

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

PRESENT: COUN T A JONES (CHAIR)

Mesdames: L Wood, J I Measor, J Black & M Milsom

Messrs: R Kyle, J Alvey, H Bennett MBE, W M Jeffrey,  
R Curtis, R Jones, D Langan, C J Metcalfe,  
R Huitson, D Milsom, C Robbins, C Austin  
& E W Hall

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

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted and accepted on behalf of  
Councillors G Cowie and J Hardy.

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

Matters Arising

(i) Minute Number 33 – Enlarged Local Councils Forum

At the Council Meeting in July it was RESOLVED the Town Council  
representation on this enlarged Forum now be as follows:- Councillor  
J I Measor, Councillor W M Jeffrey, along with the Town Clerk, with  
Councillors D Langan and D Milsom as reserves.

(ii) Minute Number 36 – Internal Audit – Query Regarding Cheque Signing Process at the Council Meeting held in July, it was RESOLVED that at least four of the fifteen Members of the Finance Sub Committee attend to sign cheques at the monthly meeting. It was suggested that this be amended to read “**RESOLVED that at least four of the fifteen members of the Finance Sub Committee attend to authorize cheques at the monthly meetings**”.

(iii) Minute Number 42 - Adults, Well Being & Health, Mental Health Day Services - Public Consultation on Proposed Changes to in house services

Members were circulated with a copy of a reply from the Mental Health Day Services Manager following the Town Clerk’s letter on the future of the Horizons Mental Health Resource Centre. Members were not happy with the response and asked that the Town Clerk compile an appropriate reply.

**RECOMMENDED that this course of action be followed and progress with this matter be awaited.**

(iv) Minute Number 43 - Heritage Centre

At the Council meeting held in July, it was RESOLVED that the flag used at the recent flag flying ceremony be retained by the Town Council and used at “The Pavilion”. FURTHER RESOLVED that should any member of the forces or the British Legion etc ask to use the flag, permission be granted.

46. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY & 27<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2209 copies of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

47. THE INSTITUTE OF LOCAL COUNCIL MANAGEMENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2009, CHELTENHAM – DELEGATE’S REPORT

Members considered the report produced by the Town Clerk following his attendance at this Conference. The Town Clerk drew to

Member's attention in particular the item on e communication which was of interest in terms of future engagement with residents.

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

48. AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL AUDITING STANDARDS

Members were circulated with a copy of correspondence received from the Audit Commission. The Town Clerk had discussed the contents with both the Chairman of this Committee and the Mayor and the Audit Commission confirmed that this approach was satisfactory.

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

49. ADJUDICATOR'S DECISION REGARDING COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR 2010 AND BEYOND

Members were circulated with a copy of the School's Adjudicator's decision that ruled that Durham Johnston School must have the same admissions criteria as those for all Community Secondary Schools. This was an issue that the Town Council had made representation on.

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

50. EAST DURHAM – AAP – STEERING GROUPS

The Town Clerk circulated for Members a copy of an invitation to register for various steering group meetings where it was hoped Board and Forum members of the East Durham AAP would take a lead with these groups. The meetings were to be held over a period of just less than a week and the groups were Youth Issues, Education & Deprivation, Job Creation and Regeneration Infrastructure and Transport. Unfortunately, less than a week's notice had been given for the dates of the meetings. The Leader confirmed that some Forum members had not been given any more notice than this also. It was

suggested that the Town Clerk take this matter up with the Principal Area Co-Ordinator.

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

51. EAST DURHAM AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP – UPDATE & FIRST BOARD MEETING

Members were circulated with a copy of an update and details of the first board meeting.

The Leader of the Council had attended the meeting in July and reported that Forum Members were given the opportunity to speak and put issues forward.

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

52. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILLORS, FREE SEMINAR, WEDNESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009, GATESHEAD

Members were circulated with a copy of details of this free seminar to be held in Gateshead on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

**RECOMMENDED that two places be reserved on this course for Councillor J I Measor and Councillor E W Hall.**

53. EAST DURHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Members were circulated with information received advising of the recent changes to the Citizens Advice Bureau and inviting the Town Council to become a member of the East Durham Citizens Advice Bureau. The Town Council's representative on this body, Councillor Alvey, advised that he was concerned that he was listed as a trustee and that meetings were arranged and then cancelled at very short notice.

**RECOMMENDED that this matter be referred to the Council**

**meeting for further consideration.**

54. COUNTY DURHAM & CLEVELAND COUNTY TRAINING PARTNERSHIP UPDATE – HOW TO BECOME A BETTER COUNCIL – TRAINING SESSIONS

Members were circulated with details of the latest courses being offered by the County Durham and Cleveland County Training Partnership. The Town Clerk suggested that “The Council and the Community” Training session to be held on 13th October 2009 at Park House, Lanchester may be useful.

**RECOMMENDED that nine places be reserved on this training course for the following Members:-**

**Councillor Susan McDonnell**

**Councillor Jimmy Alvey**

**Councillor Margaret Milsom**

**Councillor Don Milsom**

**Councillor Bill Jeffrey**

**Councillor Chris Metcalfe**

**Councillor Janice Measor**

**Councillor Ted Hall**

**Councillor Rob Jones.**

55. PROJEKT SENSATION EVENTS

The Deputy Town Clerk asked for approval to arrange the next seven Projekt Sensation Events. The budget for this provision was confirmed. She reported that these events were held at the end of every school term and had been very well attended.

**RECOMMENDED that approval be given for these events to be arranged for the forthcoming scholastic year.**

56. NOMINATIONS FOR POSITIONS ON THE CDALC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members were asked if they wished to nominate for the positions on the CDALC Executive Committee.

**RECOMMENDED that no nominations be submitted at this time.**

57. CDALC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - AGENDA FOR MEETING OF 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009 & MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2009

Members were circulated with a copy of these documents forwarded by the County Durham Association of Local Councils. As the Town Council do not have a representative on the Executive Committee, the Town Clerk felt that circulating these documents would help keep Members advised on discussions. In considering these papers, the Leader referred Item 11 relating to the adoption of allowance rates payable to Executive Committee Members attending conferences, meetings etc. and asked how did the Town Council's rates compare.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted, and the Town Clerk advise in due course how the allowances compare with those paid by Peterlee Town Council.**

58. DIFFICULTIES FOR PEDESTRIANS CROSSING ESSINGTON WAY AT THE JUNCTION WITH LOWHILLS ROAD & STEPHENSON ROAD, PETERLEE

Members were circulated with a copy of a letter received from the District of Easington Citizen Panel regarding the difficulties being experienced by pedestrians at the junction with Lowhills Road and Stephenson Road. It was reported that this was an issue that had been discussed under traffic improvements at a recent meeting with County Council Members and the Town Council and it was understood that investigations were being made such as traffic surveys etc and a progress report was awaited from the County Councillors.

**RECOMMENDED that an appropriate reply be made to Mr Mercer.**

59. REGENERATION OF PETERLEE

Members were circulated with a copy of correspondence received from the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Economic Development, at Durham County Council on the regeneration of Peterlee, giving an assurance that the County Council regard Peterlee as a continuing priority and that things had moved forward significantly since the GVA report. The Town Clerk reported that a meeting was to be arranged for September to discuss this further and it was **RECOMMENDED that this item be placed on the Parks & Cemetery Committee for the Town Clerk to advise accordingly.**

60. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION – PETERLEE AREA ACTION PLAN

Members were circulated with a copy of the report produced by GVA Grimley on the Stakeholder Consultation – Peterlee Area Action Plan. The Town Clerk reported that he has received no formal feedback following this event.

**RECOMMENDED that further information be awaited.**

61. POLLING STATIONS – PETERLEE

Members were circulated with a copy of correspondence from Durham County Council regarding a review of polling stations, in particular finding alternatives to using school premises and a list of premises they considered could be suitable alternatives in Peterlee. All of the locations listed Hill Rigg House, Information Centre, The Pavilion and the classroom at Woodhouse Park, were all in the ownership of the Town Council and this use was agreed in principle. There were issues about the suitability of locations in terms of proximity for voters, in particular Hill Rigg House for residents of Acre Rigg. It was suggested that this view be forwarded to the Electoral Officer.

**RECOMMENDED that the Town Council agree in principle to the use of Hill Rigg House, the Information Centre, The Pavilion**

**and the classroom at Woodhouse Park for elections, but the concern at the location of Hill Rigg House be forwarded also.**

62. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS & PUBLIC  
IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE PASSED THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS & PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1961 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

63. REGISTRATION SERVICES – RELOCATION – PROGRESS REPORT

The Town Clerk advised he was continuing discussions with this proposal. An initial offer had been made in principle by the County Council but the Town Clerk requested approval to continue negotiations and keep Members advised in due course.

**RECOMMENDED that further details be awaited.**

64. COMMUNITY PROJECT PROPOSAL – TREE NURSERY SITE AT ESSINGTON WAY, PETERLEE

Members were circulated with a copy of a community project proposal which involved a request to use the site of the former Tree Nursery on Essington Way. This project was supported by Walkers Snack Foods.

**RECOMMENDED that the author of the proposal, Ms Chrisp, be invited to attend the Parks & Cemetery Meeting to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009 to discuss this proposal with the Council.**

65. PAYMENT OF OUTSTANDING LOAN BALANCE

The Town Clerk gave details of negotiations in the above regard. He requested authority to authorize the payment of £20,900 to Inbev, following consultation with District Audit.

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

66. RENTAL OF A ROOM AT PETERLEE INFORMATION CENTRE

The Town Clerk reported an expression of interest received from NHS South of Tyne & Wear in renting a room for 3 full days from 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009 in the Information Centre, Peterlee, and outlined the offer made. The Town Clerk suggested that in his opinion this was a good offer.

**RECOMMENDED that the offer made by NHS South of Tyne & Wear to rent a room in the Information Centre at a charge of £150.00 per 3 days, be accepted.**

67. PETERLEE CRICKET & SOCIAL CLUB – PROPOSED MEETING  
– SUNDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

The Town Clerk circulated for Member's attention a copy of correspondence received from the Chair of Peterlee Cricket and Social Club. Members were asked if they had any agenda items to include on the agenda for the meeting to be held on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2009 to advise the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

**RECOMMENDED that the following Members represent the Council at this meeting:-  
Councillors S McDonnell, W M Jeffrey, J I Measor & R Jones.**

68. PUBLIC MEETING – SHOTTON AIR FIELD

The Town Clerk advised that he had been contacted to advise that there was to be a public meeting to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2009 at 7.00pm in Shotton Community Centre to discuss the increasing noise pollution/wind turbines/extensions to hangar facilities and the expansion of the Parachute Club.

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

69. MEMBERS & STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Town Clerk asked for clarification as to if the Council wanted a party organizing again this year and also which venue they would prefer as the Town Council now had a new facility with The Pavilion should they wish to organize this.

**RECOMMENDED that this be further considered at the Council Meeting.**