

## ITEM NO 2

### THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHESTER-LE-STREET

Minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of the District Council of Chester-le-Street held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Chester-le-Street on Thursday 231 December 2006 at 6.00pm

#### PRESENT:

Councillor R Harrison (Chairman)

#### Councillors:

G Armstrong	PH May
S Barr	JM Proud
JW Barrett	D Rand
C Carr	R Richardson
GK Davidson	D Robson
L Ebbatson	IS Smith
MJ Gollan	DMG Stoker
AK Holden	SCL Westrip
A Humes	A Willis
C Jukes	

Officers: R Templeman (Chief Executive), L Chambers (Director of Resources), I Broughton (Director of Community Services), A Swinney (Head of Organisational Development), C Potter (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), P Stephens (Head of Housing Services), J Elder (Risk and Financial Services Manager) and C Turnbull (Democratic Services Officer).

Also in attendance were three members of the public.

#### **107 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors LEW Brown, P Ellis, JJ Evans, S Gollan, TH Harland, SA Henig, D Holding, W Laverick, DS Meek, K Potts, M Potts and A Turner.

#### **108 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 30 NOVEMBER 2006**

It was proposed by Councillor L Ebbatson and seconded by Councillor SCL Westrip that the minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of the District Council held 30 November 2006 copies of which had previously been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the minutes of the meeting held 30 November 2006 be confirmed as a correct record.”

The Chairman proceeded to sign the minutes.

## **109 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no requests under the Council's Public Speaking Scheme.

## **110 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

## **111 REPORT FROM LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

### Key Decisions

The Leader advised of the Key Decisions taken by the Executive on 4 December 2006 as follows: -

### 'Land Matters

- 1 That the land identified in Appendix A to the report is declared surplus to the Councils requirements and is disposed for the purposes of an enclosed garden area, subject to the applicant obtaining Planning Permission and the Councils standard terms and conditions relating to the disposal of land.
- 2 That the land identified in Appendix B to the report is not declared surplus to the Councils requirements and be refused for disposal for the purpose of an enclosed garden area, for the reasons outlined in the report.
- 3 That the release of the restrictive covenant on land identified in Appendix C to the report be approved subject to the Councils standard terms and conditions relating to disposal of land.
- 4 That the land identified in Appendix D to the report is declared surplus to the Councils requirements and a Right of Access be granted subject to the Councils standard conditions relating to the disposal of land.'

### Bus Service to Picktree Area

The Leader advised that Councillor JM Proud had received a letter confirming that the local bus service to the Picktree area would be reinstated in the new year.

### Changes to Council Meeting Dates

The Leader advised that in order to meet the deadline for response to the Government's White Paper it would be necessary to bring forward the January meeting of the Council. Also, the February meeting of the Council would be put back for one week for consideration of setting a Council tax for 2007/2008.

## In Conclusion

The Leader added that although there had been some very sad events in the past year, overall it had been a busy and successful time for the Council, and another busy and exciting year lay ahead.

She wished everyone a merry Christmas, a peaceful holiday and a happy new year.

## **112 REPORTS FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

### a) Finance and Leisure

There was no report from Councillor SA Henig.

### b) Environment

There was no report from Councillor AK Holden

### c) Regeneration

There was no report from Councillor C Jukes.

### d) Housing and Community Safety

Councillor IS Smith took the opportunity to congratulate Members, Officers and Staff for all of the Council's successes throughout 2006 adding that it highlighted the true meaning of One Team.

She gave special thanks to those Teams within her Portfolio; to the Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team for bringing together corporate working; to the Leader for her enthusiasm, vision and support; to Executive Members for sharing ideas and thoughts; and to her husband John for his help, support and taxi service.

### e) Personnel and Communications

There was no report from Councillor SCL Westrip

## **113 QUESTIONS TO LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

There were no questions for the Leader or Executive Members.

## **114 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services advising that following a recruitment exercise three applications had been received for the two vacancies on the Independent Remuneration Panel and requesting that Council selects the two applicants to serve on the Panel.

The Chairman of the Council drew lots to select the two successful applicants.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That James Greenwell Armstrong and Leigh Henderson be appointed to serve on the Independent Remuneration Panel for a term of office up to 31 March 2009.”

#### **115 INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATIVES ON THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services concerning the length of the term of office of an Independent Member of the Standards Committee.

Councillor L Ebbatson proposed and Councillor GK Davidson seconded that the recommendation included in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That, when Independent Members are appointed to serve on the Standards Committee, the term of office shall normally be for a period of four years with a possible extension of one further period of four years, making a maximum term of office of eight years.”

#### **116 PARTNERSHIPS STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report from the Performance and Improvement Manager and the Risk and Financial Services Manager seeking approval to a draft Partnership Strategy.

The Chief Executive introduced and spoke to the report.

Councillor M Gollan welcomed the report and commented that engaging with community and voluntary organisations was not easy and needed strengthening in the Strategy.

Councillor S Barr said that community and voluntary organisations were best placed to identify needs. He commented that building capacity needed to be identified in the Strategy.

The Chief Executive agreed that attention needed to be given to how the Council supported community and voluntary organisations.

Councillor M Gollan proposed and Councillor C Jukes seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the Partnerships Strategy as detailed in the appendix to the report be approved.”

### **117 CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2007/2008**

Consideration was given to a report from the Revenues and Benefits Manager on the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2007/2008.

Councillor L Ebbatson proposed and Councillor IS Smith seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“1. That a reduction in discount on second homes from 50% to 10% be confirmed.

2. That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, the amount calculated by Chester-le-Street District Council as its Tax Base for 2007/2008 be 17,126.18.

3. That the inclusion of 33.1 in the tax base for the reduction in discount on second homes from 50% to 10% be noted.

4. That the collection rate be set at 98.5%

5. That it be noted that the 2007/2008 tax base does not take account of any reduction in the discount on long term empty properties.

6. That the schedule of instalments for payment of the precept to Durham County Council, Durham Police Authority, Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority, and for the Council’s own demand on the Collection Fund as detailed in Section 5.6 of the report, be accepted.”

### **118 REVISED MANAGING ATTENDANCE AT WORK POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Consideration was given to a report from the Human Resources and Policy Manager seeking approval to revisions to the Council’s Managing Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure.

Councillor SCL Westrip advised that the revisions were in response to changes in legislation.

Councillor SCL Westrip proposed and Councillor C Jukes seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the revised Policy and Procedure appended to the report be approved.”

**119 REVISED RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Consideration was given to a report from the Human Resources and Policy Manager seeking approval to revisions to the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure.

Councillor SCL Westrip proposed and Councillor C Jukes seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved.

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the revised Policy and Procedure appended to the report be approved.”

**120 COMMON SEAL**

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the action of the Officer in affixing the Common Seal of the Council to the following documents be confirmed: -

Transfer in duplicate relating to 13 Elm Avenue, Pelton Lane Ends  
Transfer in respect of 38 Lyne Close, Perkinsville  
Diversion of Footpath No 5 North Lodge Parish Order, in duplicate  
106 Agreement in triplicate relating to land at Drum Industrial Estate  
Form DS1 in respect of 9 Seventh Avenue, Chester-le-Street.”

**121 MEETING DATES**

The Council RESOLVED:

“That the following changes be made to scheduled meeting dates: -

<u>Scheduled Date</u>	<u>Revised Date</u>
Thursday 25 January 2007	Wednesday 24 January 2007
Thursday 22 February 2007	Thursday 1 March 2007”

Following the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman of the Council thanked everyone for their help, understanding and support and extended seasonal greetings and best wishes for 2007 to all.

The meeting terminated at 6.32pm

