

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 7th SEPTEMBER 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 7th SEPTEMBER 2022 at 7.15 p.m.**

PRESENT

Councillor Martin Ashcroft (Chairman) and
Councillors, Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Lindsey Aston, Dorothy Bowman, Arun M Chandran, John Clark, Bob Fleming, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Andy Hill, Joanne Jones, Neville Jones, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Michael Stead, Anne Woodward and John Woodward.

OFFICERS

Mr Dan Austin (Town Clerk)
Miss Amanda Donald (Corporate and Policy Officer)
Mr Steve Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)
Mr Lee Williams (Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator)
Mrs Julie Walton (Corporate Assistant)

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Sandra Haigh
Mrs Cheryl Blakey - Aycliffe Beekeepers Association
Mrs Helen Rickaby
Mr Neil Rickaby
Mr Ian Templeton - Allotment Tenant, St Oswald's site

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Jim Atkinson, Phillip Hawkins and Ken Robson.

36. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

No applications for dispensations had been received.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

38. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Public questions were received from:

- i) Mrs Cheryl Blakey from Aycliffe Beekeepers Association provided further information regarding Item 8 on the Agenda, explaining the steps which have been taken by the Beekeeping Association to minimise any disruption to allotment holders and explaining the reasons behind the request to move the teaching plot.
- ii) Mrs Helen Rickaby referred to Item 12 on the Agenda and provided further information in relation to public safety concerns as a result of inconsiderate and illegal parking in Aycliffe Village. Mrs Rickaby requested the Town

Council's formal support in lobbying Durham County Council and Durham Police in relation to the following key issues:

- a) Requesting that Durham County Council consider implementing parking restrictions in key problem areas in the form of double yellow lines.
 - b) If cost is put forward as a reason for rejecting the above request, granting permission to Mrs Rickaby to raise funding for the required works.
 - c) Providing Durham Police with details of the specific problems and concerns in relation to crime and disorder, including illegal parking, obstruction of pedestrians, and a public disorder incident and asking how they might be able to respond to and address the concerns.
- iii) Mr Ian Templeton from St Oswald's Allotments referred to Item 6 on the agenda and asked if it was possible to place notices on allotments where tenants were in breach of their tenancy agreement, and if it was possible to reduce waiting lists by contacting each individual to establish whether they wished to remain on the list.

39. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Michael Stead, seconded by Councillor John Clark and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee, held on 13th July 2022, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

40. ALLOTMENTS REPORT

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator submitted a report updating members on issues relating to the Council's allotments for the eight weeks ended 28th August 2022.

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator also provided a verbal response to the public questions regarding termination notices and management of waiting lists.

It was moved by Councillor Eddy Adam and seconded by Councillor John Clark and:

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) that the Town Clerk contact the Police to request that the Town Council are informed when they attend a serious incident on council land.

41. GREAT AYCLIFFE GARDEN GUILD COMPOSTING TOILET

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator submitted a report to update members on a request from the Great Aycliffe Garden Guild to install a composting toilet on the Clarence Chare Allotment Site.

Councillor Arun Chandran requested that the licence for the use of the land at Clarence Chare Allotments should include provision that the toilet is watertight and properly managed, maintained and cleaned, and that responsibility for the ownership of the toilet must remain with the Garden Guild even in the event that the Garden Guild folds.

Following a discussion, it was moved by Councillor John Clark and seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam and:

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) permission be granted for the installation of the Kazuba KL2 Accessible Composting Toilet to be installed adjacent to the car park in Clarence Chare allotments.
- iii) strict requirements are written into the licence agreement for the use of the land in relation to safe and acceptable use of the toilet, appropriate risk assessments being drawn up, the regular maintenance and cleaning of the toilet, that installation of the toilet is undertaken by undertaken by a professional contractor and the provision that should the Garden Guild dissolve, they will be responsible for the removal of the unit.

42. RELOCATION OF BEE KEEPING PLOT

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator submitted a report to update members on the consultation which has taken place with St. Oswald's Allotment tenants following an application from Aycliffe Beekeepers Association to relocate their second teaching plot.

It was moved by Councillor Bob Fleming and seconded by Councillor Joanne Jones that the meeting be adjourned to allow Members' questions to be answered by Mrs Cheryl Blakey from Aycliffe Beekeepers Association.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7.55pm

Members asked several questions which were answered by Mrs Cheryl Blakey and Mr Ian Templeton, it was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran and seconded by Councillor Lyndsey Aston that the meeting be reconvened.

The Meeting was re-convened at 8.02pm

It was moved by Councillor Arun M Chandran and seconded by Councillor Bob Fleming and

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) the second teaching plot be relocated to Pigeon Plot 4.

43. ENVIRONMENT REPORT

The Works and Environment Manager submitted a report to update members on issues relating to the environment for the eight-week period ended 28th August 2022.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) Members appreciation be noted for the work carried out by the Works Section staff who acted quickly and efficiently to remove a fallen, mature Ash tree.

44. CEMETERIES REPORT

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator submitted a report giving information regarding burials and grants of grave space and providing an update on issues relating to the cemeteries for the eight-week period ended 28th August 2022.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that

- i) the report be received.

45. BUS SHELTER MAINTENANCE PROVISION

The Works and Environment Manager submitted a report to request Member's consideration for the future maintenance provision of the 55 bus shelters owned and managed by the Town Council.

Following a detailed discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Arun M Chandran and seconded by Councillor John Woodward and

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) the 'Ultra-Flex' liquid waterproofing system is used for the re-roofing of bus shelters where necessary.
- iii) a rolling programme of prioritised maintenance and repair works to bus shelters be produced and presented to a future meeting of the Environment Committee.
- iv) perch seating is no longer considered as a seating option for the bus shelters.
- v) the feasibility of advertising on bus shelters be investigated and a report be presented to a future meeting of the Environment Committee.

46. AYCLIFFE VILLAGE GREEN PARKING ISSUES.

Members considered the report of the Town Clerk setting out the concerns of a local resident regarding public safety and illegal and inconsiderate parking in Aycliffe Village and seeking the support of the Town Council in lobbying Durham County Council as the highways authority and Durham Police as the enforcement authority to take action to address the concerns.

It was proposed by Councillor Carl Robinson, seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam, and

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) the Town Council support Mrs Rickaby by writing to Durham County Council and Durham Police to lobby them to take action and forwarding a copy of the letter to the County Councillors for Great Aycliffe asking them to support the resident.

Chairman