



TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Severn Ham Committee meeting

Held at Town Hall, Tewkesbury on 19th June 2024 at 10.00am

Present: Cllrs P Brookes (Chair), J Baddams, C Danter, J Raywood, Ms C Corsie, Mr Perry, Mr Baggs (Clerk to the Commoners)

In attendance: J King (Deputy Town Clerk), Mr R Safe (Tewkesbury Popular Angling Association)

SH 24/001 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Cody, Ash & Mrs Andrews.

SH 24/002 To record declarations of interest

Mr Baggs – Clerk to the Commoners

Mr Perry – Hay spreading and application

SH 24/003 To consider requests for dispensations

None received.

SH 24/004 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2024

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2024.

Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Cllr Danter.

SH 24/005 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

SH 24/006 Correspondence

One item of correspondence was received from the Abbey, who thanked the Severn Ham Committee for their use of the Ham for the River Blessing Service.

SH 24/007 Matters arising from the previous minutes – for information only

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

SH22/058 Eel Pass monitoring details – ongoing.

SH22/070 Legacy proposal – circulated – now with Severn Trent.

SH23/025 Plug plant project – assent given – complete

SH23/026 Bird boxes – being installed - ongoing

SH25/039 Pennywort – with Environment Agency – ongoing

SH23/055 Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation to circulate – complete

SH23/058 Apply to Natural England to harrow an area – ongoing

SH23/058 Engagement with local schools – with Cllr Cody - ongoing



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SH 24/008

To receive an update from Severn Trent and to agree any actions

Written report was received from Severn Trent.

Legacy / dock issue – Severn Trent are still considering the request for the Rootwave machine and ongoing costs.

Bund repair – payment to carry out this work was received this week.

Green hay spreading – no agreement reached for this year yet.

Penny Anderson Consulting will be carrying out the National Vegetation classification surveys on the Severn Ham and at Coombe Hill over the next few weeks. These surveys will be repeats of the previous surveys undertaken in 2023

The committee discussed the recent leak on the Severn Ham and the potential impact of repairs on the site. The Deputy Town Clerk has met with the site manager and will keep the committee apprised of any progress.

SH 24/009

To receive an update from Caroline Corsie, Environmental Advisor and to agree any actions

Ms Corsie provided the following update:

In terms of numbers of seeds, there is not much difference between green hay and small bales. Thanks were given to Kym Jackson who hosted the Severn Ham committee to see the meadows.

Ms Corsie and Deputy Town Clerk attended the most recent Severn Vale Catchment Basement meeting.

Meeting with Emma Rothero from the Floodplain Meadows Partnership on site next Wednesday to discuss approaches for the dock issues.

Future agenda item – possibility of a full vegetation survey on the Severn Ham. This may be useful for transitioning to new schemes.

SH 24/010

To receive an update from Tewkesbury Popular Angling Association

TPAA gave the following update:

Main concern from last year is the floating pennywort. The floods took a lot of it away. Avon Navigation Trust have a barge and have been working upstream on removal. The angling club offered assistance with the works.

Anglers have noted that soil has filled the river where the leak on the Ham has occurred. The water has been tested and there is no pollution issues. Question was asked as to whether Severn Trent would clear the river at the same time as reinstating it. **Action:** Deputy Town Clerk to raise with Severn Trent.

SH 24/011

To receive an update from the Deputy Town Clerk and agree any actions including:

- i. Eelscape Project – Deputy Town Clerk is part of the Stakeholder Group meetings which are looking at how to involve everyone in the project which is vital to moving forward to the next phase.



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ii. Hay sale

For the first time not all of the hay was sold on the Ham due to the prevalence of the docks. Two options have been proposed, one the removal as haylage, the second by making hay. Both will cost £800. Haylage option is preferred as it will not spread the seed as widely.

It was RESOLVED to take the haylage option at a cost of £800, subject to checking that this is allowed in the Higher Level Stewardship and Severn Ham Acts. Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Cllr Danter.

Post meeting note: The Higher Level Stewardship states that 'the sward should be managed through grazing and cutting' and refers to the 'haylage auction'. The Severn Ham Act 1808 refers to 'hay harvest' and that we should 'mow or cut the grass or herbage'. On this basis the haylage option has been requested to take place in the cut after 10th July.

iii. Rootwave / Legacy Issues

There is no response yet regarding the Rootwave machine from Severn Trent. The issues with docks have become worse and it may be necessary to investigate alternatives.

Sward lifters and trials were discussed. No conclusion reached. It may be necessary to have a working group meeting to deep dive into the options regarding docks.

iv. Hinkley Point C Consultation Update

Changes were requested to the documentation from EDF regarding access to the Ham to carry out surveys. Updated documents have not been received.

v. Report from Environment Agency

Helping the Fish Home – Teams call organised for after the elections.

Abbey Mill - Any future works to the eel pass will be delivered by Asset Performance team. Details regarding timescales will be shared when more information is available.

Avon Floating Pennywort – A working group has been set up and surveys are being produced to help the maps that will influence the management plan. Next step will be to get hot spots removed – if possible and appropriate through a combination of some of our internal teams, staff environmental leave days and potentially days with external partners/volunteers. TPAA have volunteered to get involved. In the meantime the operations team will be working with the Avon Navigation Trust to clear the Pennywort at Abbey Mill itself over the next month or so.

vi. Help for nesting swans – it was felt that assistance should be provided to the last pair of nesting swans in Tewkesbury if possible.



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Action : Deputy Town Clerk to speak to Wetherspoons.

- vii. Land Agent for 2024/5 – Current Land Agent; Mike Cluley has left Carver Knowles and is working independently.
It was RESOLVED to move the land agent contract for the Severn Ham from Carver Knowles to Mike Cluley with immediate effect.
Proposed by Cllr Danter, seconded by Cllr Baddams.

SH 24/012 To receive the committee budget report and earmarked reserve report
The reports were received.

The meeting closed at 11.15am

Next meeting: Wednesday 25th September 2024

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes

DRAFT