

SPECIAL POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 5th JANUARY 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the **SPECIAL POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe on Wednesday 5th January 2022 at 7.15pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Arun M. Chandran (Chairman)

Councillors Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Jim Atkinson, John Clark, Bob Fleming, George Gray, Ian Gray, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Ken Robson, and Michael Stead.

OFFICERS

Mr. D. Austin (Town Clerk)
Mrs. T. Woodhead (Finance Manager)
Mrs. C. Walton (Corporate and Policy Officer)
Mrs. S. Stretch (Senior Administrative Officer)
Mr. C. Lawson (Golf Administrator)
Miss A. Donald (Town Clerk's PA)

IN ATTENDANCE Councillors Lindsey Aston and Andy Hill.

95. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors: Peter Bergg, Dorothy Bowman, Brian Haigh, Mrs. Sandra Haigh, Phil Hawkins, Kate Hopper and Andrea Miller.

96. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

There had been no applications for dispensations.

97. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Carl Robinson declared an interest in Agenda Item 6, Fees and Charges 2022-2023, as a member of the Oakleaf Golf Club and Complex.

98. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Councillor Lindsey Aston wished to make a comment on the golf complex fees and charges and suggested that consideration could be given to increasing the age threshold for the over 60 memberships to state pension age, and the possible introduction of an additional membership category, with a higher membership fee, for non-Aycliffe residents.

The Chairman advised that the comments would be taken into consideration in the discussions regarding the golf fees and charges at Agenda Item 6.

99. INTERNAL AUDITOR RECRUITMENT REPORT

A report was given by the Finance Manager outlining the planned recruitment process for a new Internal Auditor.

It was proposed by Councillor Jed Hillary, seconded by Councillor Michael Stead, and

RESOLVED – that

- i) Standing Order 22 be suspended to allow for the recruitment exercise to proceed immediately without waiting for Council approval of the minutes.
- ii) the job description, person specification, grade and hours be approved on the basis of no change, and the vacancy be advertised immediately as formal resignation has now been received.
- iii) the shortlisting and interview process to be undertaken by a panel of six members which shall comprise of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Sub Committee, plus two representatives each from the Labour Group and Liberal Democrats Group, to be advised to the Town Clerk.
- iv) the Town Clerk to be advised if any member is unable to attend so that another representative may be appointed.

100. 2022/23 FEES AND CHARGES REPORT

The Finance Manager submitted a report to support the annual review of the fees and charges levied for the Oak Leaf Golf Complex and football pitches, with a view to agreeing proposed changes to those fees and charges for the 2022/23 financial year.

Following a discussion on the various fees and charges and a number of proposals in relation to individual fees, the Chairman referred Members to the recommendations of the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Jed Hillary and seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam that the football pitches fees for 2022/23 be frozen, subject to a future review.

It was proposed by Councillor Carl Robinson and seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft that the football pitches fees for 2022/23 be increased by 2%.

A vote was then taken with the following result:

For: 7 votes
Against: 7 votes

The Chairman used his casting vote in support of the 2% increase.

RESOLVED – that:

- i) A 2% increase in football pitches fees for 2022/23 be agreed.

Councillor Bob Fleming spoke in opposition to the Over 60 Golf Membership recommendations and in particular the proposals to remove this membership category or to increase the age threshold.

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

RESOLVED – that

- ii) the Over 60 Golf Membership category be left in place.

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

RESOLVED – that

- iii) 2022/23 golf membership prices be frozen.
- iv) 5 Day Golf Memberships be amended to exclude rounds on bank holidays from 2022/23 for bookings made before 12 noon, subject to the till system being able to support this request.
- v) a pro rata golf membership for all adult members is introduced from April 2022.
- vi) the proposal that the Council offer a 15 month for the price of 12 months membership from 1st January 2022 for new members is not implemented.
- vii) the proposed removal of off-peak and concessionary green fees in 2022/23 is not implemented.

It was proposed by Councillor Eddy Adam and seconded by Councillor Jed Hillary and

RESOLVED – that

- viii) all green fees be frozen in 2022/23.
- ix) the County Card fee be frozen in 2022/23.
- x) visiting party green fees be reduced to £12 per round in 2022/23.
- xi) golf buggy hire charges and club hire fees be frozen in 2022/23.
- xii) golf trolley hire fees be frozen in 2022/23.
- xiii) driving range fees be frozen in 2022/23.

It was further proposed by Councillor Jed Hillary and seconded by Councillor Bob Fleming and

RESOLVED – that

- xiv) a full review of all fees and charges be undertaken ahead of the 2023/24 financial year.

AGENDA ITEMS 7 TO 15 – POLICY UPDATES

The Chairman advised that Councillor Jed Hillary had submitted a document to the Corporate and Policy Officer and Town Clerk with proposed updates and alterations regarding the policy updates under Agenda Items 7 to 15.

It was proposed by Councillor Jed Hillary and seconded by Councillor Eddy Adam that the policies be accepted, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Jed Hillary's suggested alterations, in liaison with the Corporate and Policy Officer and HR Advisors.

Councillor Eddy Adam commented about the number of policies that had been submitted for discussion and requested assurance that this would not happen again.

The Chairman confirmed that only one policy would be included per agenda moving forward unless there were urgent reasons for including additional policies.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Jed Hillary for his extensive work done on scrutinising the policies placed before the meeting, for his amendments and the time saved on behalf of members of the Committee.

101. PATERNITY LEAVE POLICY

Members received the Paternity Leave Policy for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received.
- (ii) that the Paternity Leave Policy is approved and implemented, subject to making the recommended amendments.

102. PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Members received the Parental Leave Policy for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received.
- (ii) that the Parental Leave Policy is approved and implemented, subject to making the recommended amendments.

103. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Equality and Diversity Policy for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received,
- (ii) that the Equality and Diversity Policy is approved and implemented, subject to making the recommended amendments.

104. ANTI BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received.
- (ii) that the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy is approved and implemented, subject to making the recommended amendments.

105. DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A report was received to provide the updated Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received.
- (ii) that the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is approved and implemented, subject to making the recommended amendments.

106. GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A report was received to provide the updated Grievance Policy and Procedure for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received.
- (ii) that the Grievance Policy and Procedure is approved and implemented, subject to making the recommended amendments.

107. MATERNITY, ADOPTION AND SURROGACY POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Maternity, Adoption and Surrogacy Policy for members consideration and approval.

Councillor Martin Ashcroft commented that this item had been previously considered at a Review Sub Committee meeting on 7th July 2021 and that additional information had been requested regarding the policies of other councils.

He proposed to return this policy to the next Personnel Sub Committee meeting to allow this further information to be considered.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received
- (ii) that the Maternity, Adoption and Surrogacy Policy be submitted to the next meeting of the Personnel Sub Committee for consideration.

108. SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

A report was received to provide the Shared Parental Leave Policy for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received
- (ii) that the Shared Parental Leave Policy is approved and implemented subject to making the recommended amendments.

109. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

A report was received to provide the updated Performance Management Policy for members consideration and approval.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) that the report is received
- (ii) that the Performance Management Policy is approved and implemented subject to making the recommended amendments.

CHAIRMAN.