

Climate & Ecological Emergency Forum

21 November 2023, 6.30-8pm

Present

Cllr J Hodgson	JH	Totnes Town Council (Chair)
Cllr T Cooper	TC	Totnes Town Council
Maiken Hutchings	MH	Totnes Town Council, Sustainability Officer (Notes)
	FB	Resident
Cllr J Cummings	JC	Totnes Town Council
	RO	Totnes Trust
	BP	Totnes Climate Hub

Recommendations

It was **RECOMMENDED** by the group that TTC fund a double spread in the Totnes Directory for the diet flyer at a cost of approximately £180.

Actions

- 1: BP to speak to Climate Hub about moving the Forum to the Climate Hub
- 2: JC to get the Plant-Based Treaty motion to Town Matters Committee for amendments and a conversation with a view for it to go to December Full Council
- 3: JH to speak to Cllr McKay about taking the Plant-Based Treaty to South Hams District Council
- 4: JH to take the Plant-Based Treaty to Devon County Council
- 5: FB to pursue getting a double spread diet flyer into the Totnes Directory, liaising with the Climate Hub as necessary.
- 6: JC to look into the cost of a different type of air quality monitor and take it to Town Matters / Council Matters Committee if needed
- 7: MH to send a copy of the draft Climate Policy and Action Plan to JC, BP and FB.

1. Welcome & introductions

2. Future of the CEEF

JH informed the group that MH is leaving her role at TTC from the 14th December, having accepted a job elsewhere. This has prompted a reconsideration of how the CEEF is operating, particularly in light of TTC having to make difficult decisions around budgets and also lack of Councillor (Cllr) participation in the CEEF.

It has proposed that the CEEF ceases and so this will be the last Forum meeting.

However, JH came with the suggestion that the CEEF combines forces with the Climate Hub, operating from there rather than from TTC. This would have added benefit of being more in the community than it currently is.

- She noted it would be good to engage more people and for it to focus on active projects and not just be a talking shop. This would perhaps be more possible outside of TTC rather than within it.

RO agreed that this sounded like a good idea.

BP said she would take this idea to the Climate Hub Heart Circle which has its next meeting on Tuesday 28th November. There are a lot of details that would need to be thrashed out but she will report back their general response which she imagines will likely be positive.

- BP noted that there could be a 'kick off' event with a speaker and inviting all Town Cllrs and others.

JC added that as Chair of Town Matters he would be happy to be the link Cllr to Climate Hub.

ACTION 1: BP to speak to Climate Hub about moving the Forum to the Climate Hub

3. Diet flyer / Plant-Based Treaty discussion

Diet flyer

The group discussed FB's diet flyer, which has been looked at on several other occasions. It was again noted by some of the group that it might be better to focus on the health benefits of eating a more plant-based diet.

FB asked that the group support adding the flyer to a future Totnes Directory. It was suggested by PB – as had been discussed in a previous meeting – that it coincide with a Climate Hub article on the same topic.

- JH suggested that TTC pay for the diet flyer to be included in the Totnes Directory as a double spread. This is covered under agenda item 4 relating to budget discussions.

Plant-Based Treaty

FB also asked the group to endorse recommending to TTC that they sign up to the Plant-Based Treaty. There is a template motion that can be used that the Exmouth Climate Officer has prepared for Exmouth Town Council.

- FB briefly ran through some of the key points included in the template

The group noted that the template motion would need amending to reflect the context of a parish council such as TTC. Currently it is aimed at larger county and city councils which have much greater powers.

It was also noted that a number of the actions on the list are already happening in Totnes.

JH proposed getting the motion amended and then taking it to TTC. She suggested that this might be a task for the TTC Town Matters Committee.

ACTION 2: JC to get the Plant-Based Treaty motion to Town Matters Committee for amendments and a conversation with a view for it to go to December Full Council

The group then briefly discussed the plans at SHDC and Devon County Council (DCC). JH informed the group that Cllr McKay at SHDC has been hosting meetings to figure out how to best go forward on climate and biodiversity emergency issues. JH said she would take the PBT motion to SHDC and DCC.

ACTION 3: JH to speak to Cllr McKay about taking the Plant-Based Treaty to South Hams District Council

ACTION 4: JH to take the Plant-Based Treaty to Devon County Council

4. Budget discussion

There is currently £4373 left in the budget.

As was discussed under agenda item 3, it was **RECOMMENDED** by the group that TTC fund a double spread in the Totnes Directory for the diet flyer at a cost of approximately £180.

JH noted that if TTC did not fund it, she would be able to fund from her County Cllr Locality Fund.

The group discussed what the remaining budget could be spent on.

- Discussion around funding a food related project
 - Linking in with Food in Community - Pay what you feel cafes
 - That would be a good venue for leafleting and getting message across.
 - First Saturday of the month in the United Reform Church
- JC brought up the issue of the air quality monitor in town.
 - What is being measured in town at the moment is only PM2 which is mainly from woodsmoke. If we want to measure car exhaust we would need a different type, NOx.

ACTION 5: FB to pursue getting a double spread diet flyer into the Totnes Directory, liaising with the Climate Hub as necessary.

ACTION 6: JC to look into the cost of a different type of air quality monitor and take it to Town Matters / Council Matters Committee if needed

5. Policy & Action Plan

MH briefly ran through an initial draft of a Policy and Action Plan for Totnes Town Council. This focuses on actions that TTC can take internally and not on actions for the wider community. As this is a very early draft, it will only be circulated internally with those present who expressed an interest in receiving it. It is not currently ready for wider circulation.

ACTION 7: MH to send a copy of the draft Climate Policy and Action Plan to JC, BP and FB.

There was some discussion around the vision; this requires further work.

- Suggestions include: Our vision is to support local climate and biodiversity action, and thereby to become a net zero council which protects local wildlife and habitats and increases community resilience.

BP asked about who TTC banks with. Cllrs weren't sure but thought it might be Lloyds. This could be added to the Action Plan for review.

6. Energy Wise Show

JH asked for feedback from the event from anyone present. Three people had been there. Comments:

- Good talks but not advertised who was talking and when – could have been a lot better advertised
- Good range of stallholders
- Timetable of speakers - not much time for each talk to run over by 5 mins for questions etc. Could have done with fewer talks, bit longer each and break between them.
- Questions around why TTC were subsidising it - more like a trade show
 - It had been the understanding that there would primarily be charities present rather than commercial businesses. This appears not to have been the case.
 - JH noted that the team at Transition Town Totnes is much smaller now and the preparations were done primarily by one person who therefore needed more support. This was the majority of the costs involved.
 - Something to consider should TTT request funding in future.

Meeting finished: 20:15