

**Ashington Town Council, Draft Minutes of the Climate Change & Environment Committee Meeting held at 5:00pm on Tuesday 30th July 2024, at Ashington Town Hall, Council Chamber, 65 Station Road, Ashington, NE63 8RX.**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:**

Cllrs. Caroline Ball, Louis Brown, Marjorie Chambers, Matthew Cuthbert, Glyn Davis, Lynne Grimshaw, Gemma Hemsley, Jim Lang, Graeme Wright, Paul Wright, Pauline Thompson (arrived 5:25pm)

**ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE:**

Sarah Eden – Executive Officer/RFO, Stephen Humphrey – Assets & Development Manager, Sharon Parmley – Communications & Engagement Officer (minute taking)

**CCE24/001 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Cllr Wright took the Chair temporarily in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair and asked for proposals for Chair.

**It was PROPOSED and AGREED** to elect Cllr Paul Wright as the Chair of the Climate Change and Environment Committee.

**CCE24/002 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

It was **PROPOSED and AGREED** to re-elect Cllr Pauline Thompson as Deputy Chair of the Climate Change and Environment Committee.

**CCE24/003 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Victor Bridges, Liam Lavery, Mark Purvis, Sophie Robinson, John Tully and Bob Walkinshaw.

**CCE24/004 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of interests from Councillors.

**CCE24/005 DISPENSATIONS**

There were no requests for dispensations from Councillors.

**CCE24/006 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present, however, Councillors agreed to receive an urgent item relating to an event planned at Ashington Football Club.

Ashington Town Council have been invited to comment on an event planned to take place at Ashington AFC on Wodhorn Lane. Members received details of the event, and the invite via email. In view that there were concerns raised, mainly in relation to the impact on the environment, the Executive Officer thought it would be appropriate to formally agree a response to the NCC Safety Advisory Group (SAG) (see note below on the function of the SGA).

*Note: The Northumberland Safety Advisory Group is operated by the Public Protection Service of Northumberland County Council and includes 17 internal and external partner agencies and services including (Northumbria Police, North East Ambulance Service and the Council's Highways Service and Licensing Team).*

*SAGs provide a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event. They aim to help organisers with the planning and management of an event and to encourage cooperation and coordination between all relevant agencies. They are non-statutory bodies and so do not have legal powers or responsibilities and are not empowered to approve or prohibit events from taking*

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*place. Event organisers and others involved in the running of an event, retain the principal legal duties for ensuring public safety.*

It was **AGREED** that the Executive Officer would respond as presented on behalf of the Council including questions raised by Cllr. Gemma Hemsley and Cllr Sophie Robinson. The following response was **AGREED**.

*Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Monster Truck Event at Ashington Football Club cc. Jimmy Reith (NCC Green Spaces)*

*Dear Safety Advisory Group (SAG), and Climate Change Team at Northumberland County Council*

*First and foremost, Ashington Town Council is very pleased to have been included in the communications that relay back to the Safety Advisory Group. This inclusion is something our County Councillors have sought, and we are very grateful to have been consulted in this process.*

*I am writing to bring to your attention several concerns raised by Town Councillors regarding the proposed Monster Truck event scheduled to take place at Ashington Football Club in September. These concerns touch on health and safety issues, environmental impact, and alignment with council policies.*

**Environmental and Climate Impact:**

*The event's nature raises significant concerns about its environmental impact, particularly in terms of air pollution and carbon emissions. This appears to be in conflict with:*

- a) Northumberland County Council's Climate Action Plan, which aims to reduce the county's carbon footprint.*
- b) The Northumberland Local Plan, which emphasises the importance of reducing carbon impact and promoting sustainable development.*

*We kindly request that the Safety Advisory Group review this event with the Climate Change Team in light of these commitments.*

**Safety Concerns:**

*Several safety-related issues have been highlighted:*

- a) Frequency of safety checks: The current plan only mentions checks prior to and after the event. Councillors query how often checks will be conducted during the event and whether these differ from the opening checks.*
- b) Public access: There is a lack of clarity on whether all identified safety actions will be completed before allowing public access.*
- c) Insurance: Has appropriate insurance coverage for the event been provided and verified?*

**Event Management:**

*Will the events manager be on-site throughout the duration of the event to oversee operations and address any issues that may arise?*

**CCE24/007 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

**It was AGREED to RECEIVE** and sign as a true record, the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>TH</sup> April 2024.

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### **CCE24/008 UNLEASHING THE POWER OF LOCAL COUNCILS TO TACKLE THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

It was **AGREED** to **RECEIVE** a report from the Communication and Engagement Officer on a recent NALC event.

### **CCE24/009 BULB PLANTING**

#### **a) Identify Sites**

It was **AGREED** that Councillors would send potential bulb planting site to the Assets and Development Manager, following their own engagement, including with County Cllrs.

#### **b) Engagement and Action**

It was **FURTHER AGREED** to delegate spending to the Assets and Development Manager, who will liaise with NCC on identified sites.

### **CCE24/010 MINERS MEMORIAL MEADOW**

It was **AGREED** to use the £3,000 set aside for this project to address the drainage issues as recommended by the Assets and Development Manager.

It was **FURTHER AGREED** to delegate to the Assets & Development Manager to seek quotes for the work and progress the project within the budget available and in accordance with financial regulations.

The Assets & Development Manager also suggested a steering group meeting at the town hall to discuss the stone that marks the meadow and how to develop the signage.

### **CCE24/011 ELECTRIC-POWERED MICROMOBILITY AND LITHIUM BATTERIES ACT 2023**

It was **AGREED** to support the Safety of Electric-Powered Micromobility and Lithium Batteries Act 2023.

It was **FURTHER AGREED** to take proactive steps to enhance the safety and awareness of lithium-ion battery use and disposal within Ashington by using the Town Council's social media platforms to disseminate information to the public and for the Executive Officer to write to the Fire Safety Officer Gordon Stewart and MP Ian Lavery encouraging them to also support the Act.

*Cllr Pauline Thompson joined the meeting at 5:25pm.*

### **CCE24/012 ECO FAIR**

It was **AGREED** to **RECEIVE** the report of event concept for an ECO Fair planned for February 2025.

It was **FURTHER AGREED** to a budget of £3,500 for the event and to delegate authority to the Communication and Engagement Officer to progress with planning.

### **CCE24/013 DATE, TIME, AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 28th October 2024, and Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Meeting ends 5.32pm.**