**Environment Committee**

**2 June 2021 2021**

**7.00 pm - 9.00pm**

**(Via Zoom)**

**Minutes**

**Attendees: Cllrs J Simister, M, Beard, C Elsmore, M Cox, S Cox, Ms D Sturgess, Ms F Herniman, Ms S Cheese. Ms M Getgood joined the meeting at 18:49.**

**Cllr N Penny attended to take notes.**

1. **To elect a Chair**

Cllr J Simister was proposed by Cllr. M Cox, and seconded by Cllr. Elsmore

**This was unanimously agreed by those present**

1. Apologies were noted from Mr Chris Haine, Assistant Clerk (and was noted that Cllr. Penny would take the minutes in his absence), and Mr W Williams.
2. **To confirm membership of committee**

**The following members were confirmed for this committee:**

Cllrs J Simister, M Cox, S Cox, C Elsmore, M Beard

Members of Public Mr W Williams, Ms D Sturgess, S Cheese, F Herniman

1. **There were no declarations of interest**
2. **There were no dispensation requests.**
3. **To approve the minutes of 4 May 2021**

The minutes were proposed by MC and seconded by Stuart Cox. All were in agreement that these were a true and accurate record of the meeting of 4th May and were signed by the Chair.

1. **There were no matters arising from the minutes of 4 May 2021**
2. **To take comments from the Public**

Cllr Simister deferred this item until later in the meeting as Melanie Getgood was expected to join at 7pm.

1. **To request delegated authority within the budget allocation, and in line with the agreed Environmental Action Plan**

Cllr M Cox introduced this item and referred to the agreed budget allocation of £10,000 for this year, and referenced the action plan that is agreed, and updated each month. Cllr Penny referred to all contracted works needing to go through the Town Council.

**Recommendation:** **That any items agreed within the action plan, within allocated budget sped and excluding contracts of work that delegated authority for decisions be given to this committee.**

**Proposed M Cox Seconded F Herniman**

**All members were in favour.**

1. **To receive updates, and make recommendations re the updated Environmental Action Plan (see attached)**

Cllr John Simister presented the updated action plan and led discussions accordingly, highlighting to members the key changes and additional tabs for tracking activities undertaken.

**Recommendation: that the list of key dates be included as a calendar on the Town Council website once updated.**

Cllr S Cox presented the draft environment policy which was reviewed and updated during the meeting.

**Recommendation: The draft Environmental policy now goes to Full Council for approval.**

Communication was discussed and it was agreed that a specification for the Environment content on the improved Coleford Town Council website should be prepared and presented to the Marketing and Regeneration committee to take forward. It was noted that simple changes could be achieved within the current website. It was also suggested that this committee feed environmental messages suitable for Social Media through Cllr Penny / the Office to feed the marketing plan being supported by Copper Phoenix.

Cllr Penny updated on the Forest Youth Association and Foresters’ Forest Youth / Community litter pick planned for Saturday 12th June between 10am and 12 noon. Equipment and Hi-Viz vests will be supplied by the project and 20 of each will be left with both Cinderford and Coleford for future litter picks. Ms Sturgess also updated on engagement with the cycling community with regards to litter specifically around the trails area.

Cllr. M Cox updated on discussions re extending cycle ways and footpaths through Regeneration Committee. One to go from Coleford to Christchurch, another to link in Puzzlewood/ Perrygrove to Gateway 7.

Ms S Cheese updated the committee with regards to species monitoring at the Cemetery and Bells Field. The services supported through membership of the Dean Meadows and Monmouthshire Meadows Groups were discussed. It was suggested that this committee should become familiar with both the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (Bells Field) and Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (all other parish areas) with a view to understanding the existing management strategy before investigating/ reviewing a more environmentally active approach.

**Recommendation:** **That Coleford Town Council join Monmouthshire Meadows and Dean Meadows Group’s (total £20 per annum).**

Cllr M Cox updated the committee on the recent Coleford Cemetery Inspection that has been shared with the Finance and Asset Management Committee. The environmental criteria has been added in.

There was a discussion around Electric Vehicle Charging Points. The committee requested that Cllr Beard speak with the Forest of Dean District Council to understand their plans

**8. To receive comments from the Public**

Ms M Getgood, arrived at this point, and updated members of the Foresters’ Forest Worcester Walk Community Project work.

1. **To receive updates, and make recommendations re working group activities:**

**Communications and Publicity**

An article could be produced for inclusion in the Foresters’ Forest newsletter to highlight our volunteering opportunities, such as working parties at Cemetery/Bells Field.

**Recommendation:** That information for the Town Council newsletter be recirculated, and that a communications plan be drafted to include a proposal for the website structure.

**Coleford Town Council Environmental Policy**

This was taken through item 10 – the Environmental Action Plan.

**Environmental Matters**

Cllr M Cox updated on recent discussions with FoDDC regarding Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) in the parish. There is concern that several significant trees within the Parish do not seem to be covered by TPOs.

Cllr. M Cox to recirculate criteria and ask for 3 trees to be suggested by each member.

**Recommendation: A definitive list of trees that require protection should be drafted by this committee for sharing with the Planning Committee.**

**Data Collection**

Cllr M Cox and Ms Sarah Cheese updated on work to date. Suggestion was made to set some regularity to the species surveys to allow wider publication to involve the community to engage.

**Volunteers**

The litter picking element of this was taken through item 10 – the Environmental Action Plan. Details of volunteering opportunities to be drafted and shared via social media.

1. **To receive updates, and make recommendations (if necessary) re enhancing the town gateways**

Cllr M Cox updated regarding ongoing discussions with GCC Highways regarding planting of trees on verges in key locations. The County Council are asking for suggestions of areas that would be appropriate for planting. Ms F Herniman will speak with Coalway School to engage their interest to support this initiative, particular on verges near to the school grounds.

Mr W Williams had submitted in writing a request for the committee to visit each of the (8) gateways to look at environmental improvements. Cllr. M Cox to provide map showing location of all gateways.

**At 8:30pm Cllr M Cox moved a 5-minute extension of time, all agreed.**

1. **To receive updates re: wider FoD Environment meetings, forums and activities**

Cllr S Cox stated that no formal Forest Climate Group meetings have taken place since the last meeting. He further updated that a bid had been successful securing £500,000 for the Forest of Dean district through the Aurora (EU funded) project.

**The meeting closed at 8:35pm.**