**Minutes, Environment Committee held 30th January 2024 at Saddleworth Civic Hall.**

**Present:** Cllr K Phillips (CH), Cllr S Al-Hamdani, Cllr A Wrigley, Cllr J Garner,

Cllr D Wall, Cllr H Bishop,

Mrs T Rhodes (Greenfield & Grasscroft)

**588. Apologies for Absence**: Cllr M Bingey, Cllr L Dawson.

Absent: Cllr M Birchall

**589. Declarations of interest:** None declared

**590. Minutes of meeting held 11th September 2023**

Agreed as a true record and signed by the chairman at the meeting.

**591.** **Minutes of Extraordinary meeting held 14th December 2023**

Agreed as a true record and signed by the chairman at the meeting.

**592. Community Toilet Scheme**

The Clerk explained to new councillors about the scheme. And there was some discussion around it.

Signage was discussed and it was agreed that the new Site Manager would inspect across the parish.

It was agreed that Councillors would arrange to inspect the facilities and feedback at the next meeting.

It was agreed the Clerk would add Grandpa Greene’s and Limekiln Café onto the website list of available community toilets and that a list would be prepared with opening times etc for the notice boards.

The Clerk explained she had received a request from Albion Farm Shop to join the community toilet scheme, but it was agreed that due to its isolated position it wouldn’t be suitable.

The email from Cllr Lancaster and Cllr Shah’s response was shared. It was agreed that the toilets in the civic hall already meet these requirements but it would be too difficult to enforce these requirements over all the community toilets. But it was suggested SPC write to them all making them aware of this campaign.

**593. Grouse Shooting**

Cllr Wall delivered a presentation to the committee. He advised that the Labour Party members of the Parish Council were looking at taking a Motion to the Parish Council over their concerns over this issue; that the open moorland areas around Dove Stone, Yeoman Hey and Greenfield reservoirs are not being managed in a way that maximises the benefits for the community in Saddleworth.

The recent growth of game shooting as an alternative to hill farming, has seen an expansion of the traditional grouse shooting with many more shooting events being held, resulting in damage to the environment. Safety issues were also discussed as councillors understand that when shooting is taking place, public access is shut off.

The legal position was discussed, Councillors were informed that United Utilities who own the land have not given rights to close off sections of land for shooting.

The proposed Motion would be to adopt policy that promotes the extension of the re-wilding work of Moors for the Future across all of the peatlands in Saddleworth, and to work with the RSPB to raise public awareness of the benefit of this approach to land management.

To apply United Utility’s promise made in July 2023 to stop supporting game bird shooting, by ceasing to allow the use of its access roads and land for game shooting on land around Dovestones, Yeoman Hey and Greenfield reservoirs, so that public access for recreation is no longer restricted by shooting interests.

To request the PDNP use all of its statutory powers to protect natural ecosystems, support re-wilding and promote full public access to open land designated under the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000.

After some further discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Wall and the Clerk would arrange a meeting with both the RSPB and with the Landowner. These meetings ideally to take place within the next few weeks to enable feedback at the next meeting. Cllr Wall would also draft a letter to the PDNP via Cllr Beeley who is the Parish Council representative.

Councillors thanked Cllr Wall for his excellent presentation.

**594. Energy survey/funding - progress so far**

The Clerk advised that the funding application submitted to Saddleworth Hydro for an energy survey via Greenzone had been successful. The survey was booked in for 1st February 2024. Once the report is received it will be shared at the next meeting.

**595. Pollution of the River Tame in Delph Valley –response from United Utilities from Full Council Motion – Follow Up Actions**

Deferred to next meeting

**596. Development of the Parish Field**

Deferred.

**597. Update on Tanner’s Mill, Forestation**

Deferred to next meeting

**598. Items for the next agenda**

Update on Grouse Shooting/rewilding work

Energy Survey report

River Tame

Tanner’s Mill

**Next meeting: Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 18.00hrs**