

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Civic Hall Square, Shildon, Co Durham on 22nd December 2008.

Present: Councillor A Hammond,
Councillors G Swinbank, A Walker, P Quinn, M Hardy,
G Lewis, H Nicholson, T M Bannister, GMR Howe, SC Bird,
D M Hancock, V Chapman, F Timmiss and J G Huntington.

Prior to the announcement of the meeting the Town Mayor welcomed the newly elected Councillors H Nicholson and T M Bannister, following their success at the recent bye-election.

TC 92/08 Public Question Time

There were no questions from members of the public.

TC 93/08 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors L Iddon and B H Stoker.

TC 94/08 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 95/08 Minutes of Ordinary Council Meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 24th November 2008 be approved and adopted.

TC 96/08 Committees

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

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|----|---------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| a) | Service & Amenities | - | 8 th December 2008 |
| b) | Resources | - | 8 th December 2008 |

TC 97/08 Police Report

Burglary – dwelling	9
Burglary – non-dwelling	11
Theft from motor vehicles	7
Theft of motor vehicles	4
Assaults	16
Sexual offence	1
Drugs offence	3
Criminal damage	20
Youths causing annoyance	29

Acting Sergeant Brown advised that the crime levels had risen particularly burglary but was also able to advise of a recent operation regarding a brothel on Byerley Road following which a number of warrants had been executed and arrests made.

TC 98/08 Durham County Council (Public Footpath No 49) Public Path Diversion Order 2008

Resolved that the Diversion Order be noted.

TC 99/08 County Durham Association of Local Councils – Proposal for Replacement of District Committees

Resolved that the County Durham Association of Local Councils be advised that:-

- a) The Town Council understands and accepts the logic of restructuring the County Durham Association into area committees based on the membership of the Area Action Partnerships (AAP's).
- b) The County Association is requested to consider the practicality of replacing the existing Sedgfield District Local Councils Committee with four AAP's based committees.
- c) The proposal for the AAPS based committees to determine the town and parish council representation on the relevant AAP board be deferred until the geographics and governance arrangements for the AAP's are agreed.
- d) The Town Council is of the opinion that the existing members of the Sedgfield and District should continue to meet as a group of local councils following April 2009 to consider issues which may arise following the establishment of the unitary authority and which affect all local councils in the former Sedgfield area.

TC 100/08 Area Action Partnerships (AAP's) – Consultation on Function, Governance and Budgets

Resolved that the following comments be submitted to Durham County Council:-

- a) The Town Council is disappointed to note that no specific reference at all is made to parish and town councils in the original bid document.
- b) The absence of any detailed proposals regarding the membership of the AAP Boards and the manner by which representation will be determined makes it difficult to comment constructively on certain key areas.
- c) Notwithstanding b) above, if town and parish councils are to be included in the one third elected members element of the Board together with Durham County Council elected members there is a serious concern that the level of town and parish council representation on the Board will be inadequate.
- d) Existing Durham County Council electoral divisions will, in many cases, be split geographically between more than one AAP. However, there are no proposals regarding the manner by which Member Budgets will be allocated between AAP'S in such cases.

- e) There are currently 126 elected Members of Durham County Council. There are 14 AAP's proposed with total elected member representation for each Board of seven. Therefore, there are 98 elected member AAP Board representatives provided for in the proposals. Consequently, allowing for town and parish council elected member representation there will be a significant number of County Council elected Members who will not be members of the relevant AAP Board. In such cases the practicality of the AAP Board determining/influencing the use of Member Budgets could be severely undermined.

TC 101/08 Seaham Town Council – Informal Civic Reception

Resolved that the Town Council be represented by the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Leader, Deputy Leader and two labour members.

TC 102/08 Consultation on Codes of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees

Resolved that:-

- a) the proposed changes to the Members Code of Conduct be supported
- b) the proposed introduction of a Code of Conduct for employees be supported
- c) the application of the employees Code of Conduct to parish council employees be supported
- d)