

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Town Council** meeting held on **Monday 23rd September 2024** at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Shotton Hall, Peterlee.

Present: Councillor D. Howarth (Mayor) and Councillors R. Burnip, K. Duffy, S. Franklin, K. Hawley, M. McCue, R. Moore, and S. Simpson.

Also, Present: Ian Hall, (Chief Officer and Town Clerk), David Anderson (Locum Democratic Services Manager) and Louise Hudson (Democratic Services Assistant)

Two members of the public

C.55/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were offered from Councillors T. Duffy, B. Fishwick, D. Hawley A. Laing, K. Liddell, S. McDonnell, S. Meikle, R. Scott and A. Stockport

RESOLVED: That the apologies be noted.

C.56/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

No interests were declared.

C.57/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions were raised during public participation.

C.58/24 MINUTES

- a) Council meeting held on 19th August 2024
- b) Resources Meeting held on 9th September 2024
- c) Events Working Party held on 12th September 2024

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the above meetings be approved as a correct record and recommendations contained therein be adopted.

C.59/24 FUTURE EVENTS

Consideration was given to a number of possible future events which had been listed on the agenda.

It was noted that the Children's Halloween Party would not be able to be held as there were no entertainers available.

RESOLVED: That the following events be approved:-

- a. Best Dressed Halloween House (Wed 30th October 2024)
- b. Christmas Tree Light Switch on and Christmas Fayre, Shotton Hall. (Fri 29th November to Sun 1st December 2024)
- c. Children's Christmas Party, Pavilion (Fri 13 December 2024)
- d. Nursing Homes Christmas Party, Pavilion. (Possibly 18 or 19th Dec)
- e. Peterlee Music & Food Festival 2025, subject to budget allocation for 2025/26. (Date TBC)

C.60/24 DISMISSAL POLICY

Consideration was given to a dismissal policy, which had been circulated with the agenda.

Members requested that this item be deferred to a future Council meeting to give additional time to consider the wording of the document.

RESOLVED: This item be deferred to a future Council meeting.

C.61/24 SERVICE REVIEW

The Town Clerk provided Members with an update on progress on the Service Review and associated staffing structure. It was anticipated that a report would be submitted to Council in October 2024 to formally agree the revised staffing structure and context statement.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

C.62/24 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT DECISIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, which had been circulated with the agenda, setting out a complaint against two Town Councillors that had been investigated by the Monitoring Officer at Durham County Council. The Monitoring Officer had concluded that no further action was required.

RESOLVED: Decision of the Monitoring Officer be noted.

C.63/24 SECTION 106 MONEY PROJECT AT LOWHILLS ROAD

Consideration was given to a report, which had been circulated with the agenda, proposing the refurbishment of an unused building and resurfacing of an internal road at Lowhills Road Allotments at an estimated cost of £22,000 funded by s106 grant.

RESOLVED: That the project be agreed and s106 funding be sought to finance the works.

C.64/24 SHOTTON HALL FIRE ALARM

Consideration was given to a report, which had been circulated with the agenda, setting out issues identified with the fire alarm at Shotton Hall.

Members noted that the fire alarm was operative, but the isolation of part of the control panel meant that the system no longer communicated direct with monitoring company, Phoenix Eye. Alternative arrangements had been put in place with Phoenix Eye to ensure monitoring when the building was not occupied. The Council's insurance provider had confirmed that the Council was still covered due to the monitoring that had been put in place.

Members considered options to renew the system or to delay an upgrade until the outcome of the sale of the building was known.

RESOLVED:

1. That the information be noted and action taken be endorsed.
2. That the upgrading of the fire alarm system be reconsidered when the outcome of the sale of Shotton Hall was known.

C.65/24 REVIEW OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

At the request of members, consideration was given to a review of the committee structure and frequency of meetings.

The report setting out the terms of reference of committees, which had been considered by Council at the Annual Meeting held on 20th May 2024, had been circulated with the agenda.

Following detailed consideration members proposed suspending meetings of the Resources Committee and Community & Environment Committee and instead holding Council meetings on the first and third Monday of the month.

A review of the committee structure was to be undertaken in due course.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That meetings of the Resources Committee and the Community & Environment Committee be suspended and instead Council meetings be held on the first and third Monday of the month.
 2. That a review of the committee structure be undertaken in due course.

C.66/24 PARKING FOR FISHING OUTSIDE OF SHOTTON HALL

This item was included on the agenda at the request of members due to complaints being received regarding damage to the grassed area adjacent to the entrance gate which had been installed for Shotton Hall Angling Club.

Concerns were expressed that the grassed area would deteriorate if parking persisted during the winter months.

Following detailed consideration members proposed that a 'No Parking' sign be placed on the gate to prevent further deterioration of the grassed area.

- RESOLVED:** That a 'No Parking' sign be placed at the gate and the Angling Club be advised of the parking restrictions.

C.67/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- RESOLVED:** That in accordance with the provision of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded for the remaining item by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

C.68/24 SALE OF THE LAND AT THE WARDEN'S HOUSE

The Town Clerk updated Members with regard to the progress of the sale of land at the former Warden's House, Lowhills Road. Members were reminded that it had previously been agreed in principle to sell the land at market value with the purchaser paying the Council's legal costs. (Minute No C.43/24 refers).

Market Value had been independently established and agreed with the purchaser. The sale of the land was proceeding on the basis agreed.

- RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.