

REPORT of the meeting of the Environment
Committee held 29th March 2016

Present:

Cllrs: Matthew Stringer (Chairman)

Vincent Costello
Benj Emmerson
Helen Harrison
Pam Shipp
Guy Rawlinson
Angela Symonds
Martin Trueman
Gail Whitehead

Allan Burberry (Filnore Woods)
Judith Hurford (Tree Warden)

Mrs S Richardson (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr: Clare Fardell (Out of Thornbury)

Brett Harrison (Thornbury Composting and Filnore Allotments)
Felicity Harrison (Sustainable Thornbury)

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

(a) Fairtrade Status

Cllr Gail Whitehead informed members that Fairtrade Fortnight had been a great success. Ana Maria the Nicaraguan producer talked to various groups including pupils in several schools in the area about coffee and cocoa production and how the products are sold. The big breakfast held in several different venues around the town was a great success and the colouring competition was well supported with 260 entries.

Cllr Gail Whitehead wished to thank the two Castle School students who had helped to promote Fairtrade and especially with the colouring competition. It was agreed to invite the two Castle School students to the Volunteers evening which would be discussed later in the meeting.

(b) Town Centre Directional Signage

Following agreement at Council that Environment contribute £2000 towards the cost and installation of the directional signs and posts the order had now been placed.

(c) Seating Along Streamside Walk

There had been no further progress on this item.

Cllr Benj Emmerson had been seeking views from the public on where they would wish to see extra seating in the town and had received several replies. It was agreed that members investigate the matter further and bring their views back to the next meeting. The deputy Clerk reminded members that a wooden seat costing £180 might not be suitable for some areas and that the metal seats purchased previously would cost approx £400 each.

(d) Environmental Area at Poulterbrook

There was nothing further to report on this item.

(e) Development of Land Adjacent to Composting Site

Judith Hurford informed members that some time ago she had tried to gain TPO's for some trees on this site but had not had a reply from South Gloucestershire Council.

Brett Harrison from the composting site had sent members a report expressing views that the development of this land would adversely affect a wide variety of wildlife that is linked to both this site and Filnore Woods. The information was noted.

It was agreed that members ask Cllr Clare Fardell to investigate the future of this piece of land with the relevant South Gloucestershire Council officers.

(f) Thornbury in Bloom Plaque

The plaque had now been sited and it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda

(g) Seat in Memory of Derek Anthony

The deputy clerk had met with the manager of Tesco and agreed a site for the seat which had now been ordered from the Hatch as agreed.

(h) Big Spring Clean 2016

An email had been circulated informing members that if they could not join Litterbusters on their spring clean on 5th March there would be another on 2nd April, meeting in the leisure centre car park at 9.30am. Several Councillors had already agreed to represent Council at this event.

(i) Volunteers Evening

Tree warden, Judith Hurford, agreed to be the guest speaker at the event. It was decided to hold the evening on Monday 9th May beginning at 7.30pm running the same format as previous years with a short talk followed by cake and coffee.

3. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(a) Schedule of Minor Matters

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

4. OPERATIONAL REPORT

(a) Operational Matters

The deputy clerk reported that 163 hanging baskets had been sold and the order placed.

Members were also informed that a new accommodation guide had been compiled and was available on the Town Council website. The uptake for entries had been similar to previous years.

(b) Composting Site

Brett Harrison informed that the report for the previous meeting should have read that the composters had received a grant of £3000 for 2016 from South Gloucestershire Council not £7,000 which is what they had requested.

This meant there was a shortfall of £4,000 which would have to be raised from other sources.

(c) Allotments Report

In a written report Brett Harrison informed members that the allotments association would be holding a plant swap on Sunday 15th May.

(d) Filnore Woods

Allan Burberry reported that a recent working party had had a successful session laying the hedge on the lower side of the site.

(e) Medieval Fishponds

There had not been any further progress on this item

The deputy clerk informed members that Historic England had commented on the Park Farm development planning reserved matters phase two and three stating that the developers were running short of time, having only two days left to carry out works as detailed by Historic England.

Cllr Vincent Costello expressed concern that in the near future there would be a large number of people walking the area and that as there was little or no fencing round the site some of the deep ponds could pose a danger to the public.

(f) Tree Wardens Report

Judith Hurford reported that in February she had been able to plant 25 trees following an article in January's edition of the Thornbury Magazine which had raised awareness in the town. This now left only 14 more trees to be planted to reach her target of planting 100 trees in the town.

(g) Sustainable Thornbury

Felicity Harrison had emailed a list of workshops that the group had arranged and the information was noted.

(h) Footpath Warden

The Footpath Warden requested that this committee contact the Public Rights of Way at South Gloucestershire Council to follow up council's comments on the footpath which runs from the Castle School and through the Camphill Community. This had been raised at a recent Council meeting and concern was expressed that the footfall would increase on this site following the building of houses on Park Farm. Members were concerned that the extra footfall may cause disruption to the vulnerable residents of the community.

He also reported that the footpath that runs from the Tennis Club across a field to Kyneton House had been ploughed and requested that Public Rights of Way also be informed of this.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

(a) South Gloucestershire Council – Heritage Open Doors

Notification had been received that South Gloucestershire Council would be publishing its annual Discover leaflet that would cover all South Gloucestershire events in September and October 2016. This would include the annual Open Doors event when the Town Hall opens its doors to the public to have guided tours and learn the history of the building. The date for this would be Saturday 10th September and it was agreed to offer the same service again this year. The deputy clerk would register the event with South Gloucestershire Council and organise the rota of members to carry out the event nearer the time.

(b) St Mary Centre-Tree Preservation

A letter had been received from Alan Cole, St Mary Centre Manager, bringing to Council's attention that South Gloucestershire Council had imposed Tree Preservation Orders on the 7 Black Pine trees that line the front of Aldi car park. This was in response to the centre requesting to remove several large conifers from their garden area.

Mr Cole went on to inform members that the centre had contacted South Gloucestershire Council's Tree Officer requesting that this order not be permanent.

The information was noted.

(c) South Gloucestershire Council- Biodiversity Action Plan

It appeared that members had not received the information that had been emailed on this item and as comments had to be made before the next meeting it was agreed that the deputy clerk email the information again and members forward any comments before the closing date of 1st May. These would then be forward as committee's response to the document.

6. SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATIONS

There were no publications