

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 20TH OCTOBER 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 20th October 2021 at 7.15pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Arun M. Chandran (Chairman)

Councillors Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Jim Atkinson, Peter Bergg, Dorothy Bowman, Barbara A. Clare, John D. Clare, Neil Collinson, Bob Fleming, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Phillip Hawkins, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, 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)

Mrs. S. Stretch (Senior Administrative Officer)

Members stood to observe a minute's silence in memory of the late Councillors Brian Hall, David Hardaker and Alan Courtney, a former Great Aycliffe Town Councillor.

61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Andrea Miller and Sandra Haigh.

62. MEMBERS DISPENSATIONS

There had been no applications for dispensations.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Jed Hillary and Eddy Adam declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Item 7a (Grants and Donations – Rotary Club Grant Application)

Councillor John Moore declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 7c (Grants and Donations – Sedgefield and District Swimming Club).

64. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

65. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Ken Robson, seconded by Councillor George Gray and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, held on the 8th September 2021, be confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

66. ACCOUNT CONTROL SHEETS

Account Control Sheets for the period 27th August 2021 to the 6th October 2021 and the General Bank Accounts for August and September 2021 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the Account Control Sheets for the period 27th August 2021 to the 6th October 2021 and the General Bank Accounts for August and September 2021 be received.

67. GRANTS AND DONATIONS

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

It was reported that a total of £2,961 is currently available in the 2021/22 Small Grants and Donations Budget, £2,000 in the Youth Council Grants Budget, £23,000 in the COVID Recovery Community Grants Fund and £5,109 in the Community Benefit Fund.

a) Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe

Councillors Jed Hillary and Eddy Adam left the meeting for the consideration of this item.

An application was received from the Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe for an amount of £200 from the Donations Budget. The donation will be used to part fund the cost of the room hire at the Youth Centre for a Model Railway Exhibition to be held on 26th March 2022.

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

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that a grant of £200 be awarded to the Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe from the Donations Budget.

Councillors Jed Hillary and Eddy Adam returned to the meeting.

b) The Friendship Club

An application was received from The Friendship Club of Newton Aycliffe for a grant from the COVID Recovery Fund. The club is applying for a total of £690 towards the cost of a Christmas trip for its members.

It was proposed by Councillor Bob Fleming, seconded by Councillor George Gray that a grant of £200 be awarded.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Eddy Adam, seconded by Councillor Peter Bergg that a grant of £690 be awarded.

A vote was taken on the amendment with 10 votes in favour and 10 votes against. The chairman used his casting vote against the amendment. The amendment was therefore defeated.

A further amendment was proposed by Councillor Tony Armstrong, seconded by Councillor Jim Atkinson, that a grant of £500 be awarded.

A vote was taken on the amendment with 12 votes in favour and 10 votes against. The amendment was passed.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion that a grant of £500 be awarded and this was passed by a majority decision.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that a grant of £500 be awarded to The Friendship Club from the Covid Recovery Fund.

c) Sedgefield and District Swimming Club

Councillor John Moore left the meeting for the consideration of this item.

An application was received from Sedgefield and District Swimming Club for a grant from the COVID Recovery Fund. The club is applying for a total of £4,995 which is equivalent to the cost of 18.5 weeks of Durham County Council pool hire costs.

It was proposed by Councillor Bob Fleming, seconded by Councillor George Gray that a grant of £4,995 be awarded.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Eddy Adam, seconded by Councillor Peter Bergg that a grant of £2,500 be awarded.

A vote was taken on the amendment with 10 votes in favour and 10 votes against. The chairman used his casting vote against the amendment. The amendment was therefore defeated.

A vote was taken on the original proposal. This was passed by 11 votes to 7.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that a grant of £4,995 be awarded to Sedgefield and District Swimming Club from the Covid Recovery Fund.

Councillor John Moore returned to the meeting.

d) Aycliffe Squash Club

An application was received from Aycliffe Squash Club for a grant from the COVID Recovery Fund. The club is applying for a total of £240 which will be used to fund the cost of 10 weekly promotional sessions with the aim of stimulating interest in squash and attracting new members to the club.

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

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that a grant of £240 be awarded to Aycliffe Squash Club from the Covid Recovery Fund.

e) Aycliffe Tri Club

An application was received from Aycliffe Tri Club for a grant from the COVID Recovery Fund. The club is applying for a total of £3,700 which will be used to fund the cost of 25 swimming sessions at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre, 25 training sessions at the Oak Leaf Sports Complex, as well as 5 funded community activator places, 5 funded pool lifeguards and 'GoTri' funding for 5 sessions at the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

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

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that a grant of £3,700 be awarded to Aycliffe Tri Club from the Covid Recovery Fund.

f) Sporting Force / Veterans Community Hub

An application was received from Sporting Force based within Veterans Community Hub for a grant from the COVID Recovery Fund. The club is applying for a total of £3,597 which will be used to part fund a fitness and well-being programme from the Veterans Community Hub in Newton Aycliffe, as well as Oak Leaf Sports Complex and Aycliffe Leisure Centre.

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

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that a grant of £3,597 be awarded to Sporting Force / Veterans Community Hub from the Covid Recovery Fund.

68. EXCLUSION POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Exclusion Policy for Members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received
- (ii) that the Exclusion Policy is approved and implemented.

69. DATA BREACH POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Data Breach Policy for Members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received
- (ii) that the Data Breach Policy is approved and implemented.

70. DATA PROTECTION (GDPR) POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Data Protection (GDPR) Policy for Members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received
- (ii) that the Data Protection (GDPR) Policy is approved and implemented.

71. REPLACEMENT COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

The Corporate Management Team submitted a report providing information for Members to consider approving the purchase of replacement computer equipment that is nearing the end of its recommended useful life.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran, seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft that the recommendations of the report be agreed, and that officers be authorised to use their discretion to securely dispose of the old computer equipment, including consideration of whether the computers could be donated to a local organisation.

Councillor Eddy Adam requested that officers report back to Members as to how the equipment had been disposed.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the information provided in the report is received
- (ii) that the purchase of the replacement computer equipment as set out in the report be approved.
- (iii) that the Standing Orders Exemption Form relating to the procurement of the computers be approved.
- (iv) that officers be authorised to use their discretion to securely dispose of the old computer equipment, including consideration of whether the computers could be donated to a local organisation, and report back to Members as to how the equipment had been disposed.

72. RIDDOR REPORT

A report was submitted by the Town Clerk to update members regarding a recent staff accident which was reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report be received.

73. 2021/22 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET POSITION TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021 AND PROJECTION OF EXPECTED OUTTURN

A report was presented by the Finance Manager detailing the half-year financial position on the Council's approved 2021/22 Revenue and Capital Budget, along with a forecast of the expected year-end outturn position.

Councillor Eddy Adam expressed his thanks to the Finance Manager for the comprehensive report and to Council Officers for continuing to manage the Council's finances effectively.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the half-year financial position on the Council's 2021/22 Revenue and Capital Budgets and the early projection of year-end expected outturn be received; and;
- (ii) that a further Revenue and Capital Budget Position Report be received at the January Policy and Resources Committee, detailing the financial position as at 31st December 2021 and an updated projection of expected outturn.
- (iii) that the Council's thanks be expressed to the Finance Manager for the comprehensive report and to Council Officers for continuing to manage the Council's finances effectively.

74. DRAFT POLICY AND RESOURCES 2022/23 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

The Finance Manager presented a report for Members' consideration, comments, and approval, the draft 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Budgets for the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the draft 2022/23 Policy and Resources Revenue and Capital Budgets be approved and any comments, feedback, or proposed amendments to be submitted to the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee as soon as possible.

75. OVERALL DRAFT 2022/23 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET

Members received a report from the Finance Manager of the Council's overall draft 2022/23 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Budget for their consideration, comments, and approval.

The report also asked Members' to provisionally agree the proposed level of Precept and Town Council Tax for next year and note the likely movement on the Council's balances and reserves

The Finance Manager advised that the balances and reserves figure set out in the recommendations of the report should read £986,452 rather than £1.036 million.

Councillor Eddy Adam advised that Durham County Council would be continuing to pay the Council Tax Support Grant to town and parish councils for 2022/23.

Councillor Jim Atkinson queried the situation with regard to the local government pay award and requested that this be closely monitored by officers.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the overall summary of the draft 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Budget be agreed, including:-
 - The draft 2022/23 Precept of £1,743,450;
 - The proposed increase of 1.99% in the Town Council Tax;
 - The draft 2022/23 Capital Programme Budget of £275,600;
 - The expected fall in the Council's Balances and Reserves to £986,452 million by the end of the 2022/23 year.
- (ii) that Members provide any comments, feedback and proposed amendments to the 2022/23 draft Revenue and Capital Budgets to the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee as soon as possible.

76. ADDITIONAL 2021/22 CAPITAL PROGRAMME BUDGET APPROVAL

Members were requested to approve an additional Capital Programme Budget of £3,200 for the replacement of the fencing at St Oswald's Allotments as agreed at Environment Committee on 13th October 2021 (Minute No.61)

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the additional Capital Programme Budget of £3,200 for the replacement of the fencing at St Oswald's Allotments, as agreed at Environment Committee on 13th October 2021 (Minute No.61) be approved.

77. FAREWELL FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN CLARE

Councillor Dorothy Bowman left the meeting at this point.

Councillor John Clare made a speech announcing his intention to step down from the Town Council after 26 years of service, highlighting his reasons for doing so, reflecting upon his time with the Council, and thanking fellow councillors and staff for their help over the years.

Councillors Peter Bergg, Eddy Adam, Bob Fleming, and Arun Chandran all gave thanks for Councillor Clare's outstanding service to the Town Council and the community of Great Aycliffe, reflecting upon some of his achievements.

CHAIRMAN.