

AGENDA ITEM No. 6

**TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET AND POLICY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2023**

**BRIEFING NOTE
SUSTAINABILITY & THE ENVIRONMENT**

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Committee will recall that Council endorsed the approach set out in the Briefing Note on 'Sustainability and Environment' at Full Council on 30th May 2023, which was read in conjunction with supporting documentation specific to the updated Sustainability and Environment Workgroup Report.
- 1.2 The core principles agreed were:
 - a) An amended and reformatted interim report would be submitted, aligned with the Budget Setting process for 2023, so that each year, as part of the Budget Setting process, the Budget & Policy Committee would consider the priorities in the report so that where resource and funding allowed, Tavistock Town Council would be able to progress environmental and climate actions in an effective and supported manner.
 - b) That progress would be considered on 6 monthly intervals specific to Tavistock Town Council's environmental and sustainability programs, policies and priorities, including the identification of possible funding streams that may be available to Council to action priorities.
- 1.3 By undertaking the process outlined above, regarding producing the equivalent of biodiversity reports, it is acknowledged that the Council is aligning its approach to the Environments Act 2021, 'biodiversity duty' where Public Authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.
- 1.4 The below is an inception document in tabular format, outlining progress against previously reported projects, describing new initiatives implemented, whilst identifying projects which require further exploration specific to resource and funding implications, e.g. EV charging stations, photovoltaic panels.

2. THE CURRENT SITUATION

PROJECT/TASK	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	NOTES
SE1: Waste management	To continue to monitor and improve upon the Council's arrangements with regards to waste management.	All Officers	The main intervention implemented this year is a redesign of the recycling area within the Pannier Market complex which should improve efficiencies and reduce cost.
SE2: Event Sustainability	Specific to Council led events/bookings to encourage/implement arrangements specific to such aspects as waste reduction/use of plastics	Works Manager	For 2023, Goose Fair stall holders have been advised regarding expectations relating to waste management initiatives and a review of waste management in the round for this event has been scheduled for January 2024. The above principles are encouraged for event hirers e.g. Meadows and implemented in their Management Plans
SE3: Light pollution	Reviewing such aspects as light usage and looking at partnership project implications	General Manager Works Manager	As per 2022, agreed with BID to operate Christmas lights for less hours during the day and for less days than previous years, including looking at the efficiency of existing infrastructure e.g. uplighters in churchyard. Replaced Drake Statue uplighters with LED and currently looking at options specific to

			Meadows Street Lighting.
SE3: Contracts and tender review	To continue to include within procurement processes sustainability	General Manager Works Manager	<p>Main points of 2023 include:</p> <p>Letting of Bannawell play-park contract included an assessment of the providers sustainability objectives.</p> <p>Other contracts:</p> <p>Market Rd retaining wall: Sustainability of flood defence, implementation of all requirement for the Flood Risk Activity Permit regarding wildlife and biodiversity and installing 120 tonnes of limestone to assist with fish breeding.</p> <p>Museum: improving infrastructure, dry rot treatment, reinstatement of lime plaster, improving insulation etc</p> <p>Town Hall: repointing front and side elevations in lime pointing and carrying out plastic repairs to ensure that that there is no further degradation of the Hurdwick stone infrastructure</p>

SE3: EV Charging points	To consider EV installation as part of the design process relating to Council owned land	Town Clerk General Manager	Facilitated arrangements for easements to install EV charging points in Bedford Car Park. Looking at options for EV installation when considering design/layout for Market Rd enhancement (medium term initiative). Similar to future proofing approach within Guildhall Car Park.
SE4: Works vehicles and equipment replacement	As part of the procurement process, to include more environmentally friendly options specific to purchase.	Works Manager	e.g. Prices are currently being sought for replacement of mowers which are battery powered.
SE5: Municipal buildings	To regularly review building infrastructure and operations to reduce the carbon footprint.	General Manager Works Manager	Significant works have been commissioned to the Town Hall boiler system to improve efficiency. The Council has reviewed in the round its approach with regards to energy usage with the aim to reduce utility costs, whilst ensuring this is not at detriment to the building fabric. Refer to SE3.
SE6: Bus Shelters	To replace 11 in No. bus shelters with living roofs	General Manager	Currently 5 of the shelters have been replaced and the remainder and scheduled to be installed by end 2023.

SE7: Active travel	To encourage initiatives pertaining to such aspects as green travel	General Manager	As part of the design process, bike rack installation is being considered by Guildhall toilets and options are being reviewed specific to paid bike lockers
SE8: Green Burial Wildflower Meadow (Plymouth Rd Cemetery)	To continue to work with community partners regarding the upkeep of the green burial site.	Works Manager Community and Compliance Officer	A scything exercise was carried out with Friends of the Wild Flower Meadows on 1 st August 2023, which encourages wildlife and reduces carbon footprint. An information board will shortly be installed at the entrance and TTC continue to manage the natural paths.
SE9: Celle Gardens	To work with Tavistock Community Gardeners regarding the upkeep of Celle Gardens.	Works Manager	The Council provides a polytunnel at Plymouth Rd Cemetery which is used to assist Tavistock Community Gardeners with the cultivation of plants. Work has been carried out to Celle Gardens this summer.
SE10: Meadows Canal beds	To continue to develop and manage the new wild-life friendly planting scheme	Works Manager	On-going
SE11: Tree planting	To continue to maintain the existing tree stock and to plan accordingly for replacement	Works Manager	On-going watering and management of the newly planted trees has continued in 2023. More liaison is undertaken with WDBC's Senior Tree Officer and a tree management strategy

			is currently being drafted.
SE12: Reuse of green materials	To reuse green waste on Council estate	Works Manager	Chippings are being used from tree surgery works to maintain newly planted tree stock and Hurdwick stone is being re-purposed on the Town Hall capital project
SE13: Encouraging birds	To assist with the facilitation of the installation of 27 bird boxes.	Works Manager	No change, monitored as required.
SE14: Sustainable weed and invasive control	To train staff and implement a schedule of works to address such aspects as invasive species on Council land	Works Manager	A large section of Himalayan Balsam has been removed from the parcel of land adjacent to Market Rd by Abbey Bridge. Research is being undertaken around the potential threat specific to Asian Hornets.
SE15: SHARE Recycling for Charity	To support the recycling initiative specific to plastic materials sent to Terracycle.	General Manager	The Council continues to allow SHARE to use its ship's container in Pixon Lane open space, FOC, to support this initiative.
SE16: Paper use	To reduce the amount of paper produced and to recycle accordingly	All Officers	No change
SE17: Whitchurch Down	To manage the biodiversity at Whitchurch Down, including a SSSI,	General Manager Works Manager	Working with partners the Whitchurch Down Management Plan is being reviewed this year to implement another 5-year plan.

			In addition to the above, verge clearance has been scheduled and tree planting schemes have been initiated/authorised.
SE18: Bats	To support an initiative specific to bat monitoring where the Council has provided a bat monitor in July and August 2023.	Works Manager	Positive responses were received by volunteers following a press release in July with bat identification undertaken in August with a Devon Bat Group expert, along with waterway surveys, 6 in No. completed during this period.
SE19: Westcountry Rivers Trust Project	To work with Westcountry River Trust to help bolster resilience to climate change and flooding.	Community and Compliance Officer	For our estate this specifically relates to mapping and modelling where the hydrological surface flow routes across Witchurch Down are likely to flow with a subsequent report to follow, providing advice on natural flood management options.
SE20: Energy Performance Certificate Legislation implications	To monitor the latest guidance around EPC proposals for 2024/25 in respect of rental properties and the subsequent legal obligations	Town Clerk General Manager	Continue to monitor implications of this legislation regarding reaching EPC ratings of at least Band C by 2028 and to understand the implications to our estate and how this is applied to Listed Buildings. A study will be commissioned in the last quarter of this financial year to investigate the financial implications and expectations.

SE21: Photovoltaic panels	To look at options specific to renewable energy on our municipal buildings.	Town Clerk General Manager	A feasibility and (cost/benefit) analysis with be undertaken in 2023/24 as a bespoke project identified within the Commercial/Community Service Plan
SE22: Neighbourhood Development Plan	To identify areas for play space and green space designation	Working Group and stakeholders	Significant progress has been made specific to this element of the NDP process with a first draft expected to be complete in the last quarter of 2023.

**WAYNE SOUTHALL
GENERAL MANAGER
SEPTEMBER 2023
TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL**