

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 13th JULY, 2016** at **7.15 p.m.**

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

IN ATTENDANCE Mr. C. Waddell (Director, Mazars LLP)
Mr. D. Hurworth (Ass. Manager, Mazars LLP)

OFFICERS Mr A Bailey (Town Clerk)
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin. Officer)

The Chairman announced that as the Council's Auditors were in attendance to present the Audit Completion Report item Nos. 10, 11, 12 and 13 on the agenda would be brought forward and considered after agenda item No. 5. (Public Questions).

30. **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

31. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J. Atkinson, P.J. Bergg, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. S. Haigh, J.P. Hillary, Mrs. W.P. Hillary and W. Iveson.

32. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATION**

No dispensation requests had been received.

33. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There had been no declarations of interest submitted.

34. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from members of the public.

35. **2015/16 AUDIT COMPLETION REPORT**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Cameron Waddell, Director of Mazars LLP to the meeting to present the Audit Completion Report for 2015/16.

The Auditors had given the Council an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and the Value for Money aspect of the Council.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That Mr. Waddell be thanked for his attendance to present the Audit Completion Report.

- (ii) That the information from the report be received.
- (iii) That the Finance Manager and his staff be congratulated on the excellent results they had achieved in obtaining an unqualified audit opinion.

36. **2015/16 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

The Corporate Management Team submitted a report and the Annual Governance Statement for the 2015/16 financial year for members approval.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Annual Governance Statement for 2015/16 be approved and signed off by the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Council.

37. **2015/16 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Finance Manager submitted a report and the Council's Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2015/16 for approval.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Finance Manager.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Statement of Accounts for 2015/16 be approved.
- (iii) That the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts be signed by the Chairman of the Council and the Finance Manager.
- (iv) That the Annual Report included within the Accounts be approved and signed by the Finance Manager.
- (v) That following the completion of the Audit of Accounts by Mazars LLP and receipt of the Audit Completion Report, the signed audit opinion and certificate, and Annual Audit Letter, the Account be published in accordance with the statutory framework no later than the 30th September 2016.

38. **CONCLUSION OF THE 2015/16 AUDIT AND APPROVAL OF THE MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER**

The Finance Manager submitted a report to set out the implications arising from the conclusion of the 2015/16 external audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts.

The report sought approval for the signing of the 'letter of management representation', which is required by the Council's Auditors in order to issue the signed audit opinion and certificate, the Annual Audit Letter and issue the closure notice for the 2015/16 Audit.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the letter of representation be approved and signed by the Chairman of the Council, Town Clerk and Finance Manager prior to being forwarded to Mazars LLP.
- (v) That following receipt of the final audit opinion and audit closure certificate from Mazars LLP the notice of completion of the Audit of Accounts be published and the audited Statement of Accounts be advertised in the local press in accordance with the statutory framework.

39. **CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

The representative from the Citizens Advice Bureau had not arrived to give a presentation to update members on their services. The Chairman dismissed the agenda item and proceeded with the meeting.

40. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on the 8th June 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following:-

‘That Councillor B. Hall’s apologies be added to the Apologies for Absence item’.

41. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor had submitted a list of appointments he had attended for the period 9th June 2016 to 13th July 2016. The Chairman reminded Councillors and members of the public that the Mayoress ‘At Home’ would be held on Friday, 15th July 2015 if they wished to attend.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

42. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

(a) **Environment Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor I. Gray, seconded by Councillor W.M. Blenkinsopp and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on the 29th June 2016 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 Recreation Committee held on the 29th June 2016 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(c) **Policy and Resources Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson and

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 6th July 2016 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted subject to the following:-

‘That it be noted that Councillor Mrs. B.A. Clare had submitted her apologies and that her name be removed from the attendances list’.

43. **POST OFFICE**

The Town Clerk had submitted correspondence from the Post Office in connection with a Public Consultation to restore a Mobile Post Office Service at Aycliffe Village.

RESOLVED - that this Council would wish to support the proposal of a Mobile Post Office Service for Aycliffe Village.

44. **COUNTY DURHAM PLAN – ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

A copy of the County Durham Plan – Issues and Options document had been circulated for members to consider making a corporate response to the document.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the Council’s corporate response be made by the Corporate and Policy Officer together with the Town Clerk.
- (ii) That members wishing to make their own responses to the document should do so direct with the County Council.

45. **C/DALC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – NOMINATIONS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report seeking members to consider and submit nominations for the C/DALC Executive Committee positions which are elected at the Annual General Meeting to be held in October 2016.

The following appointments were to be considered:-

- (a) President - currently Grahame Morris MP
- (b) 3 x Vice-Presidents - currently held by:-
 - Councillor David Bell (Brandon and Byshottles P.C.)
 - Councillor Ralph Harrison (Sacriston and Kimblesworth and Plawsworth P.C.)
 - Councillor William Jeffrey (Peterlee Town Council)
- (c) Honorary Treasurer - currently held by Councillor Dudley Waters (Sedgefield T.C.)
- (d) Honorary Auditor - currently held by Mr. Dan Austin (Finance Manager at Great Aycliffe Town Council).

RESOLVED – that this Council would wish to nominate the current Executive Committee post holders for re-elected.

46. **DELEGATED POWERS**

The Town Clerk asked members to consider granting delegated powers to the Personnel Sub-Committee to deal with a vacancy in the Administration Office of the Council Offices. This would be necessary due to the timescale and current Council recess.

RESOLVED – that delegated powers be granted to the Personnel Sub-Committee to deal with the vacancy in the Administration Office.

47. **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – CHANGE OF COMPOSITION OF MEMBERS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report to seek to amend the membership number of the Policy and Resources Committee from 27 members to 28 members. This had been sought following the recent elections to enable the newly elected member to take part in the debate and voting on matters relevant to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Under the Council's Standing orders SO15(a)(iii) the Council may, at any time, dissolve or alter the membership of a Committee.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the membership of the Policy and Resources Committee be amended from 27 to 28 members.
- (iii) That an item be placed on the next Policy and Resources Committee agenda seeking nominations to fill this vacancy on that Committee.

48. **NORTH AGNEW PLANTATION**

The Town Clerk submitted a report to update members on the proposed transfer of land and North Agnew Woodland.

The Environment Committee had resolved to accept the Woodland and land adjacent to Burnhill Way but not the land within the Golf Club adjacent to the C35. This decision would need to be ratified by Council prior to any further action taking place. The land would then be transferred to this Council thus removing the need for a Council Seal to be used on a deed. The deed would be between Durham County Council and Hall Construction.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the change to the mechanism of land transfer from Woodham Golf Club to the Town Council be agreed.
- (iii) That legal assistance with the conveyance procees be agreed.

49. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

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

- (a) Youth Council
There had been no meetings.
- (b) County Durham Association of Local Councils
Councillor R.S. Fleming informed that the AGM would be in October when the Executive positions would be appointed.
- (c) Aycliffe Village Community Association
No report.
- (d) Woodham Village Community Association
Councillor K Henderson reported that the Centre was thriving.
- (e) Great Aycliffe and Middridge Local Council's Committee
No meeting.
- (f) Larger Local Councils' Forum
Next meeting would be in two weeks time.
- (g) Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre
No report.
- (h) Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society
Councillor I. Gray gave an update on new ventures being undertaken.

- (i) Friends of Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve
Councillor I. Gray gave an update on the works being carried out.
- (j) Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway
No report.
- (k) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
No meeting.
- (l) Crime and Community Safety Task Group
Councillor M. Ashcroft gave a report on the most recent meeting.

RESOLVED – that the information given from the Representatives serving on the Outside Bodies be received.

CHAIRMAN.