

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am to inform you that a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee will be held on Wednesday, 13th September 2023 at **7.00p.m.** in attendance at the Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe DL5 6QF.

Yours faithfully,

**Dan Austin
Town Clerk**

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

2. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

To consider written requests for dispensations from members who have declared interests under Disclosable or Non-Disclosable Pecuniary Interests – Section 33 of the 2011 Localism Act.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To notify of any items that appear in the agenda in which you may have an interest, including those that have previously been recorded in the Members Register of Interests.

4. NEWTON AYCLIFFE SCOUT SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION – SCOUT HALL

... To consider an item to be raised by the Chairman, concerning indications that the Scouts Groups will no longer be able to use this facility raising questions regarding Trustees Constitution Committee and Charity Commission and governance.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask questions, and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Questions will not be received by the Council which are in furtherance of a person's individual circumstances, or which are about a matter where there is a right of appeal to the courts, a tribunal or government minister. A question will not be received by the Council where the issue it concerns has been the subject of a decision of the Council in the last six months.

6. GUEST SPEAKER

Councillor Amanda Hopgood, Leader of Durham County Council, and Mr. Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources will be in attendance to provide a presentation and answer questions on the issue of the proposed reduction to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) grant paid to town and parish councils in County Durham.

7. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 19th July 2023 for information. (Previously Circulated).

8. ACCOUNTS CONTROL SHEETS

. . . To receive the account control sheets for the period 13th – 28th July and 10th – 24th August 2023 and the General Bank Account for July 2023.

9. GRANTS AND DONATION REQUESTS

. . . To consider the attached report from the Town Clerk.

10. 2024/25 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET SETTING FRAMEWORK AND TIMETABLE

. . . To consider the attached report from the Finance Manager.

11. 2023/24 TO 2027/28 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

. . . To consider the attached report from the Finance Manager.

12. NOTICE OF MOTION

To consider the following motion from Councillor Michael Stead, seconded by Councillor Neville Jones (or if not in attendance Councillor Lindsey Aston):

“This Council agrees to freeze the council tax for the financial year 2024/25 and asks our multi-skilled managers to present innovative ideas to raise capital and look further into possible options to find savings required, including fees and income, service delivery, efficiencies and external grant funding to help prevent such a large suggested increase this year following last year’s already hefty increase.

We are constantly informed that the Council has healthy reserves balances of £1.6 million and requesting another huge increase of 7.5 % in the precept in the next financial year, with no improvements to / or additional services is simply not acceptable to all of our residents of Newton Aycliffe.”

13. NOTICE OF MOTION

To consider the following motion from Councillor Arun Chandran, seconded by Councillor Ken Robson:

“Taking the MTFP into account this Council was looking to increase Council Tax by 2.99% for 2024/25 and less thereafter. It is the view of the Independent Group that the Council must not confuse capital expenditure with revenue expenditure. If the LCTRS grant is reduced by Durham County Council, then it is our view that the Town Council Precept should be raised by that amount, thus Durham County Council will be directly responsible for an increase of 2.99% becoming 7%. This Council will not create a black hole in its finances by falsely running down capital reserves to support revenue expenditure, nor will we cut and slash services, events and facilities and cripple the Council’s finances for future generations to have to deal with. We believe that the Liberal Democrat proposal which would create a black hole in the Council’s finances of approximately £123,000 in year one and then compounded each year thereafter which is an unacceptable course of action and could bankrupt the Council in 5 to 6 years”.

14. INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

. . . To consider the attached report from the Finance Manager.

15. USE OF VAT WINDFALL RESOURCES

. . . To consider the attached report from the Town Clerk and Finance Manager.

16. EV CHARGING POINTS

. . . To consider the attached report from the Works and Environment Manager.

Any questions or queries on agenda items or reports should be raised with officers before meetings by telephone or email.

Please note that this does not preclude members from asking the question at the meeting if this is important to the debate or decision.

Members are requested, during Council Meetings, to observe the Council's Standing Orders relating to the Business and Proceedings of the Council, with particular reference to the Rules of Debate, as well as the Members' Code of Conduct and the principles of Civility and Respect Pledge.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

Councillors Eddy Adam, Tony Armstrong, Martin Ashcroft, Lindsey Aston, Jim Atkinson, Peter Bergg, Dorothy Bowman, Arun M. Chandran, John Clark, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Mrs. Sandra Haigh, Phillip Hawkins, Andy Hill, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, Simon Hocking, Sandra Kirby, Joanne Jones, Neville Jones, John Moore, Carl Robinson, Ken Robson, Anita Sparrow, Michael Stead, Anne Woodward and John Woodward.