

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2018** at **7.15 p.m.**

**PRESENT** **Councillor Wendy Hillary (Chairman)** and  
Councillors Eddy Adam, M. Ashcroft, Derek G. Atkinson, Jim Atkinson, Kathy Beetham, P.J. Bergg, Bill Blenkinsopp, Mrs. D. Bowman, Arun M. Chandran, B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, J. Clark, Mrs. M. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, George C. Gray, I. Gray, B. Hall, Dave Hardaker, K. Henderson, Jed Hillary, Kate Hopper, M. Iveson, Mrs. V.M. Raw, Ken Robson and Paul Symons.

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

**IN ATTENDANCE** Mrs. Trish Pemberton (Chairman of the Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway).

Mr. Syd Howarth (Chairman of Great Aycliffe Residents' Association)

**NOTE:-**

The Chairman informed the meeting that there would be a change to the order of the Agenda in view of the large number of Members of the Public in attendance for Agenda Item No. 6 and Agenda Item No. 10. Therefore item No. 6 (Public Questions) would be brought forward to follow Declarations of Interest and item No. 10 (Great Aycliffe Residents' Association – (GARA)) would then follow Public Questions.

120. **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

121. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs. S. Haigh, Mrs. I. Hewitson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson and Sally Symons.

122. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATION**

No dispensation requests had been received.

123. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared interests:-

**Councillor Eddy Adam** – Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he has family associated with the area and is a member of Durham County Council and would not be taking part in item 10.

**Councillor J.D. Clare** – Pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as a member of Durham County Council who own land in the area and will be leaving the meeting during that item.

**Councillor Kate Hopper** – Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as a member of Durham County Council who own land in the area and would not be taking part in the meeting for that item.

**Councillor Dave Hardaker** – Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he has family associated with the area and would not be taking part in item 10.

**Councillor Ken Robson** - Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he is a member of the Great Aycliffe Residents' Association.

**Councillor Derek Atkinson** – Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he is a member of the Great Aycliffe Residents' Association.

**Councillor Jim Atkinson** – Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as a member of Durham County Council and would not be taking part in the meeting.

**Councillor R.S. Fleming** – Non pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he is a member of the Great Aycliffe Residents' Association and would not be taking part in this item. However he would be making an address under the Public Questions.

**Councillor M. Ashcroft** – Pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 6 (Public Questions) and Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he owns property in the area. He would be leaving the meeting during these items.

**Councillor Arun M. Chandran** – Pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 6 (Public Questions) and Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as he owns property in the area. He would be leaving the meeting during these items.

**Councillor Mrs. D. Bowman** –Pecuniary interest under Agenda Item 6 (Public Questions) and Agenda Item 10 (GARA) as she lives in property in the area. She would be leaving the meeting during these items.

124. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

**Councillors Martin Ashcroft, Mrs. D. Bowman and Arun M. Chandran left the meeting at this point in the procedure.**

The following written public questions had been received, following appropriate notice being given in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders:-

(a) Mr. Dave Catleugh

“When Livin has finalised its regeneration plans, will it, or the Town Council, be willing to hold a proper ballot of residents so as to accurately gauge their views?”

*The Chairman stated that the question could not be answered as there had been no Council discussion until item No. 10 (GARA) on the agenda.*

(b) Susan Cook

1. I would like to ask Great Aycliffe Council what their stance is on the regeneration scheme of the West Ward (Kirkstone Place, Whinlatter Place, Honister Place, Eskdale Place, Langdale Place and Silverdale Place) ?

*The Chairman stated that the Council had no stance prior to the discussion under item No. 10 (GARA) on the agenda.*

2. I would like to ask Great Aycliffe Council that if this does not go ahead are they going to stand back and watch the area be run down?

*The Chairman pointed out that this Council did not own any property or land in that area.*

3. Are you going to ask 'Livin' to speak with the tenants and explain what will happen for individuals?

*Mrs. Cook withdrew this question as she had already been in discussion with 'Living'.*

(c) Simon Rooney

1. Livin state that their new estate layout will help design out crime and anti-social behaviour. Does the Council really believe this will be the case or is it not simply that these elements will be simply dispersed?

*The Chairman stated that the question could not be answered as there had been no Council discussion until item No. 10 (GARA) on the agenda.*

2. Livin has indicated that it is unlikely that planning permission would be given for building new homes on much of the designated green space within the estate. There are sections of land which used to have properties / buildings on them which have been demolished which could be utilized once again for housing. Therefore, does the Council think that option 2 has been ruled out too quickly and should therefore be looked into again as the loss of some green spaces must be better than the almost total loss of green spaces that the new estate plan indicates?

*The Chairman stated that Councillor R.S. Fleming would answer this question in his statement.*

3. The proposed new layout of the estate has residential areas going right up to the Burn and also along the meadow that runs along the south east of Burnhill Way where it joins Greenfield Way. Does the Council believe that the proposed green corridor will offer suitable protection / passageway for animals using the Burn as a wildlife corridor to other areas of the town and possibly surrounding towns?

*The Chairman stated that Councillor R.S. Fleming would answer this question in his statement.*

(d) Sam Level

If the Council is against regeneration of the area (as they appear to be opposed to option 3, option 1 is pointless and option 2 is not feasible) then what are they going to do to tidy up the area ?

Where I live there are potholes that a small child would fall in, litter strewn everywhere, kids toys and unwanted furniture scattered around, noisy scooters and bikes riding around all over unchallenged and some very untidy and unkempt gardens and houses.

*Ms. Level withdrew her question as she felt the meeting was not appropriate due to the absence of 'Livin'.*

(e) Andrew Tenwick

1. Are living now prepared to buy this property now that it is unlikely to sell with all this uncertainty they have caused and if so a timescale for this to happen?

*This was a question which 'Livin' would need to address.*

2. The house is a financial burden as they is still council tax to pay with the prospect in the near future of a 150% rate due to the government's empty 2<sup>nd</sup> home policy now in force. Will Durham County Council waive this due to Livin's proposal?

*This was a question which 'Livin' would need to address.*

- (f) Councillors Eddy Adam, Kate Hopper and J.D. Clare gave information and general statements in regard to 'Livin' and their proposals.

- (g) Councillor Fleming stated that he had been looking forward to 'Livin' attending this meeting as he would have liked to hear their side of the issue of the Western Area Regeneration Scheme. Unfortunately they had decided not to attend, so much for consultation and working with the public. If they had attended, he would have asked a number of questions, for example:

Why are you proposing to demolish 500+ homes?

Have you carried out a survey that indicates they are not considered fit for refurbishment or is this purely a business decision, or is it an opportunity for social engineering?

Where will you decant the tenants during demolition/building?

At the moment there are 286 tenants. When regeneration is complete, there will be 158 tenants. Therefore 128 tenants will not be coming back to the estate. What criteria will you use to select who will be successful? And what happens to those who are unsuccessful?

I understand that you will be attempting to buy out the 224 home owners and will be seeking compulsory purchase (through DCC because you do not have that power). What compensation deal are you going to guarantee them? I understand that a figure of £50k is going to be offered. What kind of accommodation can be bought in Newton Aycliffe for £45k? Where do you propose to decant the residents? According to your figures, you will not be able to offer them social housing in the area. So what happens then?

Do you realise the amount of distress you are causing. The three most common causes of anxiety are divorce, bereavement and moving house. Already you have put a blight on the estate. House owners on the estate are already unable to sell their houses privately. It is like the old category D villages.

Until yesterday, I had an open mind and yes, I was concerned that Livin were conducting a consultation rather than a referendum. Madam Mayor, members of the public, I, like all other town councillors, received a copy of Livin's bid to the Department of Environment (ref 2013) which is enlightening. Livin has said that there were three options for the area, A, B and C. There was only ever one option in their bid to the Department of Housing and Local Government. Option C - total demolition of the site. Planning permission 2018. Leaseholder buyouts (some cases compulsory purchase order 2018). Decanting starting 2018. Demolition and infrastructure started 2019.

In their bid there is a heading on Local Support and 'Livin' state 'we are committed to enabling community voice and view residents as key partners.'

The outline plan of the proposed development indicates that the plan to purchase a large area of green open space from DCC and build homes on this site. This is totally contrary to the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan and could well lead to another test case.

Although I am unable to propose anything I believe we must have urgent meetings with 'Livin' and the County Council to ascertain their true position on this regeneration scheme.

- (h) Mr. Syd Howarth (Chairman of Great Aycliffe Residents' Association) read out a statement from (GARA) in respect of the Western Area Regeneration Project, seeking the Council's support in opposing Option 3 of Livin's proposals to include the wholesale demolition of the Estate.

## 125. **GREAT AYCLIFFE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

**Councillors Jim Atkinson and J.D. Clare left the meeting during the discussion on this item.**

**Councillors Martin Ashcroft, Mrs. D. Bowman and Arun M. Chandran remained out of the meeting for this item.**

Members considered information which had been supplied by GARA along with information gained from the public questions.

Following a lengthy discussion by members the following two proposals were made by Councillor M. Iveson and seconded by Councillor Bill Blenkinsopp:-

- (1) That Durham County Council and 'Livin' be asked to talk to this Council and Residents to gather the information and facts needed before sending a letter to the Minister for Housing and Local Government pointing out the facts and the need for a judicial review.
- (2) That this Council is against any development on green spaces by 'Livin' or any other builder.

A vote took place on the two proposals and resulted in the proposals being agreed.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:-

- (i) That Durham County Council and 'Livin' be asked to talk to this Council and Residents to gather the information and facts needed before sending a letter to the Minister for Housing and Local Government pointing out the facts and the need for a judicial review.
- (ii) That this Council is against any development on green spaces by 'Livin' or any other builder.

**Councillors Martin Ashcroft, Jim Atkinson, Mrs. D. Bowman, Arun M. Chandran and J.D. Clare returned to the meeting as this point.**

126. **STOCKTON AND DARLINGTON RAILWAY**

Mrs. Trish Pemberton the Chairman of the Darlington and Stockton Railway was in attendance to give members an update on the significant progress on the preservation of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and the forthcoming bicentenary celebrations.

In view of the timescale taken for items 6 and 10 it was not possible for Mrs. Pemberton to give her presentation.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:-

- (i) That sincere apologies be forwarded to Mrs. Pemberton for her not being able to give her presentation on this occasion.
- (ii) That Mrs. Pemberton be offered a further Council Meeting date to address the Council on the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

127. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Dave Hardaker, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson and

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

128. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

(a) **Environment Committee**

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

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee, held on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018, 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 Bill Blenkinsopp and

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Recreation Committee, held on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018, be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(c) **Special Recreation Committee**

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

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Special Recreation Committee, held on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018, be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(d) **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 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018, be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted.

129. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor had submitted a list of appointments she had attended during the period 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

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

130. **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report and updates to the Financial Regulations of the Council which formed part of the overall framework of the Scheme of Administration and Standing Orders.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the amendments to the Financial Regulations be approved prior to them being formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Council on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

131. **STANDING ORDERS – CONTRACTS AND PROCUREMENT**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report and updates to the Standing Orders for Contracts and Procurement which formed part of the overall framework of the Council's Standing Orders to be formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the amendments to the Standing Orders for Contracts and Procurement be approved prior to them being formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Council on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

132. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT CODE OF PRACTICE UPDATE**

The Finance Manager had submitted a report and update to the Treasury Management Code of Practice which forms a part of the overall framework of the Council's Scheme of Administration and Standing Orders.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:-

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

133. **NALC 2018 – MODEL STANDING ORDERS**

The Town Clerk had submitted a report to advise members of the production of new Model Standing Orders by the National Association of Local Councils which now incorporate or reference legislation that has been introduced by Government since the Model Standing Orders were first published in 2013.

**RESOLVED** – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That amendments would be made to the Standing Orders for submission and approval at the Annual General Meeting.

134. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

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

- (a) Youth Council  
Councillor Jim Atkinson gave an update on the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018.
- (b) County Durham Association of Local Councils  
There had been no meeting.
- (c) Aycliffe Village Community Association  
Councillor Blenkinsopp had been unable to attend on this occasion.



- (d) Woodham Village Community Association  
Councillor K. Henderson gave an update report.
- (e) Great Aycliffe and Middridge Local Councils' Committee  
There had been no meeting.
- (f) Larger Local Councils' Forum  
The next meeting was scheduled for May.
- (g) Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society  
Councillor I. Gray gave an update on the Society.
- (h) Friends of Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve  
Councillor I. Gray gave an update from the volunteers.
- (i) Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway  
Councillor Dave Hardaker gave an update report.

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

**CHAIRMAN.**