

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2020 – 7.15 p.m.

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on Wednesday, 11 March 2020 at 7.15 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillors Eddy Adam, M. Ashcroft, Derek G Atkinson, Jim Atkinson, Kathy Beetham, Bill Blenkinsopp, Mrs. D. Bowman, Arun M. Chandran, J. Clark, R.S. Fleming, George C. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Hall, Dave Hardaker, Mrs. I. Hewitson, Kate Hopper, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, Ken Robson, Michael Stead and Paul Symons.

IN ATTENDANCE

Samantha Townsend (Co-op Member Pioneer)

OFFICERS

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

111. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council it was proposed by Councillor M. Iveson and seconded by Councillor Bill Blenkinsopp that Councillor R.S. Fleming be appointed as Chairman of the Council for this meeting.

RESOLVED – that Councillor R.S. Fleming be appointed as Chairman of the Council in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Councillor R.S. Fleming took the Chair.

112. NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

113. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors P.J. Bergg, B.A. Clare, J.D. Clare, Mrs. M. Dalton, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, Mrs. V.M. Raw and Sally Symons.

114. MEMBERS' DISPENSATION

No dispensation requests had been received.

115. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest submitted.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Michael Stead to the meeting as the newly elected Member for the Woodham Ward of Great Aycliffe following the By-election held on the 5th March 2020.

Councillor Kate Hopper left the meeting at this point as she had another engagement.

116. CO-OP LOCAL COMMUNITY

Ms. Samantha Townsend was in attendance to give a short presentation on her role to improve community links with the Co-op.

She spoke of the scheme set up by the Co-op to nominate three local causes which they would raise funds to help. New applications would be considered in the Spring and Samantha asked for nominations to be considered to be sent to her to be dealt with.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That Ms. Townsend be thanked for her attendance and presentation.
- (ii) That Members forward information on local organisations who would benefit from the scheme direct to Samantha for consideration for this years' scheme.

117. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions from the public.

118. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor B. Hall, seconded by Councillor Bill Blenkinsopp and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 29th January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

119. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor had submitted a list of appointments she had attended for the period 29th January to the 10th March 2020.

RESOLVED – that the information submitted by the Mayor be noted.

120. COMMITTEE MINUTES

(a) Environment Committee

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

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on the 26 February 2020 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 M. Iveson and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the minutes of the Recreation Committee held on the 26 February 2020 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted subject to the following:-

Minute No. 91 – Exclusion Report

That following receipt of further information from the Police this item would be referred back to the next Recreation Committee for further consideration.

(c) Policy and Resources Committee

It was proposed by Councillor M. Ashcroft, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson and

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 4 March 2020 be received, and
- (ii) That the said minutes be approved and adopted subject to the following:-

Minute No. 105 (i) – Removal of Telephone Box, Whinlatter Place

That it be noted that this Council wished to object to the removal of the actual Service and Telephone Box at Whinlatter Place.

Councillor Kathy Beetham entered the meeting at this point on the agenda.

121. STANDING ORDER NO. 32 – CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT

The Town Clerk had submitted a report to advise the Council of the outcome of the Code of Conduct Complaints which had been reported to Council on the 30th October 2019 that two Members (Councillor Kathy Beetham and Councillor J.D. Clare) had breached the Council's Code of Conduct.

Durham County Council's Governance Solicitor has now completed the investigation and the decision of the Governance Solicitor is that no further action is required in respect of this complaint.

RESOLVED – that the information be received and noted.

122. NEW PREMISES LICENCE – THE AVIATOR GIN BAR

Information had been circulated in respect of an application for a new Premises Licence at Unit 18 Northfield Way, Aycliffe Business Park, by The Herbal Gin Company Limited.

RESOLVED – that no objections be made to the application.

123. INSTALLATION OF EVCP's IN COUNTY DURHAM

Information from Innovate UK had been circulated for Members to consider and identify potential sites for the possible installation of electric vehicle charge points. It was pointed out that Innovate would assess sites which are nominated and made a decision as to which would be the most beneficial.

It was suggested that the Oakleaf Sports Complex and Moore Lane Eco Centre be forwarded as suggestions for electric charging points.

RESOLVED – that the Oakleaf Sports Complex and Moore Lane Eco Centre be forwarded to Innovate for their consideration as potential sites.

124. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Corporate Management Team had submitted a report for consideration and approval of the annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control for the 2019/20 financial year.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control in respect of the 2019/20 financial year be approved.
- (ii) That the review be taken into account in providing the assurance that the Council requires in order to approve the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement, as set out in Section 1 of the 2019/20 Annual Return later in the year.

125. CORONAVIRUS

The Town Clerk submitted a report for Members to consider on the impact of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) for the functioning of the Town Council and its services.

Information updates were being received on a daily basis from Government Departments and an 'Emergency Arrangements Protocol' had been prepared and circulated for Members consideration by the Town Clerk. The protocol gave Members information on the impact which could affect this Council with staffing, day to day running of facilities, Council Meetings and proposed events which are to take place.

The Town Clerk would be holding frequent meetings with his Management Team, Service Managers and Chairmen and Vice-Chairman of appropriate Committees to make necessary provision for the Council to function.

The question of authority to make decisions in an emergency situation, on behalf of the Council, was questioned. The following proposal was submitted by Councillor Arun M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam.

'That all necessary authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to deal with the Covid-19 issue in accordance with Government guidance and in consultation with relevant Councillors'.

The proposal was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the reports be received.
- (ii) That all necessary authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to deal with the Covid-19 issue in accordance with Government guidance and in consultation with relevant Councillors'.
- (iii) That the Town Clerk and Senior Officers be commended on the work which had been undertaken on emergency protocols and in keeping the Council updated on the situation.

126. OUTSIDE BODIES

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

- (a) **Youth Council**
Councillor Derek G. Atkinson gave an update from the meeting held on the 5th March 2020.
- (b) **County Durham Association of Local Councils**
No meeting. (only A.G.M.)
- (c) **Aycliffe Village Community Association**
Councillor Bill Blenkinsopp gave an update.
- (d) **Woodham Village Community Association**
Councillor P. Symons had been unable to attend the meeting.

The Chairman pointed out that there was currently a vacancy on the Woodham Village Community Association and proposed that the newly elected member for the Woodham Ward, Councillor Michael Stead, may wish to be elected to serve on the Association.

Councillor Michael Stead duly agreed to be the Council's representative.

- (e) **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Local Council's Committee**
No meeting had been held.
- (f) **Larger Local Councils' Forum**
The Town Clerk gave an update on the meeting.

- (g) Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society**
Councillor I. Gray gave a current update on the Society.
- (h) Friends of Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve**
Councillor I. Gray gave an update.
- (i) Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway**
Councillor Dave Hardaker reported on the meetings which had taken place.
- (j) GAMP – Community Safety Task Group**
Councillor B. Hall had been unable to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED – as follows:-

- (i) That the information given from the Representatives serving on the Outside Bodies be received.
- (ii) That Councillor Michael Stead be appointed to serve on the Woodham Village Community Association.

CHAIRMAN.