

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 19 MAY 2021 – 7.15 p.m.

Minutes of the proceedings of the **ANNUAL MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY 19th MAY 2021 at 7.15 p.m.**

PRESENT Councillors E. Adam, T. Armstrong, M. Ashcroft, J. Atkinson, P. Bergg, D. Bowman, A. M. Chandran, B. A. Clare, J. D. Clare, J. Clark, N. Collinson, B. Fleming, G. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Haigh, B. Hall, D. Hardaker, P. Hawkins, J. Hillary, W. Hillary, K. Hopper, J. Jones, N. Jones, A. Miller, J. Moore, C. Robinson, K. Robson, M. Shelton, and M. Stead.

OFFICERS Mr. D. Austin (Town Clerk)
Mrs. S. Stretch (Senior Administration Officer)
Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate and Policy Officer)
Miss. A. Donald (P.A. to the Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE Mrs. M. Dalton (Outgoing Mayor), C. Clement, M. Murphy, V. Crosby, S. Allison, and M. Dixon

1. APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

It was proposed by Councillor M. Ashcroft, seconded by Councillor B. Fleming that Councillor Mrs. S. Haigh be nominated as Mayor for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

It was further proposed by Councillor P. Bergg, seconded by Councillor J. Clark that Councillor W. Hillary be nominated as Mayor for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

A vote was requested with the following results:-

For Councillor Mrs. S. Haigh – 16 votes

For Councillor W. Hillary – 11 votes

RESOLVED – that **Councillor Mrs. S. Haigh** be appointed Chairman (Mayor) of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

Councillor Mrs. S. Haigh took the Chair for the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Mayor's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The newly appointed Mayor made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

3. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

It was proposed by Councillor B. Haigh seconded by Councillor M. Ashcroft, that Councillor K. Robson be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

RESOLVED – that **Councillor K. Robson** be appointed Vice-Chairman (Deputy Mayor) of the Council for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

4. NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

5. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

There had been no requests for dispensations under disclosable or non-disclosable interests.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

8. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor A. M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor M. Ashcroft and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on the **22nd April 2021** and the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on **28th April 2021** be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor's Announcements

The newly appointed Mayor, Councillor Mrs. S. Haigh, thanked the Council for the honour of being appointed as Chairman of the Council (Mayor) for the year 2021/22.

The Mayor informed the Council that her nominated charity for her year in office would be 'Children's Blessings' – based in Newton Aycliffe.

The Mayor gave the vote of thanks and presentation of flowers to the outgoing Mayor, Mrs. Mary Dalton, thanking her for her dedicated service during her two years in office.

The Mayor also gave the vote of thanks and presentation of flowers to the outgoing Deputy Mayor, Wendy Hillary thanking her for her dedicated service during her two years in office and gave special thanks for chairing the Council Meetings during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Town Clerk Announcements

The Town Clerk announced details of the Parish Meeting which is to be held on Wednesday 26th May 2021 and an offer from the Member of Parliament for Sedgefield to attend a future meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

10. ANNUAL CONSTITUTION REVIEW

The Town Clerk submitted a report seeking members to review the Council's Constitution and seek the adoption of the amendments proposed.

The report set out information on each Article of the Constitution separately attaching details of any amendments which were recommended:

CONTENTS AND INTRODUCTION

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 1 - How the Council Operates

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 2 - Committee Structure

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 3 - Powers and Duties of Committees

*The powers and duties of the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups had been reviewed and updated by officers to reflect the actual responsibilities of each more accurately. The updated Article was set out in **Appendix 1**.*

ARTICLE 4 - Mayor's Information Booklet

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

*However, Members were asked to agree or propose amendments to the Civic Guest List attached at **Appendix 2**. The Civic Guest list for 2021/22 was agreed to remain with the same Authorities as for 2019/20.*

ARTICLE 5 - Members' Allowances Scheme

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 6A - Standing Orders – Relating to Proceedings and Business of the Council

These Standing Orders were updated and approved by Council on the 10th March 2021 (Minute No. 225 (ii) referred).

ARTICLE 6B - Standing Orders – Relating to Contracts and Procurement

These Standing Orders were updated and approved by Council on the 22nd April 2021 (Minute No. 243 (ii) referred).

ARTICLE 7 - Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were updated and approved by Council on the 22nd April 2021 (Minute No. 242 (ii) referred).

ARTICLE 8 - Scheme of Delegation

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 9 - Rights of Citizens

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 10 - Members Code of Conduct

There were no recommendations for amendment or alteration following the adoption of the Code of Conduct on the 1st November 2017.

ARTICLE 11 – Officers Code of Conduct

No recommendations for amendment or alterations to the Officers Code of Conduct.

ARTICLE 12 – (A) – Member / Officer Protocol

ARTICLE 12 – (B) – Protocol on use of Council Facilities & Resources by Councillors

There were no recommendations for amendments or alterations to (A) or (B).

ARTICLE 13 - Strategies / High Level Documents / Service Plans

The following documents are reported and updated annually at their appropriate times and reported to the Council or appropriate committee:

1. *Risk Management Strategy*
2. *Medium Term Financial Plan*
3. *Treasury Management Code of Practice*
4. *Business Continuity Plan*
5. *Asset Management Plan*
6. *Town Council Service Delivery Plan*
7. *Sports Complex Service Plan*
8. *Works and Environment Section Service Plan*
9. *Finance Section Service Plan*
10. *Pre-Schools Service Plan*
11. *Code of Governance*
12. *Health and Safety Policy Manual*

ARTICLE 14 - Council Policies and Procedures

A full list of Council Policies and Procedures showing when they had last been reviewed was set out in the report for information.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the amendments to Article 3 of the Council's Constitution as outlined in Appendix 1 be approved.

- (iii) That the Civic Guest List be agreed to be the same list of Authorities as in 2019/20.
- (iv) That the Council's Constitution as set out in the report be readopted.
- (v) That a full copy of the adopted Constitution of the Council be available for Members to peruse in the Council Chamber and on the Website.

11. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

The Council considered proposals in relation to the three Standing Committees of the Council; Environment, Recreation and Policy and Resources

RESOLVED – as follows:-

(i) Environment Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A. M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor K. Robson:

- (a) That an Environment Committee be appointed for the Municipal Year 2021/22.
- (b) That it comprise of 27 Members of the Council plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as Ex-Officio Members.
- (c) That the Membership of the Environment Committee be:

Councillors E. Adam, T. Armstrong, M. Ashcroft, J. Atkinson, P. Bergg, D. Bowman, A. M. Chandran, B. A. Clare, J. D. Clare, J. Clark, N. Collinson, B. Fleming, G. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Haigh, B. Hall, D. Hardaker, P. Hawkins, J. Hillary, W. Hillary, K. Hopper, N. Jones, A. Miller, J. Moore, C. Robinson, K. Robson, M. Shelton, and M. Stead.

(ii) Recreation Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A. M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor K. Robson:

- (a) That a Recreation Committee be appointed for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.
- (b) That it comprise of 27 Members of the Council plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as Ex-Officio Members.
- (c) That the membership of the Recreation Committee be:

Councillors E. Adam, T. Armstrong, M. Ashcroft, J. Atkinson, P. Bergg, D. Bowman, A. M. Chandran, B. A. Clare, J. Clare, J. Clark, N. Collinson, B. Fleming, G. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Haigh, B. Hall, D. Hardaker, P. Hawkins, J. Hillary, W. Hillary, K. Hopper, J. Jones, N. Jones, J. Moore, C. Robinson, K. Robson, M. Shelton, and M. Stead.

(iii) Policy and Resources Committee

It was proposed by Councillor A. M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor K. Robson:

- (a) That a Policy and Resources Committee be appointed for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.
- (b) That it comprise of 24 Members of the Council plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as Ex-Officio Members.
- (c) That the membership of the Policy and Resources Committee be:

Councillors E. Adam, T. Armstrong, M. Ashcroft, J. Atkinson, P. Bergg, D. Bowman, A. M. Chandran, B. A. Clare, J. Clare, J. Clark, N. Collinson, B. Fleming, G. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. S. Haigh, B. Haigh, D. Hardaker, P. Hawkins, J. Hillary, W. Hillary, K. Hopper, A. Miller, J. Moore, C. Robinson, K. Robson, and M. Stead.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF COUNCIL MEETING

It was moved by Councillor M. Ashcroft, seconded by Councillor A. M. Chandran and

RESOLVED – that the meeting be adjourned to enable the Environment, Recreation and Policy and Resources Committees to appoint their Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

Please refer to the Minutes of these Committees.

13. RECONVENING OF COUNCIL MEETING

It was moved by Councillor A. M. Chandran, seconded by Councillor K. Robson and

RESOLVED – that the meeting of the Council be re-convened following the completion of the meetings of the Environment, Recreation and Policy and Resources Committees.

14. MEMBERS' ATTENDANCES

The Town Clerk submitted a list of members' attendances for the Municipal Year 2019/20 and 2020/2021.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

15. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2020/21

The Finance Manager submitted a report setting out allowances and expenses which had been paid to Elected Members during the Financial Year 2020/21.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

16. OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Clerk submitted a report setting out the current list of Outside Bodies to which the Council currently appoints representatives, together with the number of members currently serving on those Bodies.

It was proposed by Councillor A. M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor C. Robinson that items c, d, g, and h be removed from the Outside Bodies List.

Following a lengthy debate this proposal was withdrawn.

RESOLVED – that the following members and officers be nominated to the undermentioned outside bodies:

- (a) Youth Council
Councillors D. Bowman and P. Hawkins together with the Corporate and Policy Officer.
- (b) County Durham Association of Local Councils
The Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee and Councillor K. Robson, together with the Town Clerk.
- (c) Aycliffe Village Community Association
Councillor J. Atkinson
- (d) Woodham Village Community Association
Councillors M. Stead and M. Shelton
- (e) Great Aycliffe and Middridge Local Councils' Committee
Councillors A. M. Chandran, P. Bergg together with the Town Clerk.
- (f) Larger Local Councils' Forum
The Chairman and Vice Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee together with the Town Clerk.
- (g) Newton Aycliffe Bus Preservation Society
Councillor I. Gray.
- (h) Friends of Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve
Councillor I. Gray.
- (i) Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway
Councillor D. Hardaker.
- (j) GAMP Community Safety Task Group
It was proposed by Councillor J. D. Clare and seconded by Councillor P. Bergg that this be removed from the list as it no longer meets.

17. MEETINGS 2021/2022

The Town Clerk submitted a suggested schedule of Council meeting dates for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

RESOLVED – that the scheduled dates be approved for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

18. COUNCIL INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS REVIEW

The Finance Manager submitted a report setting out the annual review of the Council's insurance arrangements, including a list of insurance claims over the last ten years, as required by the Council's Standing Orders.

RESOLVED – that the annual review of the Council's insurance arrangements and list of insurance claims over the last 10 years as required by Standing Orders be approved.

19. REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS WITH DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL - LICENCE TO OPERATE ON DCC ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS

The Town Clerk submitted a report setting out a review of the licence in place with Durham County Council allowing the Town Council to operate on County Council environmental areas, as required by the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and that the licence is continued.

20. REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS WITH DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL -WINTER MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENT

The Town Clerk submitted a report setting out a review of the licence in place with Durham County Council covering winter maintenance works, as required by the Council's Constitution.

It was proposed by Councillor J. Hillary and seconded by Councillor John Clark that consideration of the continuation of this licence be deferred and that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Environment Committee, following the completion of the discussions with Durham County Council regarding the provision of suitable equipment.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That review of the licence with Durham County Council regarding winter maintenance arrangements be deferred and reported to a future Environment Committee meeting, following the completion of the discussions with Durham County Council regarding the provision of suitable equipment.

21. REVIEW OF INVENTORY OF LAND AND BUILDINGS

The Town Clerk submitted a report to provide a list of land and buildings under the Council's ownership and advise of any sales, acquisitions or leases entered into over the previous year.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

22. REVIEW OF COUNCIL AND STAFF SUBSCRIPTIONS TO OTHER BODIES

The Town Clerk submitted a report with a list of subscriptions to other bodies currently paid on behalf of the Council and its officers.

RESOLVED – that the report be received with no changes proposed to the list of subscriptions.

23. REVIEW OF COUNCIL EXPENDITURE INCURRED UNDER THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE 2020/21

The Town Clerk submitted a breakdown of expenditure incurred by the Council under the General Power of Competence during the 2020/21 financial year.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

24. ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

The Town Clerk submitted a report to provide information to members indicating the Council's eligibility to meet the criteria set by the Secretary of State (Localism Act 2011 – Section 8) for the Council to adopt and use the 'General Power of Competence'.

The report confirmed that the Council meets the two required criteria for eligibility, at the time of this meeting to exercise the General Power of Competence.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the report be received.
- (ii) that the Council resolves to adopt to use the General Power of Competence.

25. COUNCILLOR INDUCTION TRAINING

The Town Clerk submitted a report to provide Members with information on the induction training available for new and returning councillors following the recent election.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

26. POLITICAL GROUPS

The Town Clerk gave a verbal report requesting that each Political Group on the Council advise who their Spokesperson(s) are for the information of Officers of the Council to enable consultation and co-ordination of information outside of Council Meetings.

RESOLVED – That the Political Groups on the Council advise the Town Clerk of their representatives.

CHAIRMAN.