



PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PETERLEE  
TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL,  
PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2006

PRESENT: Coun. R Curtis (CHAIR)

Mesdames: A Lowden, A Laing,  
M Milsom & M A Cartwright

Messrs: B Scott, G Calvert, D Coates,  
H Bennett, W M Jeffrey, C J Metcalfe,  
E W Hall, R Huitson, B Joyce &  
D Milsom

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The Public Open Session was attended by Mr G Wheatley and Mr W E Craigs of Cleveland Place, who addressed the Council on their concerns regarding the height of the hedge adjacent their properties at Woodhouse Park.

Mr Wheatley thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak to them and advised of his concerns that in the light of events in the Park he asked if the height of the hedge could be reduced, and if some of the trees could be taken out to leave gaps in the hedge.

Mr Wheatley felt that this course of action would deter some of the youths who are entering the Park regularly to drink after its closure. Mr Wheatley said he was aware that it was impossible for staff to supervise the Park because of its size, but was concerned children may be at risk. If the height of the trees was reduced and gaps left he felt this would ease some of the residents concerns. The hedge was now the height of the adjacent street lamps.



Mr Craigs explained he and his late wife had met with the former Parks Superintendent, Mr Clay approximately five years ago. At the time, Mr Clay had explained to Mr Craigs it was his intention to let the hedge grow to fence height. At this point Mr Clay could determine the effectiveness of the hedge as a windbreak, and decide which and how many trees could be taken out. In the light of this information, Mr Craigs said he had not complained at the time.

In closing Mr Wheatley said he believed that the height of the hedge affected the safe use of the Park and was “an accident waiting to happen”. He advised children were getting between the hedge and the fence, climbing the fence and he was concerned some child impaled themselves. He asked the Council to review the situation.

The Leader thanked Mr Wheatley and Mr Craigs for their attendance, and advised the Council would consider their request.

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

203. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Cowie, R Kyle, C Robbins and J I Measor.

204. AUDIT COMMISSION

- (i) Audit of Accounts 2004/05
- (ii) Best Value Performance Plan 2005/06
- (iii) Programme for Closure 2006/07

The Chairman welcomed Mr Hepple, the Audit Manager for the District to the meeting.

Mr Hepple was pleased to advise that the Council had received unqualified reports for items (i) and (ii) above.



With regard to the Best Value Performance Plan, he had no reservations but suggested that the Council should take steps to publicise the Plan, specifically through web site development.

With regard to treasury management, Mr Hepple advised with more autonomy been given to Council's, then Council themselves needed to determine what borrowing was affordable, and the rationale behind this. The Council were asked to consider the implementation of the Prudential Code to create the framework for determining affordable borrowing levels.

Mr Hepple pointed out that Members needed to be involved in the assessment of what internal controls are in place to safeguard the Council, and again he urged Members to follow this course.

Finally, at the District Auditor's request, Mr Hepple drew to Member's attention the need for scrutiny in the closure of the accounts. Mr Hepple said the District Auditor was concerned, not about Peterlee Town Council, but generally at the number of simple errors in accounts which suggested Members were not scrutinizing accounts, and he urged further Member involvement and scrutiny.

The Leader thanked Mr Hepple for his presentation, and the Town Clerk and his staff for again receiving a satisfactory report from the Audit Commission.

The Leader also confirmed Members were conscious of their responsibilities on financial matters, and would refer the matters raised to the Council's Internal Audit Panel.

**RESOLVED that the matters raised by the Audit Commission be referred to the Council's Internal Audit Panel for consideration.**

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

MATTERS ARISING

- (i) Minute Number 202 – Civic Taxi Contract **RESOLVED that this minute be amended to show that Councillors R Curtis, J I Measor, A Laing and R Kyle had all declared an interest and left the meeting while this item was discussed.**

(ii) Minute No. 190 – Stocktake Summary Sheet – Line Cleaning, the Facilities Manager had attended the meeting to give Members a verbal report on line cleaning and wastage, the practice, procedures and the figures involved.

**RESOLVED** that the Facilities Manager prepare a written report on this matter for Member's future reference, and the matter be further considered at a future meeting.

206. THE REPORT OF THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2005, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

207. THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

In connection with Minute No. 147 – Review of Capacity and Direction from SOLACE it was **RESOLVED** that this proposal be not taken any further.

208. THE REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

209. THE REPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed, subject to Councillor H Bennett, as being shown in attendance.

210. THE REPORT OF THE HELFORD ROAD WORKING PARTY HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Architect's brief for the new building, as circulated to each Member, be approved and forwarded to the Council's Architect to commence design work.

211. THE REPORT OF THE CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

- (i) In connection with Minute No. 66 – Request for Financial Assistance – Durham Play and Community Network, it was **RESOLVED** that a donation of £100.00 be made to this organisation.
- (ii) In connection with Minute No. 67, it was noted that Peterlee Youth now propose to hold a Cabaret Evening and the Peterlee Round Table event was 4<sup>th</sup> February, not the 14<sup>th</sup>, as stated in the minutes.

**RESOLVED** that these amendments be made.

212. THE REPORT OF THE PARKS & CEMETERY COMMITTEE HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

In connection with Minute No. 63 (iii) – Transportation and Siting of the Pasmore Pole Sculpture it was **RESOLVED** that this work proceed on this basis of an outside company providing assistance.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the location at Shotton Hall be as Option 4 (as circulated to the meeting), but closer to the car park thereby reducing potential damage to the grassed areas.

213. STOCKTAKE SUMMARY SHEET – SHOTTON HALL – 3<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2006

Consideration was given to the Stock Taker's report for the period up to 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2006.

**RESOLVED** that the Stocktaker's report be received, the Facilities Manager having explained to the meeting how the allowances were itemised.



214. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Details of the planning applications relating to Peterlee, which had been submitted to the District of Easington, had been circulated to each Member for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that no observations be made on the applications received.

*PRIOR TO DISCUSSING THE FOLLOWING ITEM COUNCILLOR D COATES DECLARED AN INTEREST AND TOOK NO PART IN THE DISCUSSION WHICH ENSUED.*

215. COUNTY DURHAM & DARLINGTON FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY – INTERGRATED RISK ASSESSMENT PLAN – DRAFT YEAR 3 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Town Clerk had circulated a copy of the Plan to each Member for consideration advising the consultation period ended 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006.

**RESOLVED** that the Plan be considered at the next Finance and General Purposes Committee.

216. SHOTTON HALL CATERING FRANCHISE

The Town Clerk reported that this franchise was due for renewal in May 2006, and he had placed a public notice in the press for expressions of interest from contractors. Expressions of interest had to be received by 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006.

**RESOLVED** that the franchise be offered for a period of three years with an option for the Council to extend the award of this licence for a further period of two years by agreement with the successful tenderer.

217. LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader in his report made reference to the following matters:-



(i) APOLLO PAVILION

Members were advised by the Leader that local residents were being invited to attend the exhibition at the DLI Museum and Art Gallery in Durham on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2006. Transport and admission for the event was free, and the Leader asked any Member interested in attending if they could advise the Office as soon as possible.

(ii) NORTH BLUNTS FORMER SCHOOL SITE

The Leader asked the Town Clerk if he could obtain an update from Modus Properties on what was happening on this site.

(iii) ESTATE MATTERS

a) Junior Football Field

The Leader requested the Estate Manager to ascertain if a suitable site could be found for a Junior Football field.

b) Trees Adjacent Former Peterlee Methodist Manse

The Leader requested the Estate Manager to inspect the trees in this area and determine whether any arboriculture work was necessary.

**RESOLVED** that the items contained within the Leader's Report be noted, and the necessary action be taken.

218. TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION – 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2006, HARROGATE

The Town Clerk requested authority for two members of the Parks Department to attend the above trade exhibition, entry being free of charge.

**RESOLVED** that Mr J Harrison and Mr K Green be given authority to attend.

