

HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Environment Sub-Committee
held at the Town Council Offices, Albert Road, Horley on 17 May 2022, at 6:00 pm**

Present	Cllrs	Hannah Avery (Vice-Chairman)	Jordan Beech	David Powell*
		Jante Baird	Giorgio Buttironi	Martin Saunders (Chairman)
			Mike George	
Non-Councillors		Richard Bethell	Mike Humphrey*	
* Absent				
Also Present		Joan Walsh (Town Clerk)		
		Judy Morgan (RFO)		

ESC 1 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

RESOLVED: that the apologies of Cllr Powell and Mr Mike Humphrey be accepted.

Constitution

Election of Chairman (Cllr Beech in the Chair)

ESC 2 Cllr Beech called for nominations. Cllr Avery proposed, and Cllr George seconded the nomination of Cllr Saunders as Chairman until 2023. There were no further nominations for the post.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Saunders be elected as Chairman of the Environment Sub-Committee until April 2023.

ESC 3 Election of Vice-Chairman

The Chairman called for nominations. Cllr George proposed, and Cllr Beech seconded the nomination of Cllr Avery as Vice-Chairman until 2023. There were no further nominations for the post.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Avery be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Environment Sub-Committee until April 2023.

ESC 4 Election of Co-Opted Members

The Chairman called for nominations. Cllr George nominated, and Cllr Beech seconded the nominations of Mr Richard Bethell and Mr Mike Humphrey be co-opted as non-Councillors until 2023. There were no further nominations for the post.

RESOLVED: That Mr Bethell and Mr Humphrey be co-opted as non-Councillors to the Environment Sub-Committee until April 2023.

ESC 5 Terms of Reference

The draft Terms of Reference which had been circulated before the meeting, were approved.

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference of the Environment Sub-Committee be approved and that they be reviewed annually.

ESC 6 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest in relation to any items included on the agenda.

RESOLVED: noted.

ESC 7 **Public Forum**

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

RESOLVED: noted.

ESC 6 **Works Perfect: Horley Commercial Hub Proposals**

In the absence of Mike Humphrey, Cllr George gave a comprehensive update. He said that the proposed commercial hub had been featured in the outcomes of the public and stakeholder engagement rounds by the external consultancy 'thinkingplace', appointed by RBBC. The project was further supported by the RBBC Executive Member for Economic Prosperity, Cllr Eddy Humphreys and by the Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, Cllr Richard Biggs. So it was with some frustration that progress was slow in moving to the final step with the principal authorities to set up a legal agreement and put set-up funds in place since SCC and RBBC had already supported a need for this provision in Horley.

In the meantime, Mike Humphrey was actively pursuing options for securing accommodation with 1-2 years rent free with the RBBC property department and to be able to fit out the shell of the hub once a suitable location had been sourced. The Chairman undertook to investigate the possibility of alternative hub locations and Cllr Beech volunteered to contact Surrey Police and the Police & Crime Commissioner with a broad enquiry about the former Police Station building in Massetts Road being used which was believed to be currently unoccupied.

The Chairman added that the need for more office accommodation for Horley Town Council staff might also be another factor in taking the project forward.

Cllr Beech added that the LEP grant scheme was no longer active. However, RBBC had a new Government Shared Prosperity Fund to administer for which the project could potentially be a good fit and this could be followed up at a future stage.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Saunders investigates alternative locations for the Horley Commercial Hub; and Cllr Beech follows up on enquiries for using the former premises by Surrey Police on Massetts Road.

RESOLVED: that a further update on the proposed Horley Commercial Hub project be provided at the next Sub-Committee meeting.

ESC 7 **Tree Planting initiatives**

The Chairman gave the following updates.

- Trees had been planted in Tanyard Meadows with spirals.
- The spirals may be removed after one year.
- There had been some damage through vandalism, but trees had been reinstated.
- The main issue was watering but with the help of volunteers and loans of hoses this was under control.

- ESC 7)**
- Lessons had been learnt for any future implementations and it was noted that wildflowers may be easier to plant and maintain. Additionally, wildflowers may be planted between May and October so there was more flexibility. The Chairman undertook to do more research on wildflower planting.
 - The next planting season for trees generally would begin in October so a decision on the way forward should be taken at the next meeting.
 - Cllr Beech offered to make further enquiries with the SCC Senior Woodland Management Officer on options for receiving tree donations from the Forestry Commission's Treescapes Fund as well as assistance in identifying suitable locations for planting along with aftercare.
 - The group were continuing to work with the RBBC Sustainability Officer and it was suggested the post-holder be invited to a future Sub-Committee meeting.
 - Proposals to plant a community orchard both on Cheyne Walk roundabout and as a green barrier along the boundary between Court Lodge estate and the playing fields were being pursued. Raven Housing Trust was reportedly in favour of this and dwarf fruit trees were being considered.
 - The Woodland Trust was reportedly still advertising free trees and this would be followed up by HTC Officers.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Chairman investigate options for wild flower planting;**
- (ii) that Cllr Beech makes enquiries with the SCC Senior Woodland Management Officers on acquiring trees through the Forestry Commission's Treescapes Fund along with suitable locations for planting and aftercare advice;**
- (iii) that HTC Officers makes an enquiry the Woodland Trust about the donation of free trees and the process to be followed;**
- (iv) that RBBC be invited to the next meeting of the ESC Environment Group on 6 September 2022.**

ESC 8 Environmental Survey

It was reported that the response to the junior survey was disappointingly low with less than 20 responses. Cllr Baird offered advice that a paper form might be easier for schools to use. It was agreed that the survey should be circulated to the Sub-Committee for review and suggestions and feedback should be received at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the junior survey be circulated to the ESC Sub-Committee for discussion at the next meeting.

ESC 9 Future projects and priorities

The following projects and proposals were put forward by the Sub-Committee:

- Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points at the HTC offices (subject to Full Council approval on terms and financial arrangements)
- Future considerations to be made for HTC's office accommodation and workspace requirements along with ongoing maintenance of the Albert Rooms through eco-friendly projects.
- Interim Environment Working Group meetings to be organised by the Chairman on MS Teams, in between sub-committee meetings.

RESOLVED: noted.

Meeting closed at 19:05 pm

Date of Next Meeting – 6 September 2022