

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE

AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2006

PRESENT: COUN W M JEFFREY (CHAIR)

Mesdames: M Milsom

Messrs: H Bennett, D Milsom,  
R Jones, T Jones, C J Metcalfe, D Coates,  
B Joyce, R Kyle, G Calvert, B Scott

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

IN THE ABSENCE OF BOTH THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN, COUNCILLOR W M JEFFREY WAS NOMINATED TO TAKE THE CHAIR.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Cowie, R Curtis, R Huitson and E W Hall.

2. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Matters Arising

- (i) Minute Number 194 – Outstanding Debt, Shotton Hall, the Town Clerk advised that he had spoken to a debt recovery agent who confirmed that the Company concerned had declared themselves bankrupt.

**RECOMMENDED that agreement be given to writing this debt off.**

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED that the item be referred to the Audit Sub Committee to review the procedure relating to outstanding debts.**

- (i) Minute Number 199 – Youth Activities/Provision, the Town Clerk reported that he had been discussing this matter with the Youth Inclusion Programme and he was awaiting a letter regarding youth provision generally in Peterlee. Once this letter had been received he intended to prepare a further report.

**RECOMMENDED that the letter be awaited and this matter be considered further.**

- (iii) Minute Number 209 – Policy on Mode of Transport for Officials on Twinning Visits, it was noted the Town Council had decided that the Policy was that if the visit was a Twinning Trip arranged in conjunction with the PNFA then the Officials travel with the Twinning Party; if it was an official invitation from Nordenham to the Council, then the policy be to fly. As this short 4 day trip was part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Visit, if the two seats could be filled, then the two Councillors who had requested to do so, be allowed to fly to Germany with the Leader and Town Clerk continuing to travel by coach.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

- (iv) Minute Number 212 – Enquiry for Land at Shotton Hall it was noted that the Town Clerk had started discussions on this item.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

3. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was adopted.

4. APOLLO PAVILION

The Chairman welcomed Mr Dave Clarke and Mr Paul Penman, of the District of Easington to the meeting.

Mr Penman outlined for Members the cleaning regime where from April through to November the lake itself was cleaned 5 times, the concrete was cleaned 8 times per year and the grass cut on a 10 day cutting cycle, with daily litter picks.

It was noted that the water came from the Lake in Shotton Hall grounds and the problem was keeping the flow steady to avoid any build up of smells. It was suggested that Officers of the District Council liaise with Officers from the Town Council on this matter.

Questions were asked as to how much money had been spent on the proposed scheme for the Pavilion and where was this to be financed from in the future. Dave Clarke assured he would provide the financial details to the Clerk after the meeting. He confirmed that he had received plans from the Apollo Pavilion Steering Group which were attractive but required funding to bring to fruition. Unfortunately, these proposals were not seen as financially sustainable at the moment.

Mr Clarke advised that as part of the Heritage Open Days the Pavilion would be open for public access to the top level on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted and the actions as detailed be carried out.**

5. APOLLO PAVILION STEERING GROUP, NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 2<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were accepted.
6. NOTES OF THE PETERLEE YOUTH GROUPS OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL & 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were accepted.
7. SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERK'S LARGER LOCAL COUNCILS CONFERENCE, CANARY WHARF, 27<sup>TH</sup> & 28<sup>TH</sup>

APRIL 2006 – DELEGATE'S REPORT, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was accepted.

8. INSTITUTE OF CEMETERY & CREMATORIUM MANAGEMENT SEMINAR 2006, CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY, 27<sup>TH</sup> & 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2006 – DELEGATE'S REPORT, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was accepted.

It was requested that the Officer attending prepare a report on the salient points from the Seminar.

**RECOMMENDED that this course of action be agreed and a report be awaited.**

9. UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE CASTLE EDEN DENE NNR JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were accepted.

10. THE NOTES OF SITE VISIT TO LIMEKILN GILL AND MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member were accepted.

11. EMPTY PROPERTY STRATEGY

Members were given a copy of the questionnaire relating to empty properties and asked to complete it and return it to the District of Easington.

**RECOMMENDED that this course of action, be agreed to.**

12. PETERLEE YOUTH FORUM GRANT

Members were advised of receipt of a grant for £1,000 from the Community Network towards the costs of organising the next Rave event to be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2006. An evaluation was required after the event and the Community Network welcomed

the involvement of Peterlee Youth Council in the activities associated with the Network.

**RECOMMENDED that the grant be received.**

13. CHANGES TO REFUSE COLLECTIONS

Members were circulated with a copy of details on the changes to refuse collections in the District.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

14. COMMUNITY DECLINE & CHARTER 88'S CAMPAIGN FOR A MODERN DEMOCRACY – EMPOWERING CITIZENS AND LOCAL COUNCILS

In considering this request for support Members felt that the local MP, Mr John Cummings should be consulted to obtain further information.

**RECOMMENDED that this course of action be followed.**

15. LOCAL AUTHORITY BYELAWS IN ENGLAND: A DISCUSSION PAPER & DRAFT RESPONSE FOR CONSIDERATION

Members were circulated with a copy of this ODPM Discussion Paper, and the draft response prepared by the Town Clerk.

**RECOMMENDED that the contents of this draft be agreed and sent on behalf of the Town Council.**

16. EASINGTON & DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU – INCORPORATION DETAILS

Members were circulated with information relating to the incorporation of the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted.**

17. ENSURING A PATIENT-LED NHS – OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE CONFIGURATION OF PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS

Members were circulated with details of the decision made by the County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority that two PCTs be established: one PCT for County Durham & Darlington and one PCT for Teeside. This was to be recommended to the Secretary for State for Health. It had also been agreed to merge the two strategic Health Authorities in County Durham and Tees Valley and Northumberland, Tyne & Wear to form a single SHA for the North East.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

18. EASINGTON AREA ASSOCIATION OF PARISH & TOWN COUNCILS – MINUTES/ATTENDANCE AT ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Members were circulated with a copy of a letter from the Easington Area Association of Parish & Town Councils expressing their concern at the lack of attendance of representatives from some Parish & Town Councils. It was asked that this be brought to the attention of representatives to encourage them to attend these meetings whenever possible.

One of the Town Council's representatives explained that he did not receive notification of the meetings from the Secretariat.

**RECOMMENDED that this be taken up with the Easington Area Association of Parish & Town Councils.**

19. NALC- NOMINATIONS FOR LARGER LOCAL COUNCILS COMMITTEE 2007

**RECOMMENDED that this item be referred to the Council Meeting for consideration.**

**PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM COUNCILLOR B JOYCE DECLARED AN**

**INTEREST AND TOOK NO PART IN THE DISCUSSION WHICH ENSUED.**

20. PROPOSED SPORTS & COMMUNITY BUILDING, HELFORD ROAD, PETERLEE – DESIGN REPORT – 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT

Members were circulated with the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft report together with a display showing the amendments to the design of Helford Road Sports and Community Building, as a result of the first public consultation.

Members were agreeable to the amendments but asked if the Town Clerk could find out from the Architect if it would be possible to “turn” the building slightly so that it was more South facing.

The Town Clerk advised that the proposals would now go to the public for further consultation.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted, and the Architect be consulted to see if the aspect changes could be accommodated.**

21. DANGEROUS, SPEEDING & UNAUTHORISED TRAFFIC ACCESSING THE EASTFIELD AND THORNTREE GILL ROADS

The Town Clerk advised that this matter had been discussed at the last meeting of the Central Area Forum and that he was to attend a meeting at Peterlee Police Station on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2006 to discuss this matter.

**RECOMMENDED that a progress report be awaited.**

22. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE – VISION FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

Members were circulated with a copy of the summary of the Building Schools for the Future – Vision for Secondary Education.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

23. PUBLICATION OF THE COUNCIL'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The Town Clerk requested approval for the publication of the Town Council's quarterly newsletter for 2006/2007 at a cost of £710.00 per issue with the North East Press.

**RECOMMENDED that approval be given to proceed with the publication of the Town Council's quarterly newspaper "A bout T own" at a cost of £710.00 per issue.**

24. DISTRICT OF EASINGTON

- (i) Local Council Charter for Easington
- (ii) Procurement Code of Practice

Copies of the above information were circulated to each Member. The Town Clerk advised that it was possible that Peterlee Town Council may have to adopt a Procurement Code of Practice as part of Corporate Governance requirements.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

25. PETERLEE REGENERATION PLAN – WALKABOUTS, REPORT OF SOCIAL REGENERATION CONSULTANTS

Members were circulated with a copy of the reports following these Estate Walkabouts. Members were asked to feed back any comments to the Town Clerk; alternatively they had received details of the workshops being held week beginning 12<sup>th</sup> June 2006 where they could attend and give direct feedback to the Consultants.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**



26. MEMBERS PARTICIPATION ALLOWANCES – LETTER FROM SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL

Members were circulated with a copy of a letter received from Spennymoor Town Council giving details of recommendations made by them to the Remuneration Panel at Sedgefield Borough Council.

**RECOMMENDED that this matter be referred to the Council Meeting for further consideration.**

27. FINANCIAL BUDGET COMPARISON 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2005 – 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2006

Given below are overall the figures for the year:-

	Budget	Actual
Gross	1,637,598.00	1,620,972.64
Income	1,542,005.00	1,721,813.73
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Net	-95,593.00	+100,841.09

Whilst gross expenditure was almost as budgeted, (down only £16,625.25), income was up by £179,808.73 on the budgeted figure which is reflected in the Council's bank balance at the year end of £441,529.23.

The major variances in the 2005/2006 expenditure/income budgets against the actual figures relate to:-

Service Head

Corporate Management +£30,000 income – Best Value Grant

Other Services +£50,910 income – VAT Return

Banqueting Suites +£28,623.00 income – Additional Income from hirings etc

Public Buildings

Parks General

Sport & Leisure Cemetery & Burials	+£22,614.00 expenditure – additional manpower costs
Capital Works (expenditure)	underspend of £50,352 reflecting predominantly Helford Road Training Scheme (awaiting grant application approval) and Helford Road rebuild (under spend on fees) plus non budgeted capital income of £13,519.00

**RECOMMENDED that the Financial Budget Comparison 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 through to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 be agreed.**

28. AUDIT

**(a) Internal Audit Reports**

- (i) Teddy Bear's Picnic
- (ii) Debtors System
- (iii) Public Buildings
- (iv) Internal Audit Service 2006/07
- (v) Internal Audit Panel- Date for a Meeting

**RECOMMENDED that the internal audit reports (i-iii) be referred to an Internal Audit Panel, along with the item relating to the writing off of debts.**

**Audit Commission**

- (i) Audit Plan 2006/2007
- (ii) Work Programme & Audit Fee Scales 2006/2007
- (iii) Audit of Accounts 2005/2006 – Notice of Appointment of  
Date for Exercise of Public Rights

The Town Clerk gave Members details of the above.

**RECOMMENDED that the Audit Plan 2006/2007 along with the work programme and Audit fee scales 2006/2007 be accepted, and it be noted that the Town Council's Accounts were open for inspection from the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006.**

29. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC  
RESOLVED THAT 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, PERSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES

(ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1961 & THE LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT

30. CASTLE EDEN DENE NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

The Town Clerk gave details on the proposed joint agreement being drawn up between the Town Council, District and County Council and English Nature to cover staff from Castle Eden Dene National Nature Reserve.

**RECOMMENDED that further details be given on progress when known.**

31. SITE INVESTIGATION – PROPOSED SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB, HELFORD ROAD, PETERLEE

The Town Clerk asked for permission, in consultation with the Chairman and Leader, and acting upon the recommendation of the Council's Architect, to accept the lowest tender for this work and for plenary powers be granted to allow site investigation to be carried out as soon as possible.

**RECOMMENDED that approval be given to this course of action.**

32. ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH – CHARITY CONCERT

The Town Clerk asked Members to give consideration to supporting a programme to be produced in conjunction with the presentation of "Midsummer Gladness 3" at St Cuthbert's Church, Peterlee by St Leonards School. Money received from ticket sales would be kept for the Fabric Fund of the Church.

**RECOMMENDED that a quarter page advert be placed with Sport and Leisure Publications Ltd at a cost of £63.00 to support this production.**