

TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Severn Ham Committee meeting

Held at Tewkesbury Town Hall on 23rd September 2021 at 9.30am

Present: Cllrs P Aldridge (Chair), J Raywood, S Raywood, R Gurney, P Devine, Ms C Corsie, Mr J Lucas, Mr A Purkiss, Mr T Perry, Mr B Perry, Mr S Kerr (Severn Trent), Mr O Fielding (Dalcour Maclaren), Mr N McGovern (Geda Construction)

In attendance: J King (Assistant Town Clerk)

SH 21/001 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr Cluley & Cllr Cody

SH 21/002 To record declarations of interest

Mr Purkiss – Clerk to the Commoners.

Mr Perry – Tree work quotation.

SH 21/003 To consider requests for dispensations

None received.

SH 21/004 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2021

Mr Purkiss disagreed with the comment regarding overgrazing in SH20/078 but it remains as the minutes are a record of the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2021.

Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Cllr S Raywood.

SH 21/005 Matters arising from the previous minutes – for information only

SH19/051 Additional Trough – Mr Purkiss, Mr Fielding, Ms Corsie & Mr Cluley to discuss most appropriate location – complete.

SH19/056 Land ownership issue – has been submitted – ongoing.

SH20/024 ELMS Model for the Severn Ham – ongoing.

SH20/029 Investigating floristic diversity & NE approval – ongoing.

SH20/077 Additional signs – complete.

SH 21/006 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

SH 21/007 To receive an update from Severn Trent and agree any actions

Mr Kerr & Mr McGovern provided an update on the works. The pipes have been pressure and quality tested and preparations are being made for the connections to be made in the next few weeks. There will be some overnight works whilst the connections take place. There is currently a two-week delay on the project and the expected finish date is the end of November, if the weather and rivers remain favourable. Regular communications continue to be sent out via noticeboards and Facebook.

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The top soil has been reinstated along the 75% where the pipeline has been replaced. The window for natural regeneration has now passed. The Committee discussed the options for reinstatement, seed rates and grazing implications. It was noted that this is likely to take more than one year.

It was RESOLVED that the 75% where the topsoil has been replaced can be reinstated with oats and EM8 from Emorsgate Seeds, in proportions to be agreed between Ms Corsie, Mr B Perry and Severn Trent, the 25% where the haul road currently is, will be planted just with oats – if weather conditions. It was noted that it may not be possible to sow anything on the haul road topsoil.
Proposed by Cllr Aldridge, seconded J Raywood.

SH 21/008

To receive an update from Caroline Corsie, Environmental Advisor

Ms Corsie is currently monitoring the Ham, particularly the height of the grass given how dry the ground is, as well as the prevalence of thistles and docks.

Ms Corsie led walks around the Ham on 'Green Day' and feedback from the public about the site and the works was positive.

Invited to attend Tewkesbury Nature Reserve Management meetings and create a stronger link with the Severn Ham. Future funding through ELMS is going to look at these links and wider connections.

Severn Trent were asked about when Karen Colbourne would be getting involved with the site to look at the bigger picture and futureproofing.

Action: Severn Trent to report back.

More information is needed on the species on the Ham, baseline monitoring will be required for ELMS, as from this you can monitor whether the site is improving or declining. This could be volunteers or potentially involve Hartpury College.

Action: Severn Trent to speak to Steve Pullen. Assistant Town Clerk to approach Nancy Oakes at Hartpury College.

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust 'Earth Stars' project returns to the Severn Ham on Saturday 16th October and Saturday 18th December.

SH 21/009

To receive an update from Mike Cluley, Carver Knowles

Reports were received regarding the Severn Trent works. Mr Cluley is happy with how the works are progressing and hopes that the delays do not end up causing an issue. It is understood that Dalcour McLaren are beginning to look at initial compensation payments.

SH 21/010

To discuss and agree any actions regarding the proposed eel pass at Abbey Mill

There has been no contact from the Environment Agency since Mr Cluley contacted them on 7th September.

SH 21/011

To receive an update on the hay sowing project and to discuss the proposed work to improve the floristic diversity on the bund

Availability of hay from Kym Jackson and weather conditions have been favourable, so 190 bales have been chopped and spread on the hay restoration plots this year. Cost has been £2600 for application and £1000 for bales. 12 bales and a box of seed

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are held in storage ready to be hand spread on the bund following the sheep finishing grazing to help create an enhanced wild pollinator corridor.

Action: Date for spreading to be circulated to Committee as members would like to be involved.

SH 21/012 To consider a request from SUP Gloucester to improve the access into and out of the Avon for paddleboards and agree any next steps

The Committee considered the request from SUP Gloucester and were keen to facilitate better access into and out of the Avon for paddleboards and canoes. Concern is causing any additional erosion on the Ham.

Options considered were:

Extending the disabled fishing platform to provide better access – would require liaison with the Angling Club.

Incorporate into the eel pass – discounted as not happening far enough down the Avon for safe access

Access out at Victoria Gardens – refer on to Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Use the Town Council owned jetty on the Town side, just above the weir.

Action: Assistant Town Clerk to refer to Buildings & Mooring re: Town Council owned jetty and refer SUP Gloucester to Tewkesbury Borough Council re: Victoria Gardens.

SH 21/013 To receive an update on the tree works on the Ham and to consider and agree the quotations for work to the ash trees with dieback near the weir

Planned pollarding down the Avon has been completed and has made a significant improvement to the flow of the river.

Two ash trees over by the weir have dieback and need to be taken down. Plan is to have one of them turned into a sculpture of fish by the weir.

Two quotes have been received, both are from retained contractors who have worked on the Ham before. One for £3300, one for £1940. Both contractors have visited site to view the required works. Once contractor has been appointed, permission can be sought from Natural England.

It was RESOLVED to award the work to Chris Radbourne at a cost of £1940.

Proposed by Mr Lucas, seconded by Cllr J Raywood, J Lucas.

SH 21/014 To receive the committee budget report

The budget report was received.

SH 21/015 To consider and agree the draft budget for 2022/23

The budget for 2022/23 was discussed, noting the beginning of the reduction in the basic payment scheme. This reduction is £1500 for 2022/23. Discussions were had regarding the reductions that will happen over the next four years. It was noted that it may not be possible to always manage the budget without increasing the precept request, as it reduces from £13,000 to £0.

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It was RESOLVED that the following items (nesting project, volunteers & footpath repairs) should each be reduced by £500 for 2022/23 to balance the budget.

Proposed by Cllr Aldridge, seconded by Cllr J Raywood.

SH 21/016 To approve payments list
There was no payments list.

SH 21/017 Correspondence
There was no correspondence.

The meeting closed at 10.56am.

Next meetings: 18th November 2021 & 24th February 2022.

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes 18th November 2021