

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2010

PRESENT: COUN C J METCALFE (CHAIR)

Mesdames:- S McDonnell & L Wood

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

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

87. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted and accepted from Councillors  
J Black, (on holiday), G Cowie, (asthma), & R W Jones, (wife ill).

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

Matters Arising

Minute number 78 – Dog Fouling Campaign – AAP Target areas

It was reported that the request to include Lowhills Road and Helford  
Road on the list of target areas could not be accommodated but they  
would be included on lists for monitoring and action.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

89. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF COUNTY DURHAM – CORE STRATEGY ISSUES & OPTIONS PAPER

The Chairman welcomed Stuart Timmiss and Ian Thompson from the Planning Section, Durham County Council.

The Leader of the Council gave Members the background to the invitation being extended to the Officers to come along and update Members.

An update was given on the Core Strategy and gave assurances where it was felt that the strategy did not appear to cover the expectations and regeneration for Peterlee. Mr Timmiss advised that the next stage of consultation would be circulated in due course and they would be pleased to return and talk to the Town Council.

Details were summarised on the supermarket proposals for Peterlee and it was confirmed that all applications would be considered in December 2010.

The Chairman then opened the meeting for a question and answer session.

Members asked questions on house building in the Town, the need for another supermarket and other retail factors; jobs and employment and road links to support this; and the need for them to be kept fully informed as there was much public interest in the Town's future and they wanted to be able to provide answers wherever possible to residents.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for their attendance and extended the invitation for them to come along to future meetings to keep Members informed.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

90. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE MEETING OF 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2010 was agreed, subject to Councillor D Milsom being recorded as being in the Chair.

91. THE PAVLION MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING OF THE  
12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2010 – ITEMS REFERRED FOR  
CONSIDERATION

The following items had been referred from the last meeting of the Management board for consideration:-

(i) Purchase of a Tv/Dvd

**RECOMMENDED subject to monies being available, approval be given for this purchase.**

(ii) Access by the Town Band

**RECOMMENDED this matter be included in the discussions with the Town Band at a meeting to be arranged, and the Facilities Manager be included in these discussions.**

(iii) Request to open Christmas Day

**RECOMMENDED that this be considered further at the next Management Board meeting and then at the Town Council meeting.**

92. APOLLO PAVILION COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION –MINUTES  
OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER & 5<sup>TH</sup>  
OCTOBER 2010, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were accepted.

93. CASTLE EDEN DENE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE –  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2010 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were accepted.

Members expressed their concern that in recent press articles information had been given on the privatisation of reserves and it was asked if this could be discussed at the next Joint Management Board Meeting. There was also the issue of partner funding that Members commented upon.

**RECOMMENDED that further developments be awaited.**

94. ONE VOICE NETWORK CONFERENCE – 16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER  
2010, 9.30 – 1.00PM, EXCEL CENTRE, NEWTON AYCLIFFE

Details of this open invitation were given to Members.

**RECOMMENDED any Member wishing to attend advise the Office.**

95. EAST DURHAM TRUST ANNUAL CONFERENCE, THURSDAY  
25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2010, 10.45 – 4.00PM, SHOTTON HALL

Details of this open invitation were given to Members.

**RECOMMENDED any Member wishing to attend advise the Office.**

96. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR, DIVERSITY &  
MEDIA TRAINING – 24<sup>TH</sup> – 26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010 –  
DELEGATE'S REPORT

Members were circulated with a copy of the delegate's report following their attendance at this event. It was agreed that this was an interesting report and it was asked that for all future reports reference be included as to what information the Town Council and Councillors got from the event and was it of benefit to attend.

**RECOMMENDED that the report be accepted and future reports from delegates include the information as agreed.**

97. 2011 CENSUS & LOCAL AUTHORITY ASSISTANCE

Members were circulated with information on the 2011 Census and opportunities available.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

98. SHOTTON AIRFIELD CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
– 18<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2010

Members were circulated with details of this meeting. The Town Council's representative advised that this was operating more akin to a complaints committee and he was flabbergasted at the strength of opposition to the operation of the air field and it's positive activities in the local community.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

99. DRAFT SPORT & LEISURE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

Members were circulated with a summary of this draft document, a copy of which had been given to the Sports Development Officer and Horticultural Supervisor for their comment. Several Members requested a full copy of the document.

**RECOMMENDED any comments be given to the Town Clerk/Deputy as soon as possible to allow a response to be made.**

100. NATIONAL TREE WEEK 2010

Details of this year's Tree Week Campaign which was to run from 27<sup>th</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> December 2010 were circulated to each Member for their information.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

101. SPENDING REVIEW

Members were circulated with an update from the National Association of Local Councils on the Governments Spending Commitments to 2014, although this information would not directly affect authorities it was felt that there may be some fall out from local government in years to come. It was expected that the Localism Bill

to be released later this year would contain further details on whether the parish council precepts would be capped etc.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.**

102. PRECEPT REQUESTS

Members were circulated with a copy of the statement issues by the Communities Secretary Eric Pickles announcing that the Spending Review had allocated a £650 million fund to help local authorities to implement a council tax freeze in England in 2011-12. There were specific references to Parish and Town Councils in the narrative in so much as Eric Pickles was telling local councils that they would not be able to access any of the £650m available to assist local authorities provide for a nil increase in Council Tax bill for residents whilst at the same time asking Parish Councils to exercise restraint when setting precept requests. It was felt that this was a little unfair that other local authorities would be given financial assistance to enable them to avoid passing on any increases to their residents whereas parish councils were merely being asked to err on the cautious side and not increase their precepts.

The Town Clerk advised that he needed to call Members together as soon as possible to discuss spending plans and projects for next year.

**RECOMMENDED that a meeting of the Budget Sub Committee, (Members of the Clerk's Advisory Committee), be called as soon as possible to consider the budget for 2011/12.**

103. THE FUTURE OF LOCAL AUDIT: ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Members were circulated with an extract of this paper which helped to track developments in relation to future audit arrangements.

**RECOMMENDED that further developments be awaited.**

104. COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORKS – A ROLE FOR TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS

Members were circulated with information advising that the Health & Wellbeing Partnership, (a sub thematic partnership of the County Durham Partnership), had established 5 Health Networks covering County Durham which replaced the former Health Improvement Groups, and intended to provide local intelligence, aiming to narrow the health inequalities gap in County Durham.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted and further developments awaited.**

105. NALC BULLETINS

- (i) DIS Extra – Issue 745 – October 2010
- (ii) 9,000 Parish Councils to be freed from archaic payment rules
- (iii) E Bulletins – September, 8<sup>th</sup> October, 22<sup>nd</sup> October

Extracts of these bulletins and circulated were circulated for each Member's information.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

106. STOCKTAKE SUMMARY SHEETS

Members were circulated with a copy of stock take sheets for the three licensed premises belonging to the Town Council. Members asked for a meeting of the Peterlee Football Liaison Committee and at that meeting a sheet detailing takings etc as prepared for the Helford Road Management Board, be presented for consideration.

Reference was made to outstanding reports relating to loss of stock and the cellar service at Eden Lane and assurances were given that these would be progressed.

**RECOMMENDED that:-**

- (i) **the stock take reports be accepted;**
- (ii) **a meeting of the Peterlee Football Liaison Committee be**

**called and reports as requested be presented at this meeting;**

**(iii) reports be made on the outstanding matters as soon as possible.**

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

108. B1320 BURNHOPE WAY, C15 SHOTTON ROAD, MILL HILL, ACRE RIGG ROAD & PENNINE DRIVE, PETERLEE – TEMPORARY SPEED RESTRICTION ORDER

Members were circulated with a copy of details relating to the above Order which would impose a 30 mph speed restriction on this highway.

**RECOMMENDED that no comments be offered on this Order.**

109. PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL – AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2009/10 – NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF AUDIT

Members were advised of receipt of a letter from the Audit Commission advising that the audit of the Town Council's accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> march 2010 had been complete.

**RECOMMENDED that the relevant advert be placed advertising that the audit had been concluded and the Statement of Accounts was available for inspection by local government electors.**

110. DOUBLE TAXATION & TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS

Members were circulated with a letter prepared following discussions at the CDALC AGM where it was reported that the County Council was unable to support any review of the double taxation until such time as the Council was no longer experiencing reductions in Government funding and therefore there would be no reference to double taxation in the budget reports to Cabinet. This directly conflicted with the advice given at recent meetings to consider the review of the Local Councils Charter. In addition it was stated that the County Council would continue to assess the payments presently made to town & parish councils as part of the ongoing budget reviews.

**RESOLVED that further developments with the issue of double taxation be awaited.**