

# Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 8th July, 2009.

**Present:** The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Paul Kirton), Cllr Hilary Aggio, Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Phillip Broughton, Cllr Mrs Ann Cains, Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Aidan Cockerill, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Mrs Eileen Craggs, Cllr Alex Cunningham, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Jackie Earl, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Fletcher, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Maurice Frankland, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Miss Barbara Inman, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Roy Rix, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

**Officers:** D E Bond, P K Bell (LD); M Robinson (DNS); J Danks (R); R Kench (CESC).

**Also in attendance:** Mr E Chapman (Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee), S Boyd (Director of Tristar Homes Ltd), 4 Members of the Public.

**Apologies:** Cllr Andrew Larkin, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Mrs Kath Nelson, Cllr Ross Paterson, Cllr Fred Salt and Cllr Allison Trainer.

## **C 79/09**      **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 11 - Children and Young People Select Committee minutes - CYP 67/08 as he was a Member of MALAP.

Councillor Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 13 - Children and Young People Select Committee minutes - CYP 8/09 as he was the Chairman of the Eastern Ravens Trust.

Councillor Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 18 - Health Select Committee minutes - H 4/09 as he was a member of Diabetes UK.

Councillor Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 19 - Health Select Committee minutes - H 9/09 as he was a Registered Social Worker.

Councillor Mrs Cains declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 19 - Health Select Committee minutes - H 9/09 as she was a Trustee of the George Hardwick Foundation.

Councillor Coleman declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 10 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 46/09 as he was an allotment holder.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 24/09 due to his non executive role with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 26/09 due to his role as a consultant to the energy industry.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 27/09 due to his role as a consultant to the energy industry.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 29/09 due to his role on the Regional Development Agency.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 30/09 due to his non executive role with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 34/09 due to his role on the Regional Development Agency.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 35/09 due to his role on the Regional Development Agency.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Cabinet minutes - CAB 36/09 due to his non executive role with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust.

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 26 - Planning minutes - P 33/09 due to his role as a consultant to the energy industry.

Councillor Miss Large declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of any items that related to Tristar Homes Ltd as she was a member of Tristar Homes Board.

Councillor Nesbitt declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of any items that related to Tristar Homes Ltd as she was a member of Tristar Homes Board.

**C  
80/09**      **Councillor Jean Kirby**

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed Jean Kirby to the meeting as the recently elected Councillor for Ingleby Barwick West.

**C  
81/09**      **Councillor Trainer's Charity Night**

The Worshipful the Mayor reported that Councillor Mrs Trainer was having a charity night in aid of North Tees Breast Cancer/Chemo Unit at the M & M Building, Mandale Triangle, Thornaby on Friday, 17th July 2009 and encouraged everyone to support the event.

**C  
82/09**      **Armed Forces Day**

The Worshipful the Mayor reported that the Lord Lieutenant of Durham Sir Paul Nicholson had requested that his congratulations be passed on to Kevin

Bowdrey (Mayors Attendant) for his excellent work in organising Armed Forces Day.

**C  
83/09**      **North East and Cumbria Teaching Awards**

Members formally recognised the success of:-

Mike Venning (Executive Head of Stockton First Federation of Abbey Hill and Westlands School) who had won the Ted Wragg Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kathryn Lindop (Teacher at Abbey Hill School) who had won the Outstanding New Teacher of the Year Award.

Norton Primary School (The Head Teacher - Mr Stoddard was in attendance) who had been awarded a Commendation in the Sustainable School of the Year Award.

The Worshipful the Mayor and Councillor Cunningham (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) presented each of the above with a certificate and framed picture of the Town Hall to mark their achievement.

**C  
84/09**      **Public Question Time**

The Director of Law and Democracy informed Members that no Public Questions had been received.

**C  
85/09**      **Members' Question Time**

The following question was submitted by Councillor Large for response by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety:-

"The announcement by the PM of £2.1 billion being made available to construct affordable housing and the announcement that councils will be able to keep rents and cash from council house sales to spend on new build or renovation of properties is surely welcome. But what effect will this have on Stock Transfer?"

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded with:-

"On 30th June 2009 the Housing Minister John Healey announced he was intending to produce a consultation paper detailing plans to dismantle the housing revenue subsidy system. The review will set out details of how Councils can become self financing which will be a change to the current system where revenue is redistributed nationally according to a government formula. We will not know exactly how the system will work until the paper is released but we are expecting this in the next three weeks. What we do know is that the proposal is for Councils to keep their rents and all of the money from the sale of council homes but that there will be a national redistribution of debt between all the 202 councils that still have housing stock. Unfortunately we don't at this point understand what this will mean for us in cash terms as we don't have the detail.

In terms of the impact on the stock transfer it is too early to say as we don't

know what additional resources any remodelling will give us. However if we go back to the original reason for transfer we were previously in the region of £80 million short of the resources needed to fund our 30 year business plan to carry out the work identified in the stock condition survey. As soon as we get the paper we will be assessing the contents to identify if the new model would deliver the resources we need in Stockton and weigh up the pros and cons. We will report this back to the Council's Cabinet as part of the follow up report on the housing futures programme."

Councillor Large asked the following supplementary question:-

"If there is a sudden windfall will the money be spent on Council houses or will we just outsource the stock anyway?"

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded with:-

"The stock transfer process will continue but we will look at this to assess whether we can obtain resources to assist tenants. Primary legislation will however be needed and that may not be until after the next general election. We will run the two processes in parallel as we can not put everything on hold."

The following question was submitted by Councillor Eddy for response by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety:-

"In light of the announcement by the Minister John Healey at the LGA Conference that Councils could keep all the money from rents and sales of Council houses, will you please tell me the estimated amount of money this unexpected wind fall will bring into the Housing Revenue Account and how will this money be wisely invested in social housing, which is, I believe, the responsibility of the Tristar Board?"

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded with:-

"I refer to my previous answer to the previous question. We do not have the figures yet and it is a work in progress.

Councillor Eddy asked the following supplementary question:-

"I realise that much of this has been covered by the previous reply from Councillor Nelson but can we be assured that the money will be spent wisely and that the previous waste of resources by Tristar Homes Ltd will not happen again and that the shocking state of repair of some of our stock will be sorted out in the near future?"

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety responded with:-

"We have spent money wisely in the past. Tristar Homes Ltd have improved greatly and you will need to give me examples of the waste you are referring to."

The following question was submitted by Councillor Eddy for response by the

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

"Councillor Cunningham will you please tell me:-

1. The number of schools within the Borough of Stockton using WiFi technology?

2. The numbers of 'looked after' children, for whom we are all 'Corporate Parents', attending these schools?"

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:-

"67 of our schools – that's 53 Primary, 12 secondary and 2 special schools use WiFi technology and one Primary is in the process of having it installed. 12 currently do not have such a system.

We have 104 looked after children in the schools using the technology."

Councillor Eddy asked the following supplementary question:-

"Thank you for those figures Councillor Cunningham but does it not seem irresponsible to you that in the light of a rapidly growing body of statistical information indicating a definite danger to all especially young people we are allowing an indiscriminate, unscrutinised and potentially fatal expansion of WiFi technology in our schools and has any thought been given to the legal implications especially with regard to the children for whom we are corporate parents in the event of something going wrong in the future?"

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:-

"No it's not irresponsible at all. The Council doesn't have a stated position on WiFi other than that it takes the advice of the Health Protection Agency which is that there is no evidence that the very low power signals emitted by wifi give rise to concerns in schools – the signals are lower than those emitted by mobile phones. Research is ongoing and we will continue to keep abreast of the findings and inform schools accordingly. Ultimately decisions lie with schools themselves and we can only advise – our advice would be to follow Health Protection Guidelines. The Council may also like to know that we are being proactive in ensuring we keep up to date.

The Chief Executive has arranged a meeting for senior officers and relevant Cabinet Members through Dr Roberta Marshall who is Unit Director and Acting Regional Director of the Health Protection Agency North East. They will be specifically briefed about WiFi and the HPA current research programme by an expert from their Centre for Radiation, Chemicals and the Environment. There is also an excellent briefing note available from the Council for members who wish to read it."

The following question was submitted by Councillor Eddy for response by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

"Councillor Cunningham bearing in mind the obvious and sensible need for

councils to monitor spending and ensure careful use is made of public funds, will you please tell me the total running cost of Stockton's BSF Programme to date?"

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:-

"The total running cost of the Stockton BSF Programme from the start date in August 2007 to the 22nd June 2009, was £1,013,000. With the benefits to generations of our children which BSF will bring, I hope Councillor Eddy will agree that it is money well spent."

Councillor Eddy asked the following supplementary question:-

"Thank you for the information Councillor. I am totally surprised that bearing in mind our national financial difficulties the money is still available. Can I be certain that that this reply especially the figures will be minuted fully and carefully?"

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:-

"There has been an unprecedented investment in education and schools over the last 10 or 11 years and I am pleased to say that the £150 million has been increased to £180 million as we have been allowed to bring more and more schools into the project and as usual the figures quoted will be minuted fully and carefully."

The following question was submitted by Councillor Eddy for response by the Leader of the Council:-

"As a new Councillor I am very interested in the mentoring system that was talked about last year. Is this system still being considered and are there any plans to use the skills, knowledge and experience of our Borough's Alderman, who seem to have a very small role at present?"

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

"Since 2000, Stockton on Tees Borough Council has bestowed the honour of Honorary Alderman on 20 of its former Councillors. The honour recognises the eminent services they have provided to the Council and Borough over many years. The Council has previously identified criteria that must be satisfied before the Council will consider such an appointment.

Honorary Aldermen have no legal, social or royal precedence. The honour is bestowed on the individual in recognition of past services and should be viewed as such. The honour is conferred without condition and does not place or imply the placement of any duties or obligations on the recipient.

Currently, the Council's Aldermen are invited to attend events such as Mayor's Sunday, Annual Meeting, Billingham International Folklore Festival. Those who are able to attend do so and support the office of Mayor and the Council. Their continued attendance is very welcome; as is any other support they are able to offer."

Councillor Eddy asked the following supplementary question:-

"Thank you Councillor but I am still unsure of the role of our present and perhaps future Aldermen. I will read the top lines of the recent LGA First Magazine and ask is there a use for our Aldermen?"

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

"It is ultimately up to the individuals concerned but there are now new governance models in local government. In this context I was mentored by a Leader of another Borough which I found very useful. There are also opportunities for Members to be mentored by another Member in their political group. There will also be new proposals from a government paper in September."

The following question was submitted by Councillor Walmsley for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport:-

"What plans has Stockton Borough Council for Mandale Triangle and adjacent derelict area following the refusal of recent Planning applications?"

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transportation responded with:-

"Mandale Triangle is one of many locations where the potential for regeneration has been highlighted and is currently being assessed through the refreshing of the draft masterplan and development documentation. This process involves exploring potential uses for the area that, under the current financial climate, will unlock development potential to provide long term sustainability, refraining from inappropriate development that may give short term gain but would likely lead to sustainability issues in the future. The master plan/development brief will be underpinned by planning policies within the emerging LDF.

Officers have been in discussion with several interested parties regarding future development within the Triangle and further discussions are planned. Members are to be invited to feed into this process.

The Western area of the Mandale Triangle is active, with a number of properties in use some of which have been subject to planning permissions including Jamal Building. Similarly other areas have, to a greater or lesser degree, current occupiers with suitable use.

Current re-assessment of ownerships is underway. On receipt of this information and following the outcome of the Supreme appeal, exploratory discussions will be undertaken with land owners on the development potential for Mandale Triangle."

Councillor Walmsley asked the following supplementary question:-

"It has been over 40 years since we were promised utopia but we still have derelict buildings, wouldn't it be a good idea to talk to local Councillors?"

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport responded with:-

"I can only refer to my last response."

The following question was submitted by Councillor Walmsley for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport:-

"Has a precedent now been set whereby wind turbines can now be sited in open countryside and Greenfield throughout the borough of Stockton on Tees?"

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport responded with:-

"No."

Councillor Walmsley asked the following supplementary question:-

"Was there a block vote that decided that?"

It was indicated that there had been no block vote.

Members' Question Time was concluded.

**C**  
**86/09**

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 6th May 2009 were signed by the Worshipful the Mayor as a correct record.

**C**  
**87/09**

**Arts Leisure & Culture Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Mrs O'Donnell, seconded by Councillor Sherris and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee held on 20th March 2009 (Minute ALC 41/08 - ALC 45/08) be confirmed.

**C**  
**88/09**

**Audit Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Woodhouse, seconded by Councillor Womphrey and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit Committee held on 11th May 2009 (Minute A 7/09 - A 13/09) be received.

**C**  
**89/09**

**Cabinet Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Lupton, seconded by Councillor Mrs Beaumont and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet held on 14th May 2009 (Minute CAB 21/09 - CAB 36/09) be confirmed or received as appropriate subject to the following correction:-



"Councillor Dick Cains and Councillor Mrs Ann Cains were both present at the meeting."

**C  
90/09 Cabinet Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Lupton, seconded by Councillor Mrs Beaumont and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet held on 11th June 2009 (Minute CAB 37/09 - CAB 51/09) be confirmed or received as appropriate.

**C  
91/09 Children & Young People Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Harrington, seconded by Councillor Eddy and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee held on 11th February 2009 (Minute CYP 67/08 - CYP 71/08) be confirmed.

**C  
92/09 Children & Young People Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Harrington, seconded by Councillor Eddy and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee held on 27th May 2009 (Minute CYP 1/09 - CYP 6/09) be confirmed.

**C  
93/09 Children & Young People Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Harrington, seconded by Councillor Eddy and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee held on 3rd June 2009 (Minute CYP 7/09 - CYP 10/09) be confirmed.

**C  
94/09 Corporate, Adult Services & Social Inclusion Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Stoker, seconded by Councillor Apedaile and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee held on 7th April 2009 (Minute CAS 1/09 - CAS 5/09) be confirmed.

**C  
95/09 Environment Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Mrs Rigg, seconded by Councillor Smith and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment Select Committee held on 9th March 2009 (Minute ENV 44/08 - ENV 48/08) be confirmed.

**C  
96/09 Executive Scrutiny Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Gibson, seconded by Councillor Miss Large and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive Scrutiny Committee held on 24th March 2009 (Minute EXC 68/08 - EXC 77/08) be received.

**C**  
**97/09**      **Executive Scrutiny Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Gibson, seconded by Councillor Miss Large and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive Scrutiny Committee held on 5th May 2009 (Minute EXC 1/09 - EXC 9/09) be received.

**C**  
**98/09**      **Health Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Mrs Cains, seconded by Councillor Faulks and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health Select Committee held on 6th April 2009 (Minute H 1/09 - H 6/09) be confirmed.

**C**  
**99/09**      **Health Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Mrs Cains, seconded by Councillor Faulks and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health Select Committee held on 18th May 2009 (Minute H 7/09 - H 10/09) be confirmed.

**C**  
**100/09**      **Housing & Community Safety Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Cherrett, seconded by Councillor Mrs Rigg and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee held on 12th March 2009 (Minute HCS 59/08 - HCS 63/08) be confirmed.

**C**  
**101/09**      **Licensing Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Woodhead, seconded by Councillor Perry and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 23rd April 2009 (Minute L 10/09 - L 15/09) be received.

**C**  
**102/09**      **Licensing Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Woodhead, seconded by Councillor Perry and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 26th May 2009 (Minute L

16/09 - L 25/09) be received.

**C**  
**103/09**      **Licensing Sub Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Woodhead, seconded by Councillor Perry and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Sub Committee held on 2nd June 2009 (Minute LSC 1/09 - LSC 3/09) be received.

**C**  
**104/09**      **Planning Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Rix, seconded by Councillor Gibson and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 29th April 2009 (Minute P 15/09 - P 23/09) be received.

**C**  
**105/09**      **Planning Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Rix, seconded by Councillor Gibson and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 20th May 2009 (Minute P 24/09 - P 30/09) be received.

**C**  
**106/09**      **Planning Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Rix, seconded by Councillor Gibson and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 10th June 2009 (Minute P 31/09 - P 36/09) be received.

(Councillor Cunningham declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of minute P 33/09 due to his role as a consultant to the energy industry and left the meeting room during consideration of the question raised about condition 14 of the planning consent in respect of the application.)

**C**  
**107/09**      **Regeneration & Transport Select Committee Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Cains and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Regeneration and Transport Select Committee held on 20th April 2009 (Minute RTS 1/09 - RTS 5/09) be confirmed.

**C**  
**108/09**      **Standards Committee Minutes**

Moved by Mrs E Chapman, seconded by Councillor Dixon and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Standards Committee held on 9th April 2009 (Minute S 1/09 -

S 10/09) be received.

**C**  
**109/09**      **Standards Committee Minutes**

Moved by Mrs E Chapman, seconded by Councillor Dixon and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Standards Committee held on 7th May 2009 (Minute S 11/09 - S 19/09) be confirmed or received as appropriate.

**C**  
**110/09**      **Building Schools for the Future BSF Project Board Minutes**

The minutes of the Building Schools for the Future BSF Project Board held on the 6th April 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**111/09**      **Building Schools for the Future BSF Project Board Minutes**

The minutes of the Building Schools for the Future BSF Project Board held on the 11th May 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**112/09**      **Building Schools for the Future BSF Project Board Minutes**

The minutes of the Building Schools for the Future BSF Project Board held on the 1st June 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**113/09**      **Cleveland Fire Authority Minutes**

The minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority held on the 27th March 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**114/09**      **Local Joint Consultative Panel Minutes**

The minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Panel held on the 16th March 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**115/09**      **Local Joint Consultative Panel Minutes**

The minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Panel held on the 8th June 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**116/09**      **Markets Forum Minutes**

The minutes of the Markets Forum held on the 27th May 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**117/09**      **Safer Stockton Partnership Minutes**

The minutes of the Safer Stockton Partnership held on the 12th May 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**118/09**      **Stockton Home Safety Association Minutes**

The minutes of the Stockton Home Safety Association held on the 10th March 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**119/09**      **Stockton Home Safety Association Minutes**

The minutes of the Stockton Home Safety Association held on the 28th April 2009 were noted.

**C**  
**120/09**      **Officer Decisions in Consultation with the Mayor**

Consideration was given to a report that informed Members of the following Officer Decisions which had been taken under urgency provisions in consultation with the Mayor:-

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

Authorisation was needed for a site erroneously omitted from the SHLAA document approved for public consultation by Cabinet to be included in the public consultation.

Amended 2009/10 Rent Increase

On the 8th January 2009, Cabinet approved an average 6.5% rent increase for 2009/10 for Council homes, this decision was agreed by Council on 21st January 2009.

As a result of extensive lobbying by Councillors, tenants and interested housing organisations, the government on the 3rd March 2009 announced that they would, after consultation, amend the guideline rent to a 3.1% increase on the previous years actual rent.

This had resulted in an average £2.10p per week (48 weeks) reduction to the rent set on the 8th January, which would be back dated to the 1st April 2009.

In order to reduce the period before the new rent could be set and refunds calculated the matter needed to be approved under 'Urgency' procedures.

RESOLVED that the Officer Decisions that had been taken in consultation with the Mayor be noted.

**C**  
**121/09**      **Ingleby Barwick West By - Election**

Consideration was given to a report that informed Members of the results of the Ingleby Barwick West By – Election held on Thursday, 18th June 2009.

Jean Patricia Kirby was duly elected to represent Ingleby Barwick West on the Council.

RESOLVED that the results of the Ingleby Barwick West By – Election be noted.

**C**  
**122/09**      **Amendments to Memberships**

At its Annual Meeting held on Wednesday 1st April 2009 Council approved appointments to its Committees and Panels for the Municipal year 2009/2010.

As a consequence of the result of the recent by election, in the Ingleby Barwick West Ward, it had been necessary to re-calculate political proportionality for certain Committees and for the total number of seats available within the Council as a whole. Following consultation with relevant political groups the changes detailed below were presented for Council approval: -

Planning Committee

Remove - Councillor Mrs Jean O'Donnell

Replacement - Councillor Jean Kirby

Licensing Committee

Remove - Councillor Mrs Ann McCoy

Replacement - Councillor Jean Kirby

Executive Scrutiny Committee

Remove - Councillor John Fletcher

Replacement – Councillor Ken Dixon

Appeals and Complaints Committee

Remove – Councillor Mrs Mary Womphrey

Replacement – Councillor Jean Kirby

Home Safety Association

Remove – Councillor Steve Walmsley

Replacement – Councillor Julia Cherrett

The following changes were not as a result of the re-calculation, following the by election, but reflected requested changes, within a political group:-

Employee Appeals

Remove – Councillor Andrew Larkin

Replacement – Councillor Jean Kirby

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee

Remove – Councillor Kevin Faulks

Replacement – Councillor Jean Kirkby

RESOLVED that the above amendments be approved.

**C**  
**123/09**     **Motion to Council - Sustainable Communities Act**

The following motion was submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1. Moved by Councillor Lupton, seconded by Councillor Gibson:-

"Stockton on Tees Borough Council recognises that the Sustainable Communities Act's provisions build upon the core objectives of Stockton on Tees Borough Council's Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan and provide the opportunity to make proposals to Government for greater local control, flexibility and assistance. This is consistent with Stockton's actions and consistent requests of Government in conjunction with the other Tees Valley Councils via the MAA and the Tees Valley City Region Bid.

Stockton Borough Council supports the aims and objectives of the Sustainable Communities Act in allowing local authorities and their communities to drive, lead and co-ordinate the help Central Government provides in pursuit of thriving sustainable communities."

The motion was carried.

**C**  
**124/09**     **Forward Plan and Leaders Statement**

The Leader of the Council gave his Forward Plan and Leaders Statement.

Tees Valley Unlimited was focusing its efforts on the strategic issues of:-

- Dealing with the immediate short term issues of Corus, petrochemicals and engineering
- Securing long term investment in renewable energy and biofuels
- A 5 year investment plan for the Tees Valley to secure its long term economic development and continued strategic regeneration and housing growth

- In the light of declining public sector expenditure, develop more efficient and streamlined methods of delivery.

Transport: The Government had granted Programme Entry status to the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements project. Some £40 million of Government funding would be topped up with Council and private sector contributions, including bus operators, to provide a network of higher quality, higher frequency, more reliable bus services, focused on the main centres. Corridors earmarked for treatment in Stockton include Bowesfield Lane, Bishopton Road, Durham Road, Middlesbrough Road, Norton Road/ Billingham Road, Oxbridge Lane and Yarm Road. More local consultation on the proposals would start in the autumn and, assuming final Government approval, substantial work could start early in 2010 with completion of all corridors planned for mid-2012.

There was encouraging reports and formal Department for Transport approval was awaited for an allocation of £30 million towards Phase 1 of the Tees Valley Metro project. A report was scheduled for Cabinet in September 2009.

Independent examination for the Local Development Framework core strategy was due to begin on 22 September, with the preliminary hearing on 5 August.

The Council had won the English Heritage regional and national award for the 2009 National Heritage at Risk Award. The Council was also successful in the recent Local Authority Building Control Building Excellence Awards, in which the Council's Building Control team received nine awards or commendations, including the award for Best Educational Building for the RSPB Saltholme Wildlife Reserve.

The Council had also recently granted outline planning consent for North Shore, enabling the exciting regeneration of this riverside area. It was expected the first reserved matters application for the Home Zone in November 2009.

The £15 million Billingham Forum refurbishment began last week and would ultimately provide a major boost for the town centre. Most of the Forum activities had been relocated and the new Stockton News (out on Friday) carried a full schedule.

It was reported that the Council's bid for DWP's Future Jobs Funding had gained Stage 1 approval. This would enable the Council, with 22 partners, to create sustainable jobs for 181 people out of work for 12 months or more. It was targeted at 18-24-year-olds from across the Borough and people of any age from disadvantaged areas.

Delivering good services relied on well-trained and motivated employees. So developing the workforce was vital and the Council was pleased to be the North East's first council to secure the new Investor in People standard.

A report to Cabinet would consider a range of issues related to safeguarding children. As this issue had risen to national prominence, there had been an increase in social care referrals to the Council, children subject to a child protection plan and looked after children, and the Leader of the Council urged members to become familiar with the issue.



Cabinet would also consider a report on the Medium Term Financial Plan, which reaffirmed how well-managed the Council resources were. However the Council could not ignore the clear messages coming from all political groups about public spending in future years and the Council must prepare for a more difficult financial period ahead.

The Economic Climate report that would be presented to Cabinet had some positive indicators:- the Stockton Business Centre occupancy levels had increased by 3% to 78% the number of people on Job Seekers Allowance in Stockton had increased by only 3 people from the previous month, and month on month increases in the Tees Valley had slowed from a peak of over 2000 in January 2009. There were also 1056 job vacancies notified to jobcentre plus offices in Stockton. The report also identified that of the 1920 direct jobs under threat at Corus 228 affect Stockton residents. The Dow and Kroga Plant closures announced with the loss of 180 jobs was a further blow to the Tees Valley economy.

On a brighter note, the Council is playing its part in providing a fantastic range of mostly free activities through the coming weeks, and I encourage you all to make the most of the opportunities provided by events like the Stockton International Riverside Festival and Fringe, Billingham International Folklore Festival, the new Take to the Tees festival and Stockton Summer Show, to name just a few.