

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2015

PRESENT:- COUN D MILSOM (CHAIR)

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

Messrs:- S Miles, D Sillito, W M Jeffrey, C Watkins, L Cook, R Curtis, R Kyle, J Alvey, G Cowie, C J Metcalfe, C Robbins & A Watson

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.

206. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been submitted from Councillor J I Measor, (on holiday).

RECOMMENDED the Council approve the reason submitted for absence received on the grounds given above, and Councillor Measor’s apologies for absence be recorded.

207. POLICE – UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Roberts to the meeting. An update

on activity in the Town from the date of the last meeting to date was given for Members, a copy of which had been previously circulated to each Member prior to the meeting, and the Chairman invited questions to the Officer.

Members offered their thanks and appreciation for receiving the figures prior to the meeting which they felt was very helpful.

It had been confirmed that calls made to 101 were charged at a flat rate of 15p per call. Further information was requested on the sale of cannabis, sneak in burglaries, off road motor bikes and parking on Lowhills Road Sports Fields. Details were given of contact made with the Police following dissatisfaction with response times.

RESOLVED the Officer be thanked for his attendance at the meeting.

208. THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THE 16TH MARCH 2015 & SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 23RD MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved. It was noted that the meeting held on 23rd March 2015 was an extra ordinary meeting, not merely a Special Meeting and it was confirmed that this meeting would be re convened in due course, in the light of the advice received on the Code of Conduct matters.

An update was given on the Tesco proposal received from the Planning Section of Durham County Council. It was hoped there may be some further progress to report towards the end of May, however it was commented it was hoped this was a genuine effort to achieve progress with the development of the site.

RESOLVED progress be awaited.

209. THE MINUTES OF THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE OF THE 16TH MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2015

210. THE MINUTES OF THE JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE OF THE 19TH MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved, subject to Councillor Metcalfe's apologies only being recorded once.
211. THE MINUTES OF THE SHOW COMMITTEE OF THE 26TH MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
212. THE MINUTES OF THE SHOTTON HALL SUB COMMITTEE OF THE 30TH MARCH 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
213. THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF THE 7TH APRIL 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
214. THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE 7TH APRIL 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
215. THE MINUTES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE OF THE 7TH APRIL 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
216. THE REPORT OF THE CLERK'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE 13TH APRIL 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.
Matters Arising
V E Day 8th May 2015, Beacon Ceremony across County Durham
21.30
Members were circulated with details of this event, and it was confirmed that Seaham Town Council were to take part in these celebrations.
- RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**
217. THE MINUTES OF THE PARKS & CEMETERY COMMITTEE OF THE 13TH APRIL 2015 a copy of which had been circulated to

each Member, were approved.

218. APOLLO HOUSE BIRCHWOOD DRIVE, BRACKEN HILL BUSINESS PARK

Further details were circulated with details of this application made by Codexe for housing at this site.

RESOLVED, if possible, the Town Council confirm its objection to and submit the comments made to the Planning Inspectorate on this proposal to the County Council.

219. PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING THE CHAIRMAN/MAYOR

Councillor A Watson has requested that this item be included on the agenda.

Members were advised that unless standing orders provided otherwise, which they currently did not, voting on a question would be by show of hands. If it was voting other than by a show of hands, say a secret ballot, then this needed to be part of Standing Orders. It was pointed out NALC's reference and advice to the use of secret ballots where they say it is difficult to envisage the circumstances which would warrant a secret ballot; therefore, probably not recommended, but permissible. A vote was taken as to whether standing orders should be amended to specify that a secret ballot could be taken for the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor only.

RESOLVED Standing Orders not be amended and voting on the question of election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor at the AGM would be by show of hands.

220. SPOKESPERSON OF THE MAJORITY POLITICAL PARTY'S REPORT

Councillor Jeffrey asked if the Deputy Town Clerk was willing for him to meet with her Union Representative; she confirmed that she was and wished for current issues to be amicably resolved if possible.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

221. SPOKESPERSON OF THE FAIR/NEP MEMBER'S REPORT

Councillor Watson reported that all of the members of the Fair Party currently sitting on the Town Council were now fully paid up members of the North East Party and this was how they wished to be known.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

222. 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.

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

223. AUDIT REPORTS

(i) Town Twinning

(a) Host Allowances

RESOLVED a host allowance of £10.00 per night, per person be agreed for the 40 no visitors expected form Nordenham in July 2015. FURTHER RESOLVED a policy be applied that this host allowance would only be paid to those living within the former District of Easington boundary.

(b) Audit Report

Consideration was given to this report prepared by the Town Council's appointed internal auditor, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED the internal Auditor be asked to meet with Councillor Cartwright, acting on behalf of the PNFA, on issues she had raised with the report. **FURTHER RESOLVED** a joint meeting of the Twinning Sub Committee and the Representatives of the Peterlee & Nordenham Friendship Association be convened.

PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM COUNCILLORS J ALVEY, CJ METCALFE AND W M JEFFREY DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THE ITEM.

(ii) Peterlee Leisure Gardens - Audit & Letter from Thorntree Gill Association

Consideration was given to this report prepared by the Town Council's appointed internal auditor, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED the Representatives at Thorntree Gill be issued with a copy of the internal auditor's report. **FURTHER RESOLVED** as suggested in the report, a meeting be held with representatives of both sites, (3 officials), all Council Members being invited, to try and seek a resolution of the pending issues.

224. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – CODE OF CONDUCT ISSUE

Members were advised that as agreed a complaint regarding an alleged breach of the Members Code of Conduct had been referred to Durham County Council.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and progress be awaited.

225. LETTER RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR THOMPSON & JEFFREY- INSURANCE ISSUE

A copy of a letter received had been circulated to each Member, asking for an indemnity for insurance pursuant to the Local Authorities, (Indemnities for Members and Officers), Order 20004.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised she had contacted the council's insurers for advice and had received feedback from the Risk & Insurance Consultant that they were not sure why this was being asked as there was no explanation for the reason for the request she had asked that the Deputy find out more on the request.

Councillor Jeffrey explained he was asking about insurance cover for Councillors and also made reference to legal expenses cover.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council had taken out legal expenses cover as previously agreed.

RESOLVED the letter be received and no action be taken with this request.

226. NOTICE OF A CLAIM – J RUSSELL V PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

All Members were formally advised the Council had received notice of this claim. A defence to this claim would be submitted with the support of Smith & Graham and Park Lane Plowden Chambers in accordance with the required deadlines.

RESOLVED approval be given to this course of action and progress be awaited.