

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 27th MARCH 2023 at 6.30PM

PRESENT: - Cllr R Moore (Chairman)

K Liddell, M McCue, R Burnip, S McDonnell, S Franklin, J Black, D Hawley, K Duffy,
T Duffy, B Fishwick, A Laing, R Scott & M Sanderson

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chair asked for a minutes silence following the recent passing of a former Mayor and Town Councillor Colin Austin.

127. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were offered from Councillors K Hawley, S Simpson, A Stockport, M A Cartwright, S Meikle, D Quinn & D Howarth T Duffy. **RESOLVED the apologies for absence from these Councillors be noted.**

128. Public Participation Session

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

129. To receive declarations of interest

Members were reminded of the need to disclose any interests in items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. None were given.

130. To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the 27th February 2023

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

131. The notes of the Scrutiny Meeting of the 28th February 2023

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

132. Notes of the Finance Sub Committee of the 13th March 2023

Members were requested to confirm and endorse the resolution of the Finance Sub Committee to approve BACS payments to be paid on 16th March 2023. **RESOLVED the payments be accepted and paid.**

133. The Minutes of the Resources Committee of the 13th March 2023

The minutes of this meeting are attached for information purposes only. **RESOLVED the record of the meeting be noted.**

134. Notes of the Events Meeting held on 15 March 2023

The notes of this meeting were attached for Member's consideration. There were two items from the notes that required a decision from Council as follows:-

(i) Emergency Services Day – 9th September

To consider the cost of a marquee for this event. The approximate cost was given as £1,300 for the marquee only and it was **RESOLVED a marquee not be booked for this event.**

(ii) Community Events Grant Fund

To review a suggestion from Events Working Party to establish a small community events fund and budget allocation to enable small local community events during 2023/4. Members supported this idea and it was **RESOLVED a £1,500 Community Events Small Grants budget be established with grants available up to £250 to support local community organisations/groups to organise community social events during 2023/4. FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be given authority to design and implement a suitable grants process as soon as practicable.**

135. Review of the Town Council's approach to risk

Members considered the report of the Town Clerk outlining the Council's approach to managing risk, key internal risk controls, and the annual review of the Council's Risk Register. The Clerk confirmed that DCC had given notice on the current internal audit service and he confirmed that he was working with Clerks from other larger Councils in County Durham to procure an alternative service. **RESOLVED the contents of the report be noted and having reviewed the Council's corporate risk matrix and Risk Policy, this be approved. FURTHER RESOLVED further details on the arrangements for the internal audit service, be awaited.**

136. Review of the Town Council's Use of Reserves Policy

Members considered a report from the Town Clerk reviewing the Town Council's Use of Reserves Policy. **RESOLVED the contents of this report be noted the Council's Use of Reserves Policy as provided in appendix 2 to the report, be approved.**

137. Town Council insurance arrangements 2023/4

To confirm the arrangements for the town council's insurance cover for 2023/24 following a review of provision by the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk. The Town Clerk gave brief details of discussions on the renewal policy for the Town Council's insurance cover form 2023/2024. **RESOLVED consideration of this item be deferred to a future meeting, with the Town Clerk being granted approval to renew with the current supplier if necessary.**

138. Code of Conduct Complaints

The Town Clerk circulated two reports to inform Members on the result of two investigations by the Durham County Council Monitoring Officer into separate Code of Conduct complaints against two Town Councillors. Both investigations had concluded that no further action is to be taken by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor T Duffy asked for it to be recorded that in his opinion the Town/County Councillor involved with one of the complaints regarding the use of social media should resign. At the subsequent Council Meeting held in April following discussion it was agreed that "the use of social media which in his opinion amounted to hate speech, should resign" be added to the minute.

RESOLVED the information given, be noted and the changes be approved.

139. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

Councillor McDonnell reported that she was disappointed to read the report of the Monitoring Officer regarding the comments made by a Town and County Councillor on social media. She spoke about the recent fatal traffic accident involving a local resident man and said that her thoughts were with his family and the paramedics and police who had to deal with the incident. She was pleased to see there were moves to ban the sale of nitrous oxide, an issue that Councillor Franklin had been championing for some time. She was pleased to report that several highway safety restrictions were going to be applied in the proximity of some Peterlee schools and the college at busy times. She congratulated Councillor K Duffy with her fundraising efforts for the Samaritans. **RESOLVED the information given, be noted.**

140. Spokesperson of the Labour Political Party's Report

Councillor McCue offered her congratulations to the Warm Hub Café with numbers of local residents making use of the café taking off, and she encouraged others to be involved and volunteer if they were able. Whilst this project was going well she reported some projects were sadly coming to an end. She felt the need in Peterlee would only increase, with the need for low cost healthy food increasing with food and fuel poverty again she encouraged Members to support the efforts. Councillor McCue was pleased to see Durham was one of the front runners on new anti social behaviour

initiatives and she congratulated the Police and Crime Commissioner for her efforts.
RESOLVED the information given, be noted.