

Committee(s): Ordinary Council	Date: 27 th September 2023
Subject: Chairs report for Clean & Green Committee	
Committee Chair: Cllr Barry Aspinell	

The Clean & Green Committee met on the 11th September with the updates set out below:

The Chair updated the Committee on the meetings of the Task & Finish Groups and Working Groups. Scheduled meetings for continued work will be arranged.

To date, Task and Finish for Fly Tipping has met.

Task and Finish for Enforcement has met

Task & Finish for Hutton Country Park has met.

Working Group on Woodland Management to be convened.

Jonathan Woodhams updated the Committee on the successful applications for Brentwood for Project Minerva and Safer Streets funding. Brentwood Borough Council were successful in obtaining all that was applied for which in total is in excess of £200,000. This was a great achievement and the funding will be allocated on a number of incentives.

Members approved for Officers at the Council to work with the new BID Manager and Chamber of Commerce to look at options to support a new Brentwood in Bloom initiative. Brentwood In Bloom was linked to the Anglia in Bloom competition which encourages all communities across the region to participate in the unique horticultural and environmental initiatives and demonstrate that their efforts are making a difference to their local surroundings. There is an opportunity that the new Business Improvement District (BID) may well want to support part of this initiative as part of their priorities. There may also be opportunity from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to provide a small grant programme to support entries.

Officers will work with the relevant Horticultural Societies to understand whether additional allotment sites need to be developed or whether the existing sites are meeting the current demand. Members agreed to delegate authority for the Director of Environment together with the Chair of Clean and Green Committee, Conservative Spokesperson and the Horticultural Societies to identify possible new allotment sites and to undertake a review of existing allotment sites to determine the capacity and unmet demand.

Officers provided options for sites bought forward by Clean and Green Committee for the trial of “rewilding” areas of parks and verges. Members agreed to additional planting of up to 80 standard avenue trees at Hutton Recreation Ground, fully funded through Thames Chase Trust partnership.

Members agreed to a consultation to develop a vision statement for Hutton Country Park. This will be the keystone of developing a 10-year management plan for the site that aligns with the strategic objectives of the Council’s Corporate Strategy. This would ensure a long-term strategic plan is developed for Hutton Country Park that aligns with the Council’s broader corporate aims.

In order to address fly tipping, Members agreed to an inception meeting with Keep Britain Tidy offer of support, to scope the specific needs of the Council and for a costed project plan based on the deliverables of the Better Street programme to be presented at a future Clean & Green Committee for consideration.

The public toilets in Brentwood Highstreet had recently experienced high levels of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Initial scoping for the modernising of the facilities to reduce risk of vandalism suggests that it would not be financially feasible to undertake, with the installation of new smaller facilities or conversion of the Changing Places facility being presented as the only feasible options. It has not been established what the footfall of the toilets currently is, therefore, it is proposed that they are re-opened, and monitoring is undertaken to determine the size of facility that the public require. Members agreed to the necessary repairs to the existing toilet facility and reopen to the public and to approve installation of counters to monitor use, and report back to Committee, seeking final decision on the future of the toilets.

The Climate Emergency Working Group met and agreed to its scope and frequency of meetings. The main aim of the group will be to keep on track the progress of Environment Strategy action plan, with one exception, that the Council is now to achieve carbon net-zero by 2030, rather than 2040 as set out in the Strategy, reflecting the subsequent declaration of a Climate Emergency and the alteration of the net-zero target to 2030.