

TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Severn Ham Committee meeting
Remotely via Zoom on 30th April 2020

Present: Cllrs P Aldridge (Chair), J Raywood, C Cody, S Raywood, K Brennan, Ms C Corsie, Mr J Lucas, Mr A Purkiss, Mr M Cluley, Mr M McKenna

In attendance: J King (Assistant Town Clerk), D Hill (Town Clerk), 1 member of the public

SH 19/103 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr Perry & Cllr Smith

The Chair advised that item 7 (report from Severn Trent) would move up the agenda as Mr McKenna had another meeting to attend at 9.30am.

SH 19/104 To record declarations of interest

None received.

SH 19/105 To consider requests for dispensations

None received.

SH 19/106 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2020

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2020. Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Mr Purkiss.

SH 19/107 To receive an update and agree any actions regarding the Severn Trent Pipeline work

Mr McKenna provided an update. There was a pipeline burst in December 2019 and since then Severn Trent have been carrying out a programme of checks.

Severn Trent have been onsite for the last two weeks testing and carrying out further investigative work. Where leaks are found they will be repaired on a proactive basis. All necessary assents are obtained from Natural England each time work is required, and if protected species are seen in the area, they withdraw and try to mitigate the circumstances.

Cllr Cody joined the meeting at 9.10am due to technical difficulties.

The only constraint in carrying out repair work is the assent from Natural England, in that it could take up to 28 days for permission to be granted.

Mr McKenna was asked if there was a guide to what activities may happen between now and May 15th, as this may impact on the HLS form submission. Mr McKenna advised that he would keep the Town Council informed as it would depend on the investigate work currently taking place.

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Mr McKenna was asked about the 'lake' that has formed on the Ham and if this was caused by a leak. Mr McKenna advised that they have tested the water and there is no chlorine present, which together with an internal survey on the pipe would indicate no leaks. Severn Trent are monitoring the size of the 'lake' and it does seem to be receding. It will continue to be actively monitored.

Mr Cluley joined the call at 9.15am.

Mr McKenna left the call at 9.20am

SH 19/108 Matters arising from the minutes – for information only

SH19/009 HLS options – HLS Extension applied for – ongoing.

SH19/011 Flock Health Plan – No flock on Ham since November – complete.

SH19/027 Remarking of plots – Not considered advisable – complete.

SH19/051 Additional Trough – ST investigating – ongoing.

SH19/056 Land ownership issue – Solicitor appointed – ongoing.

SH19/081 Curlew Project – Mike Smart was due presenting at Annual Assembly on 6th April - postponed

SH19/082 Environmental Watching Brief – with Severn Trent – ongoing.

SH19/084 HLS Rollover – JK getting permissions to RPA website – complete

SH19/084 Boost for Diversity funding – ongoing.

SH 19/109 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

SH 19/110 To receive an update from the Chair

The issue regarding hay cutting was discussed. Until Severn Trent confirms when the pipeline replacement work will start, it is not possible to ascertain which plots may be affected for the hay cutting this year or where the birds may be nesting and therefore which plots should be cut earlier / later. A pragmatic approach will need to be taken when this information becomes available.

Currently there are two pairs of curlew in the southern half of the Ham and another pair who look like they may nest in the northern half, close to the proposed pipeline route. Severn Trent are walking the northern part of the pathway in order to try to dissuade the birds from nesting. Dog walkers have been seen with dogs not on leads.

Action: Assistant Town Clerk to post to Tewkesbury Noticeboard to remind people to keep the dogs on leads.

SH 19/111 To receive an update from Caroline Corsie, Environmental Advisor

Ms Corsie will liaise with Natural England regarding the hay cutting pattern and where the curlew are nesting.

HLS form will be held to submit until closer to the deadline so we know what is happening.

The hay from Marshlands continues to be held, ready for the hay sowing project. Due to the flooding issues on the Ham last year it was not possible to carry the work

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out. Kym Jackson has kindly advised that he will pass the current hay on and provide the Town Council with fresh hay in the Autumn. The planned visit to Marshlands will take place when the Covid 19 restrictions have been sufficiently lifted.

Ms Corsie will attend a webinar next week with Gloucestershire Floodplains Meadow Group being led by Emma Rothero. Agenda items include an update on the Severn Ham pipeline and related survey by Steve Pullen, as well as discussions on future projects including Severn Ham pipeline rewilding.

Wildlife is flourishing on the Ham at present, there are 24 swans on the 'lake' and skylark and corn bunting have also been spotted.

Marine Plan Consultation – Ms Corsie replied on behalf of the Town Council. One issue is that a lot of the data is quite old. Cllr J Raywood extended her thanks to Ms Corsie for condensing hundreds of pages into a response that we were all able to understand.

The Committee discussed potential projects for the Severn Ham volunteer.

Trough has a tiny leak at the back of it and will need a clean out before livestock come in, in the autumn. **Action:** Assistant Town Clerk to arrange.

Ms Corsie to invite Brian Smith from the Environment Agency to a future meeting to discuss drainage on the Severn Ham and techniques that have been used on sites not dissimilar to the Ham – for example, rotary ditches on Coombe Nature Reserve. With a view to enhancing the opportunities for birds in the future. Ms Corsie also to ask Mr Smith about the removal of the EA erected fence on the Ham.

SH 19/112 To receive an update from Mike Cluley, Carver Knowles

The hay auction will take place by informal tender this year rather than a public auction.

The Committee discussed the registration of the Severn Ham and the information requested by the solicitors. **Action:** Cllrs J Raywood, S Raywood and Brennan to investigate the registration regarding the river bed and any documents stored in the mezzanine.

SH 19/113 To approve the payments list

It was RESOLVED to approve the payments list totalling £4750.42
Proposed by Cllr Aldridge, seconded by Cllr J Raywood.

SH 19/114 Correspondence

Cllr Cody advised that she has a large number of oak saplings available, should anyone know of a suitable location that might like them.

The meeting closed at 10.05 am.

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes25th June 2020