PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, PONTELAND ON 11 DECEMBER 2019

Present: Councillor A Varley (in the Chair)

Councillors S Ahmed, Mrs C Caisley, L Darwin, Mrs C Greenwell, A Hall, Mrs K Overbury and Mrs K Woodrow.

Police Community Support Officers Laura McCann and Cameron Hall were in attendance to observe the meeting. They were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

101. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Dodd, Mrs S Johnson, and A Shanley

102. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 13 NOVEMBER 2019

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 November 2019 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved.

103. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

104. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

105. PLANNING

(i) Planning Committee

Minutes of meetings held on 29th October and 12th November 2019 were circulated for information.

(ii) Report on recent planning decisions

There were no reports.

106. PROJECTS REPORT

The projects report had been circulated for the consideration of Councillors. It was reported that the lights on the toilets at Thornhill Road had been installed to assist with lighting up the car park. One complaint had been received and a slight adjustment to the lights had been made. No further complaints had been received.

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106. PROJECTS REPORT (Continued)

Members mentioned that positive comments had been received from users of the car park in the evening.

RESOLVED – The report be accepted.

107. RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

(i) Risk Management Report

Members were reminded that consideration of this report had been deferred from the November meeting pending consideration of items relating to office security. The report was presented together with a supplementary report relating to security of the office staff.

Discussions had been held with the staff who were pleased that signage relating to treating staff with respect had been displayed. They did not feel the other suggested measures were necessary. Councillors would be made aware of any problems if they arose.

RESOLVED -

- (i) The risk management report be accepted.
- (ii) The supplementary report relating to staff security be accepted and the Council agree to take no further action at the present time.

108. OFFICE CLOSURE - CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

A report relating to the closure of the office over the Christmas and New Year period had been presented. It was proposed to close the office at 1.00 p.m. on Monday 23rd December and reopen at 9.30 on Monday 6 January. The staff would take three days leave for this period.

Notices would be displayed on the office door, on the website and on notice boards. The number for the County Council would be displayed and the generic email address for the Town Council would also be listed.

RESOLVED – The information regarding the office closure be noted.

109. PROPOSED CHANGE OF DATE - JANUARY 2020 TC MEETING

Members were reminded that the scheduled date for the January Town Council meeting was 8th January. It would prove difficult to prepare reports etc in view of the festive break. There was also a need to schedule an informal budget meeting prior to the January TC meeting. Members were advised of the need to advise NCC of the precept requirement by 27th January 2020.

It was therefore proposed to change the date of the January Town Council meeting to Wednesday 15th January and schedule the budget meeting for Wednesday 8th January (or some other suitable date in advance of the 15th)

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<u>109. PROPOSED CHANGE OF DATE – JANUARY 2020 TC MEETING</u> (Continued)

RESOLVED – The Council agree to the proposed date changes and to holding the Town Council meeting on the 15th January and the budget meeting on the 8th.

110. ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a meeting of the Working Party held on 18 November 2019 had been circulated.

A recommendation had been made by the Working Party for Ponteland to enter the Northumbria in Bloom competition in 2020 depending on a positive response being received from the owner of a prominent building on Main Street. The Clerk reported that a response to the letter had not been received.

There was some debate relating to the proposed entry. Some Councillors felt that there had been no difference in the standards this year when Ponteland had not entered whilst others were concerned at the lack of community involvement. Concerns were also raised at the number of empty business properties and other issues that could have a negative impact on the entry.

It was suggested that consideration should be given to having two community events next year to involve residents and volunteers in various clean-up activities. After a vote, it was agreed by 5 votes to 3 not to enter the competition in 2020 and to positively engage with the community as outlined above.

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved, and the Council agree not to enter Northumbria in Bloom in 2020 but that the Council would organise two community events as outlined above with further detail to follow.

111. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

There were no County Councillors in attendance.

The Clerk advised Councillors that the permanent play area on Callerton Lane was currently being discussed by Northumberland County Council who had asked for the input of the Town Council. A couple of layouts would be circulated to Members in the near future for their comments. It appeared that the contractor would be supplying some new equipment as the current items could not be reused and insured. The Clerk had recommended that any equipment be in metal and not wood due to potential vandalism issues.

The Clerk had advised NCC that it was likely the Town Council would want to add some items to whatever was installed. The issue of fencing, surfacing, CCTV and lighting were also mentioned.

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111. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT (Continued)

Councillors asked if it would be possible to find out what was being included in the new Leisure Centre and it was suggested that a request for a tour of the new facility should be requested.

112. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor submitted details of his diary engagements for November and December 2019 and January 2020.

He reminded members that his Christmas reception would be held at the Golf Club on Monday 16th December from 11.30 until 1.00 p.m.

113. REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

(i) Ponteland Community Partnership

A summary of the meeting of the PCP held on 20th November that had been attended by Councillor Mrs Greenwell was circulated.

(ii) Richard Coates Educational Foundation

A summary of a meeting of the above Foundation held in October had been circulated for information.

(iii) Newcastle Airport Consultative Committee

A summary report of the above Committee held on 3rd December had been circulated.

The problems with access to the airport roundabout at certain times was raised. Councillor Mrs Caisley was asked to raise the suggestion of lights on the roundabout to be operational at busy times only with the airport to obtain their opinion. This would ultimately be the responsibility Highways England.

114. ACCOUNTS/ BANK RECONCILIATION/ BUDGET REPORT

The Accounts Committee approved payments totalling £36,232.91. A copy of the monthly budget report was also circulated, as well as the Bank reconciliation document for November 2019.

RESOLVED – The reports be accepted.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 15th JANUARY 2020 AT 6.45 P.M. AT THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES PLEASE NOTE THE REVISED DATE.

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