

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2011** at **7.15 p.m.**

**PRESENT**                    **Councillor Mrs. D. Bowman (Chairman) and**  
Councillors Mr. T.R. Bowman, V.Crosby, W. Curtis, Mrs. M. Dalton, P. Ducker, P. Gittins, G.C. Gray, G.R. Gray, I. Gray, B. Haigh, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. I. Hewitson, Mrs. K. Hopper, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, Mrs. A. Palmer, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, Mrs. V.M. Raw and A. Warburton.

**OFFICIALS**                Mr. A. Bailey (Town Clerk)  
Mr. D. Austin (Finance Manager)  
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin. Officer)

134. **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

135. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, R.S. Fleming, Mrs. J. Gray and T. Hogan.

136. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Declarations of personal interests were submitted by Councillors V. Crosby and M. Iveson for Agenda Item No. 9 (Changes to the Home to School / College Transport Policy) as they are School Governors on the affected schools.**

137. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor B. Hall, seconded by Councillor V. Crosby and

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

138. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor had submitted a list of appointments she had attended for the period 8<sup>th</sup> March to the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

The Mayor made special mention to the Royal Visit she had attended at Roman Limited to mark their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the Bible Readings to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the King James Bible. She had made the raffle draw at the Rotary Charity and presented prizes to winners of the Bowls Competition.

The Town Clerk advised that he would be submitting further information on the recent decision made at the Policy and Resources in respect to changes to the Audit and Accounts Regulations and subsequent costs under the heading of Policy and Resources Minutes.

**RESOLVED** – that the information be received.

139. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The following question was asked by Mr. A.M. Chandran:

Agenda Item No. 10 (Civic Office and Events)

“Can the Town Clerk explain the reason for proposed changes under the ‘Role of Mayor’ item that the Mayor has to name his/her own Mayoress/Consort and that this person is the only person nominated to wear the Mayoress/Consort Chain of Office”.

*The Town Clerk informed Mr. Chandran that this had been raised in order to clarify the matter as there has been various previous custom and practices. This item would be explained fully and discussed under Agenda Item No. 10.*

140. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

(a) **Environment Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor V. Crosby, seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton and

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(b) **Recreation Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor B. Hall, seconded by Councillor W. Iveson and

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(c) **Policy and Resources Committee**

The Town Clerk gave further information on a decision which had been made at the Policy and Resources Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> April with regard to the continuation of a full audit for the year 2010/11.

A sum of £15,000 had been budgeted for accordingly for this audit, however the Audit Manager had advised that the new fee that would be applicable for the limited assurance audit would be £3,500 for 2010/11 plus a charge for the audit work that had already been undertaken previously for the full audit. The limited assurance audit would be undertaken by a private company named BDO. The total estimated cost for 2010/11 via. limited assurance audit is £7,000.

Officers continued to recommend the full audit for 2010/11 with a review during 2011 to confirming a full audit or moving to a limited assurance audit via. the submission of an annual return to BDO at a reduced cost.

It was proposed by Councillor V. Crosby, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson and

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2011 be received, and
- (ii) That the information provided by the Town Clerk be noted.
- (iii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

141. **SELRAP – (Skipton-East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership)**

Information had been circulated from SELRAP seeking the Council's support for the re-opening of the Colne to Skipton rail link as part of the National Rail Network.

**RESOLVED** – that a message of support be forwarded to SELRAP for the re-opening of the Colne to Skipton rail link.

142. **CHANGES TO THE HOME TO SCHOOL / COLLEGE TRANSPORT POLICY**

**Declarations of personal interest had been received from Councillors V. Crosby and M. Iveson as they are governors of the affected schools. (They remained in the meeting for the discussion).**

A Public Consultation document had been forwarded outlining proposed changes to Home to School/College Transport which would affect some parents and their children.

**RESOLVED** – that Members forward their individual comments to the Public Consultation.

143. **CIVIC OFFICE AND EVENTS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report which set out the civic event list together with associated costings in respect of the Mayoral function. Also attached was a copy of the Mayor's Information Booklet with suggested amendments.

Members asked the reason for the suggested protocol which changed the wearing of the Mayoress/Consort Chain of Office by only the nominated Mayoress or Consort.

Previously the Mayor had been allowed to take a partner of their choice to events even if they were not their designated Mayoress/Consort and this person had worn the appropriate Chain of Office.

It was proposed by Councillor M. Iveson, seconded by Councillor Mrs. V. Raw that the Mayor be allowed to choose their Mayoress/Consort to attend events and that person be allowed to wear the Chain of Office.

This was a unanimous decision.

Other changes to the Information booklet were in respect to the wearing of the Civic Robes and for the confirmation of the Civic Dignitary list.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Civic Event list and budget as indicated in Appendix 1 be approved.
- (iii) That provision of Civic Transport as indicated in Appendix 2 be approved.
- (iv) That permission be granted for the Mayor to choose a partner to attend specific events and that person be permitted to wear the official Mayoress/Consort Chain of Office.

144. **STANDING ORDERS – RELATING TO CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT**

The Finance Manager submitted a report and information regarding amendments to the Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement for members approval.

These Standing Orders provided the framework rules for the procurement of all works, goods, materials and services and also set out tendering and contract procedures.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the revised Standing Orders for Contracts and Procurement be approved.

145. **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS UPDATE**

The Finance Manager submitted a report and information on updated Financial Regulations of the Council for members consideration.

The Financial Regulations provide the framework rules for the management of the Council's financial affairs and ensuring that its financial management arrangements are sound.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the updated Financial Regulations be approved.

146. **MEMBER TRAINING UPDATE**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report with regard to members attendances at training events during the municipal year 2010/11.

**RESOLVED** - that the information be received.

147. **ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY**

The Finance Manager submitted a report and the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which set out the overall framework and guidelines within which the Council operates. The report sought members consideration and approval to the update of the this policy.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be approved.

148. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT – CODE OF PRACTICE**

The Finance Manager submitted a report seeking approved of an update to the Council's Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Treasury management covers the borrowing and investment activities of the Council and the effective management of risks in relation to these activities.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Treasury Management Code of Practice be approved.

149. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

Verbal reports were given by representatives on the undermentioned Outside Bodies:-

- (a) Youth Council  
Councillor V. Crosby gave information that the next meeting would be the 21<sup>st</sup> April.
- (b) County Durham Association of Local Councils  
There had been no meetings.
- (c) Citizens Advice Bureau  
There had been no meetings.

- (d) Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership (GAMP)  
There had been no meetings.
- (e) Woodham Village Community Association  
Councillor K. Henderson gave an update on this Association and that they had received a grant which would enable them to provide a number of courses at the centre. These would be in conjunction with the Agnew Community Centre.
- (f) Great Aycliffe and Middridge A.A.P. Local Council's Committee  
The next meeting would be following the A.G.M. and would be to identify the representatives nominated to serve on this Committee for the next year.
- (g) Durham Countryside Volunteers  
Councillor I. Gray gave information on this group and the problems which were being encountered from fences and wood being stolen especially around the Nature Reserve.  
Councillor V. Crosby reported improvements to the Great Aycliffe Way were now completed (9 mile walk) and he wished to congratulate the Environment Officer for the work he had carried out to the new brochure and improvements.
- (h) Larger Local Councils' Forum  
There had been no meetings.
- (i) Lifelong Learning Committee  
There had been no meetings.
- (j) Normandy Veterans' Association  
There had been no meetings.
- (k) Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre  
Councillor V. Crosby informed the meeting that a new Management Board of Trustees had been elected.
- (l) Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society  
Councillor I. Gray gave a report stating that the Society was operating very well with no problems and outlined a number of events which were to be held during the Summer period. He especially made reference to the events which are held at the Locomotion Museum at Shildon.

**RESOLVED** – That the reports from Outside Body representatives be received.

**CHAIRMAN.**