

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE

AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 2006

PRESENT: COUN M A CARTWRIGHT (CHAIR)

Mesdames: J I Measor, A E Laing, M
Milsom

Messrs: A Geldard, D Milsom, E W Hall,
B Joyce, W M Jeffrey, R Huitson, D Coates
& B Scott

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

IN THE ABSENCE OF BOTH THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN, COUNCILLOR M A CARTWRIGHT WAS NOMINATED TO TAKE THE CHAIR.

49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C J Metcalfe, H Bennett, G Calvert & G Cowie.

PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM COUNCILLOR D COATES DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM AND TOOK NO PART IN THE DISCUSSION WHICH ENSUED.

50. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Matters Arising

(i) Minute Number 44 – Consultation Document on the Proposal to Build One Secondary School in Peterlee, it was confirmed that the Town Council had chosen Option 4 which was to support the keeping open of both Dene Community School and Shotton Hall.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Minute Number 46 – Request to Purchase or Lease Land at Edenhill, it was confirmed that, the Council maintain it's existing policy and refuse the request to purchase or lease land at Edenhill.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

51. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 29TH AUGUST 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was adopted.

52. THE NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE APOLLO PAVILION STEERING GROUP: AGM HELD ON 29TH JUNE 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were accepted.

53. THE NOTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PETERLEE YOUTH GROUP HELD ON 10TH JULY & 14TH AUGUST 2006 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were accepted.

54. THE NOTES OF THE PRIDE HOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1ST AUGUST 2006 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were accepted.

55. NOTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HELFORD ROAD SPORTS & COMMUNITY CLUB HELD ON 20TH AUGUST 2006 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were accepted.

56. DISTRICT COUNCIL VACANCY – PASSFIELD WARD

The Town Clerk reported that he had received the Notice of Vacancy from the District Council created following the resignation of Mr K Gallagher Councillor for the Passfield Ward. He would advise Members of progress with this vacancy in due course.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

57. EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The Town Clerk confirmed that Mr Steve Nicklin of the Audit Commission would continue as auditor to Peterlee Town Council for the 2006/07 financial year.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

58. LSP ANNUAL REVIEW 2006

Members were circulated with a letter of thanks received from the District of Easington for the Town Council's contribution to the LSP's Annual Review .

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

59. NOMINATIONS & MOTIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

RECOMMENDED that this item be referred to the Council meeting for further consideration.

60. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT – PUBLICATION SCHEMES – EXTENSION OF LIFESPAN

The Town Clerk reported that the publication scheme implemented

under the Freedom of Information Act had been extended for a further two years.

RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted and details be awaited as to the exact date of the extension.

61. NATIONAL LICENSING AGENCY - NEWSPAPER
COPYRIGHT – APPLICATION FOR LICENCE

The Town Clerk asked for consideration of the Council applying for a licence required to allow photocopies of newspaper articles to be taken. The licence fee was £1,108.79 but he felt that this was a service that would be well used by the Council and Members.

RECOMMENDED that the Council apply for the appropriate licence through the Newspaper Licensing Agency.

62. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS -
SUBSCRIPTION TO THE LOCAL COUNCIL REVIEW

The Town Clerk advised that NALC recently raised the Local Council Review subscription rates with the introduction of a discount if Councils enter into a two or three year agreement. The Town Clerk felt this magazine was an excellent source of information for Members and suggested that a three year subscription be taken out.

RECOMMENDED that a three year subscription be taken out for the Local Council Review at a cost of £10.26 per Member, per annum.

63. UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATIONS, NALC CONSULTATION
RESPONSE – REMOVAL OF TELEPHONE BOXES BY BT

The Town Clerk had circulated for Member's information the National Association of Local Councils response to the Universal Service Obligations Consultation which indicated the Association

would oppose any proposals which affected the ability of Local Councils to respond to consultations on the relocation/removal of public telephone boxes.

Under new proposals the District Council will become the local organization for determining local opinion on any proposal.

A Local member expressed the view that the criteria for making decisions needed to be made known so that local councils can put forward appropriate and reasoned arguments.

RECOMMENDED that the letter be received, and progress be awaited.

64. DATA QUALITY REVIEWS –CHECKLIST FOR SMALL BODIES

Members were circulated with details of the above. The Town Clerk advised that he needed to meet with District Audit to go through the requirements in detail to ensure compliance but that the objective of this work was to determine whether proper corporate management arrangements for data quality were in place.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted and the Town Clerk arrange a meeting with the Audit Commission to discuss this matter further.

65. PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL WEB SITE

The Town Clerk was pleased to advise that the Town Council's web site was up and running and was available at www.peterlee.gov.uk and he encouraged Member's to visit the site, and offer any suggestions/comments they may have on future development.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted and comments/views be awaited.

66. PRESS RELEASE – VANDALISM MAY IMPACT ON TAX BILL

Members were circulated with a copy of a press release made by the Leader of the Council following the recent Parks Inspection. The Town Clerk also reported that vandalism had taken place in the Cemetery at Eden Lane and that he intended to meet with the press the following morning. The Council felt such vandalism should be drawn to the attention of residents, and that the Police be asked to assist the Council in addressing this issue.

Following considerable discussion it was **RECOMMENDED that:-**

- (i) **an urgent press release be issued on the vandalism in Eden Lane Cemetery**
- (ii) **a Security Sub Committee be convened to discuss these issues in detail.**

67. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE COMMUNITY USE CONSULTATION EVENT

Members were circulated with details of a BSF consultation event to be held at Peterlee Library on Thursday 14th September from 4.00-8.00pm, (drop in session).

RECOMMEDED that the information given, be noted.

68. OPEN AIR CONCERT – CASTLE EDEN DENE

A Local Member voiced his concerns that he along with other Members were inundated with telephone calls from residents who live in the vicinity of the Lodge at Castle Eden Nature Reserve following an article regarding an open air concert that was to take place at the Dene. He felt that the Town and District Councils should have been advised of the details of the event, as well as Members that sit on the Joint Management Committee of the Dene.

RECOMMENDED that this matter be placed on the Agenda for discussion at the next Joint Management Committee.

69. VISITORS TO THE TOWN FOR THE SHOW WEEKEND

The Town Clerk reported the thanks and appreciation from both the German guests and the Chairman of NALC, Ken Cleary and his wife Sandra for the hospitality shown to them over the Show Weekend.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.