ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2026

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER 2026 at 8.02pm.**

PRESENT

Councillor Andy Hill (Chairman) and:
Councillors Jaci Beddard, Tony Beddard, Dorothy Bowman, Richard Burchell, Arun M. Chandran, Chris Clement, Neil Collinson, Luke Ellis, George Gray, Phillip Hawkins, Sharon Hutchinson, Jackie McFadden Lewis, Carl Robinson, Ken Robson, Brian Sowerby, Michael Stead, Anne Woodward and John Woodward.

OFFICERS

Mr Dan Austin (Town Clerk)
Mr Steve Cooper (Works and Environment Manager)
Mr Lee Williams (Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator)
Mrs Vikki Anderson (Corporate Assistant)

IN ATTENDANCE

Three members of the public were in attendance.

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tunde Akinsanya, Martin Ashcroft, Lindsey Aston, Brian Haigh, Richie Hutchinson, Sandra Kirby, John Moore, Kyle Robinson and Tracey Williams.

26. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

No applications for dispensations had been received.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

28. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the public thanked the Grounds Maintenance Services Coordinator and Councillor Andy Hill who judged the Annual Allotments Competition, suggesting that the Annual Allotments Meeting, currently held in November, could be brought forward to late summer, following the judging held in June.

The Grounds Maintenance Services Coordinator clarified that historically the Allotments Annual Meeting had always been held in November, but he had no objection with moving the date to mid-October this year, and possibly September next year and going forward.

29. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor George Gray, seconded by Councillor Neil Collinson and:

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee, held on 8th July 2026, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

30. ALLOTMENTS REPORT

Members considered an update report from the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator on issues relating to the allotments for the eight weeks ended the 23rd August 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun M. Chandran, seconded by Councillor Carl Robinson and:

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

i) The report be received.

31. ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Members considered an update report from the Works and Environment Manager on issues relating to the environment for the eight weeks ended the 23rd August 2026.

Councillor Tony Beddard commented on the independent baseline soil testing undertaken around the Parish on behalf of Fornax, which the Council has facilitated on its land. He raised concern that it may appear to the public that the testing is being arranged and co-ordinated by the Council and that this may insinuate that the Council supports the incinerator.

He suggested it would have been beneficial to have in the report that the Council, has always opposed the incinerator facility and this remains to be the case.

The testing provides useful information for benchmarking, but the Town Council remains against the facility.

He requested that this be recorded in the minutes.

Councillor Carl Robinson commented that the Christmas tree planted on Aycliffe Village green is still not growing, confirming that he will be requesting at a future meeting that a cut tree is purchased and displayed for Christmas.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

i) The report be received.

32. CEMETERIES REPORT

Members considered an update report from the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator on items relating to the cemeteries for the eight weeks ended the 23rd August 2026.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that:

i) The report be received.

Chairman