

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE BRANDLING SUITE & ONLINE USING VIDEO CONFERENCING TECHNOLOGY

ON MONDAY 21ST DECEMBER 2020 at 6.00PM

PRESENT:- COUN M A CARTWRIGHT (CHAIR)

Mesdames:- S Simpson, K Liddell, K J Duffy, L Fenwick, K Hawley & D Howarth

Messrs:- S Kirkup, S Miles, R Kyle, G Johnson, G Carne, R Moore, C Watkins & A Watson

91. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were offered to the meeting from Councillors S McDonnell & T Duffy.

92. To receive declarations of interest

Members were reminded of the need to disclose any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. None were offered. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

93. The Minutes of the last meeting of the 23rd November 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting were attached for consideration and approval. **RESOLVED the minutes be accepted and signed as a true and correct record.**

94. COVID-19 Update

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update to Members on the Council's response to the COVID-19 situation. He confirmed that to date 3 members of staff had tested positive for COVID. He stated that the steps that the Council had taken to keep staff safe and healthy, appeared to be working as there had been no confirmed reports of staff with COVID transmitting the disease to other colleagues. He gave an update with the Shielding

Support Scheme and the fantastic appreciation being expressed by those receiving the telephone calls and care packages. He reported on the Santa's Wish initiative with more than 25 towns and villages, over 200 families and over 500 children with 26 different agencies making referrals to the Council. Seven County Councillors had contributed to Santa's Wish from their Neighbourhood Budget funds, and it was noted that all County Councillors had been approached for their support. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

95. Peterlee & Horden Rugby Club lease

Members were asked to approve a new lease for the Town Council's sports club and grounds at Eden Lane to Peterlee & Horden Rugby Club and the Town Clerk took them through his report highlighting the main issues. Members supported the overall ambition to enable the Club to take on more control and autonomy for the Eden Lane site, and to have a long-term stake in the venue. They also supported the proposed Grounds SLA and the movement towards reducing the current subsidy gap, as well as the ambition to consider a potential Grounds Apprenticeship jointly hosted the Council and Club in 2021 or possibly 2022.

There were two areas where Members asked that changes be made, one was reference to "rugby or other sports club" and asked this be changed to rugby club. Members felt that they wished to support P&HRFC develop rugby on the site and any future unforeseen change of sports would need to come back to the Council for consideration as a fundamental change to the lease. Second, following a long debate regarding the timescale of rent reviews Members agreed there be an initial rent review after 5 years and then 5 years thereafter.

RESOLVED:

1. approval be given to the leasehold disposal of the site to Peterlee & Horden Rugby Club for 99 years subject to the club agreeing to an initial rent review after 5 years and then 5 years thereafter;

2. responsibility be delegated to the Chairman of Council and Town Clerk to ensure that any objections to the advertised disposal were properly considered and responded to; and

3. subject to resolution 2 above, the Town Clerk be authorised to complete all requisite legal documentation in relation to execution of the lease, subject to the two amendments as detailed above.

96. Budget 2020/21 – second quarter outturn report

Members received a report on the outturn budget figures for quarter 2 (to end of September 2020) for the 2020/21 budget year.

Members were asked to note that the quarter 2 outturn figures were usually use as the basis for the budget-setting process for the following financial year.

However, given the unprecedented impact of COVID and the ongoing uncertainty about the future of Shotton Hall and levels of activity at The Pavillion there would be more risk associated with the 2021/22 budget forecasts. It would be hard for the Council to accurately forecast likely income and expenditure for the period April 2021 to March 2022 in January/February 2021 given the current levels of uncertainty, however the precept demand would need to be submitted to Durham County Council by the end of January 2021 and so Members would need to have agreed an outline budget and precept level by that point.

It was anticipated that the Town Council would meet twice in January to agree the draft budget for 2021/22. **RESOLVED the contents of this report be noted.**

97. Kickstart – Further information

Members received further information about the Council's options for adoption of the Kick Start employment scheme, either working with an existing provider or as registering as a provider, as was outlined in the report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED the contents of this briefing note be noted and the principle of working with a Kick Start Gateway provider to establish Kick Start placements at the Town Council as soon as possible in 2021, be agreed.

98. NEP Funding Application

Great North Air Ambulance Service, Requesting £200 towards the cost of their medical teams and supplies

Members considered this grant and the supporting information that had been received. **RESOLVED a grant of £200 be made to the GNAAS.**

99. New Policies

The following policies were for consideration, approval and adoption by Peterlee Town Council. Draft copies of the policies are available on the using the links given below, or in hard copy from the Deputy Town Clerk on request.

- (i) No Smoking Policy
- (ii) Mental Wellbeing in the workplace Policy, Procedure & Toolkit
- (iii) Shared Parental Leave Policy

RESOLVED the policies be approved for immediate adoption by the Town Council.

100. Shotton Hall

Notice of Motion received from Councillor K Hawley requesting the Council:

To consider using Shotton Hall as a community building during the day and open in March 2021.

Councillor Hawley explained her vision to have Shotton Hall Banqueting Suites available for hire by community groups Monday – Thursday once the Santa’s Wish and Shielding Support Scheme projects are complete and then after March 2021 (or as and when COVID guidelines permit) to consider opening weekends for weddings and other functions where the customer could bring in their own food.

Members discussed some concerns around the financial impact of concessionary community use of Shotton Hall, the existing costs of the council’s community building at The Pavilion, and the outstanding repairs costs for the Shotton Hall.

In discussions there was reference made to staffing arrangements for the building and it was agreed to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public:

101. Exclusion of the Press & Public

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the 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 Meetings) Act 1960 & the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, Part 1, paragraphs 11.

102. Future of Shotton Hall Banqueting Suites

The Clerk advised he would require more detail and direction from Members as to what they wanted to do with Shotton Hall Banqueting Suites in order for him to prepare a business plan with options for opening up Shotton Hall to the public again. He reminded Members that a substantial amount of capital investment was required to bring the building back to safe commercial or community use and that this investment was urgently required as the building was in a very poor state of repair. He also stated that if Members wished to open the building to the public again consideration would need to be made to appropriate staffing.

Whilst appreciating there was investment needed to carry out at least essential repairs for the building to operate as a community building, Members felt a future operating model should be considered. A number of Members suggested that Councillors should come up with some ideas and more detailed plans and feed these back to the Clerk to allow him to make some detailed proposals for further discussion.

RESOLVED Members feedback to the Clerk on the future of Shotton Hall.

103. The Pavilion

Members were provided with an update on progress with the relaunch of the Bistro at The Pavilion Sports & Community Centre, Helford Road. Members felt it would have been appreciated to have been kept updated on the improvements to the Bistro.

The Pavilion Centre Manager gave details of activities and promotion of the Bistro with:-

- Business & Marketing Students at East Durham College: following an initial briefing from the Council made a 'Dragons Den' style pitches of their ideas and are meeting again in New Year to refine ideas;
- Photo media student coming in to take photos of the venue, food, etc for menu, marketing, social media use, etc
- The 'Meatmen' sausage makers doing pop-up shop and cookery session
- A social media 'guru' working on ideas for using tiktok and Instagram for marketing to a new/younger market of potential customers
- Point of sale venue for students who have set up a facemasks manufacturing business
- College marketing students designing a flyer/poster design to be incorporated into March Peterlee Magazine

The Centre Manager said it had been a massive team effort and the Chair complimented them on the fantastic work. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

Councillor Watkins left the meeting at 8.88pm.

104. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

Councillor Watson asked for it to be recorded the fantastic efforts of Councillor Karen Hawley with the Santa's Wish Project he said its success was a massive achievement. He wished everyone a Happy Christmas and encouraged everyone to keep themselves safe. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

105. Spokesperson of the Labour Political Party's Report

Councillor Fenwick thanked the community for all pulling together to deliver Santa's Wish, she offered a "well done" to the Mayor, Councillors and staff. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

Councillor K J Duffy left the meeting at 8.57pm

106. Job Retention Scheme

The Council considered whether it wished to furlough relevant staff under the Government's Job Retention Scheme and to consider the terms of any such agreement having considered the report of the Town Clerk providing detail behind the scheme.

RESOLVED furlough leave be offered to employees as suggested in the report and this be done on an 80% basis.