

Minutes of a Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 12th APRIL 2017 at 7.15pm.**

PRESENT **Councillor R.S. Fleming (Chairman) and**
Councillors E. Adam, M. Ashcroft, J. Atkinson, P. Bergg,
A.M. Chandran, J.D. Clare, N. Collinson, Mrs. M. Dalton,
P.L. Davies, G.C. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, Mrs.
I. Hewitson, J. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary, Mrs. V. Raw and K.
Robson

IN ATTENDANCE Ms. Kath Shields and Ms. Sue Rounce (Durham County Council)

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

The Chairman welcomed Ms. Shields and Ms. Rounce to the meeting to report on the St. Oswald's Pre-School and would be bringing forward their report on the agenda to follow Item No. 7.

111. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors W. Blenkinsopp, Mrs. B.A. Clare, M.A. Dalton, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson and W. Iveson.

112. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

No applications for dispensations had been received.

113. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

114. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from the public.

115. **MINUTES**

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

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 1st March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

116. **PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was proposed by Councillor J. Hillary, seconded by Councillor M. Ashcroft and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on the 21st March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

117. **AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was proposed by Councillor J. Hillary, seconded by Councillor M. Ashcroft and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee held on the 5th April 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

118. **D.C.C. REVIEW OF ST. OSWALD'S PRE-SCHOOL REPORT**

A report had been submitted by Kath Shields and Sue Rounce from Durham County Council in connection with assistance and advice they are providing at the St. Oswald's Pre-School.

They gave detailed information on what had been achieved up to date and what was being proposed for the future running of the group.

Information was submitted on the new government funding to provide 30 hours of free childcare.

Members were given the opportunity to ask the Officers questions.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Officers from Durham County Council be thanked for the constructive advice and recommendations they have undertaken on behalf of the Council.
- (iii) That the D.C.C. Officers wished to record their thanks to the Town Clerk and Officers of the Council for the help and support received at the Pre-School.

119. **ACCOUNTS CONTROL SHEETS**

Accounts control sheets for the period 25th February to the 31st March 2017 and the General Bank Accounts for February 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the accounts control sheets for the period 25th February to the 31st March 2017 and the General Bank Accounts for February 2017 be received.

120. **GRANTS / DONATIONS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report which gave the current donation budget for this financial year as £4,000.

The following request had been received:

- (i) Durham Miners' Gala Brochure

An application for financial assistance in respect of an advert in their Souvenir Brochure.

(ii) Letter of Thanks

To receive a letter of thanks from Durham Cathedral for the Council's donation of £250.

(iii) Aycliffe Youth Council

The Youth Council grant budget is currently £2,000.

The Youth Council had previously agreed to purchase 6 trees in order to undertake further environmental improvements at a cost of £566 (this had been allocated from the previous year's budget).

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

(i) That the report be received.

(ii) Durham Miners' Gala Brochure

That no donation be made to the brochure on this occasion.

(iii) That the letter of thanks from Durham Cathedral for their donation of £250 be acknowledged.

(iv) Aycliffe Youth Council

That the purchase of 6 trees by the Youth Council be accepted for payment.

121. **EARLY LEARNING CENTRE REPORT**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report to provide information and an update on the operation of the Pre-School together with current child attendance numbers and training undertaken.

The report also gave information on a proposed staff structure which had been considered by the Personnel Sub-Committee.

Previously an additional budget of £2,000 had been provided to purchase additional materials for dressing of the Pre-School. Permission was now being sought for a further estimated amount of £2,627 to improve the outdoor area.

The report gave information for members to consider on the new government funding to provide 30 hours of free childcare

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

(i) That the report be received.

(ii) That the offer of 30 hours be implemented for the September term subject to a survey of possible users.

(iii) That the new staff and operating structure and financial implications be agreed.

(iv) That a budget of £2,750 be taken from reserves to refurbish the outdoor play area at St. Oswald's.

(v) That investigations be made with a view to registering the additional Pre-School building with Ofsted.

122. **FINANCE SERVICE PLAN 2017/18**

The Finance Manager submitted a report and Finance Service Plan for 2017/18 for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Finance Service Plan for 2017/18 be approved and accepted.

123. **PURCHASE ORDERING AND PAYMENTS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES POLICY UPDATE**

The Finance Manager submitted a report for consideration and approval of updates to the Purchase Order and Payments for Goods and Services Policy.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the updated Purchase Order and Payments for Goods and Services Policy be approved and accepted.

124. **INCOME COLLECTION AND DEBT RECOVERY POLICY UPDATE**

The Finance Manager submitted a report for consideration and approval of updates to the Income Collection and Debt Recovery Policy.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the updated Income Collection and Debt Recovery Policy be approved and accepted.

125. **INTERNAL AUDIT CODE OF PRACTICE UPDATE**

The Finance Manager submitted a report for consideration and approval of the Internal Audit Code of Practice which had been rewritten to comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Internal Audit Code of Practice be approved and accepted.

126. **RECRUITMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO WORKING HOURS**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report to inform Members of the recent appointment of a new Internal Auditor and to request consideration of an increase to the Internal Auditor's working hours. This would compensate for the reduction in external audit coverage following the recent change in the Council's accounting and audit arrangements.

It was proposed that the weekly working hours for the Internal Auditor be increased from 15 to 18 hours which would increase the number of days from 90 to 108 days on the Annual Audit Plan.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Internal Auditor's hours be increased from 15 to 18 hours per week.

127. **GROUND MAINTENANCE SERVICE CO-ORDINATOR – CAR ALLOWANCE**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report to request the Policy and Resources Committee to consider that the post of Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator be classed as an essential car user with access to a car allowance and mileage payments in accordance with the Officers' Allowance Policy.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Grounds Maintenance Service Co-ordinator post be designated as essential car user with access to a car allowance and mileage payments in accordance with the Officer's Allowances Policy.
- (iii) That the payments be implemented as from the 1st April 2017.

128. **HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT**

The Town Clerk submitted a report which set out the annual list of accidents and reportable accidents (RIDDOR) and also any reports from the Health and Safety Executive.

The report also set out information on the operational and health and safety training that had taken place over the year.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Health and Safety Annual Report be accepted.

129. **SPORTS COMPLEX BAR PRICES**

The Finance Manager and Leisure Manager submitted a report setting out current prices and profit margins for various drinks sold in the Oakleaf bar facility. The report sought members to consider the proposed increase to prices in response to recent cost and duty increases.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the proposed bar increases be not agreed.
- (iii) That a further report be submitted following the outcome of negotiations for a re-tender of the brewery contract.

Message of Thanks

The Chairman, Councillor R.S. Fleming, thanked all Councillors for the time they are allocated and work achieved over the past four years.

Councillor Fleming wished Members standing for re-election every success in the forthcoming elections.

CHAIRMAN