

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe on **WEDNESDAY, 31<sup>st</sup> MAY 2017** at 7.15 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor I Gray (Chairman) and  
Councillors M Ashcroft, J Atkinson, D G Atkinson, Kathryn Beetham, W M Blenkinsopp, P J Bergg, Mrs D Bowman, A M Chandran, Mrs B A Clare, J D Clare, J Clark, Mrs M Dalton, R S Fleming, GC Gray, Mrs S Haigh, B Hall, D Hardaker, K. Henderson, J P Hillary, Mrs W P Hillary, Mrs K Hopper, Mrs V M Raw, K Robson and P Symons.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Mrs S A Symons

**OFFICIALS:** Mr A Bailey (Town Clerk)  
Mr S Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)  
Mr L Williams (Grounds Maintenance Service Coordinator)  
Mrs M J Robinson (Leisure & Environment Assistant)  
Mrs J Thexton (Leisure Manager)

7. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors E Adam, M Iveson and Mrs S J Iveson.

8. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

No applications for dispensations had been received.

9. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs K Hopper declared an interest in agenda item No. 11 as a member of Durham County Council and advised she would remain in the meeting during the discussions thereon.

Councillors J D Clare and J Atkinson declared an interest in agenda item No. 14 as a member of Durham County Council and advised they would remain in the meeting during the discussions thereon.

10. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from members of the public.

11. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor R S Fleming, seconded by Councillor Mrs M Dalton and

**RESOLVED** - that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12. **ALLOTMENTS REPORT**

The Grounds Maintenance Service Coordinator submitted a report which advised of maintenance carried out for the period ending 21<sup>st</sup> May 2017.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that:

- a) The report be received.
- b) A visit for members to St Oswald's and Clarence Chare allotments be arranged.

13. **ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

The Works and Environment Manager submitted a report for the period up to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2017. The report advised of tree planting in St Oswald's Park and Woodham Burn which had been undertaken, a new wildflower meadow that had been sown on land at the top of Woodham Park and educational spring walks and classification workshops in which pupils from Vane Road and Byerley Park primary schools had participated.

The report also advised of a vandalised bus stop in Central Avenue and that permanent signage to the Lorry Park at School Aycliffe had been erected.

The Works and Environment Manager advised that the bus shelter in Central Avenue had now been repaired and a man arrested was to be prosecuted for the offence.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that:

- a) The report be received.
- b) Officers research alternative, more resilient materials which could be used for future replacement of the present glass panels.
- c) Compensation be sought for the cost of replacing the glass panels which were vandalised.

14. **CEMETERIES REPORT**

The Grounds Maintenance Services Coordinator submitted a report which gave information regarding the grants of grave space that had been issued.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that the report be received.

15. **WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE PLAN**

Members were requested to consider the Works and Environment Service Plan for 2017-18.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that:

- a) The Plan be received.
- b) More information be given on the Service Plan in relation to staff numbers.

16. **ARMSTRONG CLOSE PLANNING APPEAL**

The Corporate and Policy Officer submitted a report to give members background information regarding a planning application submitted by Livin and their subsequent appeal for a development at Armstrong Close, Newton Aycliffe.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that the report be received.

17. **TREE COMPLAINT**

Councillor K Hopper declared an interest as a member of Durham County Council and remained in the meeting during the discussions.

Members were requested to consider a letter of complaint from a resident regarding the effect of tree seedlings on their property from trees on the Council's land.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that:

- a) The report be received.
- b) The decision be deferred until more information was obtained.

18. **GREAT AYCLIFFE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM**

The Corporate and Policy Officer submitted a report which advised members on the progress of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan referendum.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that

- a) The report be received.
- b) Members were requested to raise awareness of the referendum within their Wards.

19. **NATURE PARK – GREAT CRESTED NEWTS MITIGATION**

The Works and Environment Manager submitted a report which requested members to consider the opportunity for Newt habitat improvements at Aycliffe Nature Park.

This would include the removal of the fish from the pond by electrofishing.

It was suggested that while the pond was drained, the drainage ditch which feeds the pond, be lined with clay to reduce the amount of ground seepage which leads to the pond drying out.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that:

- a) The report be received.
- b) Establish where the fish would be taken.

20. **PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

Members were requested to consider the terms of reference for the Planning Sub-Committee.

**RESOLVED** –it be recommended that the terms of reference for the Planning Sub-Committee be agreed.

21. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Councillors J D Clare and J Atkinson declared an interest as members of Durham County Council and remained in the meeting during the discussions.

**(1) The undermentioned planning applications were considered:-**

- (a) Change of use of land to private residential curtilage – Land North of 41 Garburn Place, Newton Aycliffe.
- (b) Erection of single storey side/rear extension – 6 Rookwood Hunt, Newton Aycliffe.
- (c) Reserved matters approval relation to approved plot 2 pursuant to outline approval ref: DM/16/00728/OUT – Land to the East of Osric Place, Newton Aycliffe.

**(2) Members were requested to receive for information the undermentioned planning applications, prior notice of which had been circulated to all Members of the Council. Durham County Council had been notified of the listed comments on each application:**

- (a) Discharge of conditions – 3 (wall/roof materials), 4 (windows and doors), 6 (noise attenuation), 7 (drainage), 9 (landscaping) of planning permission DM/15/03160/FPA – Barn and Stables to the South of 7 High Street, Aycliffe Village.  
No objections.
- (b) Erection of single storey rear (retrospective) and side extensions, erection of side extension to detached garage, replacement of rear boundary wall with timber fence and various fenestration alterations – 13 Sanderson Close, Newton Aycliffe.  
No objections.
- (c) Demolition of existing warehouse and construction of new warehouse with alterations to existing loading/unloading facilities and associated external works including fencing – PWS Distributors, Station Road, Aycliffe Business Park.  
No objections.
- (d) Variation of approved site layout and reduction in No. of units – Travellers Green, Newton Aycliffe.  
No objections.

- (e) Erection of garage – Yard 2, IES Centre, Horndale Avenue, Aycliffe Business Park.  
No objections.
- (f) Change of use to a pet crematorium and installation of a chimney – Forget Me Not Crematorium – Bldg.12e/465/b2 Burtree Road, Aycliffe Industrial Park.  
No objections.
- (g) Erection of 9 Houses – Livin – Site of the Former Oak Tree Inn, Neville Parade, Newton Aycliffe.  
No objections.
- (h) Erection of two storey rear extension – 12 Emerson Way, Newton Aycliffe.  
No objections.
- (i) Erection of 69 No. dwellings including access, landscaping and associated infrastructure – Land to the North of Middridge Road, Newton Aycliffe.  
No objections.

**RESOLVED** - that it be recommended that:

Application 1(a) an objection be made owing to the loss of open space.

Application 1(b) and (c) no objections.

Applications 2 (a) to (i) - the applications be received.

**CHAIRMAN**