

# **CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 13:00pm via Zoom**

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

**Also present:** Parish Clerk A Shanley, Cllr E Ashby, Cllr G Holland and Ms Tracey Millmore (DCC).

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr V Ashfield. The Clerk advised that Cllr V Ashfield had nominated Cllr N Brown to be her replacement at this meeting. The Chair confirmed acceptance of this nomination.

## **2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

None received.

## **3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

## **4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Cllr G Holland advised that he was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items. In addition, Cllr G Holland asked if the Committee would consider having a site visit to the SUEZ site in Teesside. Cllr G Holland advised that this is an excellent site and well worth a visit to understand better what happens with waste in County Durham once it is disposed of and collected by the Council. The Committee asked the Clerk to arrange this visit.

Cllr E Ashby advised that she was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items.

## **5. DISCUSSION WITH TRACEY MILLMORE ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING ROLLOUT**

The Chair welcomed Ms Tracey Millmore (DCC) to the meeting to talk to the Committee about the EV charging projects DCC is currently working on.

Tracey advised that the County Council had declared a climate change emergency in 2019 and accordingly had agreed to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2050.

Tracey advised that, in 2019, the County had several broken EVCPs that were unfixable and had very limited EV charging capacity.

Tracey advised that the Council has been successful in acquiring funding from Innovate UK to install 100 EVCPs across the County and also to fund her post within DCC as an EV project officer in order to manage the project.

Tracey noted that 100 EVCPs was a small amount for the size of County Durham and there was therefore a need for more funding and to identify the most appropriate locations to install such EVCPs.

In 2020, Tracey advised that DCC set up an EV Community User Group to hear residents' concerns.

In December 2021, DCC completed the WEVA (Weardale electric vehicle accelerator project) which resulted in the installation of 9 EVCPs (17 sockets) in Stanhope to encourage the uptake of EVs in a rural village, supported by a car club.

In January 2022, DCC completed the SOSCI (Scaling on street charging infrastructure) project which resulted in the installation of 77 (154 charging sockets across County Durham) and a car club in Shotley Bridge.

In March 2022, DCC completed the REV UP project (Regional electric vehicle) unified plan – using lessons learnt, produced best practice guide on installing EVs for local authorities, as well as looking into accessible EVCPs.

In June 2022, DCC won the Best EV project at MJ Awards for SOSCI.

In August 2022, DCC submitted a successful bid under the LEVI (local electric vehicle infrastructure) for 100 EVCPs.

Tracey advised that DCC welcomed suggestions for new EVCPs across the County and encouraged Members to contact [evcharging@durham.gov.uk](mailto:evcharging@durham.gov.uk) in order to help identify appropriate sites.

Tracey also advised that DCC has launched two trial schemes to support on-street charging; recognising that not all parts of Durham will be able to access this service because of the typography of footpaths and roads, etc.

Tracey reminded Members that, from 2030, the sale of new petrol /diesel vehicles will be banned and therefore the national move is towards Electric Vehicles.

Tracey advised that 20% of all new cars being purchased are Electric today and therefore there will be an increasing demand for EVCPs.

Tracey identified that many residents do not have a driveway or garage to Charge a vehicle. Installing charge points, brings people to the area, and visitors to the centre.

Tracey advised that it costs approximately 35-37p per kwh to charge an electric vehicle – paid for by the driver in the app.

Tracey advised that DCC is currently working on the OZEV project whereby bidding gives 75% funding and 25% of DCC funds to install. Normal install costs for EVCPs are between £10-£15k.

The Chair asked who would cover the costs of maintenance for the EVCPs once installed. Tracey advised that this would be covered in the cost of charging and DCC would take on responsibility for the maintenance of the EVCPs.

Cllr S Walker advised that she is an electric vehicle owner and she finds the apps difficult to use. Cllr S Walker asked if this could be looked into.

Tracey advised that she is looking to have an open interface on the charge points to avoid the difficulties users have with the apps.

CLlr S Walker asked if rapid charge points are being looked into. Tracey advised that a number of rapid charge points had already been installed with the closest being at Belmont.

CLlr R Friederichsen advised that he is currently working with Climate Action Durham who have a keen interest in this initiative and other low carbon transport solutions. CLlr R Friederichsen advised that he would like to put Tracey in touch with Climate Action Durham to look at some suitable sites.

CLlr L Brown asked when the Neville's Cross charging points are going to come online. Tracey advised that there had been some difficulty with the company contracted to carry out this work but she is looking to have this resolved and rectified and hoped to have a completion date for this as soon as possible.

CLlr L Brown also advised that she had suggested the car park to the new Lowes Barn Community Centre as a possible site for a new EVCP. Tracey advised that she is currently looking into this as an option.

The Clerk asked if other Parish and Town Councils across County Durham had been involved in this project. Tracey advised that she is currently working with Newton Aycliffe Council and a few other Councils on schemes within their area.

The Clerk asked if there were any planning/ conservation constraints with these EVCPs. Tracey advised that the EVCPs must be on Council land. Tracey advised that she had recently replaced an EVCP at Old Elvet. Tracey also advised that the BT phone box at New Elvet could be replaced and reused as an EVCP.

It was **agreed** that the Clerk should request a list of sites already discounted by Tracey and her team within the parish area for EVCPs so that Members may consider alternative sites.

The Chair thanked Tracey for her excellent work and her presentation. At this point, Tracey thanked the Committee and left the meeting.

## **6. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:**

### **6a. To decide:**

#### **I) To discuss efforts to establish Warm Hubs in Durham**

The Clerk advised that he had been asked about the establishment of Warm Hubs in Durham, with the concern of rising energy costs being at the forefront of residents' concerns.

The Chair advised that she was aware of efforts within the Gilesgate area in particular to try and establish these Hubs as a means of supporting residents.

The Committee discussed concerns around safeguarding and the practicality of such arrangements, highlighting the need to work in collaboration with partners such as Durham County Council and Durham University on this scheme. It was

agreed that speed is of the essence and therefore the matter should be discussed within the wider forum of the Full Council. The Clerk advised that this would be an item of discussion for the September Full Council meeting.

## **II) Organising an unveiling event for the UHND Mosaic**

The Clerk confirmed that the new mosaic was now installed in the entrance to the hospital and is already receiving very positive comments.

The Clerk advised that he and Cllrs E Ashby and C Lattin had met with the Trust and they are hoping to have an official unveiling event at 11am on 21st October at the hospital. It was agreed that Cllrs E Ashby, V Ashfield and C Lattin should represent the Parish Council at this unveiling event along with senior representatives of the Trust.

The Clerk advised that the artist who produced the mosaic will also be in attendance.

## **III) Progressing the blue plaques scheme – including proposed unveiling of existing plaques**

The Clerk advised that all five of the first blue plaques had now been installed in their agreed locations. The Clerk also advised that he would be making contact with the nominators for the two further blue plaques – Neville House and 20 Allergate – in order to agree the specific wording of these plaques.

The Clerk highlighted a concern he had around the location of the blue plaques for the first 3 female graduates of Durham University and the Railway Cottages. The Clerk advised however that the nominators for these blue plaques were happy with their locations and therefore it was **agreed** to accept this and move forward with an unveiling event.

## **IV) Renewing the Service Level Agreement with DCC for an enhanced Neighbourhood Warden Service for the parish**

The Clerk highlighted that the reports for July and August were still missing and he had now been advised that Dale Clement had left his position as the Parish Council's funded Neighbourhood Warden for the City.

The Committee expressed its concerns about this and asked that the Clerk seek an urgent meeting with the Neighbourhood Warden manager as a top priority in order to receive the reports and confirm who the new Warden will be.

## **V) To consider the purchase of an electric vehicle charging point in the City**

It was **agreed** that the Clerk should request a list of sites already discounted by Tracey and her team within the parish area for EVCPs so that Members may consider alternative sites.

## **VI) Progressing the *Shhh...11pm to 7am* campaign**

The Clerk advised that the additional *Shhh...11pm to 7am* beer mats for licensed premises were now on order and he is also expecting the pavement stencils to be refreshed in the Autumn by the Neighbourhood Wardens. The Clerk reminded Members that he has additional lamp post signs in case any additional signs are needed as part of the *Shhh* campaign. The Chair asked that Gilesgate Bank and the Sidings both receive these signs. The Clerk advised that he would have these installed accordingly.

In addition, the Clerk reminded Members that the *Shhh* branding is being promoted through the Parish Council/DURF local issues leaflet. The Clerk also advised that the welcome video by the Chair would be promoted on social media; this included a warm welcome to all new students of the City and a request that noise be kept to a minimum after 11pm.

#### **6b. To complete:**

##### **I) Improving the River Wear – joint project with the Wear Rivers Trust**

The Clerk confirmed that payment had now been made to the Wear Rivers Trust for the delivery of their agreed project and they would be looking to engage with the Parish Council when producing the volunteers/ information leaflet.

##### **II) Planning a City-wide litter picking event**

The Clerk reminded Members that the agreed City-wide litter picking event would be taking place on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022 from 11am with local residents' groups and thanked Members for their support for this event.

##### **III) New DCC stickers for bins around the parish**

The Committee noted that the Neighbourhood Wardens were currently putting out new stickers for the "bin it right" campaign across the Parish area. It was noted that some parts of the City had still not yet received these stickers and the Clerk advised that he would seek an update on this.

#### **6c. To note:**

##### **I) Renewing the planting in the planters at the Viaduct Area**

The Committee noted that the plants outside the Colpitts and the hairdressers in the Viaduct area are doing exceptionally well.

Cllr S Walker advised that the planters also needed some more peat free compost. It was **agreed** that additional compost and plants would be purchased.

##### **II) Delivery of the "What to do if you have a local issue in Durham" leaflet**

The Clerk advised that he was aware of some gaps in the delivery of the leaflet and is arranging for this to be rectified with the delivery company directly. That being the case, the majority of the Parish had now received this leaflet.

#### **7. AOB**

None received.

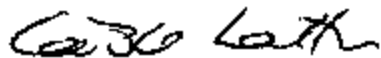
## **8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

11<sup>th</sup> October 2022

8<sup>th</sup> November 2022

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

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathy Lath', written in a cursive style.

**Chair of the Parish Council's Environment Committee  
(11<sup>th</sup> October 2022)**