

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL
THE REPORT OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF THE PARISH OF PETERLEE
HELD IN THE BRANDLING SUITE, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE
ON MONDAY 20th MAY 2019 AT 6.00PM

Present: Coun S Meikle (Chair)

Mesdames: M A Cartwright, L Fenwick, K Liddell, K Duffy, S McDonnell,
K Hawley, S Simpson & V Watson

Messrs: C Watkins, S Kirkup, A Wilkinson, A Watson, G Carne, T Duffy,
S Miles, S Franklin, R Kyle & R Moore

There were 37 electors from Peterlee present at the meeting.

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chair welcomed everyone for their attendance and interest in coming along to the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 May 2018, were received and approved as a correct record and duly signed.

2. ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Chair introduced the Town Clerk, Mr Ian Morris to the meeting. Mr Morris explained the purpose of the Town meeting and explained it had been another successful year for the Town Council. He reported on the budget and confirmed that the council tax had been frozen by the council again this year.

The Town Clerk reported the Council had delivered a number of great town events and activities throughout the year including the Peterlee Show, Remembrance Parade, Armed Forces Day, a summer family fun day in each ward, free children's pantomimes, senior citizens New year meal, Christmas tree lighting event and the second annual Young Heroes Awards event that recognised some of the brilliant young people in our town.

The Council has also continued to provide support to a number of key initiatives including the Citizens Advice case worker in the Town Centre, The Project youth engagement scheme, the Streetgames initiative, Castle Eden Dene visitors centre and a range of local community groups which have been granted funding through PTC's Neighbourhood Engagement Project.

Giving recognition to the Parks Department, the Town Clerk also reported that the Council had continued to maintain and improve Peterlee's open spaces and it was open to tender for contracts for the improvement and renewal of a number of parks and play areas in 2019. It had also become a greener council in other ways too, by

banning the use of the herbicide Glyphosate from PTC's open spaces and reducing its use of single use plastics.

Over the previous year, the council raised over £500,000 in income from operations, supplementing its council tax precept income of £1.27 million and a precept grant of £258,000. As well as this, it had delivered a restructure and was starting to see a real improvement in the way the council operates.

Closing his report, The Town Clerk explained that it was an exciting year ahead for the Town Council and it's a pleasure to serve the town as its Chief Officer and the Town Clerk.

The Mayor, Councillor S Meikle gave special thanks to the Members who had voted for him and trusted him. Although the role had been challenging at times, he had loved every moment and he was overwhelmed by the support received during his time as Mayor of Peterlee. He had been involved with fantastic projects with both young and old. He thanked his Deputy Councillor Terry Duffy for his support.

3. OPEN FORUM

After the presentation, The Chair opened the meeting for questions and comments.

Items raised were as follows:-

- (i) A Peterlee resident praised the work done on the roundabouts and asked who was responsible for the cutting down of the trees near the Lowhills Road/Kent Walk area as it had been left in an unsightly state. The Town Clerk thanked the resident for their feedback, advising he would pass on her comments to the Parks Department and confirmed DCC were responsible for the cutting down of trees and he would be happy to contact them on her behalf about this matter.
- (ii) A local member asked if there was any progress with the old college site. In her capacity as County Councillor Cllr S McDonnell explained that progress had been halted while the correct legal process was followed. However, she provided an update regarding existing businesses Lidl and Home Bargains and confirmed their current units were no longer suitable which was why they were hoping to move to the new retail park to remain in the town, otherwise, they would potentially have to close their stores and move away from Peterlee and this was why it was important the retail park was approved, as this would result in more store closures and fewer people shopping in the town centre.
- (iii) Another Peterlee resident asked if it was possible to have the town centre clock working again. The Town Clerk explained the council had attempted several times to arrange this, without success. He and members went on to explain that it is extremely difficult to speak to the company who owns the building as they were unable to find out who is responsible. They had spoken to a representative, however, they denied access to the building in which the clock is situated.