

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 6PM IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM, THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON

**PRESENT:** Councillors Stevens (Chair), Ashraf, Joyce, Meredith, Miah

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** S Carter (Town Clerk)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** One member of the public

### 12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Fuchshuber, Kilbride and Tarasiewicz

### 13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

### 14. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

**RESOLVED:** The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

### 15. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – BUDGET UPDATE

Circulated with the agenda was the latest budget update for the committee.

**NOTED**

### 16. NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL'S POLICY ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The chair reminded members that Northampton Town Council had declared a Climate Emergency on 12/4/21, and that this motion included the statement 'as a new Council it is vital that we put the climate emergency at the forefront of any decisions we take', but that we had not made a lot of progress in implementing this. The Chair added that to do this all Council events and projects should ideally be assessed as to their environmental sustainability, and every committee should include this criterion when making a decisions about events and projects.

It was noted that West Northants Council was a big authority and their activities were major in terms of climate change, however, Northampton Town Council still had a role to play with its own activities.

It was suggested that tree planting could be a policy that the council could pursue and it was agreed that this should go on a future agenda.

**NOTED**

### 17. APPLICATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE GRANT SCHEME – VOLUNTARY IMPACT NORTHAMPTON

Circulated with the agenda was a report detailing a proposed grant to Voluntary Impact Northampton

It explained that VIN were looking from £5,000 to replace lighting across three floors of their building to lower energy consumption light fittings as well as fitting motion sensors to high traffic areas. It was estimated this would reduce their CO2 output by 2.18 tonnes a year as well as saving money in energy consumption.

This grant application had been looked at by the Climate Change Forum who supported it. The Council's Grants Sub-Committee had also scrutinised it and recommended their support.

**RESOLVED:** That a grant award of £5,000 be made to VIN.

It was suggested that the council do a publicity campaign around this grant award.

#### **18. NORTHAMPTON IN BLOOM UPDATE**

Circulated with the agenda was the latest Northampton in Bloom update.

It was questioned whether the wellness boards in Abington Park would remain in situ over the winter.

*Clerk's note: It has been confirmed that the boards will be coming down to be replaced by other boards detailing events, but would be installed next Spring/Summer.*

It was commented that the feedback on the wellness boards and the floral displays in general had been really positive and the officers who delivered this project were to be thanked and congratulated.

**NOTED**

#### **19. CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM ACTIVITY UPDATE**

The Chair briefed the committee on recent activity. He explained that the Forum had recently held a couple of stalls at the Weston Favell Shopping Centre which had seen some interest from members of the public. How often the Forum would meet from now on was being reconsidered by the Chair, but if any ESC members would be very welcome to attend.

**NOTED**

#### **20. ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

The Clerk explained that the allotments had recently been added to the risk register due to the lack of information over their management and also because of the sporadic issuing of water bills for the eight sites. Contact had been made with some sites with regular metre readings now being provided. This enabled officers to log them and notice if there was a big increase which could suggest an undetected leak.

Allotments remained an issue that the committee would need to formally consider at a future meeting.

**NOTED**

#### **21. COLLEGE STREET MEWS MURAL MAINTAINED**

It was reported that as part of the St Katherine's Gardens project, the BiD were proposing to commission a mural on the side of a building facing the gardens. As part of the approval, the BiD needed to provide assurance that maintenance would be provided if the BID was not renewed at the next vote.

The Clerk explained that if the BiD failed, the Council would be obliged to step in with regards to maintenance of the mural.

It was commented that this was low risk and worth agreeing to in order to get the mural commissioned.

**RECOMMENDED:** That Northampton Town Council agrees to take on maintenance of this mural if the BiD is not renewed at their next election.

## **22. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER CONSULTATION FOR EMPORIUM WAY**

Circulated with the agenda was a report detailing a public consultation that was being carried out by WNC. The proposal was to temporarily close public access to Emporium Way using a public spaces protection order due to the level of anti-social behaviour and other criminal activities taking place there. It was explained that this closure had been requested by the police on order to assist them with policing the area.

Whilst the need to close the area was understood and there was support for the police, the committee expressed disappointment in this proposal saying that there had been alternatives including temporarily siting the market in Emporium Way. A councillor reported that he suggested to WNC that the market traders could be moved to Emporium Way prior to the market redevelopment, and that the traders he had consulted were in favour of this, and was very disappointed that this had not happened especially as the Way may now be closed.

RESOLVED: That the PSPO to close Emporium Way is supported but that assurances are provide that it would be refurbished and reopened once the work to the Market Square was complete.

## **23. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

Nothing was raised.

**MEETING CONCLUDED 19:37**