

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Civic Hall Square, Shildon, Co Durham on 28th January 2008

Present: Councillor B H Stoker
Councillors G Swinbank, L Iddon, D M Hancock, J M Smith
GMR Howe (up to Item No 14), P Quinn, F Timmiss, V Chapman,
A Walker, A Hammond, S Bird and J G Huntington (from Item 13)

TC 110/07 Public Question Time

There were no questions from members of the public.

TC 111/07 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I Jackson and L Smith.

TC 112/07 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 113/07 Minutes of Ordinary Council Meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 17th December 2008 be approved and adopted.

TC 114/07 Committees

Resolved that the minutes of the following Committees be approved and adopted:-

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|----|---------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| a) | Service & Amenities | - | 14 th January 2008 |
| b) | Resources | - | 14 th January 2008 |

TC 115/07 Police Report

There was no representative present from Durham Constabulary and no statistics had been provided.

Resolved that a further request be made for written reports from Durham Constabulary to be made available in advance of future meetings.

TC 116/08 Annual Audit letter and Best Value Performance Plan Report

Paul Hepple, Audit Manager presented both the Annual Audit letter and the Best Value Performance Plan Report and advised Members that:

- a) An unqualified opinion had been issued on the Council's accounts for the year ended 31st March 2007.
- b) An unqualified opinion had been issued on the Council's Best Value Performance Plan.
- c) The Council had effective arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources with the exception of risk management and asset management both of which had previously been reported to Members.
- d) Following changes in the Best Value legislation the audit arrangements for the Council will change with effect from 2007/08 and the accounts will only be subject to the limited audit assurance framework. This will also mean that the Council's appointed auditor will change, a Best Value Performance Plan will no longer be statutorily required and the Use of Resources audit test will no longer be conducted.

The Audit Manager also look the opportunity to thank Members and officers alike for their positive and constructive approach to the work of the external auditor.

Resolved that the Annual Audit letter and the Best Value Performance Plan be noted and received together with the implications of the changes in the Best Value legislation.

TC 117/07 Report from representatives on outside bodies

Resolved that the notes of the meeting of Shildon Children and Young Peoples Action Network be received.

TC 118/07 Appointment of Governor for Thornhill Primary School

Resolved that Councillor GMR Howe be re-appointed as governor for Thornhill Primary School.

TC 119/07 Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England

Resolved that the consultation be received but no comments be made on the basis that most of the issues relate to the future management of the Standards Committee who, by definition, would be better placed to comment.

TC 120/07 Policy Priorities

Resolved that the three most important policies for the Town Council, in priority order 1 – 3 are:-

- 1) Reduce the harm to our communities caused by the effect of drug and alcohol abuse.

- 2) Make our communities safer through effective Neighbourhood Policing and tackling anti-social behaviour, working in partnership with other agencies.
- 3) Improve the efficiency of the force by making better use of available resources.

TC 121/07 NALC Annual Conference 2008

Resolved that the Town Council be represented at the Annual Conference and the Town Clerk request expressions of interest from Members before final representation is determined at the next meeting of the Town Council.

Councillor J G Huntington entered the meeting.

TC 122/07 Larger Local Councils Forum/Proposed Larger Local Councils Partnership

Resolved that:-

- a) The Town Council be represented on the Larger Local Councils Forum by Councillor J M Smith, Councillor J G Huntington, Councillor V Chapman and the Town Clerk.
- b) The Town Council support the development of the Larger Local Councils Partnership.
- c) The Town Council be represented on the Partnership by any two of Councillor J M Smith, Councillor J G Huntington and Councillor V Chapman, subject to availability.

TC 123/07 Seymour Trust

Resolved that representatives of the Seymour Trust be invited to make a presentation to a future meeting of the Town Council.

TC 124/07 Appreciations and Congratulations

Resolved that the Mayoral engagements attended be noted.