

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2015

PRESENT:- COUN D MILSOM (CHAIR)

Mesdames:- C Baty, L Wood, V Watson, S Simpson, K Hawley, J I Measor & M A Cartwright

Messrs:- S Miles, J Alvey, A Watson, C Watkins, W M Jeffrey, L Cook, C J Metcalfe, R Kyle & G Gowie

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

Prior to the meeting, a 15 minute “open session” was held to allow members of the public an opportunity to put questions to the Council. There were no members of the public present.

168. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been submitted from Councillor K Liddell, (presentation), D Sillito, (work) & C Robbins, (ill).

RECOMMENDED the Council approve the reasons submitted for absence received on the grounds given above, and Members’ apologies for absence be recorded.

169. FORMER COLLEGE SITE, TESCO DEVELOPMENT

The Chairman welcomed Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development & Housing, to the meeting. It was explained that Mr Thompson, Corporate Director: regeneration & Economic Development, had an urgent meeting in Leeds and could not attend, however arrangements had been made for Ms Robson to attend on his behalf.

Ms Robson gave an update on discussions with Tesco. She felt it demonstrated a positive direction in that Tesco had got in touch so quickly following the headline news in January regarding the closure of unprofitable stores, profits and future developments etc. She stressed Officers would continue to meet with Tesco regularly to discuss re development options for the site.

The Chair opened the meeting up for a question and answer session where reference was made to the time taken by Tesco to develop the former Vaux Brewery site, and re location of the library, mainly the issues were the current appearance of the site and what was the potential to force a compulsory purchase order. The disappointment of residents not getting more choice with a quality retail development was also stressed. It was agreed that the offer made to continue to keep the Town Council up to date with the redevelopment of the site was accepted, it was hoped this may be April/May 2015.

RESOLVED progress be awaited and Officers be invited to attend future meetings to update the Town Council with this development.

170. POLICE – UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Bowman to the meeting. An update on activity in the town from the date of the last meeting to date was given for Members and the Chairman invited questions to the Officer. It was reported that crime was down in the Town by 18% on the previous year's figures, with the total number of incidents reported down by 19% and anti social behavior by 26%. It was reported there were to be three new PCSO's which would allow for attention to be focused on certain areas. Details were given of a

problem in the Edenhill Ward and reference was made to the recent break in at the Scouts Building and to large groups of young people gathering outside the Asda Store.

RESOLVED if possible a copy of the report be circulated for Member's attention and the Officer be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

171. THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THE 19TH JANUARY & 20TH JANUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Matters Arising

- (i) Budget Preparation

RESOLVED the Budget Monitoring Group established be made up of the following Members:-

Councillor D Milsom, R Kyle & W M Jeffrey, S Miles and A Watson.

- (ii) Minute Number 152, Car Parking in the Town Centre

There was considerable discussion on this matter and it was agreed there needed to be improved signage in the car parks in the Town advising shoppers of the rules and terms of using the car parks.

RESOLVED this suggestion be made to the Town Centre Manager(s).

- (iii) Minute Number 155 – Health & Safety Committee, November & December 2015

At the meeting there had been discussion on dog fouling and it had been suggested that dog bags should be provided free of charge. It was important essential that residents/the public make reports to the dog warden, there also needed to be appropriate notices put in place on Town Council owned land. It was agreed the small charge levied continue however bigger signs be in place to advertise dog bags were available.

RESOLVED the Town Council continue to make a nominal charge for dog bags.

172. THE REPORT OF THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE OF THE 19TH JANUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
173. THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE 19TH JANUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
174. THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved. Reference was made to Minute number 105 and it was suggested this could not be considered in the open part of the, meeting, this was agreed. It was also pointed out that any Member needing to should declare an interest if necessary.
175. THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
176. THE MINUTES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE OF THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
177. THE REPORT OF THE CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE 16TH FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
178. THE MINUTES OF THE PARKS & CEMETERY COMMITTEE OF THE 16TH FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
Matters Arising
Purchase of Vehicles
RESOLVED that the two vehicles as detailed in the Parks

Report, be purchased.

179. THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SHOTTON HALL SUB COMMITTEE OF THE 17TH FEBRUARY 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

180. DATES FOR THE EASTER MEETINGS

RESOLVED Standing Orders be amended and the meetings be held on Tuesday 7th April, Monday 14th and Monday 20th April.

181. NORTH EAST REGIONAL EVENT, 28TH MARCH 2015, COUNTY HALL DURHAM “YOUR REGION, YOUR COUNCIL, YOUR FUTURE”

Members were circulated with details of this event and asked to contact the Office should they wish to attend so that a reservation could be made.

RESOLVED the details of the event be noted and anyone wishing to attend advise the Office.

182. SPOKESPERSON OF THE MAJORITY POLITICAL PARTY’S REPORT

Councillor Jeffrey had nothing to report to the meeting.

183. SPOKESPERSON OF THE FAIR & INDEPENDENT PARTY’S REPORT

Councillor A Watson reported his disappointment with the lack of progress with the development of the former college site.

Councillor A Watson congratulated Councillor Hawley on her success in becoming the newly elected Town Councillor for the Passfield Ward; he felt this sent a clear message that residents were

not happy with the recent precept agreed. Councillor Watson applauded the action taken by Councillor Cartwright on saving a toddler where the consequences could have been dire, he felt her community spirit was fantastic.

RESOLVED the information given, be noted.

184. 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.

185. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Members had been circulated with a copy of this request which would be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

RESOLVED a reply be made in accordance with the appropriate Regulations.

Members were circulated with a copy of an e mail received from Councillor Thompson in relation to how this request had been handled.

RESOLVED the contents of the e mail be noted.

The Mayor expressed his disappointment that he had been falsely accused of blocking an investigation. Councillor Cowie commented that both the Mayor and his wife's reputation were beyond repute; Councillor Cartwright agreed with this statement and said that everyone supports the Mayor.

Members were reminded of the need to disclose an interest prior to consideration of this item.

186. TOWN CLERK'S GRIEVANCE – PROGRESS

There was further discussion in relation to Minute Number 105 of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of 9th February 2015. There was considerable discussion on this item and reference was made to recent advice received by the Council, (a copy of the Counsel's advice was made available for Members and it was stressed that this should be kept in the strictest of confidence). The legality of the Panel used to consider the Town Clerk's grievance and the process adopted was questioned by a Member. Following considerable debate and discussion a vote was taken and the recommendations made at the Finance & General Purposes Meeting, Minute Number 105 refers, were confirmed, with Councillors J Alvey & W M Jeffrey requesting that their names be recorded as voting against this motion.

A letter had also been received from the Local MP Grahame Morris regarding this matter, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member for their attention.

RESOLVED Smith & Graham Solicitors be authorized to accept any service of proceedings with this matter on the Town Council's behalf.

Councillors W M Jeffrey & J Alvey asked for it to be recorded that they were against the recommendations made at the Finance meeting, (minute number 105 refers).

RESOLVED the letter from the local MP, Mr Grahame Morris' letter be received and the contents noted.