

NOTES ON A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP (EWG)
19th July 2021 via Zoom

Attendees: Cllrs John Turner (JT, Chair), Ed Langridge (EL), Ben Scarbrough (BS), Alan Ford (AF), Ken Howes (KH) and Simon Norton (SN)

In attendance: Catherine Barrett (CB) Assistant Clerk and Katie Neve (KN) Clerk

Apologies for absence received from: Lizzie Pannell (family commitments)

1) A review of the environment policy

JT suggested that point 4, relating to services and local employment, and point 7, relating to road safety, be removed from the policy to sharpen its environmental focus. KH said it was still important to factor in other parish matters such as employment, services and highways, and their impact on the environment. After some discussion it was agreed that JT and KH would work together to make brief amendments taking this into account and do this by the end of July (within 2 weeks). The recommended changes would then be presented to full council.

2) KCC Electric Vehicle Charger (EVC) trialling scheme:

- **Overview of the scheme by the Chairman:**

JT explained that Kent County Council (KCC) were running a scheme to install chargers in parish-council owned carparks for short-term charging. Full Council had agreed to register its interest in the scheme and run a parish survey to get feedback from residents. This feedback would be used to move forward.

- **Discuss next steps for creating a survey to measure public interest:**

SN endorsed the scheme. He felt that the survey should consider the different types of respondents, those who already had an electric vehicle and a charger at home, and those who did not yet have experience of an electric vehicle and how to maintain it. He asked if you already had a charger at home, would you be likely to drive to a carpark to use the same type of charger? It was agreed that these points be incorporated into the survey.

KH asked what type of survey would be put out and who would design it. JT explained that the questions would be kept simple and could be done in-house using a template. JT explained that parish councils who had already made successful applications to KCC had surveyed residents, with the results supporting an application. CB would follow up with a parish council that Chris May had visited where there were already chargers. It was agreed that JT, EL and CB would work on the survey and present to the working group for agreement. Results, summary and next steps based on this survey are needed for agreement by Full Council ahead of the deadline for the application of 6th October.

3) South East Water dry weather plan

JT explained this item was for information only. South East Water had developed a plan proposing the management of a developing drought situation. The plan would include increased communication to stakeholders and a traffic light system for understanding state of water resources. This had been endorsed by Full Council at the July meeting and JT would update the working group when more information came in from South East Water.

4) Review of meeting points from the EWG meeting on 12th May

- **Update on GHG emissions:**

JT had begun to pull together data for the parish council's fuel consumption in the year 2019. He was using the gov.uk website to convert energy consumption into equivalent CO₂ units. This baseline calculation would be used to look at ways of reducing emissions over time.

- **Household tips:**

JT suggested sending two or three tips out at a time via the website, facebook, village magazines and parish notice boards. These would act as "teasers" to keep residents interested. This would start in September to coincide with contacting schools to gauge interest in working with the EWG. It was agreed to move forward with this idea.

EL suggested taking a whole page in parish magazines, producing fridge magnets or leaflets. KN confirmed there was some contingency in the budget for costs.

- **Tree planting/preservation:**

EL suggested a case study on a number of trees planted by the parish council in Shadwell Woods some years ago. AF reported that the trees had been growing well and he would check them again and report back. We agreed that as an EWG our immediate focus would be on "preservation of what we have today". JT would contact James Bowdidge of Langton Green Village Society (LGVVS), who would be planting 1300 trees during the next 2 or 3 years, to discuss their preservation plan.

It was agreed that BS would look back through his documents for the bio-diversity survey of the pocket park, Roopers, previously undertaken by AF.

EL would forward the contact details of Sussex Lund, a charitable fund supporting small-scale, ecology projects. AF would also share his download from the Wildlife Trust. Both of these charities might be willing to present to residents/schools about looking after trees.

5) Any other items for discussion

KH asked JT to confirm whether hedgerows would be included in any further bio-diversity audits, and it was confirmed that they would.

6) Covid Update

It was agreed once again to continue meeting by Zoom, which was still necessary for some members of the group and more environmentally friendly than meeting in person.

The meeting closed at 8.23pm.