

Agenda item 4

For information: River Frome Nature Rights update

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Summary

This note provides an update on progress with this project.

In July 2016, the Town Matters committee discussed the potential for exploring the implementation of a nature rights bye law for the River Frome and agreed unanimously to support this concept.

Unfortunately, since then, Satya, the key advisor to the project, has been out of action due to ill health of a family member and, in addition, the legislation has changed, altering some of the intended proposals. Meanwhile, the concept of Nature Rights is rapidly gaining traction (in part because of unknown changes to environmental protection post Brexit). Locally, the Town Council has been asked by the Environment Agency to keep them informed.

A new supporter of the project has emerged who has very considerable experience and links into similar projects being advanced throughout Europe. He has already done some initial research on the Frome situation and intends to visit in July and is prepared to lead on the project, working with Satya (who originally spoke to the Committee) and local environmental groups.

It is expected that after the visit, plans will be drawn up and shared as to how the work will progress. The Committee will be updated accordingly.