

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE BRANDLING SUITE, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021 at 6.30PM

PRESENT: - COUN M A CARTWRIGHT (CHAIR)

Mesdames: - S Simpson, K Duffy, E Watson, J Black, K Liddell, & M McCue

Messrs: - S Franklin, T Duffy, R Moore, G Johnson, B Fishwick &  
M Sanderson

108. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were offered and accepted from Councillors D Quinn, K Hawley, D Hawley and A Stockport.

109. Public Participation Session

There were no members of the public present.

110. To receive declarations of interest

Members were reminded of the need to disclose any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise.

111. Internal Audit Report

The Chair welcomed Steve Carter to present the Internal Auditor's report. The purpose of the report was to advise Members on work undertaken by Internal Audit between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 with coverage provided per the agreed SLA. A summary of the agreed plan showing the status of each audit was circulated. Delivery of the audit plan was affected following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic which resulted in agreeing a new way of working together to achieve the audits. Two of the nine reviews are complete and a summary of the reports on Cemetery Management arrangements and

the Parks Department was given. **RESOLVED the out-turn position on progress made in delivering the internal audit plan for 2021/22 together with that made by managers in responding to the work of internal audit to gain assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment were considered and accepted.**

112. To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting were attached for consideration and approval as a true and correct record. It was agreed that a raffle be held for the first and last tree for the planting of the 75 trees in Woodhouse Park. **RESOLVED the minutes be accepted and signed as a true and correct record and the inclusion as agreed be made.**

113. Report of the Community & Environment Meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

The minutes of the Community & Environment Meeting were attached for information. **Members were asked to note the meeting was inquorate and such could not go ahead.**

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

114. The notes of the Events Working Party of the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021

The notes of the Events Working Party were attached for the information of Members. It was noted Councillor Howarth was in attendance at the meeting. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

115. Notes of the Finance Sub Committee of the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021

To confirm and endorse the resolution of the Finance Sub Committee to approve BACS payments to be paid on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

**RESOLVED the resolution of the Finance Sub Committee of 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to approve BACS payments to be paid on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021, be endorsed.**

116. COVID-19 Update

Members received a verbal update from the Town Clerk on the Council's response to the COVID-19 situation. It was reported the two colleagues that had been poorly were now back at work. There had been an increase in the working from home arrangements as had been recommended by the Government. Face masks were now being worn in public areas in the Council's buildings. The situation would continue to be monitored and steps taken to follow the appropriate government and sector guidance as it emerged. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

117. Request to use Land at Eden Lane - Circus

It was reported a request had been received to use land at Eden Lane for the circus to perform in May 2022, (29<sup>th</sup> April – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022). Members were also asked to consider the use of Town Council Land for events arranged by other organisations.

**RESOLVED the request by the Circus to use land at Eden Lane in 2022 be agreed to at a fee of £500.**

**FURTHER RESOLVED future requests be considered individually and on their merits when received.**

118. Neighbourhood Planning

Following the workshop held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 with the Town and Country Planning Association, Members received an update from the Town Clerk on the potential pros and cons of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Peterlee. He outlined the summary of the main stages of developing a Neighbourhood Plan as well as the possible costs to deliver such a plan. Members were in agreement they wished to progress this idea further to better understand the process and costs before making a final decision.

It was suggested a working party be set up to enable a core group of members to build their knowledge of Neighbourhood Planning issues. It was suggested that a workshop be arranged with a facilitator with experience of delivering Neighbourhood Plans for Town Councils with similar issues to Peterlee. **RESOLVED this course of action be agreed.**

119. Councillor Dress Code

At the request of the Chair, Cllr Mary Cartwright, Members would be asked to consider a proposal to adopt a dress code for Councillors attending formal Council meetings. The Clerk had polled local councils and reported 63 of 65 Local Councils who responded did not have a dress code. Whilst Members considered this proposal they felt Councillors should be smartly dressed at Council Meetings and should be mindful of the fact they were representing themselves and the Town Council. It was felt that the Council needed to be inclusive and there should be more emphasis of how councillors acted rather than what they wore. **RESOLVED a councillor dress code not be adopted at this time.**

120. Draft budget for 2022/23

Members were asked to consider a report from the Town Clerk on the outline draft budget for the 2022/23 financial year seeking their feedback on options to balance the budget in the forthcoming year. **RESOLVED the contents of the report be noted and**

**Members consider the options to close the current deficit in the draft 2022/23 budget prior to further deliberation by the Resources Committee and Council in January 2022.**

121. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

Councillor McDonnell reported COVID continued to be a huge concern with figures rising rapidly. She encouraged everyone to keep their friends and family safe. She reported ASB continued to plague the town and she hoped the Police were to translate words into actions. She offered congratulations to the team that had once again delivered Santa's Wish and confirmed the news that VBites were to create new jobs in the town at the former Walker Crisps site. She also informed the meeting that it was 7 years since the first NEP Councillor, Councillor Cartwright, was elected onto the Town Council. She closed in wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

122. Spokesperson of the Labour Party's Report

Councillor McCue had nothing to report however she wished everyone a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

The Mayor offered her Best Wishes to everyone and closed the meeting.