

FULL COUNCIL

TUESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2022 – 7.15 p.m.

Minutes of the proceedings of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held in the Church Hall, St. Clare's Church, St. Cuthberts Way, Newton Aycliffe, on **TUESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2022** at 7.15 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Ken Robson (Chairman)

Councillors Eddy Adam, Martin Ashcroft, Lindsey Aston, Arun M. Chandran, John Clark, Neil Collinson, George Gray, Ian Gray, Brian Haigh, Sandra Haigh, Andy Hill, Sandra Kirby, Carl Robinson, Michael Stead, Anne Woodward, and John Woodward.

OFFICERS

Mr. Dan Austin (Town Clerk)

Mrs. Sharna Stretch (Senior Administration Officer)

88. NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

89. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tony Armstrong, Jim Atkinson, Peter Bergg, Dorothy Bowman, Bob Fleming, Phillip Hawkins, Jed Hillary, Wendy Hillary, Kate Hopper, Joanne Jones, Neville Jones, Andrea Miller.

90. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS

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

91. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

92. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

93. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Michael Stead and seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 2nd November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

94. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor submitted a list of appointments for the period 26th October to 6th December 2022 for information.

The Town Clerk reported on the potential shortage of volunteers for the Santa Tours event on Christmas Eve and that a call for further volunteers had been posted on the Council's social media. He requested that Councillors share the social media post as widely as possible and to let officers know if any councillors wished to put their names forward as reserve volunteers.

An update on the Council offices roof replacement project was also given. The Town Clerk advised that the roofing work was complete and the building watertight and that the remedial works to repair the water damage were well underway with electricity re-established in the affected areas and plastering repairs to ceilings and walls complete, and redecoration underway. It was further advised that the building be fully operational for meetings in January.

Councillor Martin Ashcroft requested that thanks be given to the whole staff team for their response to the emergency situation and the way they have been coping and managing to keep the Council running in very difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

95. COMMITTEE MINUTES

(a) Special Policy and Resources Committee

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) that the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 31st October 2022 be received, and
- (ii) that the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(b) Recreation Committee

It was proposed by Councillor George Gray, and seconded by Councillor Andy Hill and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) that the minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on the 30th November 2022 be received, and
- (ii) that the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(c) Environment Committee

Councillor Carl Robinson advised that the planning appeal against the refusal of planning permission to locate a high temperature thermal treatment facility on the business park has been upheld and planning permission granted

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and seconded by Councillor Carl Robinson and

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Committee held on the 30th November 2022 be received, and
- (ii) that the said minutes be approved and adopted.

(d) Policy and Resources Committee

Councillor Eddy Adam asked for clarification on Minute 80 as Councillor Bob Fleming initially quoted figures of £3,500 and £2,500 respectively as a donation.

It was advised that clarification was given at the meeting that the correct amounts were £350 and £250 and noted as such.

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

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 7th December 2022 be received, and
- (ii) that the said minutes be approved and adopted.

Councillor Sandra Kirby joined the meeting at this point.

96. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION CONSULTATION

A report was submitted requesting members' consideration and comments on a Local Government Boundary Commission consultation regarding changes to the electoral division boundaries for Durham County Council.

Councillor Eddy Adam thanked the Town Clerk for the report and proposed that responses should be made on an individual basis as a Councillor or member of the parish and not as a corporate response. He advised on the reductions to the number of Councillors and that he was working on a submission to retain the West Ward due to its unique identity and specific residents' groups.

Councillor Arun Chandran seconded the proposal and gave a brief outline of the previous issues from Sedgfield Borough Council and Durham County Council and their historical boundary issues.

RESOLVED – as follows:

- (i) that the report be received.
- (ii) that any comments on the consultation should be made on an individual basis either as a Councillor or member of the public.

97. OUTSIDE BODIES

Reports were given by representatives on the undermentioned Outside Bodies:-

- (a) **Youth Council**
There had been no meeting.
- (b) **County Durham Association of Local Councils**
Councillor Arun Chandran had attended a meeting. He added that the proposal from Councillor Eddy Adam regarding government funding for pay rises has now gone to NALC who are raising it at Government level. He advised that the agenda, reports and minutes are available from the Town Clerk if members wish to view them.
- (c) **Aycliffe Village Hall Association**
Nothing to report.
- (d) **Woodham Village Community Association**
There had been no meeting.
- (e) **Great Aycliffe and Middridge Local Councils' Committee**
As this Committee only meets once a year, there was no meeting to report on.
- (f) **Larger Local Councils' Forum**
Councillor Arun Chandran had attended this meeting with the Town Clerk. He advised that the agenda, reports and minutes are available from the Town Clerk if members wish to view them.
- (g) **Aycliffe and District Bus Preservation Society**
Councillor Ian Gray gave an update report.
- (h) **Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway**
Nothing to report.
- (i) **Western Area Partnership**
There had been no meeting.

98. EXEMPT BUSINESS

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Ashcroft, and seconded by Andy Hill and

RESOLVED – that it was in the opinion of the Council that due to the confidential nature of the following item, it was advisable to exclude the press and public.

99. COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AND AWARDS SCHEME NOMINATIONS

Members considered an update to the Community Recognition and Awards Scheme following a number of suggestions from Members at the last meeting, as well as a nomination received from a Member of the Council.

The following amendments have been made to the Scheme:

- a) Each nomination should be signed by at least two nominators.
- b) Background checks will be undertaken as required to ensure that the nominees are bona-fide and to confirm that the information provided in the nomination is accurate and legitimate.
- c) The Council will apply a two-tier approach in making awards:-
 - Community Recognition Scheme Certificate
 - Local Hero Medal
- d) Applications in relation to organisations or groups will receive a Community Recognition Scheme Certificate with the option of awarding multiple certificates for each member of the group if appropriate.
- e) Local Hero Medals will be awarded to one special nominee only. Successful nominees will also receive a Community Recognition Scheme Certificate.

A nomination had been received in recognition of a young man's charitable fundraising activity on behalf of various worthy causes including local care homes, hospices, and charities.

The nomination would meet the following criteria from the Scheme:-

"They have undertaken significant charitable work or charitable fundraising within the Parish" and "they have demonstrated outstanding citizenship".

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran that the update to the Community Recognition and Awards Scheme be approved and that the nominee should receive both a medal and certificate. This was seconded by Councillor Martin Ashcroft.

Councillors Lindsey Aston and John Woodward spoke in support of the nomination.

A discussion took place regarding the nominee.

Councillor Eddy Adam advised that he would have liked more information regarding the nominee's future fundraising plans.

Councillor Michael Stead suggested that it would help the Town Council to further promote the existence of this scheme.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Carl Robinson and seconded by Councillor Andy Hill, that a certificate should be given but not a Local Hero Medal on this occasion.

A vote took place on the amendment with the following results:

7 For
9 Against
1 Abstention

A vote then took place on the original proposal which was agreed by a clear majority.

RESOLVED – as follows

- (i) that the report be received.
- (ii) that the attached update of the Community Recognition and Awards Scheme be approved;
- (iii) that the nominee identified in item 4.1(a) within the report be invited to receive a Local Hero Medal and Community Recognition Scheme Certificate at a future meeting.

100. RE-ADMISSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

CHAIRMAN.