

MEETING REPORT

Meeting: Council, 4th March 2024
Agenda item: 23/126i
Report subject: Rivers meetings updates
Report author: Councillor T Lannin

Proposal

Ivybridge Town Council will provide The Watermark (subject to availability) without cost as a venue for a summer public event as part of its support of WATER's objective of working to protect the River Erme from the harmful effects of pollution and restore it back to its natural state.

Resource implications

Cost to council by making The Watermark available free of charge.

I've attended 3 meetings on behalf of ITC since the last full council meeting, all related to the River Erme.

River Erme Councils meeting Thurs 25th January

Full minutes attached, but in brief this is a group of parish council representatives that are working together to improve the health of the River Erme & its tributaries. Main focus at the moment is challenging SWW to reduce sewage discharges and looking at how local knowledge on this can be fed into SHDC planning decisions.

SHDC, River Erme Councils & WATER Tues 30th January

An in person meeting between SHDC Cllrs (Leads on Planning & Environment) , River Erme Councils representatives & Chair of WATER Tues 30 Jan.

Full minutes attached, however the meeting was requested by River Erme Councils to discuss proposed national govt changes to relax planning rules that are currently in place to ensure developers/new building & developments don't increase risk of pollution in water courses.

We also started a discussion with SHDC about how to improve how parish/town councils work with SHDC to help provide greater detail/knowledge about drainage, sewage concerns etc into planning decisions that SHDC considers.

Currently developers ask SWW to provide a report on new housing planning decisions regarding impact on sewage etc. No one was aware of any time SWW had raised a planning concern, despite the amount of sewage discharges (whether permitted or not) that suggest that SWW systems already overwhelmed.

Erme & Yealm Rivers Association (E&YRA) Tues 20th February

Notes with greater detail attached, but this meeting is for landowners along the Erme & Yealm rivers and we predominantly discussed Himalayan Balsam (HB).

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HB is currently found in various places in both catchments, we discussed the need for accurate mapping, the risks HB poses, the need to get all landowners to onboard & engage with the work need to remove this & other invasive species, and how landowners can work with groups like WATER and YEM (Yealm Estuary to Moor - who are developing a 5 year project & seeking funding to eradicate HB on the Yealm).

Action for ITC

Wild About The Erme River (WATER) are looking into arranging a public event during the summer.

PROPOSAL: