

Minutes of a Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 9th JULY 2014 at 7.15 p.m.**

PRESENT **Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and**
Councillors E.M. Adam, D.G. Atkinson, J. Atkinson, W.M. Blenkinsopp, A.M. Chandran, Mrs. B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, J. Clark, Mrs. M. Dalton, I. Gray, G.C. Gray, B. Hall, K. Henderson, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, Mrs. V.M. Raw and C. Wheeler.

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

17. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors R. Bowman, N. Collinson, M.A. Dalton and Mrs. A. Palmer.

18. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

No applications for dispensations had been received.

19. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A disclosure of interest was declared by Councillor B. Hall under item No. 14 – ‘Application for use of Council Crest’ as the application had been made by one of his Relatives.

20. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from the public.

21. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor J.D. Clare, seconded by Councillor Mrs. V. Raw and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 14th May and the 4th June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22. **SERVICE REVIEW WORKING GROUP**

Notes and recommendations from the meeting of the Service Review Working Group held on the 25th June 2014 were considered.

It was proposed by Councillor J.D. Clare, seconded by Councillor B. Hall and

RESOLVED – that the following recommendations from the Service Review Working Group be agreed:-

- (i) That a meeting be arranged with the Governors and Staff of Woodham Burn Primary School to discuss options.

- (ii) That the intake of children for the September term still go ahead.
- (iii) That following the meeting with Woodham Burn Primary School a meeting is arranged with the appropriate staff.

23. **ACCOUNTS CONTROL SHEETS**

Accounts control sheets for the period 30th May 2014 to the 27th June 2014 and the General Bank Accounts for May and June 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the accounts control sheets for the period 30th May 2014 to the 27th June 2014 and the General Bank Accounts for May and June 2014 be received.

24. **GRANTS / DONATIONS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report which gave the current donation budget for this financial year as £5,600.

The following requests had been received:

- (a) 'Vitalise'
- (b) Organisation for the Deaf Community

Initial application received – awaiting more information for consideration.

Aycliffe Youth Council

The current Youth Council grant for 2014/15 was £1,452.

There had been no applications received for grants to date.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) Vitalise
That no donation be given on this occasion.
- (iii) Organisation for the Deaf Community
No donation given.
- (iv) That the information in respect of the Youth Council be noted.

25. **PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING CENTRES**

The Early Years Officer submitted her report which set out the current attendance figures together with information on voluntary contributions.

The Ofsted report for St. Oswald's Pre-School had been received and a copy circulated. The Pre-School had received a 'good' grading.

Information on the funding formula to be implemented as a 'cushion' by Durham County Council on Woodham Burn was explained although there had been no information received on a 'cushion' for St. Oswald's Pre-School.

The government had announced that an early-years pupil premium would be set up for disadvantaged three and four year olds. More information on this would be presented to the Committee as soon as it is received.

Further information on the funding for 2 year olds was set out, however, further information would be provided once investigations had been finished by the Early Years Officer.

A staffing vacancy had arisen due to the resignation of one of the Supervisors, however, the Deputy at Woodham Burn had stepped up to the Supervisor post. Relief staff were covering the vacant post up until the end of July making a saving on the salaries budget.

The Town Clerk gave information in regard to a request by Woodham Burn School and the possibility of them taking over the running of the Pre-School at Woodham Burn and asked members to consider the future management of that Centre.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the 'cushion' for the funding for this financial year be noted.
- (iii) That the information on the Early Years Pupil Premium be noted.
- (iv) That it is felt that 2 year olds being admitted into our Pre-Schools was not feasible and no further action be taken by the Early Years Officer.
- (v) That the staffing situation be noted and agreed.
- (vi) That the request from Woodham Burn School seeking to transfer the Council's Woodham Burn Pre-School setting to them be accepted and that reports be brought back to this Committee on the progress.
- (vii) That the Council wished the Town Clerk to write, on their behalf, to the Staff of St. Oswald's Pre-School on the excellent achievement of a 'good' grading from their Ofsted inspection.

26. **RETIREMENT AND PENSION POLICY UPDATE**

The Finance Manager submitted a report setting out information for members consideration and approval of the updated Retirement and Pensions Policy for the Council.

A copy of the proposed policy had been circulated for consideration.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Retirement and Pension Policy be accepted and implemented.

27. **INSURANCE POLICY RENEWAL**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report and information for members to consider taking up an option to extend the long term agreement for the provision of the Council's insurance policy with Aviva for a further three years.

The current insurance cover had been provided by Aviva for a period of three years and was due to run out on the 24th June 2015.

The Finance Manager submitted information on the two following proposals for members consideration:-

- (i) Offer of a new three year long term agreement from Aviva which would run from June 2014 (backdated) until June 2017. This would then be in line with the Council's previous long term agreement of 5 year contracts for insurance.
- (ii) Carry on with the current agreement until June 2015 before testing the market next year with other insurance providers being given the opportunity to quote for the contract.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the offer be accepted of a new three year long term agreement by Aviva to run from June 2014 (backdated) until June 2017 and would therefore be in line with the Council's previous long term agreements of a 5 year contract for our insurance.

28. **GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE 2014**

The Corporate Management Team submitted a report setting out information in regard to the recently published Local Government Transparency Code 2014.

The Team sought members consideration of the document and advise Officers as to how they wished to comply with its requirements.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Council should aim to comply with the Code of Recommended Practice as far as is reasonable and practical, in keeping with its commitment to delivering value for money to local tax payers.
- (iii) That the Management Team of the Council is given delegated authority to determine what information is to be published, and to what level of detail.
- (iv) That a further report be brought before the Policy and Resources Committee if any of the requirements of the Code change.

29. **GREAT AYCLIFFE FESTIVAL 2015 - BUDGET**

The Town Clerk asked members to give consideration to the setting of a provisional budget for the Great Aycliffe Festival 2015 in order that preliminary work on the organisation could be commence.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that an initial indicative budget of £30,000 be set for the 2015 Great Aycliffe Festival.

30. **APPLICATION FOR USE OF THE COUNCIL CREST**

Councillor B. Hall declared a disclosure of interest under this item as this had been a request from one of his Relatives.

The Town Clerk had submitted a report and letter from Solicitors asking permission for the Council Coat of Arms to be used a part of a new Club emblem by Woodham Golf Course.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the application for the use of the Council Coat of Arms be politely refused.

CHAIRMAN.