**Minutes, Environment Committee held 11th September 2023 at Saddleworth Civic Hall.**

**Present:** Cllr K Phillips (CH), Cllr S Al-Hamdani, Cllr K Dawson, Cllr J Garner, Cllr D Wall, Cllr H Bishop, Cllr M Birchall.

Mrs T Rhodes (Greenfield & Grasscroft)

**577. Apologies for Absence**: Cllr M Bingey, Cllr L Dawson, Cllr A Wrigley

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

**579. Minutes of meeting held 19th June 2023**

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

**580. Pollution of the River Tame in Delph Valley –response from United Utilities from Full Council Motion.**

The Clerk was asked to update the meeting about the response she had received from United Utilities who will be attending the next Council meeting on 25th September. There was some discussion around this and Councillors prepared some additional questions they wish to put to the United Utilities’ representatives at the meeting. It was agreed these questions would be emailed in advance to United Utilities by the Clerk:

1, Why were the figures so high for sewerage overflow into rivers in 2022 given that it was a relatively dry summer in Saddleworth with a much lower than average rainfall rate? (Cllr Garner).

2, How do United Utilities know where all the outflows are? (Cllr Al-Hamdani).

3, Why can’t we have meaningful live statistics monthly (like other companies provide) rather than annually? (Cllr Phillips).

4, When the BBC recently asked for data relating to dry spillage, why did United Utilities fail to provide the data, citing an investigation by the Environment Agency, when 3 other water companies did supply this information? (Cllr Wall).

5, What role are United Utilities playing in the new installation of drainage at Churchill Playing Fields? (Cllr Bishop).

6, Is Saddleworth considered at a higher risk of discharge of pollution/sewerage/chemicals and where are we on your priority list? (Cllr Garner).

7, What is the liaison between United Utilities and Local Councils in regard to new building works and sewerage provision? (Cllr Al-Hamdani).

8, Will your company be paying for the clean-up of discharge of sewerage and chemicals out of your profits rather than passing this cost onto customers? (Cllr Phillips).

**581. Energy saving - progress so far**

The Clerk was asked to advise on the progress made so far. She has contacted Saddleworth Hydro, Oldham Energy Futures, GMCR, Carbon Coop and Robert Scotts and received some responses.

Saddleworth Hydro have advised they may be able to fund a survey of our building. Cleanonshore and Greenzone have provided survey quotes which were discussed at the meeting. It was agreed we didn’t need a third quote as both were under £2,000. The Clerk will now share these quotes with Saddleworth Hydro and wait for their response.

There was some discussion about how we would fund any recommendations from the survey. Cllr Al-Hamdani expected the energy bill to be less than originally predicted so some of that could be used.

The clerk advised that the Government Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme SALIX loans phase 3 for funding applications will open in October. Cllr Wall advised to treat this with caution and only commit if we were certain the proposed measures made complete economic sense.

Cllr Al-Hamdani also advised he would send a link to the clerk regarding OFGEM business energy efficiency grants and schemes.

**582. Allotments /Ecology**

The proposed development of the adjoining field to the allotment was agreed to be deferred for 12 months at the July Council meeting so can’t be brought back to Full Council for at least 6 months, earliest date would be the February 24 meeting. There was some discussion around this. It was agreed that the Environment Committee would add this back onto their agenda for the next meeting in December.

It was agreed that the Clerk would email all councillors with a copy of the Nature of Uppermill Parish Field report (already shared previously) and ask them if they had any ideas on its development, would they please send to the Clerk to forward to the Environment Committee before their next meeting in December.

It was noted that a few of the allotments still appear to be untidy. It was agreed that the Clerk would arrange for her and Cllr Beeley to visit over the next couple of weeks and meet with the TUPAS Chairman. The Clerk advised the office is already in the process of chasing up any unreturned agreements and payments for the next year.

**583. AOB**

There was some discussion around changing the meeting dates from Monday to Tuesday evenings to accommodate all committee members’ commitments. It was agreed the next meetings would be moved to Tuesday 12th December and Tuesday 12th March.

Cllr Bishop informed councillors about the Tanner’s Mill development and the TPO now in place. She asked Councillors to be vigilant as 2 healthy chestnut trees were removed just before the TPO was put in place. She advised the Forestry Commission and Natural England were both looking into this.

**584. Items for the next agenda**

* Development of the Parish Field
* Update on Tanner’s Mill, Forestation
* Energy survey/Funding
* United Utilities Update.

**Next meeting: Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 18.00hrs**

**Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 18.00hrs**