

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE  
ON TUESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

PRESENT: COUN K HAWLEY (CHAIR)

K Liddell, M McCue, R Scott, R Moore, D Hawley & D Howarth

8. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were submitted.

9. The Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting are attached for consideration and approval as a true and correct record. **RESOLVED the minutes be accepted and signed as a true and correct record.**

10. Ways of Working pre and post covid

The Town Clerk gave a presentation on working arrangements before the covid-19 pandemic and how much hybrid working is actually happening, eg in November and December 2022 there was only 1% of staff time spent working from home, in January 2023 3% of available staff days were spent working from home. Reference was made to the results of national studies that showed there was improved staff well being (60%) and a reduction in overheads, (41%) and he also gave details of the trial 4 day week. Details were given on the reduction in sickness absence and increased staff well being at PTC with the use of hybrid working. He stressed that working from home was a tool and was predominantly task driven.

There was considerable discussion about home working. The Chair asked how we might get feedback from residents on the services provided to them by PTC. It was confirmed the magazine had included several articles but to date there had been no response/feedback received from the public. The Clerk spoke about sessions used in another part of the country where a random selection of 200 households were invited to come along to an informal session/focus group and for the Council to listen to residents. He suggested this may offer a richer quality of response and provide a way to reach out to residents. **AGREED this be suggested to Council as a way to engage with the public of Peterlee.**

11. Review of Committees - Terms of Reference & attendance at meetings

The committee considered the committees and the meeting schedule in use, currently with the second and fourth Monday of the month, with working parties being held during the day and quarterly Member's Briefing session held on an evening on one of the "free" Mondays from 6-7pm. It was agreed that should the Chair's of Resources and Community & Environment have issues where they needed a meeting calling ad hoc then that would be

accommodated. It was also suggested that where possible Working Parties be held virtually via Teams. The current schedule of meetings was accepted.