

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 8 June 2026 at 6.00 p.m.**

Present:

Councillor T Bird in the Chair

Councillors J Clark and J Moore

Also in attendance:

South Durham Community Partnership – Cheryl Hudson
County Councillor Michael Ramage
Durham County Council – Kate Ward
Missed a Beat – Mark Preston
Clerk - Ian Croft

M Dodds, D Elliott and R Tindale.

1. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Westwood.

2. Defibrillators

The Chair welcomed Mark Preston from the charity Missed a Beat to the meeting. Mark gave the Council a presentation on defibrillators and bleed kits, the required maintenance of them, the siting of them and the costs associated with them. Mark undertook to forward full details of the costings to the Clerk following the meeting.

Members of the Council took a great interest in the presentation and the provision of defibrillators and bleed kits. The Chair thanked Mark for his presentation and the Council agreed to place the provision of defibrillators and bleed kits on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

Mark left the meeting at 6.40 p.m.

3. Public Participation

Michael Dodds, local resident, was in attendance and had expressed an interest in being co-opted onto the Parish Council as a Parish Councillor. He

worked as a volunteer at The One Stop Shop and had a keen interest in the local community and in improvements which could be introduced. Members of the Council discussed Mr Dodds interest in being co-opted onto the Council and upon a vote being taken it was

Resolved:

That Michael Dodds be co-opted onto the Dene Valley Parish Council.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Dodds to his new appointment.

4. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11 May 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising

The Chair referred to the provision of a seat opposite the One Styop Shop and circulated details of a metal seat which could be purchased for £307. Councillor Ramage informed the meeting that he could meet the cost of this out of his budget but would prefer for a local supplier to be used.

6. Finance Update

The Clerk provided the meeting with details of income and expenditure for the Council to the end of May 2026. The Chair agreed the balances and signed the accounts and bank statements.

The Clerk referred to the Council's Internal Audit report for 2025/26 a copy of which had been provided to all Members. It was noted that the conclusion of the Audit was that the internal controls for the Council were satisfactory and that some recommendations had been made within the report. These recommendations would be acted upon during the 2026/27 financial year.

The Council considered the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2025/26 which showed that neither expenditure nor income for 2025/26 had exceeded the £25,000 threshold. The Council resolved to complete a Certificate of Exemption for the Council for 2025/26.

The Council agreed to appoint Joanne Dickinson as the Council's Auditor for 2025/26.

7. Police Update

The Chair reported that the next PACT meeting would be held on Thursday 11 June 2026 at 5 p.m. and he would circulate the report from that meeting when it was available.

8. Play areas

Councillor Moore reported that there were no issues with the play areas. The Clerk reported that he had submitted a request to Wicksteed for an annual safety inspection of the Council's Play Areas. Members requested that the Clerk investigate a SLA with the County Council for Play Area inspection.

Kate Ward confirmed that all cabling for the MUGA lighting had been removed.

9. Planning Issues

The Chair circulated a list of planning applications recently received or decided within the Parish area or in neighbouring Parish areas.

The Chair reported that a request had been received for Parish Council Members to have a walk around the Parish Council boundaries and the Council considered that this was a good idea.

10. Footpaths and Highways Issues

Councillor Moore informed the meeting he had nothing to report.

Cheryl Hudson referred to weeds overgrowing on footpaths near to where she lived which had still not been addressed. Kate Ward replied that she would chase this up.

Councillor Ramage informed the meeting that he had written to DCC expressing his unhappiness that the issue of the footpath through the new housing development had not been resolved. As a result of this he considered that the developer should contribute towards the costs of seats and planters within the Parish.

11. Allotments

Councillor Moore referred to the use of polytunnels on the Coronation A allotment site and queried the water usage for this site. It was agreed that a visit take place to the site by the Clerk and Councillor Moore.

The Clerk reported that there were two vacant allotment sites at Close House.

12. Any other business

Councillor Moore reported the problem of quad bikes pushing fences down through the night. The police had attended some three weeks ago. Councillor Moore agreed to attend the forthcoming PACT meeting to raise the issue.

The Chair reported that since the scrapping of AAPs Local Networks had been put in place. These would be in operation by the end of the year and had £90,000 of funding available.

Councillor Ramage informed the meeting he believed that DCC had found some s106 money for the Dene Valley Parish area and he had enquired how much was available and requested a copy of the s106 agreement.

Cheryl Hudsan reported that the next meeting of the South Church Community Partnership would take place on Wednesday 17 June at The Red Alligator commencing at 10.00 a.m.

The next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Monday 13 July 2026 commencing 6.00 p.m.

The meeting finished at 7.25 p.m.