

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 21st AUGUST 2023 at 6.30PM

PRESENT: Cllr A Laing (Chair)
Cllrs K Liddell; S Simpson; R Burnip; R Moore; H Stockport; FJ Black;
KJ Duffy; MA Cartwright

51. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were offered from Councillors R Scott, S McDonnell, D Howarth, D Quinn, K Hawley, D Hawley, T Duffy, M Sanderson, B Fishwick, S Meikle. **RESOLVED Council note the apologies that had been submitted.**

52. Public Participation Session

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

53. Police

Representatives of the Neighbourhood Policing Team had previously submitted their apologies for absence from the meeting.

54. CALM CiC

Two colleagues from CALM CIC attended the meeting and provided Members with a presentation on the Lowhills Road community wellbeing facility that they operate on the Town Council's Lowhills Road site. The presentation included a summary of investment and improvements in the physical facilities on the site, activities provided, and summary information on physical, mental and emotional wellbeing improvements from a survey of 84 facility users. The CALM CIC representatives confirmed that they had delivered outreach wellbeing support to Acre Rigg school, and had also received visits from teachers and students during two wellbeing days. They confirmed that their volunteers and tutors do not include registered youth workers and so the range of youth activity that they can provide is limited, however they were open to other groups who provide youth activities potentially using the site. A number of Members acknowledged their positive experience from attending the recent open day at the site. The Chair thanked the CALM CIC representatives for an interesting and informative presentation.

55. To receive declarations of interest

Cllr MA Cartwright declared an interest as a volunteer with CALM CIC.
Cllr FJ Black declared an interest as a participant at CALM CIC.

56. To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the 24th July 2023

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

57. The notes of the Scrutiny Meeting of the 7th August 2023
The notes of this meeting were attached for information. **RESOLVED the minutes be noted.**
58. Notes of the Finance Sub Committee of the 24th July 2023
Members confirmed and endorsed the resolution of the Finance Sub Committee to approve BACS payments paid. **RESOLVED the minutes be confirmed and endorsed.**
59. DCC Consultation on proposed reduction in LCTRS grant to Parish & Town Councils for 2024/25 and 25/26
Members considered proposals by Durham County Council to reduce the LCTRS grant for Parish & Town Councils by 50% over the next two financial years, including a potential response to the formal consultation. Members discussed the substantial impact these proposals could have on the Town Council's future budgets, and concerns that the proposed budget savings by Durham County Council would have a disproportionate impact on those communities that were already suffering the most due to the economic crisis. It was noted that conversations had already begun between the larger Town and Parish Councils who were most affected by the proposed funding cuts.
RESOLVED the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to respond to the proposed cuts in LCTRS grants in consultation with the Chairs of Council, Resources and Scrutiny Committee.
60. Sale of Land at Essington Way
Members considered the details of the proposed commercial sale of Town Council land adjacent to the garage and filling station off Essington Way, Peterlee to Easington Tyre and Auto Services Ltd. It was noted that the Town Council had previously agreed the sale in principle, and that both parties were now in a position to proceed with the sale.
RESOLVED the sale of the land be approved in line with the TP1 transfer document provided to Members in the meeting;
FUTHER RESOLVED the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to oversee the completion of the sale with the Town Council's appointed solicitor.
61. Appointment of a new Internal Auditor
Members were provided with details on the procurement process for a new internal auditor as well as the detailed first year and outline second and third year initial audit plans. Members noted the independence and competence of Clive Owen LLP who are a well-established regional accountancy and audit firm. **RESOLVED that the Council appoint Clive Owens LLP as the Council's Internal Auditor for a three year period 2023/24 – 2025/26.**
62. Proposals to install Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) at Shotton Hall and The Pavilion Sports & Community Centre

Members discussed the proposed installation of EVCPs at Shotton Hall and The Pavilion by Durham County Council under an externally-funded county-wide scheme. Draft heads of terms and site plans had been circulated prior to the meeting. **RESOLVED that the proposed installation of EVCPs at Shotton Hall and The Pavilion be approved, subject to the Town Clerk being satisfied with the 3-year lease agreement with DCC.**

63. Helford Road Resurfacing

Members considered the report of the Neighbourhood Services Manager on the proposed resurfacing of the access road between The Pavilion Sports & Community Centre and Helford Road. Members noted that although the road had already been identified as being in poor repair and in need of resurfacing prior to the NWL infrastructure works in the area, NWL were providing the Town Council with a £5,000 good will contribution towards the works. **RESOLVED that contract for the resurfacing of the access road to the Pavilion Sports & Community Centre be awarded to Jem Road Construction for a sum of £21,110.61 + VAT**
FURTHER RESOLVED that the balance of £16,110.61 be drawn from General Reserves

64. Policies

This item was deferred to the September Council meeting.

65. Spokesperson of the Independent Party's Report

There was no report from the Independent Party.

66. Spokesperson of the North East Party's Report

Cllr MA Cartwright congratulated the Lionesses football team for reaching the World Cup final. She expressed concern about the possibility of Wilkos closing in the town centre. She confirmed that a recent litter pick involving 26 volunteers had resulted in 30 bags of rubbish being collected. She also confirmed that the clothes recycling project in the town centre had now helped over 800 families with children's school and other clothing.

67. Spokesperson of the Labour Political Party's Report

There was no report from the Labour Political Party.

The Chair Cllr AE Laing updated Members on the successful Mayor's civic programme including a 'Proms in the Church' event to be held on 9th September. Cllr Laing confirmed that the event had been very well received and that almost all tickets had been sold already. Cllr Laing stated that she had been active in attending civic events across a wide area and that people were glad to see Peterlee participating in civic activities again.