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Brian Spears FCIH
Chief Executive

Ref: PN/DW

17 July 2007

To: The Mayor and Members of the **COUNCIL**

Dear Sir/Madam

I hereby summon you to attend a Meeting of the **COUNCIL** to be held in the Studio, Gala Theatre, Durham, on **Tuesday 24 July 2007, at 5.30 pm.**

BUSINESS

1. Prayers.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2007.
4. Presentation of Mayoral Service Medal to Mr. Lindsley.
5. To present to Mr Blackburn, Mr Blackwell and Mr Shield their Long Service Certificate for 25 years service with the Council.
6. Mayor's Announcements (if any).
7. To answer questions under Council Procedure Rule No. 9.2
[Questions by Members – See Appendix 'A']
8. Notices of Motion.
 - (a) Notice has been given by Councillor Reynolds of his intention to move the following Motion:

“This Council believes that the best way to deliver local government services in County Durham is by the existing two-tier system with enhanced working and not by a single giant unitary council. We call on all members, our MP and the Trade Unions to take notice of the views of the people of County Durham and support retention of the 7 district councils and county council.”

Councillor Woods will second.
 - (b) Notice has been given by Councillor Mitchell of his intention to move the following Motion:

“That this Council notes the report to Cabinet (18 July 2007) recommending the creation of a Climate Change Strategy and the supporting evidence on climate change provided in the report; recognises the substantial work our Government and Durham's MP have done to highlight and tackle the issue of climate change;

understands the important role that local government has to play in tackling climate change, including leading by example with tangible action; and so resolves to cut, through reduction and offsetting, this Council's CO₂ emissions by 10% over two years."

Councillor Taylor will second.

9. Report of the Chief Executive.
10. Report of the Director of Legal and Administration Services.

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

COUNCIL
24 July 2007

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 9.2
QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

1. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Reynolds and was addressed to the Leader of the Labour Group.

"Following a letter from Roberta Blackman-Woods to members of staff, which included a quote from Councillor Mitchell, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, supporting the County Council's Unitary Bid, would the Leader of the Labour Group confirm that this is his Group's policy."
2. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Woods and was addressed to the Leader of the Labour Group.

"The District Council's independent financial advice forecasts that the County Council's Unitary Bid is financially flawed and will lead to hundreds of job losses. Their bid forecasts at least 180 jobs will go. Therefore, in light of the Deputy Leader of the Labour Group's support of the County Council's bid, do you agree that job losses are acceptable?"
3. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Kellett and was addressed to the Cabinet Member for Finance.

"Will the Portfolio for Finance enlighten me, as to whether the building of our new swimming pool is proceeding on budget, and also if it will be completed on schedule.

Could the Cabinet Member also inform this Council of what he projects will be the final cost of the new pool?, and why an update has not been given to this Council since February this year, as promised."
4. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Taylor and was addressed to the Cabinet Member for Communities.

"I presume that the Cabinet Member agrees with the principles set out in the Responsibilities for Executive Functions. I refer specifically to the principle that espouses the need for this Council to be inclusive and accountable to all sections of the community.

If he does agree and supports this principle, could the Cabinet Member tell me when he will be meeting with the Elvet Waterside Residents Group to discuss their well documented concerns."
5. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Bell and was addressed to the Cabinet Member for Communities.

"Will the portfolio for Communities define for me the term 'Affordable Housing' and does the Cabinet member and this Council differentiate between localities when using the term 'Affordable Housing'.

If the Council does make a differentiation, could the Cabinet Member give me an example?"
6. The following question had been received, by the due date, from Councillor Taylor and was addressed to the Leader of the Council.

"I did intend addressing this question to the relevant Cabinet Member, but on reflection given the seriousness of the subject matter I thought I would address it to him.

Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that the health and safety of our elderly residents receiving City Care is of extreme importance and if he does, as I am sure he does, could he explain to me and the Brandon Resident, who brought this situation to my attention,

[and other villages are in the same situation], how this Council got into the situation of not having any replacement Co₂ detectors in stock.

Could The Leader of the Council tell me how many detectors were not fully functional and therefore how many elderly people were potentially in danger?

Also how long we were waiting for replacements.

Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that it would go a long way to restoring our elderly resident's faith in the Council if he were to write a letter apologising for allowing this situation to occur and giving a reassurance that he will not allow this to happen again."

7. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Taylor and was addressed to the Cabinet Member for Communities.

"Would the Portfolio for Communities inform me of how the change over to the new Housing Allocations Policy is progressing?

What difficulties have been encountered? Are the registration forms being returned at a satisfactory rate? How many have been returned to date and how many are yet to be returned.

Are there many people experiencing difficulties in filling out the forms? I am thinking primarily of elderly residents and if this is so, what is being done to help them?"

8. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councillor Robinson and was addressed to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

"Will the Portfolio Holder for Environment, say which four Districts will be receiving part of the £200,000 pounds that the City of Durham Council were lucky enough to be awarded this year, from the Big Lottery?

If divided into four will each district receive £50,000 each, to be spent wisely and only for the needy not the greedy?"

9. The following question was received, by the due date, from Councilor Mitchell and was addressed to the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture.

"Will the Portfolio holder for Leisure and Culture please confirm that all local schools in the district will be offered the use of the new swimming pool free of charge on weekdays. If this is not the case, will she please list the areas in which schools will be charged and please explain why not all schools are being treated equally."