

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2006

PRESENT: COUN R CURTIS (CHAIR)

Mesdames: M A Cartwright and
M Milsom

Messrs: H Bennett MBE,
E W Hall, T Jones, B Scott, C J Metcalfe,
D Coates, G Calvert, R Huitson,
W M Jeffrey and D Milsom

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

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Cowie, B Joyce, C J Metcalfe, C Robbins and J I Measor.

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

86. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 27TH OCTOBER 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was adopted.

87. LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER 2006

The Town Clerk had circulated to Members copies of information received from the National Association of Local Councils setting out the key proposals in the White Paper for Town and Parish Councils. Members had also been circulated with information received via the County Durham Association of Local Councils on the broader implications for Local Government and an invitation to attend a stakeholders event on 16th November 2006 at Beamish Hall from the District of Easington, again to consider the key implications of the White Paper. The event would also consider how local government could better respond to the needs of local communities, and maximise benefits to the people.

A Local Member expressed his view that these proposals would do little to get Government closer to the people, and in determining what system of governance people wanted, a referendum should be held.

The Leader of the Council also advised he had been invited to attend a national meeting in London on 13th and 14th November 2006 which would consider in detail the implications of the White Paper.

RECOMMENDED that: -

(i) the information given be noted

(ii) the Council accept the invitation of the District of Easington and be represented at the meeting by the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk.

(iii) the Town Council also be represented by the Leader at the “N.A.L.C Conference” on the 13th February 2007 in London.

88. DEFRA GUIDANCE ON THE CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005 – ADDENDUM

The Town Clerk had circulated to each Member a copy of the addendum received from D.E.F.R.A.

RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted.

89. AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2005 / 06

The Town Clerk had circulated to each Member the Notice of Completion of the Audit, the Audit Opinion, the Auditors Report on Best Value, and the Annual Corporate Governance Report together with a copy of the Town Clerks response.

The Town Clerk drew to Members attention that the Council had received unqualified reports and the only action required in response to all these reports was the need for the Council to develop and formalise its risk management arrangements.

RECOMMENDED that the reports be received and the Town Council develop and formalise its risk management arrangements.

90. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – NOTIFICATION OF VERGE HARDENING WORKS AT FULWELL ROAD

The Town Clerk had circulated to each Member of the Committee a copy of the notice received.

RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted.

91. APOLLO PAVILION STEERING GROUP – MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER AND 26TH OCTOBER 2006

Each Member had been circulated with copies of these minutes.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes be received.

92. PRIDE HOUSE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 21ST NOVEMBER 2006

The Town Clerk had circulated to each Member, a copy of the notice of meeting.

RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted.

93. DISTRICT OF EASINGTON – CENTRAL AREA FORUM –
SHOTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL – 15TH NOVEMBER 2006

The Town Clerk had circulated to Members the notice of the above Forum Meeting.

RCOMMENDED that Members make the Town Clerk aware of any matters they wish to have raised at the meeting, such matters to be notified to the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

94. SHOTTON HALL BANQUETING SUITES – STOCKTAKERS
REPORT DATED 24TH OCTOBER 2006

The Town Clerk had circulated to each Member a copy of the Stocktakers Report.

RECOMMENDED that the report be received and the Committees thanks be passed on to the Facilities Manager and his staff.

95. EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT OF
EASINGTON – REVIEW OF HEALTH SERVICES

A copy of the extract from the above minutes had been circulated to each Member.

A Local Member advised he had recently been at a meeting with the Primary Care Trust, where it was explained that finance may be a major problem in coming years. The Member also advised that further facilities have already been located at the James Cook and South Tees Hospitals. As a result the public are already suffering serious travelling problems.

RECOMMENDED that the information gave be noted and progress be evaluated.

96. PETITION FROM HOWLETSCH WARD RESIDENTS RE ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Members had been circulated with a copy of a letter and petition from residents in the Howletch Ward regarding anti social behaviour by youths, and a request for a alcohol free zone.

The Town Clerk advised he had already drawn this matter to the attention of the District Council and the Police. Members expressed their concerns about the anti social behaviour problems not only in Howletch Ward, but across the town, and asked that this matter be again raised, as a matter of urgency with the police.

RECOMMENDED that the letter be received and further discussion take place with the Police as soon as possible.

97. NALC CONFERENCE REPORT 2006

The Town Clerk had circulated to Members a report on the above conference which appeared in the November issue of Local Council Reviews. The report highlighted the regeneration work been carried out in Peterlee and Seaham.

RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted.

98. CIVIC TRANSPORT

A Local Member expressed his concern regarding what he understood was a failure to order transport for the Mayor.

The Town Clerk advised that having spoken to the Mayor he understood this matter had been resolved, but would check again with the Mayor.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk ensure that the Mayor was satisfied with the arrangements for civic transport.

99. SHOWMANS GUILD – TICKET ALLOCATION

A Local Member expressed his concerns regarding receipt and allocation of tickets to the above event. The Town Clerk advised the Committee of the two invitations received directly from the

Showmans Guild, reiterating any other invitations received were of a personal nature.

RECOMMEND that the information given be noted, and that Members be reminded that any Member receiving and accepting such an invite should disclose this in the Register.

100. CONFERENCE ROTA

A Local Member sought clarification over the application of the Conference Rota particularly in relation to the acceptance or otherwise of conference invitations at short notice.

The Town Clerk explained that occasionally Members withdraw at very short notice for example due to family bereavement. If this occurred the Council would still incur the cost involved, and as a result staff would seek to find an attendee based on the Rota. It was not always possible to give Members any length of time for agreeing or otherwise because of the time constraints.

In accordance with existing Council policy if a conference was offered at less than two days notice, and a Member refused this conference then they would not lose their place on the Conference Rota.

RECOMMEND that this policy be re endorsed.

101. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE PASSED THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETING) ACT, 1961 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

102. REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER 2004

The above regulations came into force on 1st October 2006, and as a result the Town Council is required to have the necessary assessments, schedules, and fire plans in place immediately.

In view of the urgency to meet legislative requirements a single quotation had been sought from Peterlee Fire Company in the sum of £1,650 + VAT. The company had also agreed to carry out Fire Warden Training as part of this quotation.

RECOMMEND that Standing Orders be waived and the quotation of Peterlee Fire Company in the sum of £1,650.00 be accepted.

103. ITEC SITE – LIFTING OF RESTRICTIVE COVENENT

The Town Clerk advised Members of the approach of the owners of this site to seek to re open negotiations for the lifting of the restrictive covenant.

The Councils agents, Lamb and Edge had expressed to the other party the Councils surprise and concern at this approach.

RECOMMENDED that the information be noted and progress be awaited.