

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015

PRESENT:- COUN D MILSOM (CHAIR)

Mesdames:- S Simpson, C Baty, L M Wood, M A Cartwright,  
K Hawley & V Watson

Messrs:- S Miles, D Sillito, W M Jeffrey, C Watkins, L Cook, J  
Alvey, G Cowie, C J Metcalfe & A Watson

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

Prior to the meeting, a 15 minute “open session” was held to allow members of the public an opportunity to put questions to the Council. There were no members of the public present.

187. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been submitted from Councillors K Liddell, (on holiday), & C Robbins, (ill).

**RECOMMENDED the Council approve the reasons submitted for absence received on the grounds given above, and Members’ apologies for absence be recorded.**

188. POLICE – UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Holmes to the meeting. An update

on activity in the town from the date of the last meeting to date was given for Members and the Chairman invited questions to the Officer. It was asked again if it would be possible to have the report prior to the meeting.

It was asked what the rate of a call made to the 101 telephone number was, it had been suggested this was a premium rate number and may be putting people off from making a report. There was discussion on the Community Speedwatch Scheme where the Police were asking for volunteers to support this. Several members asked that their names be passed on to the PCSO to be included in future training to carry out this type of task. Several issues were given for the Officer where an update was given at the meeting; it was asked that the problem with littering outside Denehouse School could be passed to the street wardens for attention.

**RESOLVED if possible a copy of the report be circulated for Member's attention and the Officer be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.**

189. AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

Members were circulated once again with a copy of the report received, and considered in detail at the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The effectiveness of internal controls were detailed and approved by Members.

**RESOLVED the Annual Return be approved and accepted.**

190. REVIEW OF RISK

Members were circulated once again with a copy of the report received, and considered in detail at the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover was reviewed and agreed the current cover was suitable.

**RESOLVED the annual review be accepted and no further action be taken with regard to increasing the current level fidelity guarantee insurance.**

191. THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THE 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Councillor Alvey advised that it was hoped he would be able to give an update after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

192. THE REPORT OF THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE OF THE 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

193. THE REPORT OF THE SHOW COMMITTEE OF THE 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

194. THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

It was asked why the stock reports had not been received and a full explanation was given and accepted.

**RESOLVED the stock reports be awaited.**

195. THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

196. THE MINUTES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Matters Arising

Minute Number 60

Councillor Jeffrey asked to be included in the group of members who would work alongside Durham County Council HR to consider the job descriptions of the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

**RESOLVED this working group be made up of the following:-  
Councillors K Hawley, C Baty, C J Metcalfe, J Alvey, A Watson  
& W M Jeffrey.**

197. THE MINUTES OF THE PAVILION MANAGEMENT BOARD OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

198. THE REPORT OF THE CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved. Councillor Watson felt that this was an undemocratic Meeting and that applications for grants and concessionary use should go to a full meeting comprising of all Members; he intended bringing this issue up at the Annual General Meeting.

Matters Arising

(a) Minute number 52 – Peterlee Pumas

As requested the Deputy Town Clerk gave Members further information received in relation to the cost of strips for the Junior and Senior Teams which were £650 and men £750 respectively.

**RESOLVED a grant of a maximum of £650.00 made to the Peterlee Pumas for the renewal and sponsorship of the youth Teams strips.**

(b) Five Star Football Team

Councillor Jeffrey asked had further information been received to support this request. Councillor Cook gave further information to Members to support the request and confirmed 10 of the Team lived in Peterlee, they trained in Peterlee although they played in Hartlepool in the Hartlepool Northern League.

**RESOLVED a grant of £300.00 be made towards strips for this Team.**

(c) Past Mayor's Photographs

Progress with putting these photographs back up was requested. It was felt that these pictures formed an important part of the Town

Council's history and indeed the Towns past. Whilst considering this it was felt that the cost of this exercise needed to be kept to a minimum. It was asked if a more cost effective way of displaying them rather than renewing all of the frames be considered to reduce the cost of this work.

**RESOLVED the cost of arranging for the photographs to be reinstated be reported back for Member's consideration.**

199. THE MINUTES OF THE PARKS & CEMETERY COMMITTEE OF THE 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Matters Arising

Minute Number 97 – Fees & Charges

Councillor Watson asked for his comment that the non resident burial fees appeared very low and they should be reviewed when the fees and charges were considered in October 2015, to be included and considered at the appropriate time.

**RESOLVED the level of non residents fess for burials be considered further in October 2015.**

200. SPOKESPERSON OF THE MAJORITY POLITICAL PARTY'S REPORT

Councillor Jeffrey spoke on the parking issues in the Town Centre and felt that the restrictions should be town wide so that they were fair and uniform. He felt the support of the Government and our local MP should be enlisted to try and change how parking was controlled.

He advised that Stuart Timmiss was hoping to come along to update the Council on the Neighbourhood Plan.

**RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

201. SPOKESPERSON OF THE FAIR/NEP MEMBER'S REPORT

Councillor Watson referred to the meeting that was to be held at County Hall relating to the combined authority for then North East, he felt this was promoting an unwanted and unelected layer of Government for the North East and he and several colleagues would be attending this meeting on behalf of their political party, not as a Town Councillor. He would keep Members advised on progress.

**RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

202. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC  
IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO PASS THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

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

203. TOWN CLERK'S GRIEVANCE – PROGRESS

The Deputy Town Clerk reported the Council had taken expert advice from an employment barrister and whilst it was advisable to see a settlement of issues with the Town Clerk, it was essential to be in a position to properly justify any settlement to the Council and external auditors, based on proper consideration of all evidence and any medical and other expert advice. There must be a certainty that the amount of any settlement was fair and reasonable. Progress was being made to that end and it was not yet possible to put forward proposals for consideration by Members.

**RESOLVED the information given and progress be awaited.**

204. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

The Deputy Town Clerk reported receipt of an e mail on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015, from a Local Member which she felt was intimidating and was causing her distress. Whilst she fully respected the role each Councillor played as elected officials, she felt the Council had a duty of care towards her and all of its Officers and that this was unreasonable behaviour.

Another Member reported she had also been receiving equally distressing e mails from this individual.

**RESOLVED the Council give approval for the Deputy Town Clerk to place an immediate bloc on incoming e mails sent to her from this Councillor.**

205. EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING

The Deputy Town Clerk circulated a copy of a letter received by the Mayor and handed to her that evening requesting an extra ordinary meeting to be called the purpose of the meeting to be to commission an Internal Investigation to cover issues listed in the letter.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) As requested and required, the meeting be called;**
- (ii) It be noted that the Mayor declared an interest in this matter and felt it better that he not Chair this meeting and he would pass this to his Deputy;**
- (iii) Legal representation be arranged with Smith & Graham at this meeting.**