

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 6th SEPTEMBER 2023 at 7.45pm**

PRESENT

Councillor Ian Gray (Chairman) and

Councillors: Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Lindsey Aston, Jim Atkinson, Peter Bergg, Arun M Chandran, John Clark, George Gray, Brian Haigh, Andy Hill, Jed Hillary, Joanne Jones, Neville Jones, Sandra Kirby, 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

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dorothy Bowman, Neil Collinson, Philip Hawkins, Wendy Hillary, and Simon Hocking.

28. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

No applications for dispensations had been received.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest had been received.

30. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

31. MINUTES

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

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee, held on 12th July 2023, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

32. ALLOTMENTS REPORT

Members considered a report from the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator providing an update on issues relating to the allotments for the eight weeks ended 27th August 2023.

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator provided a verbal update on an allotments exclusion and an anti-social behaviour incident.

Councillors reiterated the Council's zero tolerance approach to the verbal abuse of council staff and the Town Clerk clarified the measures in place to deal with incidents of this nature and plans to install a CCTV system at the offices.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M Chandran seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that report be received.

33. ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager to update Members with issues relating to the environment for the eight weeks ended 27th August 2023.

Councillor Peter Bergg requested that the locations for the proposed tree planting be carefully considered to ensure the risk of vandalism is minimised.

Councillor Eddy Adam questioned the damage to the fencing on the Simpasure Nature Line and highlighted the importance of identifying the contractors or persons involved.

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

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

34. CEMETERIES REPORT

Members considered a report from the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator updating Members on items relating to the Cemeteries for the eight weeks ended 27th August 2023.

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

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

35. BUS SHELTER UPDATE

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager providing an update in relation to a number of issues relating to the provision and maintenance of bus shelters, including a proposed programme of prioritised repairs and the feasibility of undertaking advertising on bus shelters.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M Chandran, seconded by Councillor Jed Hillary and

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) Members agree to the priority schedule of bus shelter repairs for this year.
- iii) officers do not undertake further investigations with Durham County Council and other organisations in respect of advertising on bus shelters.

36. ANNUAL GARDEN AND ALLOTMENT COMPETITION

Members considered a report from the Works and Environment Manager providing an update on the annual garden and allotment competition.

Councillor Martin Ashcroft asked if the Council could consider re-establishing the prize fund for the competition to encourage participation and entries.

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

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

- i) the report be received.
- ii) the prize fund for the competition be considered for re-instatement during the next budget setting process.

Chairman