

BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held in the Coach House
on Tuesday 2nd July 2019 at 7.00pm

Chairman: Cllr M Moore
Vice-Chairman: Cllr D Spencer
Councillors: A Adshead, J Devlin, M Thomas, J Tutton

Also in attendance: the Town Clerk and one member of the public

17. Apologies for absence

Cllrs J Clark, C Dyer, K Herlock, C Roberts

18. Declarations of Interest

None.

19. Public Participation session with respect to items on the Agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest.

Mr T Gandy explained the reasons behind his design for a Town Sign and that he hoped to get it installed in the town as part of the Mayflower 2020 commemorations.

Cllr Moore thanked Mr Gandy for his presentation and said that he would be welcome to stay as members may have questions for him when this agenda item comes up for discussion.

20. Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21st May 2019

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. Environment Committee Accounts

Members received a copy of the accounts in respect of the Environment Committee from 1st April 2019 to 26th June 2019.

Resolved: Information noted.

22. Working Party/Project Group Minutes

(a) Billericay in Bloom WP Meeting held on 26th June 2019

Cllr Moore informed those present that 2019 had been another very successful year for the competition. The judging has taken place and entries are up 25% from last year. There were a total of 76 individual entries and 5 schools took part. The children's competition saw 50 children take part across 4 schools. Winners are kept secret until the prize giving event on 19th July at Canon Roche. The competition format will be reviewed at the feedback meeting which will be held in September/October.

(b) Tree Wardens PG Meeting held on 22nd May 2019.

Resolved: information noted

23. Proposal from Resident regarding Town Sign

Cllr Devlin informed members that this proposal has been put to the Town Council previously as a design for a coat of arms, however the College of Heralds had not approved it. As there is not such a stringent set of rules for a town sign it is now being presented as such. Possible locations were discussed and the only suitable sites were thought to be either Jim Shields garden or Sun Corner. Sun Corner already has the beacon as a focal point and Jim Shields has an upcoming project. Cllr Adshead asked whether this was in addition to or as a replacement for the existing town signs?

Cllr Moore closed the meeting to allow Mr Gandy to participate.

Mr Gandy took the opportunity to explain in more depth the various elements of the design and said he felt it was representative of the history of Billericay. He was unable to answer questions about the cost or location as he said he wanted to see if the project had support before he did any further work. However Cllr Moore pointed out that in a recent meeting with Mr Gandy he had been asked to provide a location and approximate cost to aid the Council when considering this proposal. Cllr Thomas felt it was very difficult for members to make a decision without an indication of location or cost. Mr Gandy's suggestion of the Sun Corner roundabout was deemed unworkable as ECC Highways would not allow it, and Mr Gandy said he would seek funding from local businesses and service organisations within the town.

Mr Gandy was thanked for his input and the meeting was re-opened.

Further discussion took place and members felt that there would be insufficient time to get a town sign installed before next year. Cllr Thomas said that this was not going through the proper process for a Town Council project and Cllr Devlin agreed that the first decision should be whether a Town Sign is wanted before any further action is taken as to a suitable design. Cllr Devlin proposed that any further discussion is shelved until the Town Council decides it wants a Town Sign. Seconded by Cllr Thomas.

Resolved: that the provision of a town sign is not supported at this time.

24. War Memorial Update

Cllr Moore informed members that the renovations were now completed and asked whether members considered a cleaning party was necessary at this time.

Resolved: (i) information noted, and; (ii) a cleaning party is to be scheduled later in the year.

25. Events

a) Festival of Remembrance - since the last meeting members had researched the charity Combat Stress suggested by Cllr Clark, however following discussion it was;

Resolved: that the proceeds from the Festival of Remembrance are to be split between the Royal British Legion poppy appeal and Help for Heroes.

b) VE Day 75 - Members were asked whether they had any suggestions as to what the Town Council could do as part of the commemorations and were advised that due to the May Bank holiday being moved from Monday to Friday 8th May the Soapbox Derby is being moved to Sunday 10th May and will have a VE Day theme.

Resolved: information noted.

26. Play Area Inspections

Members considered the annual inspection reports from the Play Inspection Company and were advised that the Town Clerk is sourcing a contractor to undertake the repairs/replacement identified. Cllr Thomas informed members that the cricket stumps in the MUSA in Lake Meadows have been removed. It was suggested that Basildon Council might know of their whereabouts.

Resolved: information noted

27. Festival Gardens

Due to the recent spate of littering and vandalism in the Gardens Cllr Moore asked members for their opinions on the formation of a working party to undertake regular inspections/clean ups. Cllr Adshead asked whether a social media post aimed at parents highlighting the issue could be generated. Other suggestions included the provision of lockable bins and cutting back the hedge so the gardens are more open.

Resolved: members to meet at the gardens on Saturday 3rd August at 8.30am to look at possible options.

28. Jim Shields Gardens

Members received and considered a proposal for a bronze sculpture to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower sailing. Cllr Adshead proposed that the Council commissions the larger two (2) metre sculpture. Seconded by Cllr Spencer.

Resolved: that Mayflower 2020 is commemorated by the installation of a John Doubleday bronze sculpture in Festival Gardens.

29. Items for Information

a) BTC bus shelters - members were advised that BBC has informed the Town Clerk there is a possibility of Essex County Council taking over responsibility for all bus shelters in the Borough, and further information is awaited.

30. Items for Consideration for Social Media/Press Release

- Cllr Thomas asked if there was a way that the Council could promote "grass verges as meadows" around the Town? Members felt this should go on the next Environment Agenda.
- Article about vandalism and littering in Festival Gardens for the website/Twitter

31. Questions from the Press and Public

None

Cllr M Moore
Chairman of the Committee

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20pm

Signed:.....Date: