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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON TUESDAY 7 APRIL 2015 at 8.00 PM

Present: Cllr Edmunds – In the Chair David Allison – Clerk to the Council

Cllrs Bennett, Dann, Getkahn and Vane.

Voting Members: 5 reducing to 4 (during item EA1125/15).

Apologies: Cllrs Brading and Seeley.

EA1119/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Seeley.

EA1120/15 Declarations of Interest

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

EA1121/15 Representations from the Public

There no members of the public present.

EA1122/15 Minutes

Resolved:

- That the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3 March 2015 be approved and be signed by the Chairman.

EA1123/15 Matters Arising

EA1117/15 Spindle Tree. The Clerk advised that a reply had been received from Julie Hughes (TRDC) which was somewhat disappointing given that the letter had been addressed to the Director of Regulatory Services, Rebecca Emmett. The Clerk added that the response itself was also disappointing as it was stated that TRDC would not be making a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on the spindle tree.

Members agreed that the reply received was far from satisfactory and that this should be followed up.

EA1124/15 Works List

The Chairman introduced this item and invited comments.

Resolved:

- That the Works List for April 2015 be noted.

EA1125/15 Nectar Oasis Areas within Croxley Green

The Chairman introduced this item and advised that this matter had been referred to the Committee to consider from the last Council meeting held on 26 March 2015.

The Chairman stated that there was agreement that the idea of having nectar oasis areas has merit but the sticking point was finding the ground/land and funds to move this forward.

It was suggested that the various groups, churches and schools be contacted to

advise them of the importance of such areas. It was commented that there was a piece of land on the Windmill Estate near a footpath leading to Copthorne Road which may be in TRDC ownership. An area of land near to the brick bus stop on the Green opposite All Saints Church was also identified as a possible site.

The Clerk reminded Members that in 2011 and 2012 groups were approached for suggested sites all of which were in third party ownership.

It was commented that with general amenity land there would need to be consultation by the landowner with residents and it would be better to focus attention on land that is in public ownership.

It was stated that creating nectar oasis areas was not as simple a process as just scattering wild plant seeds over an area as the area has to be properly prepared with ground clearance, grass killing, fertiliser put down and then using wild seed 'plugs' to start to create the nectar oasis and thereafter managed properly.

It was mentioned that in the original proposal an area on the central reservation on Scots Hill be considered but the Clerk reiterated from what was stated at the Council meeting that when this matter was discussed in 2012, Highways would not agree to Scots Hill central reservation as a nectar oasis area due to safety issues that would arise as a result of long grass. Highways said that they already promote a wildlife area in Scots Hill on the left going up the hill and would be happy to continue with that practice and would consider other highways areas but the Clerk emphasised that this was a matter for them and not this Council. The Clerk also reiterated his concern that he believes the Council does not have any direct powers in respect of this matter on third party land to pursue it further.

It was suggested that perhaps an area in Stones Orchard could be used where the footpath to the east leads to the footpath linking Owens Way to the Green but it would be necessary to check against the Management Plan.

(At this point Cllr Vane left the meeting 8.30pm).

Resolved:

- That the Clerk and Cllr Dann check the Management Plan to establish if it facilitates provision for the necessary biodiversity;
- That subject to the above resolution, TRDC be advised of nature and extent of the biodiversity proposal.

EA1126/15 Closure

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.37pm.