

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL

PETERLEE

ON TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2015

PRESENT: COUN C J METCALFE (CHAIR)

Mesdames:- K Liddell, S Simpson, V Watson, C Baty & K  
Hawley

Messrs:- S Miles, D Sillito, W M Jeffrey, C Watkins, R J Curtis, J  
Alvey, D Milsom & A Watson

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

The Chairman advised Members of the committee that part of the meeting may be recorded by both audio and video, and it may be that photographs were taken.

63. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been previously submitted and accepted from Councillor L Wood, (ill), G Cowie, (ill), C Robbins, (ill), L Cook, (Princes Trust Meeting), M A Cartwright.

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

64. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING a copy of which had been previously circulated, were approved.

65. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC  
IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING 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 1985.

66. REQUEST FOR VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY

Members were advised the Pensions Section, Durham County Council had advised that there were no employer costs for releasing the employee in questions' benefits early. Given there were no early release costs the Council have agreed you would be free to retire should you wish to do so.

**RECOMMENDED the advice be noted and an appropriate reply be sent to the employee concerned.**

67. OVERTIME REPORT

The Overtime Report and hours worked by Facilities Staff Report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was considered. The report also gave the overtime and the cost of covering vacant posts for the full year.

**RECOMMENDED the contents of the report be accepted.**

68. PAYMENT OF HONORARIA – FINANCE/CLERICAL OFFICER

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the above.

**RECOMMENDED a one off honoraria payment of £1,308.81 be paid to the Finance/Clerical Officer in respect of the additional duties undertaken.**

69. STAFFING – THE PAVILION

Members gave consideration to a report prepared outlining the options for the operation of the Pavilion.

**RECOMMENDED a Special Meeting be held to consider this report further in detail.**

AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS DECLARED AN INTEREST AND LEFT THE MEETING:-  
COUNCILLOR A WATSON, J ALVEY, W M JEFFREY, R CURTIS AND D MILSOM.

70. ABSENCE REPORT

The Sickness Absence Report, detailing sickness absence figures for the previous month, had been circulated to each Member for information. Consideration was given to the payment of occupational sick pay.

**RECOMMENDED that the contents of the absence report, be accepted. FURTHER RECOMMENDED the Town Council continue to pay full occupational sick pay as per the report issued to the Council in January 2015, (item 11.2.1(vii)).**

71. TOWN CLERK'S GRIEVANCE - APOLOGY

Members were circulated with correspondence received from the Town Clerk's Union. Reference was made to the recommendations made in the Report of the Independent Grievance Panel dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that a full and unreserved apology had been made to the Town Clerk for the delay in completing the grievance process and for the actions of the Council and individual Members in relation to elements of the grievance which had been upheld. How the public apology should be made public had still to be agreed.

The Council had also referred the two councillors, as named in the meeting, to Durham County Council for breaches of the Code of Conduct, under the Procedure for Local Assessment of Complaints – Code of Conduct Issues. The referral would be in accordance with Section 27(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members.

A sub committee was to be established with delegated responsibility for all Human Resource issues relating to the Town Clerk at the Annual

General Meeting to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015. It was suggested this Committee would have no more than four Members, including representatives from both political groups and to be chaired by either the Mayor or the Chair of the Establishment Committee, (the two councillors named in the report would not be members of this Committee for so long as the current Town Clerk continued in her employment with the Town Council).

The audit and review and update of all policy documents, was still an outstanding action, however the Governance Sub Group were meeting on a regular basis to carry out this task. The appropriate processes of risk management and structured return to work framework was to be established to enable the Town Clerk to return to work, whilst it was noted the sickness absence management policy had been adopted in January 2015.

**RECOMMENDED progress be made in due course with the outstanding actions from the Panel's report.**