

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE HELD IN WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 29TH JULY 2021 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT: Cllrs: S Briton (Vice Chair), S Cursley, R Humphreys, A l'Anson,
S Johns, P Welch (Mayor)

IN ATTENDANCE: SCC Cllr T Munt + work experience student Jack
MDC Tree Officer, Bo Walsh
WCC Administration: J Franks (Minutes)
0 member(s) of the public

21/10CBEC APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

WCC Matt Gilson gave apologies for his absence.

21/11CBEC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors were asked whether they had any Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 26th July 2012. There were none.

21/12CBEC ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

Election of Chair: S Briton proposed Cllr Humphreys. This was seconded, voted and agreed.

Election of Vice-Chair: S Briton proposed Cllr Johns. This was seconded, voted and agreed. Cllr Johns expressed his willingness to fulfill this role on the understanding that he is a new councillor 'learning the ropes' and therefore if he was required to 'fill in' for Cllr Humphreys, he would welcome the support of other members of the Cttee. This was agreed by the other members.

21/13CBEC MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th May 2021 were proposed, seconded, and approved for signing with the following corrections:

- a. On the basis of accuracy – Cllr l'Anson reported a misspelling of his name.
- b. On the basis of matters arising which are not included in this Meeting Agenda:
 - i. 21/08CBEC e. Stop Ecocide: Cllr Humphreys will review this issue.
 - ii. 21/08CBEC g. WCC Climate Emergency Cycling Group: S Briton formally expressed her thanks to Matt Gilson and the Wells Cycling Group for their co-ordinated approach to cycling/walking in the City. Cllr Humphreys will write to thank them on behalf of WCC and Wells residents.
 - iii. 21/08CBEC i. Groundworks at North End of Tor Quarry: Cllr l'Anson reported the groundworks are in breach of planning control but they have not made a planning application for works done yet. Cllr l'Anson is working with Cllr Rust, MDC and Serious Stages to monitor this.

21/14CBEC MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- a. No members of the public attended.
- b. MDC Tree Officer, Bo Walsh introduced himself and his role within Planning; his role is regulatory, not community engagement. Cllr l'Anson formally thanked Bo for all that he has done and continues to do.
- c. SCC Cllr Munt has plotted all the pieces of land (together with the landowners) along Bath Road between St Thomas Street and Budgens onto a Plan. She will bring this Plan to the next WCC Planning Meeting. She would like to see trees planted as a parking deterrent in preference to bollards to deter parking, and supports planning two or three trees for every tree removed. Bo Walsh explained that planting trees on verges will require a licence from SCC Highways.

- d. S Briton will send Cllr Humphrey's email address to Bo Walsh and requested he send to Cllr Humphreys a list the things people need to do in order to plant and maintain a tree, plus details of the re-wilding group in Wells.

21/15CBEC APPOINTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

- a. Emma Jenkins has been appointed and will be in post from 1st September 2021.
- b. S Briton will provide the Staffing Committee with the recruitment process used for the appointment of this (new) role due to its reliability.
- c. Emma Jenkins will work on three projects when she starts: the Ctte will provide her with two projects and Emma will suggest a third.

21/16CBEC MDC GRANT APPLICATION: DOMESTIC ENERGY CONSUMPTION

- a. MDC has a Climate Change Fund available with up to £2,000 per application. The Ctte agreed to proceed with a Domestic Energy Reduction application for a grant for publicity and a couple of small case studies around how people might reduce their domestic energy consumption. The deadline is 30th September. SCC Cllr Munt has two case studies which the new Sustainability Officer could focus on. S Briton suggested the new SO work with the MDC Fuel Poverty Officer.
- b. S Briton proposed to ask Sam Johnson to help with this application; this was seconded and approved.

21/17CBEC 'CONSUME LESS/WASTE NOTHING'

S Briton has identified an annual calendar for people to act together and 'consume less/waste nothing'. The draft leaflet needs some improvements after comments made by the Ctte; Charlie Coleman has offered to make minimal improvements to the leaflet within the original £210 fee. The Town Clerk is in agreement with this. S Briton will co-ordinate with Cllr Humphreys over August to create a draft for the Sustainability Officer to look at as this could be one of her three assigned projects once she is in post. She asked Ctte members to forward any suggestions for national initiatives within 'weeks' or specific dates they felt should be included.

21/18CBEC NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- a. S Briton asked the Ctte for their thoughts on how the Ctte could meet its commitment to the climate emergency in terms of structure and ensure its focus on climate emergency is not lost amongst other matters, going forward. The Ctte acknowledged the need to think about how they manage projects in future. S Briton will forward her ideas to Cllr Welch and Cllr Humphreys.
- b. The next major IPCC report is due to be published on 9th August.

21/19CBEC DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ctte agreed to delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to decide any urgent matters arising before the next meeting.

21/20CBEC ANY OTHER MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

- a. Portway Annexe: Cllr l'Anson provided an update. An Open Day on Saturday 31st July has been organised for the public with guided tours. The project is moving forward; the grant loan looks as if it is going ahead to enable WCC to purchase the building. S Briton suggested a report on sustainability and efficiency of the Annexe could be part of the new Ctte structure.
- b. Cllr Welch formally thanked the Chair for all the brilliant work she has done. She has been a great asset to the Council.
- c. Bo Walsh briefed the Ctte of the need to plan ahead when planting trees and recommended focusing on doing so within National Tree Week (27th November to 5th December). The Tree Council are very good at promoting seasonal activities around planting trees and have a Tree Warden Scheme. He explained there is no way to implement a tree replacement scheme or request a financial contribution to replacement unless these issues are included with a Tree Planting Policy, linked to the Local Plan. He recommended the Ctte purchase and read The Law of Trees, Forests and Hedgerows by Dr Charles Mynors, published by Sweet & Maxwell.

- d. SCC Cllr Munt suggested Chloe Somers' Green Spaces Plan be forwarded to Bo Walsh.

21/21CBEC DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 21st October 2021 (to be confirmed)

Minutes signed by The Chair: Date: