

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – 17TH JUNE 2024

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17TH JUNE 2024 AT 6PM IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM LOCATED IN THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON

PRESENT: Councillors Stevens (Chair), Kilbride (Deputy Chair), Fuchshuber, Meredith and Tarasiewicz

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr S Carter (Town Clerk) and Miss F Barford (Democratic Services Officer)

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms Sally Burn (Director of Public Health and Regulatory Services), Nuala Duffy (Environmental Crime Manager, WNC), Karen Pell (Environmental Protection Officer, WNC) and two members of the public from Southfields Allotment.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Miah, Soan and Joyce.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Meredith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10 as he was an allotment holder at Southfields Allotment. Councillor Stevens declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute 10 as he was an allotment holder at Broadmead Avenue.

3. TO RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM SALLY BURNS (DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH & REGULATORY SERVICES, WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL) ON THE TOWN CENTRE WASTE & RECYCLING POLICY

Sally Burns presented the Town Centre Waste & Recycling Policy, that was agreed by the WNC Cabinet in May 2024. The policy aims to change the way waste is stored and presented in the Town Centre. Key points from the presentation included:

- The policy would be effective from 1st July 2024.
- There are currently ten neighbourhood wardens covering West Northamptonshire Council, with plans to recruit an additional warden.
- Funding had been sourced from the government to assist with the implementation of the policy and to fund an additional neighbourhood warden.
- Businesses will need to label their waste bins, and was taking place engagement to ensure all 554 businesses in the Town Centre are aware of the policy.
- Businesses who did not comply could be issued with a fixed penalty notice, however enforcement would be gradually introduced to ensure business owners were engaged and informed.
- Commercial bins under the policy should not be stored on public highways, except during the designated collection windows and would need to be stored but within premises or private land.
- Information packs will be delivered to businesses, including policy details and identification stickers for waste bins.
- The policy is informed by successful implementations in other local authorities like Bristol.
- If the roll-out is successful the policy could be extended to encompass the Wellingborough Road, Kettering Road or areas with issues with commercial waste and storage.

Concerns were raised about engagement with neighbourhood wardens and the adequacy of the numbers. Issues with clothing donation bins were discussed as it had been noted fly-tipping occurred around them. Questions about waste disposal by businesses without commercial waste contracts and potential fly-tipping were addressed.

4. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL 2024 AND ASK QUESTIONS TO THE PROGRESS OF ANY ITEMS

RESOLVED: The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th April 2024 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

5. BUDGET UPDATE

The latest budgetary report for the committee were circulated. The Chair explained there was high expenditure within the Northampton in Bloom budget as the project was underway. A Councillor commented the flowers looked lovely this year and requested this be passed onto the responsible Event and Projects Officer.

NOTED

6. UPDATE ON THE JOINT WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL AND PARISH COUNCIL'S CLIMATE SUMMIT PLANNING FOR AUTUMN 2024 – REFER TO CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported on the planning of a Climate Summit for parish councils to collaborate, which was agreed upon at a West Northamptonshire Council meeting. The summit aims to be an open forum for residents, schools, and community groups to provide their views on climate change. A Councillor suggested inviting Northamptonshire Partnership Homes for their role in sustainability.

In response to a question, the Chair explained the first planning meeting was an open forum with other parish and town councils to discuss the matter of climate change and how we could collaborate. A Councillor suggested whether Northamptonshire Partnership Homes be invited as they have part to play in sustainability.

7. PROPOSAL TO APPROVE FUNDING FOR THE JOINT WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL AND PARISH COUNCIL'S CLIMATE SUMMIT – REFER TO CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair asked the Committee to provide £5,000 from the Environmental Projects budget code toward the cost of the Climate Summit. A Councillor suggested the Town Council host a stall at the event with promotional material.

RESOLVED: That £5,000 from the Environmental Projects budget code be used to.

8. BLOOM UPDATE – ATTACHED

Circulated within the agenda was the latest Bloom Report update. In response to a question, the Chair explained the Town Council intends to partake in Midlands in Bloom next year in 2025. The Chair added it would take a large amount of work to prepare for the Town Council's submission. A Councillor asked whether any further sustainable planters were available. The Chair explained the sustainable planter was transferred to Eastfield due to the high amount of vandalism in Abington Street. A Councillor commented no branding was included on the planters within the Town Centre. The Town Clerk stated he would get an update in relation to the branding of the planters.

Clerk's Note: The Bloom Working Group would place branding on the smaller planters however, it was decided not brand the larger planters as the floral arrangements would grow down and over any branding placed there.

9. ALLOTMENTS UPDATE

The Town Clerk referred to the detailed report enclosed within the agenda, providing updates on several key allotment sites.

The Town Clerk explained that the Kingsthorpe South and Studland Avenue allotment sites were not included within the vesting day document. These sites predominantly serve residents of the Kingsthorpe parish council area. The access road and the majority of the site's catchment fall within this area.

The Town Clerk highlighted that the Glebeland Road allotment site had previously been undersubscribed. In response, the former Northampton Borough Council had fenced off a section of the area, reducing the overall size of the allotments. The Town Clerk, along with the Community Engagement Officer, planned to visit the site to assess its current condition and potential for future use of the unused area.

In response to a Councillor's query, the Town Clerk explained the complexities involved in selling allotment sites. Although theoretically possible, the process is complicated due to specific allotment legislation that protects these spaces. This legislation ensures allotments are preserved for community use, making any potential sale a legally intricate matter.

The Town Clerk reported on the concerns raised by allotment holders regarding security and incidents of anti-social behaviour at the Southfields Allotment site. A detailed report from a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) had provided recommendations to enhance security. Allotment holders had approached the Town Council, expressing their worries that these problems might also affect other sites.

A Councillor suggested obtaining indicative quotes for the recommended security enhancements and presenting these at a future Environmental Services Committee meeting. The Town Clerk noted that while the Idverde Allotment contract includes assistance with minor repairs, the proposed security measures would exceed their remit, making the Town Council responsible for implementation.

RESOLVED: The Town Clerk to source an indicative quote on the recommended works and be presented at a future Environmental Services Committee meeting.

10. CCF UPDATE – REFER TO CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair stated the Climate Change Forum had not had many meetings recently. The Chair added he believed a discussion should be held to review the Town Council's declaration of a climate emergency. A Councillor asked whether the goal for the Town Council was to be carbon neutral by 2030.

The Chair explained he contributed to the Town Council website with information on clean air quality and links to West Northamptonshire Council's clean air resources. A Councillor commented that clean air in Northampton was very important to people's health and wellbeing. The Chair requested comments and recommendation to be included within the motion.

ACTION – Clean Air Quality be included on the next agenda.

MEETING CONCLUDED: 7:37PM