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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2016 at 8.00 PM

Present: Cllr David Wynne-Jones – In the Chair David Allison – Clerk to the Council

Cllrs Edmunds, Mitchell, Taft and Vassiliou.

Voting Members: 5

Members of the Public: 1

EA1203/16 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Greenman, Kataria and Kaur.

EA1204/16 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman recommended that any declarations of interest be made, if necessary, throughout the meeting.

EA1205/16 Representations from the Public

The member of the public introduced herself as Jane Archer who is the person who will be undertaking the survey of fauna in certain areas of Croxley Green, Agenda item EA1210/16. She advised that this was a 5 year project through the Hertfordshire Natural History Society who are co-ordinating a countrywide survey of mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Jane Archer explained that she had four tetrad (2km by 2km) areas, two in Maple Cross, one in Sarratt and one in Croxley Green. She will be checking the drainage area on the Green opposite Killingdown Farm for newts, frogs and toads and also the pond in Little Green Lane. This will be done both during the day and at night time using a torch. She further explained that the general public can get involved with the project by recording details of pond life in their gardens. This can be done by going to the Hertfordshire Natural History Society's web site <http://www.hnhs.org/> and click on "Submit Records".

At this point it was proposed that Agenda Item EA1210/16 Survey re fauna in Croxley Green and EA1213/16 Update on Restoration of the Little Green Lane Pond be moved up the agenda and taken next. The proposal was agreed.

EA1210/16 Survey re fauna in Croxley Green

The Chairman and Members thanked Jane Archer for providing the background to the countrywide survey of mammals, amphibians and reptiles.

A Member suggested that the Allotment Associations be contacted as a number of allotments now include a small pond. It was also suggested that local schools be approached as they may wish to get involved with the project.

The Clerk added that he would put information on the Council's website as soon as reasonably possible.

EA1213/16 Update on Restoration of the Little Green Lane Pond

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk advised that the most recent report he had from the Little Green Residents Association was in late February. The Clerk added that an update had been subsequently requested for this meeting but the Chairman of the Association was currently on holiday.

The Clerk read out the content of the email he had received which stated:

“As you or your colleagues may have noticed the above project, as of last week and at long last, has now moved another stage forward!

Barrie Hicks has completed the prep work for the Pond Renovation. He has piled up all the organic matter from the 'mini pools' at the eastern end of the site. This includes the iris roots etc that will be pulled back on top of the clay towards the end of the process so that 'pond plant regeneration' can proceed asap in the spring.

Nothing more will happen while we are away except that Barrie will make an appointment with Glen Ranger of Chiswell Pools to go and inspect the clay that is currently being dug out for a swimming pool in Ley Hill. This is currently being stockpiled for us. If the clay is deemed by Barrie to be of suitable quality, I will arrange with Glen for it to be transported to Little Green following our return on the 28th Feb. We will then see if we need more clay from the next pool in the Chiswell Pools production line!”

The Clerk concluded that the Grant monies agreed by the Council (£1,000) and the funding from the then Environment and Amenity Committee Budget (£1,000) had not be past over although it was being accrued for.

EA1206/16 Minutes

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1 March 2016 be approved and be signed by the Chairman.

EA1207/16 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

EA1208/16 Works List

The Chairman introduced this item and invited any comments.

The Clerk drew Members attention to an added item regarding checking defibrillator(s).

A general discussion took place about tree arisings that had been left for habitat piles being moved to build 'dens' and the general amount of litter that was being left in the vicinity of the dens; the poor tree work undertaken by TRDC and their reaction when it was complained about; partial collapse of the steps on footpath number 7; and, the condition of the embankment on the northbound carriageway of Scots Hill a potential TRDC/Highways matter.

There were no other comments regarding the Works List.

Resolved:

- That the Works List for June 2016 be noted.

EA1209/16 DriveSafe

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk advised that the initiative had been widely promoted but unfortunately only one person had put their name forward. The Clerk reminded Members that ten names were required. The meeting was reminded that DriveSafe whilst being facilitated and promoted by the Council, it is actually a scheme that is run by the residents and as insufficient numbers had come forward, it was considered appropriate that the matter is placed on the 'back burner' for the time being.

The Clerk added that he would leave the information about DriveSafe on the Council's website in the event that sufficient people come forward in the future.

It was reported that apparent speeding was taking place on Community Way which has a 15mph limit and this had been taken up with TRDC and the PCSOs who intended to undertake speed checks with a speed gun.

Resolved:

- That the Council puts the DriveSafe initiative into abeyance.

EA1210/16 Survey re fauna in Croxley Green

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting, see above.

EA1211/16 Senior Ranger Winter Update

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Senior Ranger to elaborate.

The Senior Ranger reported as follows:

Allotment garden Yorke Mead School

- We were asked to design and build an allotment garden for the children to use.
- There was a small budget, we sourced materials and arranged deliveries, allowed two weeks for construction
- Consisted of paved path, four raised beds, fencing and gate and installation of a sink

Buddleia Walk

- The right of way had recently been designated a bridleway and was not up to required widths
- Work consisted of first widening path with chainsaws to be able to use tractor and second using the flail arm to knock back sides further and take the tops back to stop it hanging over path
- Hertfordshire County Council happy for us to do work and to continue to a maintain it with the help of volunteer group

Croxley Hall Woods

- Look after two sections off All Saints Lane
- Last winter carried out invasive species management, removal of sycamore and laurel. Also coppiced small area of hazel, created scallops off paths through removal of bramble and ivy and cleared area around bench area.
- This winter we moved to other section. Work again included invasive species management which was the removal of sycamore and laurel. Felled small to medium trees and one larger tree to try to slow down dispersal of seeds
- This resulted in opening up the canopy and allowing oak, beech to grow as well other flora
- Management techniques include coppicing, leaving felled wood, creating dead hedges from brush
- Carried out works included in management plan agreed with three rivers district council

The Clerk added that following a site meeting between him, the Senior Ranger and the HCC Countryside Access Officer, it was the intention to install steps from Buddleia Walk, Public Footpath No. 19 to Public Footpath No. 17 by Common Moor Lock. A grant had been applied for this and HCC were preparing the necessary specifications.

EA1212/16 Update on the TRDC Public Spaces Protection Order

The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk advised that the TRDC Public Spaces Protection Order had now come into force. It covered the issue of dog fouling, a maximum of 4 dogs per handler, the requirement to place a dog on a lead if so told to do so by an authorised officer, the necessity to keep a dog on a lead in certain defined areas within TRDC and defined exclusion zones where dogs are not permitted e.g children's play areas.

The Clerk advised that the Senior Ranger has been trained by TRDC to become an "authorised officer" for the purposes of issuing penalty tickets but no paperwork has been provided as yet. The Clerk emphasised that the Senior Ranger would use his discretion and judgement regarding the potential issue of tickets and has been specifically briefed by the Clerk not to engage in anything that is likely to lead to a confrontational situation.

Members noted the position.

EA1213/16 Update on Restoration of the Little Green Lane Pond

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting, see above.

EA1214/16 Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm.