

STRATFORD- UPON- AVON TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY PANEL MEETING
(formerly Climate Change Emergency)

28 April, 2021

4:30pm

DRAFT Notes

Present:

Cllr Elizabeth Coles (EC)

Lisa Cowley (LC)

Cllr Gill Cleeve (GC)

Cllr David Curtis (DC)

Cllr Jenny Fradgley (JF)

Tony Holt (TH)

Cllr Tony Jackson (TJ)

Dave Lawley (DL)

Sarah Summers (SS)

Cllr Cohl Warren-Howles (CW-H)

All members attended the meeting via Zoom.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Tony Jackson (TJ) and Sarah Summers (SS).

Cllr Roy Dyer (RD) was absent from the meeting.

2. To approve the notes from the Environmental Strategy Panel Meeting held on 17 March, 2021

The notes were approved as correct record.

The Chair reviewed the action list from the last meeting and TH advised that the tree planter for the Cornmarket has been received and is currently being stored at Hatton Rock. TH also advised that the Cherry Tree has been ordered but needs to check whether this has been sourced from the UK or abroad. TH also agreed to check how long the scaffolding is going to remain on the Corn Market as it is currently having work completed.

3. Wildflower Planting Underutilised Space

- **Retrospective approval for Wildflower plugs**

CW-H advised that she and EC met with Welcombe residents who are keen to get involved with the wildflower planting programme, specifically at the area at the junction of Dingles Way and Blue Cap Road, known locally as Blue Cap Green. This has already been identified as one of the areas for wilding and we have agreement from SDC to do some work on that area. There are several sloped areas which would be suitable for an initial planting of wildflowers without compromising the open space.

It was therefore proposed £200.00 worth of wildflower plugs are purchased so that a socially distanced planting session can be organised with the residents.

It was Proposed, Seconded and

AGREED: to proceed with the purchasing of the wildflower plugs in order for CW-H and EC to organise a socially distanced planting session with residents.

- **Update on Arden Quarter and biodiversity report**

CW-H reported that she had met with Ecologist Catherine Coton who has produced an ecology assessment report for the Arden Quarter. This report is attached to these minutes as **Appendix 'A'**.

In the report it is noted that the site is currently dominated by broom shrub, with patches of unmanaged species-poor grassland. The considerations for future management are:

- Existing scattered shrubs and young trees – these have some ecological value already, so should be mostly retained. However, if left unmanaged, this will spread and cover the whole bank, limiting structural diversity and suppressing the grassland, so some cutting back and coppicing management will be required;
- Existing bramble scrub area – this provides good cover for birds and small mammals, and flowers and berries for insects, so it

should be retained on site. Occasional cutting will be required to prevent it spreading across the rest of the bank and onto/over adjacent paths.

It was agreed that this is a project that should be done gradually and that the first task would be to cut back overgrown areas and possibly put wood chippings/bark down on the drainage area.

It was suggested that a separate meeting with CW-H and TH should be arranged to discuss specifics of this project.

- **Update on entrance troughs and ideas for planting**

Since the last meeting it was decided that the following insect-friendly plants should be included in the entrance troughs:

- Lavender;
- Sage;
- Rosemary;
- Thyme;
- Pinks.

It was Proposed, Seconded and

AGREED: to authorise the budget of £1,500 for ten troughs and to let TH and his team proceed with the planting. TH advised that this would be done as soon as possible but will be dependent on the team's other workload and commitments. He also noted that the team would clean the signs on the entrance points to the town.

4. Green Shoots Fund – progress with application for funding.

TL has drafted this application which is attached as **Appendix 'B'** to these minutes. He highlights that there are two approaches we could take:

- **Seasonal Yellow Rattle Approach.** This is a seasonally limited approach but is the most cost effective. After scarifying the area, yellow rattle seed is sown between October and January which helps to pave the way for a wider variety of wildflower seeds to be sown from March onwards;

- Meadow Matt Approach. Meadow matt is a cut turf product which contains wildflower seed. This is not seasonally limited but has a high cost of establishment.

TL also noted that a proposed budget has been allocated in the project plan (**Appendix 'C'**), as seen below:

Item	Budget	Notes
Land Searches	£500	Landowners will be searched through the land registry. Copies of titles are £3 and copies of plans are £3. This budget will enable details to be established for over 80 land parcels.
Legal Costs	£4,500	Land agreements will need to be established in all cases. This budget will be used develop a form of agreement for the Town Council to propose to landowners. It will also enable legally sound execution of agreements with counter parties. It is anticipated that around 40-45 areas will be established of varying sizes. This allows £100 per agreement.
Habitat Surveys	£2,500	Four periods of habitat survey are planned for.
Seed	£1,000	Yellow rattle requires 1g per seed to be sown per m ² . It can be purchased at a cost of approximately 70p per g. Wild flower seed can be purchased for around 7p per g but is likely to require 1.5g per m ² (www.naturescape.co.uk). Taking account of waste, this budget will be suitable for 1,000m ² of wildflower planting.
Meadow Matt	£1,500	Meadow Matt is likely to cost £16.50 - £18.50. This allows planting outside the seasonal restrictions and will supplement wildflowers established using the yellow rattle method.
Planting Labour	£15,000	It has been estimated that each m ² of wild flower established will require 1 – 1.5 hours of labour. The required labour will be split between the staff employed by the Town Council, which is not accounted for in the budget, and through a local landscape contractor.
Total	£25,000	

As the labour cost is estimated to be more than £10,000 a quote will need to be sought for this. TL agreed to write up a specification to give to TH who may have some contacts he could obtain quotations from.

It was Proposed, Seconded and

AGREED: that this application should be submitted as soon as a labour quote is received. The Chair asked for it to be formally recorded how grateful this panel is to TL and the Outside Spaces team for the hard work they have put into this so far.

5. Communication.

- **Update on development of website page on climate change**

CW-H asked whether the proposed areas for wilding could now be uploaded to the Town Council website. TL responded he did not think that this would be a good idea just yet and that we should have a proper plan in place before publicising.

JF suggested that once areas are decided on, this panel should work out a communication strategy.

- **Our Place Our Planet – Cllr Warren-Howles**

CW-H advised that she took this proposal to the Community Services Committee who were happy to go ahead with the idea. It is anticipated that this project will take a lot of work, so it has been suggested that a Task and Finish Group be set up to look at it in more detail. LC has sent an email to Council asking who would like to join this group but so far has only had two members sign up. She agreed to send out a follow-up email to see whether there is any further interest.

6. Any Other Business

- **Stratford in Bloom – update on grant for Sheep Street**

JF and CW-H will attend the Stratford in Bloom meeting held on 29 April. JF noted that the structure of Stratford in Bloom is shifting and that whilst the competitions have been understandably reduced this year, it is hoped that much of the town will become involved.

- **Holy Trinity Churchyard**

CW-H advised that she had been in touch with the volunteer group at Holy Trinity Church who are interested in wilding part of the Churchyard. TH noted that there is an area by the chancel that would be an ideal location for this. CW-H and JF will take a look at this area before meeting with the volunteer group again to discuss further.

- **Sustainable Planters**

JF referred to an email received from the Town Clerk displaying an image of a sustainable planter created by Plantscape. These planters are made from recycled materials and are combined with a 7-day watering system. LC agreed to attach the image of this

planter (**Appendix 'D'**) to these notes in order to gather feedback from other panel members.

7. Dates of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at 4:30pm on Wednesday 2 June, 2021.

The meeting closed at 5:34pm.