

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 24th July, 2019.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Lynn Hall), Cllr Helen Atkinson, Cllr Louise Baldock, Cllr Chris Barlow, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Jacky Bright, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Chris Clough, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Luke Frost, Cllr Clare Gamble, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Tina Large, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr David Minchella, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Andrew Stephenson, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Laura Tunney, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Matthew Vickers, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Julia Whitehill, Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: Julie Danks (MD), Beccy Brown, Julie Butcher (HR&L), Garry Cummings (F&BS), Richard McGuckin (ED&D), Ann Workman (AH) Reuben Kench (C,L&E), Martin Grey (CS), Peter Bell (DS).

Also in attendance: Members of the Public.

Apologies: Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Tony Hampton, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Alan Watson and Cllr Sally Ann Watson.

C 29/19 Welcome and Evacuation Procedure

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

C 30/19 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Lynn Hall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as she had a son in the Merchant Navy.

Councillor Bill Woodhead MBE declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as he had served in the Armed Forces and was a member of 49 Bomber Squadron Association.

Councillor Nigel Cooke declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as his brother had served in the Armed Forces.

Councillor Norma Stephenson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as she was a former member of the Armed Forces.

Councillor Paul Kirton declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as he was a former member of the Armed Forces and had a family member in the Armed Forces.

Councillor Tony Riordan declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as he was a member of the Armed Forces.

Councillor Kevin Faulks declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as a family member had served in the Armed Forces.

Councillor Steve Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as his son had served in the Armed Forces.

Councillor Stefan Houghton declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as he had served in the Armed Forces.

Councillor Jacky Bright declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Armed Forces Community Covenant Update as a family member had served in the Armed Forces.

C
31/19

Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February (Special), 27 February (Ordinary), 5 March, 22 May, 27 June (Extraordinary) 2019.

The following corrections were made to the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June (Extraordinary) 2019:-

With regard to page 5 of the minutes Councillor Tony Riordan had asked the following question that had been unanswered by Cabinet.

“Could somebody from Cabinet or Council please tell me what will be the overall cost to the tax payers of Stockton for the Globe project, the final figure, the cost of the Globe build, renovation, lease and buy back, interest, ATG costs, Council costs?”

Councillor Andrew Stephenson referred to page 6 of the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June (Extraordinary) 2019 and to the reference to the Driver Report. Councillor Andrew Stephenson asked that the minutes reflect that he and other Members of Council hadn't received a copy of the Driver Report. Members were advised at the meeting that the report was available to all Members online.

RESOLVED that the minutes subject to the above corrections be agreed and signed as a correct record.

C
32/19

Long Service Awards

The Worshipful the Mayor presented Paul Glazebrook with his Long Service Award. Paul has completed 25 years' service with the Adults and Health Service as a Support Worker.

C
33/19

Public Question Time

“What are the Councils understandings of the public health concerns against the

5G roll out?"

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture responded with:-

"Many thanks for bringing this question so that all Council members can have a wider understanding of the issue.

For those not familiar with issue, 5G is the latest development in the mobile communication technology. 5G is used to describe the fifth generation of mobile communications technologies. It is anticipated that it will deliver a step change of ultrafast, low latency, higher data loads more reliable wireless connectivity. 5G mobile broadband is expected to be the first application of 5G to be rolled out commercially. Trials for 5G applications and use cases are ongoing. The roll-out of 5G mobile broadband is led by commercial mobile network operators (MNOs) and roll-out plans are not usually publicly available. Some MNOs have begun 5G trials and announced early network roll-out plans beginning in 2019.

I would like to acknowledge that you (Mr Lipthorpe) have already raised this issue previously with the Council and have received a letter from the DPH, spent dedicated time with senior council officers (Head of Environmental Health and Consultant in Public Health) and also received a formal reply from myself as chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, which represents the collective view of agencies in the area.

In response to your question as noted in all our previous correspondence, we are guided by Public Health England which is the expert national public agency whose duty is to protect health and reduce health inequalities. PHE Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards takes the lead on public health matters associated with radio frequency electromagnetic fields or radio waves used in telecommunications. In offering its advice to Government, they refer to internationally agreed guidelines from the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) which underpin health protection policies at UK and European levels.

Fortuitously, PHE have just (in the last 2 weeks) issued further guidance on this matter. The guidance is quite technical in parts but provides a very useful summary and analysis of recent, validated research and web-links to further detail – too detailed to go into here tonight.

Two statements from this guidance stand out, and I quote

1. "Scientific research based on many health related studies continues to show that exposures of the general public to radio waves are well within the international health-related guideline levels that are used in the UK"; and
2. "...despite much research, there remains no clear evidence of harm to health from exposure to radio waves below the internationally agreed (ICNIRP) guideline levels that are already adopted in the UK".

We will send you a copy of the full PHE guidance following the meeting and also circulate it to all Councillors.

Finally, I would like to reiterate to Mr Lipthorpe that it is not within the

responsibility or the power of the Local Authority to authorise or prevent the introduction of this technology. These decisions are taken at a national level and he should direct any future lobbying in that direction.”

Mr Liphthorpe was asked if he had a supplemental question to which he asked “At what point do the council think AI development should be halted?”

The Mayor ruled that the question was not supplemental to his original question and could not be allowed.

C Armed Forces Community Covenant Update

34/19

Consideration was given to a report on the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The report detailed the position and progress made by the Council in relation to fulfilling the commitments made in the updated Armed Forces Community Covenant, which was adopted in October 2018.

It considered the vital role of the Council’s Armed Forces Covenant Steering Group; the latest Stock Take regarding delivery of the Covenant ‘Pillars’; the priorities of 2019/20 Covenant Action Plan; the relevant issues from the Defence Secretary’s November 2018 Covenant report to Parliament; and the progress towards achieving the ‘Gold’ award from the MOD Employer Recognition Scheme.

Members were asked to note the contents of the report and the significant progress that was being made by the Council in fulfilling its commitments to the armed forces community, and the innovative way that this had been achieved primarily through the establishment and development of the pioneering Armed Forces Covenant Steering Group.

In order to ensure that the Covenant related activities and initiatives remained current and continue to support the local AF community, the Council would need to:

- continue to support the ongoing work of the Covenant Steering Group to review and update the Covenant Action Plan and carry out the annual Stock take of the covenant pillars;
- continue to monitoring and implementing appropriate responses to the information, guidance, research and reports provided through the various defence e-bulletins, e-newsletters and websites; and the Defence Secretary’s annual report to Parliament;

By doing this the Council would be able to retain the Silver Award from the MOD ERS; maintain progress towards the Gold Award; and continue working towards and maintaining a ‘green’ rating for delivery of the Covenant pillars.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The contents of the report and the significant progress that is being made

by the Council in fulfilling its commitments to the armed forces community as set out in the new Armed Forces Community Covenant as signed in November 2018 be noted.

2. The key areas of focus for the coming year as detailed in the report be agreed.

C 35/19 Appointments and Amendments to Committees, Panels and Other Bodies for the Municipal Years 2019/23

RESOLVED that the following Appointments and Amendments to Committees, Panels and Other Bodies be made for the Municipal Years 2019/23:-

Local Joint Consultative - Councillor Clare Gamble

Standards Panel - Councillor Eileen Johnson

Tees Valley Combined Authority - Transport Committee - Substitute Member - Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing (as substitute member)

Joint Archives - Substitute Member – Leader of the Council (as substitute member)

ANEC Resources Task & Finish Group - Leader of the Council

LGA General Assembly - Councillor Ross Patterson

Western Locality Forum - Councillor Tony Hampton

Spence Bequest - Mayor to be replaced by Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture

Durham Tees Valley Consultative Committee - Councillor Stefan Houghton

Place Select Councillor – Replace Maurice Perry with Councillor Bill Woodhead

Tees Valley Combined Authority – Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Replace Councillor Matt Vickers with Councillor Tony Riordan

Members had been informed that Councillor Paul Weston had stood down as Chair of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee and Councillor Pauline Beall had stood down as Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee.

It was noted that Councillor Pauline Beall had been nominated to the position of Chair of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee and Councillor Paul Weston had been nominated to the position of Vice Chair of the Select Committee.

RESOLVED that Councillor Pauline Beall be appointed Chair of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee and Councillor Paul Weston be appointed as Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee and, as a consequence of this, Councillor Pauline Beall would replace Councillor Paul Weston on Executive Scrutiny Committee.

Moved by Councillor Norma Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Jean O'Donnell that Councillor Carol Clark be appointed to the Schools' Forum for the Municipal Years 2019 - 2023.

Moved by Councillor Sylvia Walmsley, seconded by Councillor Ian Dalgarno that Councillor Luke Frost be appointed to the Schools' Forum for the Municipal Years 2019 - 2023.

At this point a vote took place.

RESOLVED that Councillor Carol Clark be appointed to the Schools Forum for the Municipal Years 2019 – 23.

Moved by Councillor Sylvia Walmsley, seconded by Councillor Ian Dalgarno that Councillor Ray Godwin be appointed to the Tees Active Management Board for the Municipal Years 2019 - 2023.

Moved by Councillor Norma Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Eileen Johnson that Councillor Jean O'Donnell be appointed to the Tees Active Management Board for the Municipal Years 2019 - 2023.

At this point a vote took place.

RESOLVED that Councillor Jean O'Donnell be appointed to the Tees Active Management Board for the Municipal Years 2019 – 23.

C Members' Question Time

36/19

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Steve Walmsley for response by the Leader of the Council:-

“Prior to the 2015 local election, a referendum held in Thornaby initiated by Thornaby Town Council about separation from Stockton resulted in overwhelming support for separation. In a letter to me, as TIA Leader and Chair of TTC, Leader of SBC, Cllr Bob Cook, said that he would deal with the matter after the election - i.e. presumably a reference to taking it up with relevant bodies. It never happened. With TIA now taking all SBC contested seats in Thornaby and all town council seats, will Councillor Cook now honour his commitment and refer the matter to relevant parties?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“The letter actually says the reasons why we didn't refer it to the other bodies. As Leader of SBC I acknowledge the importance of ensuring local government boundaries reflect communities and that our ability to deliver effective and efficient services is a necessity of effective democratic local government. I do not accept however that there is an identified need for a boundary change based on a consultation held by Thornaby Town Council in 2015. Councils as you will be aware cannot change their own boundaries nor can the Local Government Boundary Commission. Principal Area Boundary Reviews can only be undertaken when the Local Authorities affected agree. Changes to boundaries can only be made by the Secretary of State on receipt of a recommendation resulting from a Principal Area Boundary Review. Recommendations must meet the Local Government Boundary Commission statutory and other criteria, for example where there have been changes in the pattern of community life, or new developments such as major infrastructure. The actual letter that I sent out explained this, the reasons why we didn't send it on and that was dated 28 July 2015.”

Councillor Steve Walmsley asked the following supplementary question:-

“That is a bit puzzling, I just wonder why the Leader said he would deal with it after the election, I will point out that it was a 72% of Thornaby voted for separation and there was also a referendum in Yarm. That is two of the constituency towns of the Borough that have voted for separation. I would also point out that there more people that voted in these referendums than voted for the Cabinet system and the none binding consultation for the appointment of an elected mayor. Doesn't that tell you that Stockton really isn't a listening Council?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“It wasn't a referendum as referendums need to have polling stations, it didn't actually ask which authority Thornaby would transfer to. The question was only “Would you like to separate from Stockton Council?” 32% of the electorate sent back the postal vote. So therefore the reason why we couldn't send it to the Local Government Boundary Commission because it has to name the 2 principal authorities, one is Stockton and the other authority has to be named which wasn't mentioned therefore it didn't meet the legislation.”

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Steve Walmsley for response by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing:-

“Has approval for a 150 bed and leisure complex at Wynyard been factored into future viability estimate of the Hilton Hotel?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with the following:-

“Thank you for the straight forward question, I will give you a straight forward answer, yes it has.”

Councillor Steve Walmsley asked the following supplementary question:-

“It is all about public perception I just don't get why we line the pockets of a private developer who then gets approval for the hotel and leisure complex in a reputable prestige location and you don't think there is any sort of effect on the Hampton by Hilton Hotel. People coming into the Borough have a choice between staying in a hotel overlooking Church Road and staying at a hotel overlooking a golf course, where would they stay in such circumstances?”

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing responded with the following:-

“There are some parts of that supplementary question that I will not get into. I will not comment on the independence of the Planning Committee.

The 150 bed hotel was taken into consideration within the wider future Tees Valley supply/pipeline but at the time of production, the scheme was 'on hold'. The analysis in respect of its impact is slightly more complex in the sense that it is not within the same category of competitive relevance i.e. the proposed scheme is 4 star versus a limited service Hampton by Hilton Hotel therefore they aren't necessarily competing in the same market day to day. We will welcome

golfers at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel but it is unlikely that business men crossing the pond will come with a golf bag on their shoulders but I' sure there will be golfers stay at the Hotel but it is a very different context."

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Steve Walmsley for response by the Leader of the Council:-

"Including outside bodies, how much is claimed in total by Labour members for Chairs / Vice Chairs, other payments, etc.?"

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

"I can advise Cllr Walmsley that a notice of all allowances paid to Councillors for 2018/19 has been published and is available on the Council's website as required by The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

This notice includes all Basic, Special Responsibility and Subsistence / travel expenses paid to all Councillors.

The website also contains a schedule of allowance entitlement for all Councillors during 2019/20, and actual amounts paid will again be published and made available on the Council's website at the end of the current Municipal Year.

Regarding allowances paid by any Outside / Joint Body organisations, I would advise Cllr Walmsley to approach those organisations direct with that question as this Council has no authority or responsibility for any allowances paid by external organisations."

Councillor Steve Walmsley asked the following supplementary question:-

"Can we just accept that regardless of talent or experience the ruling Labour Group have took every Chair and every Vice Chair apart from Executive Scrutiny Committee?"

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

"I think you will find that the Labour Group has got the majority on the Council. All the Councillors that were voted on for the Chairs and Vice Chairs were voted on by this Council by a majority verdict at the Annual Meeting. So therefore it is not just the Labour Group that has voted for them."

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Ray Godwin for response by the Leader of the Council:-

"SBC recently borrowed £30 million pound for development of Town Centres of the borough. At present £7.5 million of this money has already been used to purchase Wellington Square in Stockton High Street on top of the tens of millions already put into other schemes in Stockton Centre.

Can the Leader of the Council give reassurances to the ratepayers of Thornaby that before any more of this £30 million is spent within Stockton High Street a

proportionate amount of this £30 million is ring fenced to spend in Thornaby Centre?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“The report to Council in December was clear that the borrowing was for acquisitions or developments where borrowing costs could be funded from a revenue stream. We are committed to developing and investing in all our Towns right across the Borough and if there are opportunities in Thornaby I am sure the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing would be happy to meet with you to discuss this further. We will inform all Members as and when schemes arise. It is pointless to say that we will ring fence money as schemes may arise in different Town Centres.”

Councillor Ray Godwin asked the following supplementary question:-

“This Council made promises publically to the people of the Borough and now you are saying due to the way you see the finances it may be the case that Thornaby doesn't get any money at all. As the Leader of the Council you will be aware that recently the modern vibrant profitable Thornaby Town Centre has changed ownership, there was no mention within this change of ownership that SBC had made any enquiries or were considering buying it as part of the investment plan that SBC is undergoing at the moment with hotels and Wellington Square. The question is this, does the Leader of the Council accept that this disparity of investment in the Borough is unacceptable and a simple yes or no will suffice?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“It is not a yes or no answer what I have said is that investment will be made right across the Town Centres within the Borough. We have said this right from the start. This in one of the reasons why we didn't want to use this money for The Globe. We want the £30 million to benefit people right across the Borough.”

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Luke Frost for response by the Leader of the Council:-

“At the Special Full Council Meeting in the Jim Cooke Suite last month I asked for reassurances that this will be the last time that we have to plough money into the Globe, your exact response was “hopefully”. Can you now clarify what the term “hopefully” means and will it be the last time money from the taxpayer goes into this project?”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“The additional costs are based on an Agreed Maximum Price and I am confident that this will be the position. Clearly we cannot legislate for everything and who knows what the impact will be of a No Deal Brexit on any of the services we provide in the Council.”

Councillor Luke Frost asked the following supplementary question:-

“The project is well overdue and overfunded, isn't it time this Council is held

accountable for the many failings of this project. This Labour Group has failed it, now it is time to be held accountable.”

The Leader of the Council responded with:-

“Obviously the Council made the decision, we believe that The Globe is going to benefit not just the people of Stockton Town Centre but people right across the Borough and the Tees Valley.”

Members were informed that Councillor Luke Frost had withdrawn the following question:-

“Thornaby currently has 1 street cleaner, who tries his best to cover as much of the town as he can with his barrow. Why at time when community groups are forming to help clean the streets does the Council feel the need to cut down on the service? We pay a lot of tax in Thornaby and the residents of the town feel let down. What can be done to solve a problem like litter?”

**C
37/19**

Council Date

At its Annual Meeting, held on Wednesday 22nd May 2019, the Council approved dates for the meetings of Council for 2019/20.

The following change of date was detailed for Council consideration:-

Move 18th September 2019 meeting to 25th September 2019

RESOLVED that the Council meeting due to be held on 18th September 2019 be re-arranged to take place on 25th September 2019.

**C
38/19**

Forward Plan and Leader’s Statement

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

This was the first ordinary Council meeting since the Annual meeting at Billingham Forum in May and since then Cabinet had met twice and had considered a number of important matters. Cabinet considered reports on:

- The Council Plan Annual Review
- The Medium-Term Financial Plan Outturn Report
- The 2019 Residents Survey
- Appointments to Outside Bodies
- The Children’s Services Quarter 4 Progress Update for 2018/19
- Revised Proposals for the Local Authority School Attendance Policy
- School Term and Holiday Dates for 2020/21 and 2021/22
- The Globe Restoration
- An Update on Welfare Related Issues
- An Electoral update
- Canvass Reform
- The Xentrall 2018/19 Annual Report
- An Investment Strategy for Schools, SEN and Early Years

- The Sport and Active Leisure Strategy
- The Stockton-on-Tees Visitors Economy Strategy
- The Economic Climate Update
- An Update on the Victoria Estate Redevelopment
- The Armed Forces Community Covenant update

In other news since Council last met:

In addition to the appointments of Councillors Norma Stephenson Access and Communities and Community Safety and Clare Gamble for Regeneration and Housing, which the Leader of the Council announced at the annual meeting, the Leader of the Council was pleased to confirm that he had also appointed Councillor Louise Baldock to an Assistant Cabinet Member position to the Adults Social Care portfolio.

The Leader of the Council also confirmed that the Council had been notified by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England that it intended to carry out an electoral review in the Borough. This was part of their programme of reviewing all local authorities that had not been reviewed in the last twelve years. The Council would therefore be included as it was last reviewed in 2003. The review will look at:

- the total number of Councillors elected to the local authority;
- the number and boundaries of wards
- the number of Councillors for any ward and
- the name of wards

The Commission would meet directly with all Councillors as well as carrying out public consultation activity. The Leader of the Council would keep all Members informed of progress.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that the Council had agreed a date for the LGA Corporate Peer Review which would take place between the 3rd and 6th of September. The peer team would want to meet with a wide range of Councillors and Officers. The Leader of the Council looked forward to learning from this valuable review process and would ensure that the results were shared with all Members in September.

The next meeting of Cabinet was scheduled for the 12th of September and consider reports on:

- Customer Service Excellence
- The Compliments, Comments and Complaints policy
- The Annual Ombudsman's report
- The MTFP Quarterly update
- The Peer Review
- The Targeted Action Area progress
- The Scrutiny End of Term Report
- An update on Supplementary Planning documentation
- An update on the Tees Valley Lettings Partnership
- The Wynyard Masterplan
- VCSE Sector support
- The Childcare Sufficiency report

- The SEND Inspection report and written statement
 - An update on Adults Services
- and
- The Tees Valley Waste project

The Council had a summer of great events in the Borough coming up, with SIF and Billingham International Folklore Festival in August and for the first time in Tees Valley, the Great North City Games on the 7th of September.