

## **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023**

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 12<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023 at 8.00pm**

### **PRESENT**

#### **Councillor Phillip Hawkins (Chairman) and**

Councillors: Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Jim Atkinson, Peter Bergg, Arun M Chandran, John Clark, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Phil Hawkins, Andy Hill, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, Simon Hocking, Joanne Jones, Neville Jones, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Ken Robson, Anita Sparrow, Michael Stead, Anne Woodward and John Woodward.

### **OFFICERS**

Mr D Austin (Town Clerk)

Mr S Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)

Mr L Williams (Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator)

Mrs J Walton (Corporate and Policy Assistant)

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

One Member of the Public

#### **16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Lindsey Aston, Dorothy Bowman and Neil Collinson.

#### **17. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

No applications for dispensations had been received.

#### **18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest had been received.

#### **19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

#### **20. MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee, held on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

## **21. ALLOTMENTS REPORT**

Members considered a report from the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator providing an update on issues relating to the allotments for the six weeks ended 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft seconded by Councillor Jed Hillary and

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

## **22. ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager to update Members on issues relating to the environment for the six weeks ended 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M Chandran and seconded by Councillor Ken Robson and

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) Members note the comments received from members of the public regarding the use of herbicides and strimming grass around trees but that the Council takes no further action.
- iii) Members noted the complaint received regarding the application of the Council's Tree Management Policy.

## **23. CEMETERIES REPORT**

Members considered a report from the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator updating Members on items relating to the Cemeteries for the six weeks ended 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Jed Hillary, seconded by Councillor Jim Atkinson and

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

## 24. BUS SHELTER UPDATE

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager updating on a number of issues relating to the provision of bus shelters.

Following a lengthy debate and a number of questions, it was proposed by Councillor Carl Robinson, seconded by Councillor Jed Hillary and

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that

- i) The report be received.
- ii) The Council return to the tried and tested method of using boards and bitumen to replace the bus shelter roofing most in need of repair, until such a time as the problems with the Ultra Flex system can be resolved or an alternative option identified, and the priority repairs be planned into the works department programme of works.
- iii) That eight of the ‘back to the wall’ style benches are purchased, six of which to be used to replace the existing perch seats and the remaining two be stored for future use.
- iv) That a report be presented to the September or October Meeting of the Environment Committee in relation to the works undertaken and a programme of prioritised maintenance and repair works to bus shelters.

## 25. TREE PLANTING PROJECT

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager informing Members of a funding submission to the Forestry Commission in conjunction with Durham County Council, to enable a tree planting project to be undertaken across the Parish.

Councillors Eddy Adam, Andy Hill and Carl Robinson made suggestions regarding the locations of the trees in the Town Park and Aycliffe Village.

It was proposed by Councillor Jed Hillary, seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that:

- i) The report be received.
- ii) The submission of a funding bid in conjunction with Durham County Council is noted.
- iii) That all proposed locations be agreed subject to the following conditions:
  - a. That further consultation takes place prior to implementing the plan at Aycliffe Village
  - b. That the 10 mixed species are not planted close to the Town Park play area to avoid root damage and leaf debris.
  - c. That another location is sourced for the proposed eight cherry trees in the Town Park.

**26. 2023/24 WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICE PLAN**

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager presenting the draft Works and Environment Service Plan for 2023/24.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M Chandran, seconded by Councillor Jim Atkinson and

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that:

- i) The 2023/24 Works and Environment Service Plan is approved.

**CHAIRMAN**