

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment** Committee held in the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough on Tuesday 4th February 2020 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillors	Alison Arthur Martyn Garrett Richard Jury Mia Lederman* Kay Moss David Neeves* Gareth Owen-Williams* Alan Penney Ron Reed Greg Rose* Colin Stocks	Vice – Chairman Chairman
Also present		Inspector Gross Cllr Richard Stogdon John Coleman Caroline Miles	Sussex Police ESCC Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee Town Clerk

8 members of the public.

*Denotes non attendance

APOLOGIES

Cllr Mia Lederman
Cllr David Neeves
Cllr Gareth Owen-Williams
Cllr Greg Rose
Cllr Sylvia Tidy

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident spoke about the time taken to approve the repair of a streetlight in Saxonbury Close. It was explained that due to the age of some of the streetlights the lamps cannot be replaced. In these cases, a new lantern is required which are costly. The cost of the lanterns must be approved by the Environment Committee who meet six times a year. Once approved ESCC are contracted to carry out the maintenance work.

A resident noted that Wealden District Council, despite declaring a climate emergency, was not choosing green energy suppliers when encouraging residents to switch energy suppliers.

Cllr Kay Moss, in her capacity as a Wealden District Councillor, offered to ask if the green energy options can be included in the list of suppliers.

A resident commended the Council for including the possible installation of EV rapid installation points and the climate emergency on the agenda for discussion.

A resident who was an ex – councillor of Crowborough Town Council and involved in the development of Pine Grove spoke about the previous Council's aim to reduce the carbon footprint of the building. The new lighting installed was LED and those in the main areas are motion sensed.

Due to the ground composition certain types of green heating had to be discounted.
All new windows being double glazed.
It was noted that where possible the previous Council used the best sustainable resource available to it to reduce the carbon footprint.

The chairman moved to hear item 4.1 in order that Councillors may ask questions of the representative from Sussex Police.

Claude D'eaud of Sussex Police gave a presentation on CCTV cameras in Crowborough. The following points were noted:
The Cameras are paid for by local authorities who also pay a maintenance charge.
The CCTV Network & Video Management System costs and subsequent staffing costs are paid for by Sussex Police
The transmission costs are shared between stakeholders.
The cost to Crowborough, taking into account the 16% discount negotiated by Sussex Police is £7444.11 per annum. This includes the £912.92 pa maintenance charge.

Moving forward all recordings will be in real time at 24 frames per second. There will be increased network security and there will be availability to share information with others in the system. There may be the opportunity to rent CCTV columns to BT for 5G hotspots. It is likely that Crowborough will receive an upgrade of its cameras in the near future at zero cost.

Members asked that information is fed back in terms of performance. Sussex Police hold CCTV partnership meetings and it was agreed that the Chairman of the Environment Committee would, where possible, attend the meetings and would report back to Committee.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 8.05pm

APOLOGIES

Cllr Mia Lederman
Cllr David Neeves
Cllr Gareth Owen-Williams
Cllr Greg Rose
Cllr Sylvia Tidy

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Kay Moss declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 as she is a Wealden District Councillor.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on the 29th October 2019

8981 RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th October 2019 as confirmed be signed by the Chairman.

Action list

It was noted that the post for an additional part time Community Warden is now being advertised.
The bin at Poundfield Path is still being monitored by ground staff. No issues have been reported.

RAILWAY REPORT

To note the railway report

Members noted the report. It was confirmed that to date there is nothing further to report in terms of the footbridge at Eridge or the disabled access at Crowborough. The Eridge bridge repair could take up to 20 weeks.

To note the TSE consultation submission

Members noted the response by the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee. The chairman expressed his disappointment that the Council did not submit a response as not enough councillors had responded to a request for a delegated response.

One member of the public left the meeting at 8.15pm

RANGERS REPORT

To note the Ranger's report and agree further action

The ranger reported that a meeting was being arranged to determine where wildflower verges could be created on CTC land in Crowborough. The meeting will also include looking at areas that may be feasible for planting some of the tree saplings that had been given to the local scouts to plant in Crowborough.

Members noted the Rangers request to obtain quotes to purchase a ride on mower to be used to cut and collect grass and manage diversity predominantly at Heatherview. A mower is likely to cost in the region of £12,000.

It was agreed that the ranger obtain three quotes which should be brought to the next Environment Committee meeting.

The Pocket Park is still on course to open in May, weather permitting. It is hoped that the pond will be dug next week with the pathways to be installed within the month. Benches and street furniture will be installed after the first year of opening the nature reserve.

It was noted that only 18% of the Ghyll budget had been spent. The ranger explained that there will be expenditure on the ecological management plan, path improvements and fencing before year end.

The ranger's proposals for the information board and dipping pond were noted.

It was agreed that the ranger explore options for improving the dipping platform which should be brought to the next Environment Committee meeting.

The ten trees that were felled in the Bluebell Wood will be made into benches for the Pocket Park. The diseased Chestnut tree that was removed in December will be used to make chestnut posts.

EV RAPID INSTALLATION CHARGING POINTS.

To note the report on EV Rapid Installation Points and agree any action

The chairman asked members to note the three main key points in the report: The installation points will be good for Crowborough in terms of users visiting the High Street

The installations are not proposed to be funded from the precept.
The installation encourages the use of electric cars.

Wealden District Council are currently looking to install rapid installation points in their car parks

It was noted that as WDC have a car park order it would be able to monitor the abuse of the length of stay, this may be difficult if the rapid installation points are on Council land. Members were keen to further explore the options.

It was unanimously agreed to approve the use of officers to investigate the proposal further and that officers liaise with Wealden District Council on the issue. The report to be bought before committee.

TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

To note Highways works for Crowborough

The map of impending highways works in Crowborough was noted.

It is hoped that any work carried out on Whitehill Road would not just be a re-laying of tarmac. Whitehill Road suffers from road sinking and work of this type has failed in the past.

Members agreed that it was important that any changes to the bus services as a result of the works should be publicised as much as possible.

PESTICIDE POLICY AND REPORT

To note the report on CTC's use of pesticides.

Members noted the report on CTC's use of pesticides.

It was noted that allotment holders should be encouraged to use individual sealed compost bins to deter vermin.

Members reviewed the pesticides policy and agreed to the following amendments:

1. Introduction: The Council will keep pesticide use to a minimum and only to be used if absolutely essential.
2. Weed control: Remove 'or where financial restraints mean that alternative methods are not viable'
3. Approved pesticides: The Council will only use Soil Association UK approved pesticides.

8982 RESOLVED to approve the Pesticides Policy subject to the amendments noted.

SEIB

To consider entry for South East in Bloom 2020 and agree further action

It was agreed not to enter the competition in 2020 but to consider entering the new Summersales Cemetery in the Cemetery category for 2021.

STREET LIGHTING

To note the report on street lighting and agree any action

It was agreed to defer work on jobs 5 and column 6 until the beginning of the next financial year and for the work to be paid from the street lighting budget.

8983 RESOLVED to approve jobs 1 – 4 as noted at a cost of £8001.52. Funds to be vired as follows:

£5000 from code 801/4654

£2005.85 from code 801/4601

£995.67 from code 801/4115

Two members of the public left the meeting at 9.25pm

FOOD RECYCLING

To discuss food recycling in Crowborough and agree any action

The Councillor requesting this item was absent therefore it was agreed to defer the issue to the next Environment Committee meeting if required.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

To note the report on a climate emergency and agree any action

It was noted that there will be a Mass Unwrap taking place on the 22nd February. It will give the public the opportunity to unpack the unnecessary wrapping in their shopping.

Standard orders were suspended

One of the members involved in the Mass Unwrap spoke about the campaign. It was started a year ago with the campaign group 'surfers against sewage'. The aim is to make consumers more aware about the amount of plastic used in their shopping. The plastic is collected after consumers have carried out a supermarket shop and given back to the supermarket to be recycled.

The venue for the 22nd will be advertised next week. Morrisons Crowborough has agreed in principle.

Standing orders were re-instated.

Members noted the many ideas and options that could be considered to make the Town more environmentally friendly: Repair cafes, where residents can take items to be repaired rather than replace with new. These cafes are run by volunteers who ask for donations. Climate cafes where residents can ask about saving energy and recycling. Zero waste shops have opened in Heathfield, Brighton and East Grinstead.

A community fridge has opened in Forest Row.

Council members could use their own bottles or cups rather than using the recyclable paper cups available for drinking water at meetings.

The Council could appoint a school liaison councillor.

Members noted that Crowborough Town Council had a good record in promoting environmentally friendly actions.

In 2008/9 the Council joined with a company to monitor the use of energy in the town and a meter was installed outside of the Town Hall.

The Council has encouraged the use of public transport by supporting the Weald link bus service for many years

Members agreed that the Council, in creating a climate emergency policy should ensure it comprised of meaningful and achievable actions rather than a policy that was a box ticking exercise

Due to the comprehensive nature of the Council it was agreed that a working group should be set up to prepare a Climate Change Policy.

It was agreed that members would bring their own vessels for the purposes of drinking water.

8984 RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that a working group is set up to prepare a Climate Change Policy.

8985 RESOLVED to no longer replace the recyclable paper cups in the Town Council offices.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Members noted the Income and Expenditure report.

The bus shelters at the White Hart pub and the train station were damaged by vehicles and had to be replaced. They have been replaced by narrower shelters with no overhang.

Members Noted the Committee's EMR Position

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING and/or INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

None

The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

