

**SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting held at Champions Manor Hall
on Wednesday 20th April 2022 at 7.30pm

Present:

Councillor K Bentley (Chairman)
Councillor D Eley (Vice Chair)

Councillor Humphrey
Councillor Wilson

Councillor Birch
Councillor Thompson

Councillor Shearring

In attendance: Acting Town Clerk, Town Mayor Murrough O'Brien

E307 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Lake, Kelly

E308 Dispensation considerations

No dispensation considerations received.

E309 Declarations of interest

No declared an interest received.

E310 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2022 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Eley

Seconded: Councillor Humphrey

Vote: Carried

E311 Public Questions

No members of the public present.

E312 Budgetary Position

The current budgetary position as of 31st March 2022 as attached to the agenda was **NOTED**.

Proposal: The Acting Town Clerk to move excess funds in the Environment budget to cover the overspend in Tree Works and GOR Supplies. Committee to be updated on all financial movements.

Proposed: Councillor Bentley

Seconded: Councillor Birch

Vote: Carried

E313 New gateway planters

Proposal: To accept the quotation for three gateway planters for this year's floral displays and the planters will be attached to a raised area on the gateways.

Proposed: Councillor Humphrey

Seconded: Councillor Wilson

Vote: Carried

E314 The Fenn

- Committee **NOTED** Essex Wildlife Trust are intending to start the mound and harrowing project in Autumn this year, once the wildflowers have gone and there is no disturbance the slow worms and lizards on the mound. Three quotes will be provided for work.
- Committee **NOTED** Essex Wildlife Trust are checking head office for any spare barn owl boxes. The EWT will update the Town Council as the projects progress forward.
- Committee **NOTED** Three further trees leaning by the public underpass were unstable and emergency work was agreed for public health & safety. A larger one had its roots intact but was leaning towards the road and had emergence holes of the clearwing hornet at its base. These eat the wood at the base of a tree and cause them to become unstable. Total £850.00 plus VAT. This work was completed 12th April 2022.
- Committee discussed volunteer working groups for the Fenn. Councillor Bentley commented that volunteer groups and opportunities for residents to be involved has declined.

Proposal: To propose to Essex Wildlife Trust that the Town Council collect a register of interested residents that want to be involved in volunteering opportunities on the Fenn.

Proposed: Councillor Bentley

Seconded: Councillor Wilson

Vote: **Carried**

E315 Environment Agency

Councillor Bentley updated the committee and confirmed he is waiting for additional information from the Environment Agency regarding water quality. Councillor Thompson advised the River Crouch Conservation Trust is a good source of information. It was agreed any valuable information gathered going forward should be published to the residents. Committee noted where we are with this agenda item and will decide action when more information/data is received.

E316 RCCCT Meeting

- The River Crouch Coastal Community Team is there to promote the River Crouch for tourism and businesses. Their lead partner is Rochford District Council, and they have good guest speakers at meetings. The meeting/workshop on 29th March 2022 covered what has been achieved and time to refocus and it was raised that there is a lack of communication which is an issue to residents and is being dealt with.
- Sub Committee Water Safety Group – there is a current project working alongside the Police, Fire brigade, Environment Agency and Natural England and they are focused on speed on water, issues with water skiers unlicensed and untrained at Hullbridge. The Police are presently trialling on spot fines. Anglian water has a new initiative to clean and revitalise rivers across East Anglia They want to reduce the amounts of pollution in rivers by 2025 and reduce milder pollution by 45%. Crouch harbour authority are insisting the River Crouch is included. Rochford District Council are currently producing a lot of social media about water awareness which will be passed onto the Town Council.

E317 Public Transport

Committee discussed and revised the letter completed by Councillor Humphrey regarding the current train service for residents of South Woodham Ferrers.

Proposal: To send the final agreed version of the letter to MP John Whittingdale via Councillor Massey at a meeting on the 29th of April 2022 and to send a copy to the CEO of Greater Anglia and Network Rail.

Proposed: Councillor Shearring

Seconded: Councillor Eley

Vote: **Carried**

E318 School Zones

Committee discussed how to proceed with this item. It was suggested a more qualitative version would be easier for residents to complete and results will be sent to Essex County Council.

Proposal: To not proceed with the school zone consultation attached to the agenda but to consider a revised version to be sent to residents on a digital platform and published in the Focus. This will include an additional free comment box.

- Do you feel school areas are safe?
- What school area do you live in?

Proposed: Councillor Thompson

Seconded: Councillor Shearring

Vote: **Carried**

E319 Town sign

The Town Council sign competition closed on 31st March 2022. Committee discussed the entries received from residents and other options available.

Proposal: To amalgamate the winning entry from the town competition with a design option from Councillor Humphrey. This will be an ongoing project to be brought to committee for approval at a later meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Eley

Seconded: Councillor Wilson

Vote: **Carried**

E320 Climate & Ecological Emergency Focus Group

Committee discussed and agreed to proceed with the recommendations on the Friends of the Earth 20-point plan as attached to the agenda. The recommendations will go to a future committee for discussion and approval.

Standing Order 3.x was suspended to allow the meeting to exceed more than 2 hours.

E321 Working Schedule

Working schedule as attached to the agenda was **NOTED**.

E322 Report to Council

Committee agree to report the following:

- Letter to Greater Anglian and MP

- Gateway planters
- School zone consultation
- Town sign competition
- Friends of the Earth Questionnaire

E323 Media Coverage

Committee agreed the media release:

- Town sign competition.

E324 Next Meeting

The next meeting date is 31st May 2022.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.46pm.

Signed.....

Date: 31st May 2022

Chairman of the Meeting