

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe on Wednesday 8th September 2021 at 7.15pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Arun M. Chandran (Chairman)

Councillors Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Jim Atkinson, Dorothy Bowman, Barbara A. Clare, John D. Clare, John Clark, Bob Fleming, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Mrs. Sandra Haigh, Dave Hardaker, Phillip Hawkins, Kate Hopper, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Ken Robson, and Michael Stead.

OFFICIALS

Mr. D. Austin (Town Clerk)
Mrs. T. Woodhead (Finance Manager)
Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate and Policy Officer)
Mr. L. Williams (Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator)
Mrs. S. Stretch (Senior Administrative Officer)

Members observed a minute silence in memory of Keith Henderson, a former Great Aycliffe Town Councillor.

The Chairman advised the meeting that Agenda Item 11 regarding the Maternity, Adoption and Surrogacy Policy had been withdrawn and deferred to a future meeting.

46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors, Peter Bergg, Neil Collinson, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, and Andrea Miller.

47. MEMBERS DISPENSATIONS

There had been no applications for dispensations.

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

49. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

50. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Bob Fleming, and seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, held on the 21st July 2021, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

51. PRE SCHOOL SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Bob Fleming, and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Pre School Sub Committee, held on the 21st July 2021, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

52. ACCOUNT CONTROL SHEETS

Account Control Sheets for the period 19th July 2021 to the 20th August 2021 and the General Bank Accounts for July 2021 were submitted.

RESOLVED – that the Account Control Sheets for the period 19th July 2021 to the 20th August 2021 and the General Bank Accounts for July 2021 be received.

53. GRANTS AND DONATIONS

The Town Clerk submitted a report setting out the Grants and Donations requests which had been received since the last meeting.

A total of £2,961 is currently available in the 2021/22 Small Grants and Donations Budget, £2,000 remains available in the Youth Council Grants Budget and £25,000 in the new COVID Recovery Community Grants Fund.

a) Neville Community Centre

An application was received from Neville Community Centre for a grant from the COVID Recovery Fund to help replenish their balances and build up a contingency reserve.

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and seconded by Councillor Jim Atkinson, and

RESOLVED – that a grant of £2,000 to be awarded to Neville Community Centre from the Covid Recovery Fund.

b) Greenfield Community College

An application was received from Greenfield Community College for a £4,000 grant from the COVID Recovery Fund towards the cost of installing a covered shelter for students.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran, and seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam, and

RESOLVED – that no grant be given as applications would not usually be considered from statutory organisations, where a grant would constitute the direct replacement of statutory funding.

c) Charity Event

A request had been received for the consideration of the donation of a prize towards a charity event being held to raise money for Crohn's and Colitis UK.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran, and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and

RESOLVED – that no donation be given as the applicant is not within the Great Aycliffe parish and there is no clear and direct benefit to the community of Great Aycliffe.

A letter of thanks was received from the Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe describing how the grant money had been used.

Councillor Eddy Adam thanked the Town Clerk for the new layout of the donations report which gives background information and was easy to read.

54. REPLACEMENT WALK-BEHIND ROTARY MOWER

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator submitted a report to consider the options regarding the replacement of the current Hayter Condor walk-behind rotary mower.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran, and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and

RESOLVED – that

- (i) the report is received
- (ii) that the Bobcat FS481V with dual track grip tyres at a cost of £7,380 be purchased.
- (iii) that an additional capital budget of £2,380 be approved.

Councillor Ken Robson joined the meeting at this point.

55. REPLACEMENT FAIRWAY MOWER

The Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator submitted a report to consider the options regarding replacing the Toro 5610 Fairway Mower on the Oak Leaf Golf Course.

Councillor Martin Ashcroft provided an update on the 5010-D hybrid model and its various merits following a discussion with the officer.

Councillor Carl Robinson proposed that the existing vehicle be retained for back up.

Councillor Eddy Adam thanked the Grounds Maintenance Services Co-ordinator for the clarity of the report as it gives all the relevant information required to make a decision.

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and seconded by Councillor Bob Fleming, and

RESOLVED – that:

- (i) the report be received.
- (ii) the ex-demonstration Toro 5010-D Hybrid be purchased at a cost of £48,500 from Lloyd Ltd.
- (iii) the optional roof canopy at a further cost of £750 is not required as it is included with the above model.
- (iv) the existing Toro 5610-D is retained as a back-up.

56. MATERNITY, ADOPTION & SURROGACY POLICY

This agenda item was withdrawn and deferred to a future meeting.

57. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING POLICY

The Corporate Management Team provided a report setting out the updated Confidential Reporting Policy for Members consideration.

Councillor Eddy Adam requested that bullying should be referenced throughout the policy in addition to harassment and victimisation.

RESOLVED – that:

- (i) the report be received
- (ii) The Confidential Reporting Policy be accepted and implemented subject to the inclusion of the term ‘bullying’ as relevant throughout the policy.

58. 2022/23 BUDGET SETTING FRAMEWORK AND TIMETABLE

A report was submitted by the Finance Manager to seek approval from Members of the proposed framework and timetable for the setting of the Council’s 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Programme Budgets.

The Chairman referred to item 5.1 in the report and asked that one Labour and one Liberal Democrat member be invited to the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen meeting to review the draft budgets.

Councillor Eddy Adam thanked the Finance Manager for a comprehensive report and suggested various ways that the budget consultation could be improved.

RESOLVED – that:

- (i) the report be received.
- (ii) the budget framework and timetable for the setting of the Council’s 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Budgets be approved and implemented.

- (iii) budget consultation be undertaken via an online budget survey and that consideration be given to involving local residents and community groups and schools in the consultation process.
- (iv) one Labour and one Liberal Democrat member be invited to the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen meeting to review the draft budgets.

59. NOTICE OF MOTION RECONSIDERATION

To reconsider the following Notice of Motion which was agreed at the previous Policy and Resources Committee meeting and referred back to this Committee for reconsideration at the Council Meeting on 28th July 2021.

- 1) *That the Council sets up a Special Working Group charged with proposing new money saving opportunities relating to the Council's existing services, which can result in a reduction in Council Tax;*
- 2) *That this Special Working Group be called the 'Passion-For-Every-Penny Working Group';*
- 3) *That the Chairman of this working group be appointed at the first meeting.*
- 4) *The Group meets every six weeks or as required and reports to the Policy and Resources Committee.*
- 5) *That the first meeting of the working group takes place as soon as possible.*
- 6) *That the working group has multi-party representation and consists of the following members:
Councillors Martin Ashcroft, Phillip Hawkins, Carl Robinson, Bob Fleming, Tony Armstrong and a further three members to be confirmed.*

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft that the motion be rescinded.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor John D. Clare and seconded by Councillor Barbara Clare that the motion be reverted to the original motion as proposed at the Policy and Resources Committee on 21st July 2021.

There followed a lengthy discussion, following which Councillor John D. Clare closed the debate and requested a named vote.

A named vote was carried out on the amendment that the motion be reverted back to the original motion as proposed at the Policy and Resources Committee on 21st July 2021.

The result of the named vote was as follows:

For: Councillors Barbara A. Clare and John D. Clare.

Against: Councillors Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Dorothy Bowman, Arun M. Chandran, Bob Fleming, George Gray, Brian Haigh, Mrs. Sandra Haigh, Phillip Hawkins, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Ken Robson, and Michael Stead.

Abstentions: Councillors Eddy Adam, Jim Atkinson, John Clark, Ian Gray and David Hardaker.

The vote on the amendment was lost.

A vote was then taken on the original proposal to rescind the motion.

The proposal was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED – that the Notice of Motion as referred back to this Committee from Full Council for reconsideration be rescinded.

Councillor Dorothy Bowman left the meeting at this point.

60. PROPOSED ABOLITION OF REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

A report was submitted by the Town Clerk to consider the abolishment of the Review Sub Committee.

Councillor Eddy Adam requested that any Special Meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee to consider policies, take place on an evening only and not during the day.

RESOLVED – that:

- (i) the report be received.
- (ii) the Review Sub Committee is abolished and that policy updates are now reported to a special meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee to be held on an evening.

CHAIRMAN.