

BILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 6.30PM

**HELD IN MEETING ROOM C, BILLINGHAM LIBRARY & CUSTOMER
SERVICE CENTRE**

Present: Councillors Lacey
 Leckonby
 McCall
 McCoy
 Peebles
 Scollen
 Shotton
 Stoker
 Bendelow

Apologies: Councillor Gamble (Business)
 Councillor Atkinson (Personal)
 Councillor Wallace (Personal)
 Councillor Bellerby (Personal)
 Councillor Sandbach (No apologies received)
 Councillor Wrathmall (No apologies received)

Officials: Miss Dee Smith - Town Clerk/RFO
 Ms Tracy Reece – Activities Coordinator

Two Police Officers and two members of the public were also in attendance.

In the absence of the Chairman, Cllr Mick Stoker, Vice Chairman, assumed the chair.

135/22 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced the following:

- Housekeeping;
- The Food Pantry opens on Monday 3rd October, 11am to 2pm.

136/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on this occasion.

137/22 POLICE UPDATE

Sergeant Gary Cookland gave the following report:

- The majority of crime in Billingham involves motorbikes, drugs and low level crime;
- Ongoing investigation being carried out regarding issues of disorder in Cotswold Crescent;
- Antisocial behaviour in the Town Centre with an increase in shop thefts;
- Low Grange being used as a base for criminal activity.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

138/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

A member of the public attended to raise concerns regarding wheelchair access at St Aidan's Crescent and also traffic speeding along Roseberry Road.

RESOLVED

Councillors McCoy and Stoker to contact the member of the public directly and investigate these issues.

139/22 MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21ST JUNE 2022

Members were asked to approve the draft minutes from the Full Council meeting held on 21st June 2022 as a true and accurate record.

RESOLVED

That the above minutes, a copy which has previously been circulated to each member, be approved, and signed as a correct record by the Chairman with the following amendment:

140/22 YEAR END ACCOUNTS – AUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2021/2022

Members were asked approve the audited AGAR for 2021/22. No issues were raised on this occasion.

RESOLVED

Members unanimously approved the audited AGAR for 2021/22.

141/22 PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS LISTS

Members were asked to approve the following:

- (i) Payments to creditors for July and August 2022 for the main account.
- (ii) Payments to creditors for July and August 2022 for the cafe accounts.
- (iii) Staffing costs for July & August 2022.
- (iv) To note the income received for July and August 2022.
- (v) Members were provided for information, with the bank reconciliation for all accounts up to 31st August 2022.

RESOLVED

Members approved the above reports.

142/22 BUDGET WORKING GROUP

Members were asked to set up a Budget Working Group to consider the budget for 2023/24.

RESOLVED

- a. That Councillors Gamble, Scollen, Bendelow, Leckonby, Lacey and McCall form the Budget Working Group.
- b. The Terms of Reference for this group be consideration of the draft budget to be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, before approval at Full Council in January 2023.
- c. To arrange a zoom briefing meeting with all members to discuss the draft budget before approval at Full Council in January 2023.

143/22 SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION

Members considered a sponsorship application from Catalyst Stockton for one of the Catalyst Annual Achievement Awards for £500.

RESOLVED

To approve sponsorship of £500.00.

A vote was taken: 8 For, 1 Against (Cllr Shotton), 0 Abstentions.

144/22 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Members were asked to consider the following grant applications:

- Wolviston Court Community Association for the recladding of wall in the rear room and provision of a stable door for the room originally referred to as the Club Room. The amount of funding requested is £500;
- Well-being Group for creative arts and crafts materials. The amount of funding requested is £393.74.

RESOLVED

- a. To approve grant funding of £500 to Wolviston Court Community Association;
- b. To approve grant funding of £393.74 to the Well-being Group.

145/22 MEMERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Members were asked to consider additional representation on the following Town Council committees:

- Finance & General Purposes Committee – 1 vacancy;
- Planning & Services Committee – 2 vacancies.

RESOLVED

There were no volunteers for either of the above committees.

146/22 CIVILITY & RESPECT PROJECT

Members were advised that throughout the sector, there are growing concerns about the impact of bullying, harassment and intimidation on councils, councillors and staff. In response, the Civility and Respect Project has been founded by the Civility and Respect Working Group and is supported by the Society of Local Council Clerks, National Association of Local Councils and County Associations.

Members were asked to consider the following for approval:

- Dignity at Work Policy;
- That the Town Council signs up to the Civility & Respect Pledge.

RESOLVED

- a. To approve the Dignity at Work Policy.
- b. That Billingham Town Council signs up to the Civility & Respect Pledge.

147/22 POLICIES

Members were asked to consider the following for approval:

- Local Government Code of Conduct 2020; and
- Draft Communications Strategy.

RESOLVED

Members approved the above documents.

148/22

LEASES UPDATE

Members are advised that the office lease has now been finalised and runs up until 2028.

The lease for the Café in the Park is now in progress and we are waiting for the draft lease from Stockton Borough Council. Members are asked to consider:

- Earmarking £3000 from General Reserves to cover the solicitor costs in association with the lease;
- That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, be given delegated authority to progress the lease for the Café.

RESOLVED

- a. Information duly noted.
- b. That £3000 be earmarked from General Reserves for solicitor costs.
- c. That delegation be given to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, to progress the lease for the Café.

149/22

CAFÉ UPDATE

The Town Clerk advised members that the Café has been busy over the summer months, especially on the 'Funday Friday's'.

The two new members of staff have settled in very well and have now been given permanent contracts.

After receiving three quotations for the new heating in the café, Stockton Borough Council will be carrying out the work. Work is expected to be completed by the end of November 2022.

The Café and the Annexe has signed up to the Warm Spaces Initiative.

On the 3rd October, the Town Council is opening a food pantry from the Annexe. It will be open every Monday, 11am to 2pm.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

150/22

EVENTS

The Town Clerk gave the following update on upcoming events:

- Due to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Billingham Show did not go ahead;
- The Remembrance Sunday Parade takes place on Sunday 13th November. There will also be a small service at the Cenotaph in Port Clarence at 3pm;
- The Christmas Lights switch on will take place in the Town Centre on Saturday 26th November, 2pm to 5pm. There will also be an additional event on Saturday 3rd December at St Aidans Parish Hall with children's art and crafts etc.

151/22 TOWN CRIER

The Town Clerk reported that Mr Joe Stockil has been appointed as the Billingham Town Crier. To date, he has made two official town cries in the Town Centre, the most significant being the Proclamation of His Majesty King Charles III.

The majority of the Town Crier livery has been received and we are just awaiting a few items.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

152/22 TREE PLANTING IN MEMORY OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

At this point in the meeting, a minute silence was held for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Members were asked to consider the planting and location of a memorial tree, which in time, may become known as "The Queen's Tree".

RESOLVED

To refer to the Planning and Services committee for consideration.

153/22 CHRISTMAS CLOSING

Members were advised that the Town Council office will close on Thursday 22nd December 2022, and will reopen on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

The Café in the Park will close on Friday 23rd December 2022, and will reopen on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

RESOLVED

Information duly noted.

154/22 MOBILE TELEPHONES

Members were asked to approve £500 from General Reserves for two extra mobile phones for the office staff.

RESOLVED

Members approved the spend of £500 from General Reserves.

155/22 NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Members were asked to consider moving the date of the next Full Council meeting from Tuesday 22nd November to Tuesday 29th November 2022.

RESOLVED

That the next Full Council meeting takes place on Tuesday 29th November 2022 at 6.30pm.

156/22 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC – Members were invited to consider passing the following resolution:

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the disclosure of the following item on the agenda as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A in the 1972 as described below:

Staffing Matters – Contracts

Members considered the confidential report circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED

- a. That the position of Business Support Manager be offered to an existing member of staff. The post to include delivery of the Sunday Lunch Service and will commence from 1st October 2022.
- b. That all staff on the Real Living Wage be awarded the new increase from 1st October 2022.
- b. That a spend of £11000.00 be approved from General Reserves for the above position.

The meeting concluded at 8.35pm with Cllrs Bendelow, Lacey, Leckonby, McCall, McCoy, Peebles, Scollen, Shotton and Shotton present.