

HUNTINGDON TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT SUB COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Environment Sub Committee was held at Huntingdon Town Hall on Thursday 3rd November 2022 at 19:00.

Clerk's Note: The meeting was originally scheduled to take place on Thursday 8th September, but was adjourned following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

Present: Councillors K Brockett; D Cole (Ex-Officio); J Cole; A McAdam (Ex-Officio); G Shiels; P Pearce; and S Sweek (Chair).

Absent: Councillor S McAdam

In Attendance: Councillor B Luckham
3 members of the public

11. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor A Norton.

12. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

13. **ADDRESS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND TOWN COUNCILLORS TO SUB COMMITTEE**

A member of the public indicated that they wished to speak, and it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.

Chris Jordan from Huntingdon Environment Action Team (HEAT) updated Members on the following:

- HEAT members had attended the 2022 Huntingdon Eco Fair event to gauge interest in the group among the community
- Following discussions with the Corporate Officer and Communications Officer, administration of the Eco Huntingdon Facebook group initially set up by HTC had been transferred to HEAT. It was felt the group was better suited to being run by the community rather than the council.
- Contact had been made with local schools and colleges regarding their environmental projects, including campaigns to reduce plastic and increase meat free meal options.

Mr Jordan also noted that he was keen to hear the update on the eco audit project following the previous delays.

It was then proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to reconvene the meeting.

14. **MINUTES**

Members had before them copies of the minutes of the Environment Sub Committee meeting held on 23rd June 2022 (M1). The Chair asked Members if there were any questions or comments. With no comments or questions, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting which were duly signed by the Chair.

15. **WILD ABOUT HUNTINGDON**

Stephanie James addressed the committee regarding the Wild About Huntingdon community project to support wildlife in Huntingdon. Since its launch, Wild About Huntingdon had worked with a range of local residents, groups and businesses to increase wildlife-friendly areas, including donation of seeds for wildflower planting, hedgehog homes and bee boxes. The project aimed to also target industrial areas to increase planting, and an award scheme for businesses getting involved in planting was suggested.

Members thanked Stephanie for her time and noted that Wild About Huntingdon was a great initiative. A number of potential areas for HTC to support the project were discussed, including identifying areas to allow longer grass to grow, engaging with the Huntingdon allotment holders, volunteering opportunities, and working with Huntingdon In Bloom. It was suggested that a meeting should be scheduled with relevant Officers to further discuss these projects.

16. **ECO AUDIT**

The Corporate Officer gave a verbal update on Net Zero Strategy project. It was noted that a summary report had been received following the Environment Sub Committee meeting in June 2022, but that the reports from the site visits which contained the suggested improvements and cost information were still outstanding.

A meeting had taken place between Energise and the Town Clerk and Corporate Officer to address the delays and receive an update on the project. The Coneygear Centre report had been received, with the other site reports expected to follow. It was noted the Crematorium report was being updated with accurate energy usage data now it was open. Following receipt of the reports, the final stage of the project would be a workshop between Energise and representatives from HTC to go through the strategy and set targets for moving forward.

Members noted it was disappointing that the outstanding reports had not yet been received, and thanked Officers for their work to chase these up. It was requested that an agenda item be included at the next Environment Sub Committee meeting to review the completed strategy and reports when they were received.

17. **ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS UPDATE**

The Corporate Officer updated Members on the progress of ongoing environmental projects since the last Sub Committee meeting:

- The 2022 Eco Fair event had successfully taken place in July. The HTC composter demonstration and Hunts History Festival Lego activity had been particularly popular. The decision was made to end the event one hour early due to the hot weather. The opportunity to expand the event with additional activities inside the Town Hall was being considered for future years.
- Options to reduce the council's energy usage, particularly at the Town Hall, were being investigated, including air source heating and secondary glazing.
- Huntingdonshire District Council had recently renewed their climate strategy and set the aspiration for a carbon net-zero Huntingdonshire by 2040. It was noted there may be opportunities for HTC to work together with HDC to achieve this.
- The process for reviewing and updating the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan was being looked into. It was noted that Members may consider the inclusion of additional environment-focused policies such as encouraging developments that include cycling infrastructure, electric vehicle charging points, solar panels and other eco-friendly considerations.
- Opportunities for any available funding for environment projects that HTC may be eligible to apply for were being researched.

18. **NEXT PROJECTS**

Members had before them a report on future projects for the Environment Sub Committee.

It was suggested that the council should engage with the community to find out what projects already existed, and where HTC could offer support and add value. Ideas discussed included focus groups with schools, networking events with relevant local groups, and consultation with residents through social media and the Huntingdon magazine.

Members also felt it would be beneficial to bring together the various Local Authorities and other relevant organisations to identify areas to work together and avoid duplicating work.

19. **DATE & AGENDA OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as to be confirmed. A meeting would be scheduled following receipt of the outstanding Eco Audit reports.

CHAIRMAN