

REPORT of the meeting of the Environment
Committee held 19th May 2015

Present:

Cllrs: Matthew Stringer (Chairman)

Vincent Costello
Benj Emmerson
Clare Fardell
Helen Harrison
Guy Rawlinson
Angela Symonds
Martin Trueman
Gail Whitehead

Allan Burberry (Filnore Woods)
Felicity Harrison (Sustainable Thornbury)
Brett Harrison (Thornbury Composters and Filnore Allotments)

Mrs S Richardson (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: Pam Shipp (Other Commitment)

Judith Hurford (Tree Warden)

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR ENSUING YEAR

It was proposed by Cllr Benj Emmerson, seconded by Cllr Guy Rawlinson and agreed that Cllr Clare Fardell be elected as vice chair for the ensuing year.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

Ed Cole Vice Chair of Thornbury in Bloom was in attendance so it was agreed to take item 3(c) as first business.

(a) Localism 2015/16

Ed Cole reported that Thornbury in Bloom were concerned that the flower beds at Gillingstool and the roundabout at Grovesend were unsightly and in need of weeding.

The deputy clerk informed members that when Thornbury in Bloom had pointed this out she had met quickly with Gary Meyers of South Gloucestershire Council who had apologised for the state of the beds and informed that when the grass cutting was carried

out the contractor should also be weeding the beds. He ensured that the work would be carried out in the next day or so and this had now been done. The deputy clerk went on to inform members that the roundabout at Grovesend was due for replanting in the next week.

Ed Cole felt that it would not be enough to only weed when the grass was cut and it was agreed that Gary Meyers be contacted to request a work schedule for Thornbury.

The vice chair of Thornbury in Bloom also questioned how the work was monitored and the deputy clerk informed him that the outside staff did as much as possible in their daily rounds but that it also helped that councillors and members of the public also monitored the situation. If there was found to be a problem in any area then if reported to her she would be able to contact South Gloucestershire Council and hopefully the problem would be solved fairly quickly. This had appeared to work very successfully in the past year.

Thornbury in Bloom had also complained that part of one of the beds at Gillingstool was very shallow and had suffered damage due to the public climbing over a low spot in the wall from the car park to access Gillingstool.

The deputy clerk reported that she had also spoken with Gary Meyers regarding this and he had agreed to monitor the situation and then look at some permanent planting.

It was agreed to invite Gary Meyers to the next Environment committee meeting to discuss matters.

Ed Cole left the meeting

(b) Sponsorship of Dog Bins by Local Company

The deputy clerk had been unable to discover from planning at South Gloucestershire Council if it was necessary to obtain planning permission to display sponsorship notices on dog bins in council's ownership. Cllr Clare Fardell agreed to follow up the matter.

It was also felt that as the local company concerned had offered sponsorship some time ago and that there had been no contact since then they be contacted to ascertain if their offer was still valid.

(c) Fairtrade Status

Cllr Gail Whitehead informed members that the group were continuing with the renewal of the town's fair-trade status.

(d) Loss of Coping Stones on Car Park Wall

Members were informed that the work had now been carried out and it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

(e) Town Centre Directional Signage

Cllr Guy Rawlinson reported that the Town Centre Partnership had formed a sub committee to investigate the matter further.

(f) Further Seating in the Town

The deputy clerk informed members that she had not placed an item on the town council website asking for suggestions as to where to place seating because in the meantime a well used seat had been damaged and removed from Gloucester Road following a motor accident. She had been in contact with the police in an effort to claim for a new seat from the driver involved but as yet had not received a reply. As it would be a large part of the budget to replace the seat if council had to pay then it might not be possible to provide any further seating in this financial year.

Cllr Guy Rawlinson reported that Ed Cole of Thornbury in Bloom had two seats in his garage to be sited on Rock Street Garden and members agreed to this request. The deputy clerk would contact Mr Cole with a view to arranging collection etc.

4. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(a) Schedule of Minor Matters

A schedule of minor matters had been circulated with the agenda and the information noted.

(b) Annual Summer Walk About

Members agreed to carry out a summer walkabout again this year. It was agreed to meet at the scout hut in Park Road on Monday 29th June at 6.00pm to walk the stretch of streamside walk from there to St Davids Road.

5. OPERATIONAL REPORT

(a) Operational Matters

The Deputy Clerk reported that the hanging baskets would be going up in the next week. Members were informed that it had not been possible to fulfil all orders as there had been such a large take up to the scheme. Previously the order would have to be placed at the beginning of each year and the number ordered would be judged by the previous year's reaction to the scheme with some leeway from the supplier. To ensure that this problem did not arise again, in future the order letters would be delivered to potential members of the scheme to ensure that the correct number were ordered.

(b) Composting Site

Brett Harrison reported that the site would soon run out off funding as supplied by South Gloucestershire Council and did not have enough funds of its own to continue. He informed members that the recent agreement with a local landowner who was taking the material away to compost for the site was that he would be paid one journey per week and the grant from South Gloucestershire Council was calculated accordingly. However the landowner had been making more than one trip a week and South Gloucestershire Council had been paying for up to four trips as opposed to the agreed one. Members felt that this was a ludicrous situation as funds would soon be depleted and Cllr Clare Fardell agreed to contact Mark King to inform him of the situation and ensure that payment should only be made for one trip per week.

(c) Allotments Report

Brett Harrison informed members that the site did not have a ready water supply but that the allotment owners were in the process of building a water drainage system.

(d) Filnore Woods

Allan Burberry reported that routine maintenance continued to be carried out. It was reported that deer had been spotted in the area.

(e) Medieval Fishponds

There had been no further progress on this matter and concern was expressed that the ponds would soon disappear if clearance was not carried out in the near future. The deputy clerk agreed to contact English Heritage yet again in an attempt to have clearance work carried out.

(f) Tree Wardens Report

There was nothing to report on this item

(g) Sustainable Thornbury

Felicity Harrison reported that Sustainable Thornbury had nothing to report at this time

(h) Footpath Warden

The footpath warden had nothing to report at this time.

6. Financial Accounts

(a) Draft Income and Expenditure Accounts 2014/15

The draft income and expenditure accounts showing a forward balance of £14,599.44 were presented to committee and the information noted.

(b) Re-Allocation of Forward Balances

It was agreed that the following forward balances be re-allocated as follows:-

Signs	£ 2,000.00
Tree Planting	£ 1,000.00
Poulterbrook Development	£ 2,000.00
Fairtrade Accreditation	£ 1,000.00
Seats	£ 1000.00
Uncommitted	£ 7,599.44

7. CORRESPONDENCE

(a) South Gloucestershire Council-Bus Shelter Numbering

An email from South Gloucestershire Council had been received informing members of a new bus shelter numbering system. The information was noted.

(b) South Gloucestershire Council-Bus Shelter Upgrades

A draft copy of the Better Bus Area document had been emailed to members detailing improvements to certain stops in the area and identified several within the town. Members welcomed the information.

(c) South Gloucestershire Council – Discover Festival 2015

The deputy clerk informed members that information on the Discover Festival to cover Heritage Open Doors had been received with a closing date whilst council was in Purdah. Having consulted with the chairman of Environment at the time it had been agreed that the Town Hall be entered as usual in the Heritage Open Doors. The deputy clerk had registered the event for Saturday 12th from 10.00pm until 4.00pm and members would be asked to steward the event in due course.

8. SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATIONS

A list of publications had been circulated with the agenda.