

Minutes of MEC meeting held 12th February 2024 at the Mayfly

Present: Christine Newman, Cate Clarke, Joe Thompson, Kinsey Foster, April & Andy Beale, David & Lorraine Le Grice, John Ellerby, Tim Cross, Paul Johnston, Deborah Ray, Harry Grainger, Andy Pearce, Piers Colby

Apologies for absence: Stefania, Susan Stewart, Keith Patience

1. Minutes of previous meeting were agreed

2. Matters arising:

Committee membership: John Ellerby and Susan Stewart have agreed to join the Committee

3. Proposed revival of the High Street Traders Association: Tim reported that a small group was being set up to reach out to all High Street businesses with leaflets and visits. The aim being to grow it fairly informally and act as a link with Councils and other organisations. It was agreed that landlords of High Street commercial properties should also be approached.

4. Finances: a draft statement of MEC's current position had been prepared by Stefania and was circulated. It was agreed to give £30 to the Unity Centre as a thank-you for letting us use the Centre for the Xmas gathering.

5. Use-It-All: John had prepared an information sheet. Use-It All had held many, many stalls providing recycling services and information with lots of regular visitors. The stalls had ended in July last year; John planned to contact supporters about possibilities of restarting them.

However there had been no progress on measuring recycling as ESC had provided no information despite requests. It was hoped this might improve with the change of provider in May '23.

John said that more campaigning was needed, especially on Tetrapaks and generally making recycling easier.

Use-It-All volunteers are storing huge quantities of blister-packs, but it costs £84 per tub to send these for recycling. Astonishingly the NHS has no facility for this. Andy Pearce suggested applying to ESC for grant funding.

The fact that 3 different Councils cover our area was noted as complicating efforts to reuse and recycle.

LTC had set up a pilot scheme for collection of bulk domestic waste to reduce fly-tipping, and the contactor is taking reusable stuff to charities.

Cate said the free cardboard collection from shops had ended. It was suggested that allotment holders might take cardboard for mulching. Andy would follow up on this.

Kinsey said that she would be organising recycling workshops in the Spring.

6. Community Gardens: Harry reported that LTC was not now able to fund the purchase of the land for the proposed Hanging Garden project in Crown Score and

the site was on the market for £150k. It was agreed to ask ESC if they would purchase the land; the owner might accept the original cost of £60k if it was for community use. MEC would need to change our constitution if we were to attempt fundraising ourselves to purchase the site. It was agreed not to do this. It was agreed that Harry and Andy P should meet Danny Steele to talk about possible options.

There was a discussion about the Compass Street pocket park. It was agreed that Harry, Lorraine and April would ask for a meeting with LTC and Orbit HA to attempt progress on this.

7. Community policing: Christine had met PC Kathy Aukland. She informed the meeting that 'beat' policing had been re-established with 5 officers and 1 PCSO covering the area north of the bridge, and there had been a reduction in thefts. It was agreed to ask that officers visit businesses to introduce themselves.

8. Bellevue Park 150th anniversary: LTC's press release to be circulated.

9. Ideas for the year ahead:

there had been some discussion about the possibility of pop-up shops in empty places to coincide with either Heritage Open Day week and/or Xmas. These could be businesses and community organisations. Agreed Joe and John to work on this and put it on agenda for the next meeting.

LTC is working on ideas to reduce single-use plastic consumption and Deborah will send details.

9. AOB:

Andy P reported that the Triangle trees had been saved and the site was to be 'greened'. LTC would welcome ideas for murals on the backboards.

It was hoped that works on the Town Hall would start in March, and again ideas for facilities would be welcomed by LTC.

Harry said that it was rumoured that works on The Ravine bridge would be completed next week.

John drew attention to the Use Your Voice website, especially in relation to the flood barrage. He also suggested MEC might produce business cards with QRs for relevant organisations.

NEXT MEETING in April

LTC - Lowestoft Town Council
ESC - East Suffolk Council