

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 26th JANUARY 2011** at **7.15 p.m.**

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

OFFICIALS Mr. A. Bailey (Town Clerk)
Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate and Policy Officer)
Mr. D. Austin (Finance Manager)
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin. Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE Mr. J. Murphy (Washington Developments Ltd)
Mr. M. Hepburn (Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners)
Mr. J. Baker (Ryder – Architecture)

102. **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

103. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G.C. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, T. Hogan, Mrs. A. Palmer, Mrs. E.M. Paylor and A. Warburton.

104. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of prejudicial interests were submitted by Councillors Mrs. S.J. Iveson, P. Gittins and Mrs. J. Gray on agenda item No. 17 (Woodham Golf & Country Club – Outline Planning Application) as they are members of Durham County Council Planning Committee and they would be leaving the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

A declaration of personal interest was submitted by Councillor Mrs. D. Bowman on agenda item No. 16 (I) (Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre), however she would be remaining in the meeting.

105. **WOODHAM GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB – OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION**

Declarations of prejudicial interests were submitted by Councillors Mrs. S.J. Iveson, P. Gittin and Mrs. J. Gray on this item as they are members of Durham County Council Planning Committee and they left the meeting during the presentation and questions.

It had been agreed that this item be brought forward from item No. 17 on the agenda in order that a presentation could be made by the applicants.

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Jamie Murphy (Washington Developments) Mr. Michael Hepburn (Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners) and Mr. Jonathan Baker (Ryder- Architecture) to the meeting to give a presentation on the outline planning application for Woodham Golf and Country Club.

The representatives gave a presentation on the outline application which had been submitted to Durham County Council. They spoke briefly on the previous application submitted in 2007 which had been withdrawn. An overview of the new application was set out showing the changes made from the 2007 application.

Community consultation had previously taken place and results of the questionnaires were outlined.

The economic benefits and the Social / Environment Benefits were set out, together with the proposed timescales for the development.

A question session took place at the end of the presentation when Councillors had a chance to clarify any points.

Councillor R.S. Fleming (Leader) thanked the representatives for their informative presentation and for their time in explaining aspects of the application to enable this Council to make their comments on the development.

106. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor B. Hall, seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 15th December 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

107. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor had submitted a list of appointments she had attended for the period 14th December 2010 to the 26th January 2011.

The Mayor made special mention to the opening of the Santa Grotto, the Civic Carol Service, Sports Skills Presentations and the drawing of the Town Centre Prize Draw.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

108. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The following representations were given by:

Mrs. A. Bergg - Agenda Item No. 17 – Woodham Golf & Country Club Outline Planning Application

Mrs. Bergg wished to raise her concerns regarding the growth and proposed development of housing and developments on the western side of the town which has been detrimental to the road safety on the C35 Middridge Road and the need for this road to be upgraded. This road was the main arterial route to the north from the town.

Mrs. Bergg would like to request the Council objects to any planning application which could result in a higher volume of traffic on the C35 until this road has been upgraded.

Mr. A.M. Chandran – Agenda Item No. 14 – Councillor Blenkinsopp Suspension

Is the Council aware of the fact that at the Standards Board Appeal Tribunal of 13 January 2011 Councillor Blenkinsopp, under oath, gave testimony to claiming that at the time of the offence, 9th September 2009, he was Deputy Leader of the Council, but in truth Councillor J.D. Clare was elected Deputy Leader on Wednesday, 13th May 2009 onwards to date. Will the Council bear this in mind when considering item 14.

Mr. A.M. Chandran – Agenda Item No. 17 – Woodham Golf and Country Club – Outline Planning Application

The original proposal in 2007 indicated that the developers intended to transfer the North Agnew Plantation to the Town Council if they received planning permission.

What is their intention over, now three years on regarding the Plantation, and are they aware of the Bridle path through the Plantation which they have fenced off is a public right of way established by me and recognised by the County Council.

109. **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 12th January 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 Mrs. M. Dalton and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on the 12th January 2011 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(c) **Policy and Resources Committee**

Councillor W. Curtis raised a point of order following Minute No. 92 in connection with the voting which took place on the Website development item. Councillor Curtis felt that voting was difficult to monitor when members who are not on a Committee are seated around the committee tables.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the voting on minute No. 92 had been counted correctly.

Councillor Curtis was advised to place his concerns as a motion on a future agenda for consideration.

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor J.D. Clare and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 19th January 2011 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

110. **ROYAL GARDEN PARTY 2011**

Information had been received from County Durham Association of Local Councils seeking nominations from Parish and Town Council's for attendance at a Royal Garden Party to be held in July 2011.

RESOLVED – that no nomination be made for attendance by a representative of this Authority on this occasion.

111. **2011 / 2012 COUNCIL PRECEPT**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report seeking approval for the setting of the Council's 2011/12 Precept and to authorise the Mayor / Chairman of the Council to sign the Precept Form for submission to Durham County Council.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the 2011/2012 Council Precept of £1,616,850 be approved.
- (iii) That the Mayor / Chairman of the Council be authorised to sign the Precept Form.
- (iv) That the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the Council's balances and reserves be noted.

112. **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION'S 90th BIRTHDAY WEEKEND**

Information had been received from the Royal British Legion in connection with a "Great Poppy Party Weekend" in celebration of their 90th Birthday.

RESOLVED – that the information be received and no action taken.

113. **DRAFT SEX ESTABLISHMENT / ENTERTAINMENT VENUE LICENSING POLICY**

A copy of the proposed sex establishment / entertainment venue licensing policy had been submitted by Durham County Council for Members' comments.

RESOLVED – that the information be received and no comments made.

114. **THE NATIONAL TRAINING STRATEGY**

Information had been received from the National Training Strategy for Town and Parish Councils in England setting out their proposals for managing training over the next few years.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

115. **COUNTY DURHAM AND CLEVELAND COUNTY TRAINING PARTNERSHIP**

Information had been received from the County Durham and Cleveland County Training Partnership with regard to a free workshop for Councillors / Clerks to attend in Middlesbrough.

RESOLVED – that the information be received and any Member interested in attending this workshop should notify the Town Clerk.

116. **COUNCILLOR W.M. BLENKINSOPP – SUSPENSION**

The Town Clerk submitted a report seeking consideration of the withdrawal of Council Members Allowance to Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp following the one month's full suspension as a Councillor which had been given by a First Tier Tribunal. This is a recommendation by the Standards Board but is ultimately at the discretion of the individual authority.

The report also sought for members to consider the amendment to the wording of their 'Members Allowance Scheme' paragraph 19.1 to read: "will" be fully or partially withheld and not "may".

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Basic Council Allowance be withheld from Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp during his period of suspension.
- (iii) That the wording of Para. 19.1 in the Council's 'Members' Allowance Scheme' be amended to read:

"If a member is fully or partially suspended from duties on the recommendation of the Standards Board for England, the Basic Allowance 'will' be fully or partially withheld".

117. **LAND TRANSFER**

The Town Clerk submitted a report asking members to consider receiving the transfer of land locally known as 'Seven Hills', at a peppercorn rent, from Sedgfield Borough Homes for amenity use.

There were no major reasons why the land should not be accepted as a transfer of this site which would safeguard the green space. There were minor issues which would need to be resolved relating to access for both vehicles working on the site and pedestrians passing through.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the transfer of the land be agreed in principle with Sedgefield Borough Homes subject to contract and further discussions regarding access arrangements.

118. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

A declaration of personal interest was submitted by Councillor Mrs. D. Bowman on item (I) Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre, however she remained in the meeting during the discussion.

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

- (a) Youth Council
Councillor V. Crosby gave an update on the Youth Council held on the 24th January and names of newly appointed committee members. The Group had looked at the layout of the Great Aycliffe Show and were proposing a 'Music Festival' to be held at the conclusion of the show weekend.
- (b) County Durham Association of Local Councils
There had been no meetings.
- (c) Citizens Advice Bureau
Councillor B. Hall had submitted a copy of the report of the meeting held on the 17 December for information.
- (d) Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership (GAMP)
Councillor B. Hall spoke on the meeting and presentations which had been given by the Fire Service and Police. He informed that small grants were available from the AAP and applications should be made to Mr. Brian Riley of the Area Action Partnership.
- (e) Woodham Village Community Association
Councillor Mrs. J. Gray gave information on their last meeting. The Association was to apply for an alcohol licence. Problems had arisen with the heating which would be costly. This year is the Centres 25th anniversary.
- (f) Great Aycliffe and Middridge A.A.P. Local Council's Committee
No meetings.
- (g) Durham Countryside Volunteers
Councillor I. Gray gave an update on the success of the volunteers, however, there were to be major cuts in the Countryside Services budget at Durham County Council which would affect the Group.
- (h) Larger Local Councils' Forum
The next meeting is scheduled for the 8th February.
- (i) Lifelong Learning Committee
No meetings held.

- (j) Normandy Veterans' Association
No meetings held.
- (k) Woodham Community Technology College Forum Meeting
Officers had been asked to seek information regarding frequency and membership of the Forum meetings.
It has now been confirmed that this Forum has been disbanded and would be removed from the Outside Bodies list.
- (l) Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre
Councillor V. Crosby spoke on the Youth Centre and that a meeting had been called by the Chairman for the 7th February to discuss concerns with the management structure and financial reporting to the Charity Commissioners.
- (m) Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society
Councillor B. Haigh gave an update on the Society setting out successful ventures which had been linked to local museums, especially the locomotive museum at Shildon. Refurbishment works to the buses was ongoing.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the reports from Outside Body representatives be received.
- (ii) That the Woodham Community Technology College Forum Meetings be removed from the Council's Outside Bodies List.

119. **WOODHAM GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB – OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION**

Declarations of prejudicial interests were submitted by Councillors Mrs. S.J. Iveson, P. Gittins and Mrs. J. Gray on this item as they are members of Durham County Council Planning Committee and they left the meeting during discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor R.S. Fleming opened the discussion on the Outline Planning application with an answer to Mr. Chandrans' previous question that in the planning document negotiations will be entered into for the Town Council to take over Woodham Plantation as part of the agreement to build.

The Mayor asked for members to give their views on the presentation and the application in order that the Town Council's comments could be made to the County Council on the planning application.

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming and seconded by Councillor Mrs. V. Raw - that this Council wishes to support the development of the Woodham Golf and Country Club by Washington Developments Limited.

After further discussion the following issues should be commented on when replying to Durham County Council on this planning application:

- That there should be guarantees made that the development will be completed as a whole package.

- That any contribution to affordable housing be allocated for Newton Aycliffe.
- That consideration be given to the improvement of the C35 road which would be beneficial given the amount of development proposed in this area.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That this Council supports the outline planning application for the development of the Woodham Golf and Country Club but would wish to add the following comments.
- (ii) That the Council wish to see that appropriate legal agreements and measures are put in place in order to ensure that the total development is completed.
- (iii) That the Council would wish to see any contribution that is made to affordable housing utilised within the Great Aycliffe Council boundary.
- (iv) That consideration be given to the improvement of the C35 road which would be beneficial given the development proposed in this area.

CHAIRMAN.