

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 11th July 2023 at 13:00pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors C Lattin (Chair), L Brown, D Freeman, R Friederichsen and S Walker.

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor V Ashfield.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None received.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13th JUNE 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2023 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received.

5. TO CONSIDER THE LATEST NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT

The Committee welcomed the excellent report by the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Wardens and **agreed** to formally thank Kirk and Antony for their exceptional work.

The Committee particularly noted the additional work Kirk and Antony were doing in areas such as Fowler's Yard and in enforcing the PSPO in the City centre.

6. TO CONSIDER THE LATEST OPERATION LENTIL REPORTS

The Committee also welcomed the detailed reports from the Safer Streets Coordinator Ashleigh White on actions taken as part of the Operation Lentil scheme; a jointly funded scheme to provide an enhanced policing service to the City by the Parish Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and Durham City Police.

The Committee particularly welcomed the work being done to ensure that young people are able to return home safely after visiting the night-time economy and the work being done to tackle associated anti-social behaviour in residential areas.

In addition, the Clerk reported that Inspector Dave Clarke had been successful in securing funding as part of Operation Trailblazer for additional police officers during the daytime in the City and residents have noted an increased visible presence of officers.

7. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:

7a. To decide:

I) To agree the content of the correspondence to local businesses regarding the Green Award for local Businesses

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council has agreed a fund of £1,000 towards launching a Green Business Award in the City of Durham parish area as part of the Environment Committee's budget for 2023-24.

The Chair advised that the the City of Durham *Green Business Award* is a new initiative aimed at celebrating and promoting local independent businesses that are making positive changes for the environment while helping local independent businesses become more eco-friendly.

The Chair advised that the intention was for the City of Durham Green Business Award Scheme to be free for businesses to take part in and is designed to encourage and inform businesses about simple ways to reduce their environmental impacts, helping them to make sustainable changes that support local and national climate targets.

Members unanimously **agreed** the content of the Green Business Award scheme and agreed to recommend this to Full Council. Members **agreed** to launch this award later in September 2023.

II) Update on the work of the Green Move Out operation funded through the Landlord Voluntary contribution scheme.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council launched a voluntary contribution appeal earlier this year to local landlords and letting agents in Durham City towards keeping the City clean and green.

The Clerk confirmed that to date the Parish Council has received a total of £1,508 from local landlord and agents. This figure was received from 8 individual payments – including one from Loc8me on behalf of several landlords – and a further 3 pledges of financial support have been made. In addition, the Clerk advised that Hannah Shepherd had been successful in securing an additional £2,000 towards the project from Durham University.

A reminder email to all agents was sent out in early June and the Parish Council's request generated a significant media, social media and public reaction.

The Chair reminded Members that both Durham University and the DCC Waste Management team had agreed that they felt there is a gap in the Green Move Out operation insofar as the two Sundays during move out are not currently covered from a waste collection point of view and therefore waste left on a Saturday will remain in place until Monday at the earliest.

Durham County Council had confirmed that they would be able to cover both Sundays at a cost of £2,000 in total for both days and additional Neighbourhood Wardens for the operation would be funded through the £1,508

secured from the appeal. The Clerk advised that this arrangement had taken place and he and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee had received positive feedback from partners relating to the additional support for the Move Out initiative.

The Clerk highlighted that a proposal by the Chair of the Parish Council at the June Full Council meeting to scrap the voluntary contribution appeal in future years was deferred, subject to both the Environment Committee and Business Committee considering whether to continue this scheme into the future.

The Committee unanimously **agreed** that they would wish to continue this scheme in future years and **agreed** to recommend this to Full Council.

III) To provide additional planting for the planters in the Viaduct area.

The Clerk advised that he was aware that the planters needed to have some additional summer bedding plants installed in them as they were looking slightly tired at present. The Committee agreed that Councillor L Brown and the Clerk should look to purchase some additional planting for these planters and seek volunteer support to have these re-planted over an upcoming weekend.

IV) To agree the content of this year's "*What to do if you have a local issue in Durham*" leaflet.

The Committee approved the existing content of the "What to do if you have a local issue in Durham" leaflet and remarked that this was a fantastic initiative which directed the public to the appropriate organisation to deal with regular issues of complaint in the City.

The Clerk advised that the University is presently reviewing its contract with Mitie – the Community Response Team (CRT) – and Hannah Shepherd is due to feedback the outcome of this review as soon as possible. The Clerk remarked that the content of this leaflet may need to be slightly amended depending on the outcome of this review.

7b. To complete:

I) Progressing the proposal to improve the community garden area at the top of Lawson Terrace.

The Clerk confirmed that the works were set to commence on the first week in September at the top of Lawson Terrace/ Laburnum Avenue as part of Councillor Walker's scheme to turn the area into a community garden.

The Committee expressed its hope that this would become a much-loved and well-used part of the Viaduct Area for local residents and agreed to arrange for some fruit tree planting to take place in this area as soon as possible after the works were completed.

II) To arrange the distribution of additional copies of the 7 Hills Trail map

The Clerk advised that he had requested support from Members to distribute the 7 Hills of Durham and Heritage Trail maps. The Clerk advise that a number of Councillors had come forward to volunteer to do this and get these trails around the various sites. The Clerk thanked those Members who had done so and advised that he would contact colleagues with the arrangements.

8. AOB

None received.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

12th September 2023

10th October 2023

14th November 2023

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all those present for attending and for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed,



**Chair of the Parish Council's Environment Committee
(12th September 2023)**