Biodiversity Group)
 Diana East (Sidmouth Arboretum)
 Charles Sinclair (River Sid Project)
 Roger Wolley (Sidmouth in Bloom, Sid Bashers)
 Dave Bramley (CAPS)

Apologies:

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.30pm

PART 'A'

39 Minutes

The minutes of the Environment Working Group meetings held on Monday 24 April 2023 and Monday July 10, 2023, were agreed, and signed.

40 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item Number	Type	Action Taken	Details
Cllr Ian Barlow and Cllr Chris Lockyear	All items	Personal	Remained in the Meeting during discussion and voting	Member of Sidmouth Biodiversity Group Member of Sidmouth Arboretum
Cllr Chris Lockyear, Cllr Kevin Walker	All items	Personal	Remained in the Meeting during discussion and voting.	Member of Sidmouth Biodiversity Group
Cllr Rachel Perram	All items	Personal	Remained in the Meeting during discussion.	Member of Sidmouth Plastic Warriors

41 Matters of Urgency and Report

None reported.

42 Natural Environment:

- 42.1 Jan Metcalf from the Sid Valley Biodiversity group and Charles Sinclair was invited to speak regarding the Westcountry River Trust. They gave an overview of the River Sid Partnership project (*A summary is attached as separate document with the minutes.*). Plans for the immediate future included improving river habitat. They were most concerned about Woolbrook, due to urban and rural pollution. Members acknowledged and thanked them for the concise report.
- 42.2 Councillor Chris Lockyear gave an update regarding his dialog with South West Water. A project manager had been appointed and a meeting was expected to be scheduled.
- 42.3 Councillor Kevin Walker and Rodger Wolley updated the Committee on the spread of Japanese Knotweed in the Sidmouth Area. It was pointed out that Japanese Knotweed was not something that the Town Council had the power to treat or act on as it was a landowner responsibility to liaise with the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED: to request that a letter be written to the MP, Head of County Council and District Council to request that communications/information be sent to landowners on their responsibilities to tackle Japanese Knotweed. Actions be taken by them and others to ensure that Japanese knotweed is removed and does not spread further in the river Sid.

- 42.4 Ed Dolphin gave an update to the Working Group on the project to plant 14,000 trees. Members thanked him for his report and were pleased with the progress.
- 42.5 Jon Ball spoke on treeconomics. A new Tree Survey of numbers and value of trees was required. Training, equipment costs and purchase of data would cost approximately £4K. Further information would be presented regarding the cost of evaluating the data at a future meeting when negotiations with Treeconomics have been conducted.

RECOMMENDED: that £4,000 be made available from the Environment Committee budget for the purposes of training, equipment costs and purchase of data.

43 Built Environment

- 43.1 Councillor Ian Barlow gave a brief update on sign cleaning and confirmed that work had been started and was being completed with no charge.
- 43.2 Councillor Barlow suggested a letter was written to the EDDC to increase their grass cutting/grounds maintenance budget requirement and make a co-ordinated plan. Ed Dolphin had made a suggested timetable for managing green spaces for nature with the EDDC. The Chair of the Town Council was trying to arrange a meeting with the Portfolio Holder at EDDC to discuss the issue.

43.3 Councillor Perram spoke on the funding request for the estimated £400 budget for an additional, larger, Toy Library.

RECOMMENDED: that £400 be made available from the Environment Committee budget for the purchase of a larger beach Toy Library.

44.3 Councillor Ian Barlow gave a brief update on the Sidmouth Telephone box displays. The next installations should be ready for the end of October. The displays had been well received by the public and were an asset to the Town.

RESOLVED: that a letter of thanks be submitted to the Director of the Art School.

45 **Engagement**

45.1 An update on the Caps project was given by Councillor Lockyear and Dave Bramley. Research from Pelle has shown a lot of Sidmouth residents are already aware of reducing their carbon footprint. Mailchimp had been set up to easily engage with the Community, forwarding information and educating about climate awareness.

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CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE