

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 4 March 2024 at 6.30 p.m.**

Present:

Councillor J Clark in the Chair

Councillors I Bourne, J Moore and J Nicholson.

Clerk Ian Croft

Also in attendance

Kate Ward - DCC Safer Places
John Oliver

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Beal and T Bird.

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 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

The Clerk formally recorded the resignation of Councillor R Simm.

Councillor Moore referred to the South Durham Hunt issue raised at the previous meeting and reported that he believed the Hunt had entered Durham County Council land to use as a shortcut. Councillor Nicholson added that Durham County Council and the police were involved in reports of many such incidents across the County.

Councillor Moore referenced damage being caused by quad bikes. Councillor Nicholson replied that any incidents regarding quad bikes needed to be reported to the police so that they were aware of the problem.

Kate Ward reported she had been on a visit to Eldon with the Clean and Green Team where various sites had been inspected with a view to target hardening to prevent quad bike use. Councillor Clark reported that she had seen quad bikes on Eldon Lane every day around the times of 12.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. Kate Ward undertook to inspect the CCTV camera to see what might have been picked up.

Councillor Nicholson agreed to walk Kate to other gaps which could be target hardened. Councillor Moore identified one such gap at the end of John Terrace and Richard Terrace which used to have a metal barrier.

5. Police Update

The Clerk reported that Councillor Bird had provided the following police update.

The last PACT meeting had agreed that in general ASB and nuisance was at a much lower level than last year.

The misuse of electric bikes was now a safety issue. The camera in Spencer Street had been a deterrent and had been successful in identifying persons and incidents. It was suggested that the use of dummy cameras could be pursued.

Councillor Nicholson informed the meeting that the anti-suicide measures on the viaduct were progressing well.

Kate Ward provided the meeting with details of progress of projects under the Towns and Villages project and undertook to provide these details to the Clerk following the meeting.

6. Play Areas

Councillor Nicholson informed the meeting that she was expecting a quote to be sent from Wicksteed for the Randolph Street Play Area and would email this around to all Members when it was received.

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 overgrowth at Atherton Terrace had been cut back and the path was now passable.

Councillor Nicholson reported the poor condition of the footpath through Blackies Wood which had been caused by County Council tree cutting operations and also quad bike usage. She reported that cows and their calves had been put in a field at Grange Hall Farm and no warning signage had been erected. She had reported this to the County Council.

9. Allotments

The Clerk reported that the rent letters for 2024/25 were due to be sent. Councillor Nicholson reported that she would be giving up her allotment tenancy at Close House Allotment Site.

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

Councillor Nicholson reported that she was a representative on the GRT Forum and raised the year on year issues experienced at the TSOA. Councillor Nicholson reported that the GRT Forum was working closely with senior members of the gypsy community and she was confident there would be changes going forwards.

The meeting finished at 8.10 p.m. Next meeting – 8 April 2024.