

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PETERLEE INFORMATION
CENTRE COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL,
PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 21st JUNE 2010

PRESENT: COUN. MRS M MILSOM (CHAIR)

Mesdames: J I Measor, J Black & L Wood

Messrs: W M Jeffrey, J Alvey, R Huitson,
J Hardy, T Jones, C Austin, D Milsom,
D Langan, C Robbins, R Curtis,
H Bennett MBE & E W Hall

**MEMBERS WERE REMINDED OF THE NEED TO
DISCLOSE ANY INTEREST PREJUDICIAL OR
PERSONAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF
CONDUCT.**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors; R Jones (Family engagement), G Cowie (Asthma), S McDonnell (Father ill) and C J Metcalfe (holiday).
RECOMMENDED that these apologies be accepted.
2. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
3. THE MANAGER'S PROGRESS REPORT, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was considered under the following headings:-

a) EVENTS

Easter Egg Competition

This event had proved popular, despite another similar Competition being held in the Town. Asda had been thanked for their sponsorship of prizes.

St. George's Day Event

Positive feedback had been received from many of those who attended this event. The schools' performances were fantastic and letters had been sent to thank them for their participation. If this event was to become a regular activity on the Town Council calendar, the Organiser hoped to include schools again, and perhaps a professional 'George and the Dragon' with storyteller.

Members who had attended this event commented on how fantastic the school children had performed. They also expressed their disappointment in the entertainment which had been booked by the Organiser.

RECOMMENDED that any Member with ideas for entertainment at next year's event were to contact the Organiser.

Teddy Bears' Picnic – Sunday 20th June, 2010

Members who had attended this event expressed their concerns at adults collecting a picnic and eating themselves, resulting in some children were left with no picnic. The Organiser suggested that next year the children collect picnics themselves and their hand be stamped to show had received one. Overall all who had attended seemed to have an enjoyable afternoon and the change of venue had worked well, comment was made that some of the children had missed the judging of the Teddy Bears Picnic, timing etc. would be considered for next year's event.

In considering next year's event the Organiser suggested she could prepare a pros and cons assessment of the Town Council's areas i.e. Woodhouse Park, Shotton Hall, The Pavilion and Eden Lane for a decision to be made for where the event should be held next year.

RECOMMENDED that for this event be held next year, all four of the Council's venues be considered - Shotton Hall,

Pavilion, Woodhouse Park and Eden Lane, and a further report prepared.

Other Town Council Events

These were all added to the Town Council events list on a regular basis as and when advised by colleagues and included on the current 'About Town'

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

b) STAFF

The Manager advised that Hayley Tempest (Senior Information Assistant) was pregnant with an expected delivery date of 31st October, 2010.

This could have an effect upon the recruitment of the Seasonal Post (which had already been agreed through the Council). The Seasonal Post would terminate at the beginning of September and, should the Council agree to cover Hayley's position whilst she was on maternity leave, anticipated maternity cover would be required from mid-October until possibly Summer 2011.

The Manager suggested rather than recruiting twice, she felt it would be most cost effective to roll these two positions into one, for example, advertise the Seasonal Post as usual, at Scale 1 from July to September, with the successful applicant's contract being re-started in October on a Scale 2, which was the current scale of the Senior Information Assistant's post. If the Council agreed, the advert could quite clearly indicate this expectation and form the basis of recruitment.

She suggested that this would also make the position more attractive and increase the number of applicants that may apply. The Manager advised that she had purposely held back on recruiting the Seasonal post with this in mind.

RECOMMENDED that this item be deferred to the Council Meeting.

c) PETERLEE TOWN GUIDE

This publication was now available and would be distributed along with the June edition of 'About Town' to each household in Peterlee.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

d) ENJOY ENGLAND FOR EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2010

As Members were aware, the Centre was nominated as a possible contender for the Tourist Information Centre of the Year on a National level. This was due to us achieving the Gold Award at Regional level. An application was made; however, regrettably, it did not quite reach the standards required. A letter was received from Enjoy England pointing out where we could possibly improve, which had been circulated to Members. It was "Mystery Shopper" season once again and the Manager and her Staff would make every effort to match the excellent level of service demonstrated last year.

RECOMMENDED that the Organiser send a letter expressing the Town Council's disappointment at not being granted a personal visit at the Information Centre.

COUNCILLOR E W HALL DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM AND TOOK NO FURTHER PART IN THE DISCUSSION WHICH ENSUED.

e) 'ABOUT TOWN'

This publication was proving very useful as a marketing tool for the Town Council. Many customers report receiving this at home and were taking note of its contents. The Manager had been approached by organisations outside of the Town Council with regard to placing advertisements in the publication, for example, Slimming World, Be Enterprising, Camcorder Club, Barnardo's at Hartlepool. She anticipated requests such as these becoming more regular and asked for Members consideration with these requests.

The newsletter was a publication which the Town Council were required to produce to advise residents of the roles & responsibilities of, and services of this Council. It would be my suggestion that if a group/organisation was working directly working in partnership with this Council and would like to

highlight that in the newsletter, then this be accepted and articles be considered for inclusion (e.g. the Camcorder Club did this in a previous edition).

She further suggested that organisations who were merely seeking free advertising, be invited to participate in an alternative method offered by this Council, such as displaying posters/leaflets in the Information Centre and be added to our 'Weekly Activities' board and/or an appropriate in-house leaflet.

RECOMMENDED that this item be deferred to the Council Meeting.

4. STATISTICS, INCOME & COMMISSION

A copy of the above reports had been circulated to Members for their information.

The Organiser advised Members that the use of the internet was and would in future have a detrimental affect on the activity in the Centre. She advised that more people were booking own accommodation and holidays on the internet, brochures seemed to be becoming phased out. Durham County Council were in the process of arranging a meeting to be held with all TIC Managers to consider ways of enhancing and bringing something new into Information Centres.

Members made reference to the very minimal amount of commission accrued by way of concert ticket sales for Other Tours and asked that this be taken up again.

A Member asked if the Organiser could make investigations as to the Centre being used as a rail ticket outlet.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- a) **the Organiser speak to Other Tours with regard to the commission the Town Council have received for ticket sales and commission on future ticket sales;**
- b) **The Organiser make investigations as to the Centre being an outlet for rail travel tickets.**

