

At a meeting of the Dene Valley Parish Council held at the Dene Valley Community Partnership One Stop Shop, High Street, Eldon Lane on **Monday 5 February 2024 at 6.30 p.m.**

**Present:**

**Councillor K Beal** in the Chair

Councillors T Bird, I Bourne, J Clark, J Moore, J Nicholson and R Simm.

Clerk Ian Croft

**1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. Public Participation**

There were no Members of the Public in attendance at the commencement of the meeting.

**3. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 4 December 2023 and 22 January 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Police Update**

An police update report from BASH was circulated to Members (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Nicholson referred to the multi-agency group which had been established to look at ways partners could work together moving forward to address the issue of stray horses and informed the meeting that she was a member of the multi-agency group. She would report back to the Parish Council on the work of the group at future meetings.

Councillor Bourne raised the issue of damage being caused by quad bikes in Blackies Wood and Close House. Councillor Bird informed the meeting that the next PACT meeting was due to be held on 7 March



where the issue could be raised. Police relied on intelligence being fed back to them by communities so that issues could be addressed.

## **6. Play Areas**

Councillor Simm referred to the recent personal injury claim received relating to an alleged incident at Auckland Park Play Area. He had met with a representative of Zurich Municipal and carried out an inspection of the alleged faulty equipment. Councillor Bird suggested that going forwards a more detailed record be kept of when Member carried out their inspections of play areas.

## **7. Planning Issues**

Councillor Clark circulated details of planning applications which had been received or determined in the Dene Valley Parish and surrounding areas since the last meeting (for copy see file of Minutes)

## **8. Footpaths**

Councillor Moore reported that the footpath running from Mary Terrace to Atherton Close was blocked by a Hawthorn which had been brought down by a Russian Vine, causing people to need to walk on the grass to get around it. Councillor Simm informed the meeting he had previously reported a similar problem on this footpath and the Council had cleared it.

Councillor Nicholson reported that she had been approached by three local residents regarding an incident in Blackies Wood when members of the South Durham Hunt had trespassed onto Durham County Council land and had used public footpaths which were not bridleways. The residents had felt intimidated by such actions. Councillor Nicholson informed the meeting she would raise the matter of trespass with Durham County Council.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Hunt Master of the South Durham Hunt to bring this incident to their attention and to seek their comments.

## **9. Allotments**

Councillor Bourne reported that all was quiet on the Close House Allotment Site, although one allotment plot may become vacant.

Councillor Beal reported that the charity had not come back to the Association regarding a plot on Coronation A.



Councillor Simm reported damage being caused by vehicles parking on the grass at the entrance of Close House Allotments.

#### **10. Finance Update**

The Clerk provided the meeting with details of income and expenditure for the since the last meeting. The Chairman agreed the balances and signed the accounts and bank statements.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

The dates of Parish Council meetings had been brought forwards to the first Monday of the month to enable local County Councillor to attend. Despite this, there was no Count Councillor attendance and therefore it was agreed to revert to the meetings being held on the second Monday of each month.

Councillor Beal informed the meeting that the Parish Council had requested an update from Katie on works being done in the area and renewed or updated costings. Councillor Simm reported that a follow up meeting was taking place on 22 February where costings may be made available.

Councillor Nicholson reported there was no update on the Surestart building. She had emailed the County Council two weeks ago and again this morning and has asked if an internal inspection of the building could take place.

The meeting finished at 7.35 p.m. Next meeting – 4 March 2024.

Signature: [Faint signature]  
Chairman: [Faint name] A meeting held on 4 March 2024