

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

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ON MONDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2021 at 6.00PM

PRESENT:- COUN T DUFFY (CHAIR)

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

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

119. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were offered to the meeting.

120. 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.**

121. Public Participation Session

Mr Keith Groves from the Horden and Peterlee Rugby Club joined the meeting. He said he wanted to come along to the meeting to share with the Council where the club was and how they were doing which he did, with the focus on youth and young players. He explained how the pandemic had affected the Club where the community focus had come into its own. He said the Club needed to improve and grow and there were various repairs that needed doing to the fabric of the building ie the roof. He thanked Ian Morris for progressing the lease with the Club and assured they would share the pending feasibility study, future building plans and outcome of grant funding applications with the Town Council. He asked for the council's continued support and thanked them again for giving the Club the opportunity to grow and improve. There was an opportunity for Members to give feedback, all of which was positive. **RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

122. 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 received.

123. The Minutes of the last meeting of the 18th January 2021

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.**

124. Police Update

The Chair welcomed the Neighbourhood Police Sergeant covering Peterlee, Horden and Blackhall, T/Sgt 2722 Charlotte Burn. T/Sgt reported on the response plan being pulled together to deal with off road bikes and assured work was ongoing and pro active. She reported on an increase in burglaries to local schools and the Stamping Out Project dealing with ASB/youth nuisance. Details were given on community engagement, using social media and more traditional reporting/feedback with suggestion boxes being used. Several issues were raised with T/Sgt Burn which included youths walking the streets; update on a recent dog attack, off road bikes and the frustration of residents. She encouraged all to keep reporting and communicating with the Police. **RESOLVED the Council's thanks be recorded for the Polices' attendance**

S McGlen left the meeting at 6.30 due to technical issues.

125. Internal Auditor's Report

The Chair welcomed the Durham County Council Interim Internal Audit Manager, Tracy Henderson, to the meeting and she took council through the Internal Audit Progress report, a copy of which had been previously circulated to each Member. In presenting the report council were advised delivery of the audit plan was impacted following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic which resulted in Audit agreeing a new way or working with the Council through remote access and where visits needed to be made and records collected following the completion of risk assessments for each individual and location. Details were given of the amendments made to the Annual Audit Plan and there were no management responses to outstanding draft reports overdue. There were four medium priority recommendations overdue against original target implementation dates. Revised target dates have been agreed in all cases with no recommendations overdue. There were no reports issued in the period that resulted in a Limited Assurance Opinion. **RESOLVED the outturn position on progress made in delivering the internal audit plan for 2020/21 together with that made by Managers in responding to the work of internal audit to gain assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment, be noted and the report be accepted.**

126. Castle Eden Dene National Nature Reserve

The Chair welcomed Joe Davies, Senior Reserve Manager to the meeting and he provided an update on activities at the Castle Eden Dene Nature Reserve. Mr Davies thanked the Town Council for their financial support and he gave reported the contribution had been used to install a footpath providing access for all into the area so that everyone could come and experience nature and enjoy the sights in the Reserve. Mr Davies provided an update on how the Reserve had been operating in the light of the pandemic and that he felt COVID19 had shown a new appreciation of the site with local residents using it to improve not only their physical health but their mental health and well being during a difficult period. The Chair thanked Mr Davies for joining the meeting. **RESOLVED the information given be noted and the grant for 2021/22 be considered further by the Town Council when the budget detail was finalised.**

127. Minutes of the Resources Meeting held on 8th February 2021

The minutes of the meeting of this meeting had been circulated for Member's information. **RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

128. 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 there had been no further confirmed cases of COVID 19 in the workforce, whilst there had been several tests taken. 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 confirmed that the next round of food and support packages were due to go out that week and that an exit plan was to be formulated for the service, the packages dependent upon funding and the calls on capacity. He advised the Facilities Manager, (Shotton Hall), was currently working on "Bring your own" packages for room and bar hire and re opening plans would be considered further following announcements by the Prime Minister that night. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted and further information be awaited.**

129. Risk Management: Annual review of risk

The report of the Chief Officer provided Members with an over view of the Council's approach to managing risk, outlined the key internal risk controls, and carried out the annual review of the Council's Risk Register as required by regulation. Members noted the content of the report and it was **RESOLVED the Council's Corporate risk assessment and matrix along with the Risk Policy, be confirmed as reviewed and their contents approved.**

130. Council Budget 2021/22

Members were asked to further consider the draft annual budget for the Town Council for the 2021/22 financial year, a copy of which had been circulated. Members were reminded that the draft budget had already been considered by the Town Council in January 2021 and by Resources Committee in February 2021. Resources had asked for a few issues to be clarified and wish to further consider the budget in a meeting in March. The Chief Officer reported there was currently a £144,000 forecast budget deficit. **RESOLVED this be considered further at a Resources Meeting in March.**

131. NEP Fund Application

Council considered an application from Improtech Soccer, Bradley Improtech FC requesting £600-700 towards the cost of replacement of their playing strip and the Deputy Town Clerk provided further details at the meeting. **RESOLVED a grant of £775.00 be made to this Team.**

132. Updated Policies

The following policies were for consideration, approval and adoption by Peterlee Town Council:-

- (i) COVID-19
- (ii) Officer's Code of Conduct
- (iii) Whistle Blowing Policy

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

133. Garden Competition

Members received a report from the Corporate Services Manager presenting Members with a new option for Peterlee in Bloom 2021 where the competition would be held using photos of gardens and allotments would be viewed without the plot holder being present and details of the prizes were given. **RESOLVED this suggestion be agreed to for 2021.**

134. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

Councillor A Watson reported it had now been confirmed the local council elections were going ahead on 6 May 2021. It was noted the new LIDL store had opened and was a great addition to the new retail park. News of the rolling out of the covid vaccine left everyone

feeling optimistic whilst everyone was encouraged to still be careful and use caution. It was reported the North & South Denes were much improved. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

135. Spokesperson of the Labour Political Party's Report

Councillor Fenwick spoke about how tough the past year had been financially for the Council with functions cancelled meaning a reduction in revenue. She felt the healthy reserve that had been built up helped the Council cope with the results of the pandemic with all of its services continuing where they could. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

136. Exclusion of the Press & Public

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the items to be discussed, the committee 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, Part 1, paragraph 8.

137. CCTV

The report of the Facilities Manager requesting approval to upgrade the Council's CCTV hard-wear systems and the CCTV monitoring contract, was considered. **RESOLVED the Council place an order for the installation of new CCTV equipment with Company B, Phoenix Eye from Gosforth at a cost of £19,235.12 and for the maintenance of equipment for a fixed three year contract at £8,430.00.**

138. The Pavilion

Members received a report from the Pavilion Centre Manager to seek approval to purchase a new water boiler at the Pavilion. **RESOLVED the quotation received from Company A, CDI Energy Ltd, Peterlee for the supply and fit of a new hot water boiler and flue as detailed in the report in the sum of £18,750.00**