



20th November 2023

In accordance with Paragraphs 8 & 10(2) (b) of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 I hereby summon you to attend a Meeting of **PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL** to be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE, SR8 2PH** on **MONDAY 27th NOVEMBER 2023 at 6.30pm**

Ian Morris, F.S.L.C.C
Town Clerk (Proper Officer of the Council)

Members of the Committee and members of the public are reminded that the public part of the meeting may be recorded in both audio and video, and photographs may be taken.

Members of the public are very welcome to attend our meetings. Due to ongoing precautions for COVID and other seasonal illnesses we have a limited number of designated public seating and so any members of the public wishing to attend Shotton Hall to observe the meeting are advised to contact the Council in advance so that we can reserve a seat for you: council@peterlee.gov.uk or (0191) 586 2491.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Public Participation Session**
Will be held to allow Members of the public an opportunity to put questions to the Council. This item of business to last no more than 15 minutes, as per Council Standing Orders. Several members of the public had indicated that they intended coming along to speak to the meeting.

3. To receive declarations of interest

Members are reminded of the need to disclose any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. Please seek advice from the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk **prior to the meeting** if in doubt. Members are reminded that they can check their published declaration of interests here: <https://bit.ly/2wVyeLA>

Councillor K Liddell has advised that she has an interest in the public open session item relating to Lowhills Road Leisure Gardens.

4. To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the 23rd October 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting are attached for consideration and approval as a true and correct record. (attached)

5. Notes of the Finance Sub Committee of the 23rd October 2023

To confirm and endorse the resolution of the Finance Sub Committee to approve BACS payments paid (attached)

6. The Minutes of the Resources Meeting held on Monday 13th November 2023

The minutes of this meeting are attached for information (attached)

7. Apologies for absence

Request from Cllr Meikle for the Council to agree to accept his apologies for absence from meetings due to health reasons.

8. Policies

To consider and review the following policies:-

(a) **Learning & Development Policy** To view the policy please use:

<https://bit.ly/47mQw8t>

(b) **No Smoking Policy** To view the policy please use:

<https://bit.ly/3G8EAv9>

(c) **Shared Parental Leave Policy** To view the policy please use:

<https://bit.ly/3G5vqj9>

(d) **Mutual Respect and Dignity Policy** To view this policy please use:

<https://bit.ly/3R4W2ql>

(e) **Mental Wellbeing Policy** To view the policy please use:

<https://bit.ly/3sJN4G4>

Members can access the policies using the links provided above. Hard copies are available from the Democratic Services Team on request.

9. 2023/24 Financial Year 2nd quarter budget update report

To receive a report from the Town Clerk outlining the Council's budget performance to the end of the second quarter, 30th September 2023.

(Report of the Town Clerk, attached)

10. Spokesperson of the Independent Party's Report

11. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

12. Spokesperson of the Labour Political Party's Report

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting. Space in the public gallery is limited and you are advised to contact the council in advance if you do wish to attend.

Contact: Ian Morris, Chief Officer & Town Clerk, Peterlee Town Council, Shotton Hall, Peterlee Co Durham SR8 2PH

e mail: council@peterlee.gov.uk

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2023 at 6.30PM

PRESENT: - Cllr A Laing (Chair)

M McCue, S Simpson, R Moore, J Black, D Hawley, K Hawley, R Scott, D Howarth, M A Cartwright & M Sanderson

65. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were offered from Councillors K Duffy, T Duffy, R Burnip, A Stockport & K Lidell. **RESOLVED Council note the apologies that had been submitted.**

66. Public Participation Session

There were several members of the public present at the meeting representing the Lowhills Road Leisure Gardens site. Their spokesperson circulated a list of the gardeners' concerns relating to a recent spate of crime and vandalism at the site. Following questions from Members, the Clerk proceeded to respond to the points raised. Assurances were given that an on-site meeting was to be held soon with the Police to make progress with some of the issues. The group thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to come along to the meeting and for them listening to their concerns. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

67. Lowhills Road allotments - vandalism and thefts

This item had been requested by Councillor Rob Moore and in the public open session the council discussed the issue of vandalism and thefts from the allotments at Lowhills Road. It was suggested CCTV and security lighting might help with the problem and that further information and pricing should be sought by council officers. **RESOLVED the site meeting be held with the Police and Community Safety Team and a further report be prepared for options to improve the security at the site.**

68. To receive declarations of interest

Members were reminded of the need to disclose any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. No interests were declared.

69. To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the 25th September 2023
The minutes of the previous meeting were attached for consideration and approval as a true and correct record subject to Councillor R Scott being shown as in attendance. **RESOLVED the minutes be approved and duly signed.**
70. Notes of the Finance Sub Committee of the 25th September 2023
Members confirmed and endorsed the resolution of the Finance Sub Committee to approve BACS payments paid.
71. The Minutes of the Community & Environment Meeting held on Monday 9th October 2023
The notes of this meeting were attached for information. **RESOLVED the minutes be noted.**
72. The notes of the Scrutiny Meeting held on Monday 16th October 2023
The notes of this meeting were attached for information. **RESOLVED the contents be noted.**
73. External Audit for 2022/23 completion
The Clerk presented the meeting with a summary of the feedback received from the External Auditor on the 2022/23 AGAR. **RESOLVED the notice of completion of the 2022/23 Audit from the Town Council's external auditor, be accepted.**
74. East Durham AAP Neighbourhood Budget Funding
(a) Santa's Wish/Toy Appeal
(b) Peterlee's Unsung Heroes
The Deputy Town Clerk provided details of these two applications for grant funding via the East Durham AAP. **RESOLVED the applications be supported with the match funding from PTC and progress with the grant funding applications, be awaited.**
75. Policies
Members considered and reviewed the Flexible Working Policy that was discussed and recommended for approval at the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 16th October 2023. **RESOLVED the flexible working policy be approved and adopted with immediate effect.**

76. Circus Eden Lane 2024

Members were asked to consider the request from Planet Circus to use the site at Eden Lane on 2-9th June 2024. This circus had been very well received by the community in the past and it was **RESOLVED that permission be granted for the use of land at Eden Lane in June 2024 the week in June.**

77. Budget Setting Priorities

This item had been referred from the Scrutiny Meeting held on 16 October 2023, to further consider future service provision by PTC. The Clerk provided a summary of the Council's budget, reserves and precept costs since 2016 and highlighted the fact that the Council's household precept and annual expenditure are both substantially lower 'in real terms' (ie after inflation) compared to 2016 levels. The Clerk highlighted a number of budget pressures facing the Council next year, including the proposed reduction of grant by Durham County Council and also general inflationary pressures. It was agreed a series of workshops be arranged to make progress on the new budget, with the first informal meeting of members agreed for Friday 27th October 2023. **RESOLVED this course of action be agreed.**

78. Spokesperson of the Independent Party's Report

Councillor K Hawley reported the Warm Welcome Café hub at Shotton Hall had now closed having utilised its grant funding. She thanked the volunteers and staff who had helped to make it a success. **RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

79. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

Councillor Cartwright reported on visitors being invited into the newly refurbished Leisure Centre. She reported on tinned vegan and vegetarian food being donated by Heather Mills and assured she would provide the telephone number for Members to make contact should they have groups/organisations that might make use of this. In closing she advised that the Peterlee Care Home at Westcott Road was to hold 5th November celebrations. **RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

At this point Members were advised that the Hearts of Oak had informed that the Council that they had decided to withdraw their proposal for a firework display, and had thanked everyone at PTC for their help and support in trying to make this event happen.

80. Spokesperson of the Labour Political Party's Report

Councillor R Scott reported the Winter Warmer café at the Methodist Church was still going well with 20-30 people regularly attending. He reported that the Mayor's Civic Events were going well and he encouraged more Councillors to take part in them. In

closing he reported how pleased he was with the recent by-election results around the country. **RESOLVED the information given be noted.**

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2023

Present:-
S Simpson & R Scott

6. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Members were provided with the accounts and invoices for October 2023 to be paid by BACS in the sum of £181,644.39. Following checking of the documents provided, it was **RECOMMENDED that the accounts presented be paid.**

Report to: Peterlee Town Council
Date of Meeting: 19th November 2023
Subject: 2023/24 financial year – second quarter budget summary report
Report of: Ian Morris, Town Clerk

Report Purpose: To provide Members with a budget summary report to the end of the second quarter of the 2023/24 financial year, in line the Council’s Financial Regulations¹.

Background: This budget report is intended to satisfy the requirement of s5.8 of the Council’s Financial Regulations to provide Council with a report on income and expenditure against the Council’s budget heads on a quarterly basis.

The working process that enables this report is as follows:

- End of Quarter budget report produced and circulated to Budget holders by Finance Team;
- Variance report produced and discussed with each budget holder;
- Report to Council for discussion and approval.

This report represents the Council’s position at the end of the second quarter of the 2023/24 Financial Year, i.e. as at 30th September 2023.

Q2 summary: The 2022/23 quarter 2 overall budget outturn per budget head is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

Key issues to bring to Members attention include:

- Energy cost increases continue to add pressure on budgets with Q2 energy costs (ie energy bills paid in the six months April – September 2023) up 42% compared to the same period in the previous financial year:

	Q2 2021/22	Q2 2022/23	Q2 2023/24	Difference	% change from last year	% of current year budget
Gas	£5,130	£7,845	£16,351	+£8,506	+108%	45%
Electricity	£20,559	£32,609	£41,140	+£8,531	+26%	41%
Total	£25,689	£40,454	£57,491	+£17,037	+42%	42%

Table 1: summary of Q2 utilities expenditure over last three financial years

As at 30th September 2023 the Council has paid £57,491 in gas and electricity bills, which is an increase of 42% compared to the same period in 2022 and an increase of 124% compared to the same period in 2021. The Council did

¹ Council’s financial regulations are available from the Town Clerk on request or here: <https://peterlee.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/37/2023/05/Financial-Regulations-Reviewed-May-2023.pdf>

however budget for increased costs this year and total utilities expenditure is broadly in line with expectations. Speculation about the impact by year-end is hampered by uncertainty in both future utility prices and how much energy the Council will use – which will be somewhat dictated by the severity of the coming winter.;

- Shotton Hall banqueting suites have performed relatively well compared to budget forecast for the first half of the financial year, however with the commercial operations effectively closed for the remainder of the winter due to heating and staffing issues there is a likelihood that it will significantly underperform for the rest of the financial year.;
- The Pavilion has performed below target for the first half-year, however income from room hire, bar and bistro operations are all up on the same period last year, with total income up 10% over the comparative periods.
- In total, the Q2 budget situation is marginally better than the forecast position however the second half of the year continues to include a number of key risks including weather, utility costs, property condition, and the ongoing operational impact of unforeseen staff shortages affecting commercial activities at both Shotton Hall and The Pavilion.

Q2 variances: A number of individual budget heads have variances in excess of the 'material' 15% limit prescribed in the Financial Regulations. Summary explanations for these material variances are provided in Appendix 2 to this report.

Recommendation: Members are recommended to note the content of this report.

Appendix 1: 2023/24 quarter 2 variance table by budget heads

N.B. Members' attention is drawn in particular to columns F and H which provide the *pro rata* (i.e. quarter 1 position) variances.

A: Code	B: Budget Head	C: 2023/24 Budget	D: Q2 forecast	E: Q2 Actual	F: Q2 Variance	G: % of Budget	H: pro rata variance %
101	Central & Civic HQ Costs	£691,684	£400,842	£364,324	-£36,518	-5%	-9%
102	Democratic Costs	£31,000	£15,250	£12,572	-£2,678	-9%	-18%
103	Corporate Management	£22,550	£11,275	£12,393	£1,118	5%	10%
105	Other Costs and Income	-£1,853,761	-£926,881	-£927,781	-£901	0%	0%
201	Shotton Hall banqueting suites	£92,402	£66,076	£36,195	-£29,881	-32%	-45%
221	The Pavilion Sports & Community Centre	£269,182	£95,358	£81,217	-£14,141	-5%	-15%
240	Sport & Leisure (pitches & equipment, etc)	£148,609	£74,305	£64,194	-£10,111	-7%	-14%
241	Hill Rigg House	£21,669	£10,835	£8,313	-£2,522	-12%	-23%
242	Lowhills Bowls Pavilion	£499	£250	£0	-£250	-50%	-100%
261	Rugby Club site	-£7,001	-£7,001	-£6,742	£259	-4%	-4%
262	Eden Lane Parks Depot	£40,322	£20,161	£17,643	-£2,518	-6%	-12%
293	Eden Lane Bowls Pavilion	£2,095	£1,048	£945	-£103	-5%	-10%
280	Woodhouse Park	£80,867	£40,434	£27,662	-£12,772	-16%	-32%
290	Sports Development	£49,465	£24,733	£19,159	-£5,574	-11%	-23%
301	Neighbourhood Services general budget	£220,180	£110,090	£104,694	-£5,396	-2%	-5%
325	Cemetery Service	£36,982	£18,491	£18,217	-£274	-1%	-1%
350	Allotments	£13,457	£5,004	£1,087	-£3,917	-29%	-78%
410	Town Activities	£14,000	£5,500	£2,472	-£3,917	-22%	-55%
430	Town Events	£35,000	£26,050	£22,614	-£3,436	-10%	-13%
901	Capital Projects	£66,000	£17,500	-£245	-£17,745	-27%	-101%

Appendix 2: material (>15%) variances for quarter 2 by budget head

NB: negative variances indicate an underspend, whether through reduced expenditure or increased income or both.

Code	Budget Head	pro rata variance %	variance £	Explanation
102	Democratic Costs	18%	£2,678	Lower level of participation allowances being paid due to co-option; underspend on Members' training.
201	Shotton Hall banqueting suites	45%	-£29,881	Higher than forecast net income from commercial activity, likely to fall behind forecast by year end due to winter slowdown due to property condition and staffing issues.
241	Hill Rigg House	23%	-£2,522	Hire income received at start of year; lower than forecast expenditure
280	Woodhouse Park	32%	-£12,772	Lower than forecast levels of staff costs; lower than forecast alarm & CCTV costs.
290	Sports Development	23%	-£5,574	Higher than forecast income generated by the service.
350	Allotments	78%	-£3,917	Higher income than forecast; lower expenditure than forecast.
410	Town Activities	55%	-£3,028	Lower than forecast expenditure on concessionary uses. (N.B. this nets-off against lower than forecast income for concessionary uses at The Pavilion and Shotton Hall, so there is no overall impact on the budget bottom-line.)
901	Capital Projects	101%	-£17,745	Higher than expected grant income in first half of year; small underspend in forecast emergency works