

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 6th March, 2013.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Lynne Apedaile); Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Michael Clark, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Phillip Dennis, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Ben Houchen, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Elliot Kennedy, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Mrs Kathryn Nelson, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr David Wilburn, Cllr Norma Wilburn, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: N Schneider (CE); J Danks, B Brown (R), J Humphreys (CESC); P Dobson (DNS); P Kelly (DPH); D E Bond, P K Bell (LD).

Also in attendance: 2 Members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr Mark Chatburn, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Ray McCall, Cllr Ann McCoy, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Andrew Stephenson, Cllr Michael Stoker and Cllr Tracey Stott.

C Declarations of Interest

117/12

There were no interests declared.

C Councillor Tracey Stott

118/12

Members sent their best wishes to Councillor Tracey Stott.

C Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) - Councillor Achievement Awards - Councillor David Harrington - Online Councillor of the Year

119/12

Councillor David Harrington was presented with the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) - Councillor Achievement Award for Online Councillor of the Year.

C Minutes

120/12

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2013 were signed by the Worshipful the Mayor as a correct record.

C Public Question Time

121/12

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

C Members' Policy Seminar Programme

122/12

Consideration was given to report that provided an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminars held in January and February 2013 which provided updates on Policing in Stockton, a housing update from the Tri-Star Vela group, a presentation from Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Foundation Trust, the position and progress on Welfare Reform and an overview of the Council contribution to the Government's consultation on a new measure for Child Poverty. A special seminar was held in January to feed back to Members

on the results of the Residents Survey undertaken in 2012.

Members Policy Seminars were an important vehicle for both informing and consulting with Members on a variety of topics from Policy and Legislative changes, contributions to Government consultations, and providing an update on local service provision from partner organisations. They had been in place since January 2009 and were particularly useful for those issues which were of importance to the Council or partners but were in the early stages of development, or those which would be of interest to Members, out with the usual reporting arrangements.

A programme of seminars was set annually with events planned on a monthly basis. Topics were reviewed monthly by the Corporate Management Team to ensure issues were current and discussions and information provision was timely. Special, additional seminars were arranged as required.

The Chief Superintendent who had been appointed for Stockton, Alastair Simpson provided an update on the Force restructure proposals, the Neighbourhood Structure and Engagement and performance levels across the District. The new Police and Crime Commissioner's priorities had a key focus on Neighbourhood Policing, better deals for witnesses and victims, rehabilitation and prevention of offending, more effective partnership working and improved industrial and community relations. The main drivers for change were budget related and more effective partnerships were needed to make better use of resources. Despite a reduction in budget and officers in the Force, performance continued to improve with a downward trend in crime and antisocial behaviour. Favourable results were achieved through the recent residents survey undertaken in 2012, identifying improved results for the crime related questions compared to results from the Place Survey undertaken in 2010.

Tristar Vela presented an overview of their second year of operations giving an update on their customer "offer promise", the challenges ahead, their aspirations for the next 5 years and relationships with partners. The Group were making good progress with 212 out of 242 promises already delivered which had provided improved terms and conditions, more affordable rents and giving customers better value for money. This had been supported by a restructuring of property services, a new Tenancy Policy, increased money advice and employment support services. Satisfaction levels remained high with tenants. Challenges ahead included managing the impact of the Welfare Reform Legislation and conducting a number of reviews including the Concierge Service and ASB Neighbourhood Management. The presentation set out the company's aspirations for the next 5 years which the Tristar Vela Group feel well positioned to deliver.

The Tees Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Trust presentation provided Members with the background to the work and structure of the Trust, geographical coverage, population base, funding arrangements and the extent of their service provision. The Trust had 10 key priorities for delivery which included improved access to services, improved patient feedback, responding to new business opportunities - recognising that times are changing, quality improvement, implementation of the Information Strategy and Financial Plan. There had been many improvements over the past few years not least of which was the property portfolio which had seen significant investment and provided

some very effective facilities for service users. There was an acknowledgment that this was a key area of service provision and one that had the potential for higher levels of demand over the coming years.

A number of elements of the Welfare Reform Act came into force from the 1st April 2013. Members received an update on the changes, details of analysis, the direct impact where known on individuals, community groups and wards across the Borough. Future plans for the management and monitoring of the impact of the changes were shared with members.

The Government had recently consulted organisations on a definition for a new measure of Child Poverty. The consultation set out proposals for the development of a multi - dimensional measure of Child Poverty putting the case for changing the definition, suggesting areas for inclusion in a new measures and posed questions about the methodology for calculations, weightings and potential difficulties in collection. A set of principles were outlined in the response to this consultation acknowledging that this was a complex area with many influencing factors. It was hoped that any future measure developed took account of the principles stated. A response form Government was expected in the summer of 2013.

A special seminar was held in January 2013 to provide Members with feedback from the North East Residents Survey undertaken in the autumn of 2012. The presentation was delivered by Ipsos Mori sharing the methodology, results and analysis from the survey. Results were very positive across many aspects of the survey. This was acknowledged by Members recognising input from elected Members, officers and partners all contributed to the continued delivery of good quality services and information provision to the Communities.

All slides, agenda and supporting material from the seminars could be accessed at:-

<http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>

A regular update report on Members seminar events held would be provided to Council at each meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

C **Village Ward By-Election Results** **123/12**

Consideration was given to a report on the result of the Village Ward By – Election held on Thursday, 7th February 2013. The result was as follows:-

Chapman, John Anthony - The Conservative Party Candidate - 85
Hodge, Leslie James - Labour Party Candidate - 270
Moore, Michael - Thornaby Independent Association - 800 elected
Strike, Edward Albert - UKIP - 135
Willis, Isabel - Liberal Democrat - 18

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:-

Want of an official mark - 0

Voting for more Candidates than voter was entitled to - 0

Writing or mark by which voter could be identified - 0
Unmarked or void for uncertainty - 2
Total - 2

Vacant Seats: 1
Electorate: 5,376
Ballot Papers Issued: 1,310
Turnout: 24.4%

Mick Moore was duly elected to the Council.

RESOLVED that the results of the Village Ward By – Election be noted.

C
124/12 **Amendments to Committees and Panels**

At its Annual Meeting, held on Wednesday 25 May 2011, the Council approved appointments to its Committees, Panels and Joint / Outside Bodies for 2011/15.

As a consequence of the result of the recent by-election, in the Village Ward, the following changes had been requested and were presented for Council approval:-

Audit Committee

Remove - Councillor Mrs Sylvia Walmsley
Add - Councillor Mick Moore

Children & Young People Select Committee

Vacancy
Add - Councillor Mrs Sylvia Walmsley

Schools' Workforce Joint Consultative Panel

Vacancy
Add – Councillor Mrs Sylvia Walmsley

Local Joint Consultative Panel

Vacancy
Add – Councillor Mrs Sylvia Walmsley

RESOLVED that the above amendments be approved.

C
125/12 **Special Urgency Decisions**

Consideration was given to a report on special urgency decisions. Under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”), the Leader of the Council must submit at least one report annually to a full Council meeting, containing details of each executive decision taken during the period since the

last report was submitted, where the making of the decision was agreed as urgent under the regulations. This was the annual report for 2012/13.

The Regulations provided that where the date by which a key (executive) decision must be made, made compliance with the usual notification and publication requirements impracticable, the decision can only be made where the decision could have obtained agreement from the chair of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee, or if there was no such person, or if that person was unable to act, the Mayor, or where there was neither, the Deputy Mayor, that the making of the decision was urgent and could not reasonably be deferred.

Such urgent decisions must be the subject of a report to the Council by the executive Leader, and there must be at least one such report annually whether or not urgent decisions had been taken.

During the municipal year 2012/13, no urgent decisions under regulation 11 of the Regulations had been taken.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

C
126/12

Motion

The following motion had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1 by Councillor Michael Clark:-

“The council commends the efforts of staff, trade unions and local MPs to retain the Insolvency Office on Teesside and notes with sadness and concern that their well-argued and vigorous campaign was ultimately unsuccessful and that the office will close with the loss of 39 jobs.

The council resolves to support staff in their efforts to ensure that the scaled-down interview hub facility which is proposed as part of the reconfiguration of services is located on Teesside to mitigate job losses, ensure the expertise of local staff is used and to retain, at least in part, an important facility for local businesses.”

Councillor Michael Clark moved and Councillor Bob Cook seconded the following amendment:-

“The council commends the efforts of staff, Alex Cunningham MP, James Wharton MP, Fiona Hall MEP and Ian Swales, MP for Redcar to retain the Insolvency Office on Teesside and notes with sadness and concern that their well-argued and vigorous campaign was ultimately unsuccessful and that the office will close with the loss of 39 jobs.

The council resolves to support staff in their efforts to ensure that the scaled-down interview hub facility which is proposed as part of the reconfiguration of services is located on Teesside to mitigate job losses, ensure the expertise of local staff is used and to retain, at least in part, an important facility for local businesses.”

A vote then took place and the amended motion was agreed.

C
127/12

Motion

The following motion had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1 by Councillor Mrs Maureen Rigg:-

“Stockton Borough Council, as an important consumer and opinion leader, resolves to work with the Stockton Fairtrade Borough Partnership to research, develop, and support a strategy to facilitate the promotion and purchase of foods with the FAIRTRADE Mark as part of its commitment to sustainable development and to give marginalised producers a fair deal.

To be recognised by the residents and the business community of Stockton-on-Tees, suppliers, employees and other local authorities, as a borough that actively supports and promotes Fairtrade and to increase the sale of products with the FAIRTRADE Mark.

Stockton Borough Council resolves to contribute to the campaign to increase sales of products with the FAIRTRADE Mark by striving to maintain Fairtrade status for the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees as detailed in the Fairtrade Foundation’s Fairtrade Towns Initiative.

The initiative involves a commitment to:-

- * Widely offer FAIRTRADE Marked food and drink options internally and make them available for internal meetings
- * Promote the FAIRTRADE Mark using Fairtrade Foundation materials in refreshment areas and promoting the Fairtrade Towns initiative in internal and communications and external newsletters
- * Use influence to urge local retailers to provide Fairtrade options for residents
- * Use influence to urge local business to offer Fairtrade options to their staff and promote the FAIRTRADE Mark internally
- * Engage in a media campaign to publicise the Fairtrade Towns initiative
- * Allocate responsibility for progression of the Fairtrade Town initiative to a member or group of staff working alongside the Fairtrade Borough Partnership

Organise events and publicity during national Fairtrade Fortnight - the annual national campaign to promote sales of products with the FAIRTRADE Mark.”

With the agreement of the meeting Councillor Mrs Maureen Rigg withdrew her motion.

C
128/12

Members' Question Time

The Director of Law & Democracy informed Members that no Member Questions had been received.

C Forward Plan and Leader's Statement

129/12

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

The Leader of the Council congratulated Councillor Rose who had been short - listed for the Sustainability Champion of the Year in the LGIU awards.

Cabinet had met on 7th February 2013 and considered a wide range of issues and of particular interest were the following items:-

- * A review of progress in the Adult Mental Health Services EIT review and approval of the next stage of consultation
- * The outcome of the Scrutiny Review of Affordable Warmth
- * The outcome of the review of Energy Supplies
- * The outcome of the 2012 Employee Survey

Cabinet met again on 21st February to approve the 2013/14 budget and Council Tax and approach to the MTFP for recommendation to Council.

Other Significant developments were:-

- * Work was progressing well on the redevelopment of Stockton High Street
- * Work was progressing well on the Go Warm energy efficiency project. There had been a meeting to celebrate completion of the first year of the scheme with work completed in over 1,600 homes in Parkfield, Mill Lane, Newtown and Thornaby
- * The new Chief Constable of Cleveland Police Jacqui Cheer had been appointed
- * There was a useful Members Seminar on 14th February where the impact of Welfare Reforms had been considered

Cabinet would meet next on 7th March 2013 and would consider the following significant items:-

- * The outcome of the scrutiny review into the quality and sufficiency of childcare in the Borough
- * The outcome of the Scrutiny Review of Empty and abandoned properties
- * To approve the procedures for the admission of pupils to primary and secondary schools for September 2014
- * To approve the investment in a new joint Venture to provide residential care facilities for Looked after Children and an associated education facility on the redeveloped King Edwin School site in Norton. This venture will enable us to provide local support for 20 children currently cared for outside the Borough.
- * To review Children's Social Care workload pressures
- * To approve the new governance arrangements for the Health and Wellbeing partnership

On 13th March the official re-launch of Preston Park Museum and Grounds would take place with a specially commissioned 3D Film projection on the front of the museum and the official opening by Chief Executive of the Arts Council Alan Davey who himself grew up nearby and visited the museum as a child.