

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At an Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber - County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 20 June 2018 at 10.00 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor J Lethbridge in the Chair

Councillors E Adam, J Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, B Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, A Batey, A Bell, D Bell, J Bell, R Bell, H Bennett, J Blakey, G Bleasdale, L Boyd, D Boyes, P Brookes, D Brown, J Brown, C Carr, J Carr, J Chaplow, J Clare, J Clark, M Clarke, I Cochrane, J Considine, K Corrigan (Vice-Chairman), P Crathorne, M Davinson, S Dunn, D Freeman, J Grant, N Grayson, O Gunn, T Henderson, S Henig, D Hicks, A Hopgood, K Hopper, L Hovvels, P Howell, I Jewell, O Johnson, P Jopling, B Kellett, L Kennedy, A Laing, K Liddell, L Maddison, J Maitland, J Makepeace, R Manchester, C Marshall, L Marshall, C Martin, I McLean, O Milburn, S Morrison, A Napier, H Nicholson, J Nicholson, P Oliver, R Ormerod, A Patterson, C Potts, L Pounder, S Quinn, G Richardson, J Robinson, S Robinson, A Savory, E Scott, K Shaw, A Shield, M Simmons, T Smith, W Stelling, J Stephenson, B Stephens, L Taylor, P Taylor, O Temple, F Tinsley, T Tucker, J Turnbull, A Watson, A Willis, C Wilson, M Wilson, S Wilson, D Wood and R Yorke

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Bell, L Brown, J Charlton, R Crute, G Darkes, S Durham, A Gardner, D Hall, C Hampson, K Hawley, S Hugill, E Huntington, S Iveson, C Kay, H Little, E Mavin, L Mavin, S McDonnell, M McGaun, M McKeon, A Reed, J Rowlandson, P Sexton, J Shuttleworth, A Simpson, H Smith, D Stoker, A Surtees, K Thompson, M Wilkes and S Zair

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman of the County Council with great sadness reported the death of former Derwentside District Councillor and Alderman Bob Gardner. Bob had the unique record of being the only Derwentside District Councillor who was born in the USA and was first elected to Consett Urban District Council in 1970. He held the seat for Ebchester Ward which later became the Ebchester and Medomsley Ward until 1985 when ill health forced him to stand down from public office. Bob was a former teacher and was head teacher of Marley Hill Junior School and then Consett Junior School.

The Council stood for a moments silence as a mark of respect.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 were confirmed by the Council as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

3 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed those members of the public present at the meeting. While welcome to attend and observe the meeting, the Chairman asked that they did not disturb the meeting.

The Chairman was pleased to report that Councillor Peter Brookes and colleagues had cycled 243 miles in 20 hours and 17 minutes from County Durham to reach Belleek, the most westerly point in the United Kingdom. Despite recent settled weather, Storm Hector moved in with 100 mph winds during the event taking place. As at 17 June over £1,000 had been raised in donations to the Royal British Legion.

The Chairman informed the Council of events he had attended as Chairman since being appointed to office.

4 Leader's Report

The Leader referred Members to the Celebrating Durham message walls, which were on display in the Durham Room. The message walls were created at four locations over half term week at the end of May and beginning of June and now formed one huge artwork. Over 1,500 people submitted their comments for the wall and it was those messages that formed the basis of the well-known County Durham locations which made up the artwork. It was a very special artwork that would tour suitable locations both locally and further afield. Last week it was sited at Locomotion in Shildon where the Science Museum Group held its first 'meet the museum' evening to give residents the opportunity to view development plans for the museum.

Another famous Durham artwork, the Zurburan paintings had been on tour, recently exhibited in New York and Dallas and due to move on to Jerusalem. Meanwhile closer to home Kynren would start its summer run on 30 June.

The Leader was delighted to report that Seaham Marina won the Health and Wellbeing category at the national Royal Town Planning Institute awards in London in late May. This was national recognition for the Marina and the work Durham County Council had delivered alongside the Seaham community for delivering health and wellbeing benefits for the many people visiting the marina. It was estimated that there were now in excess of 225,000 visitors per annum which was a growing trend and a tremendous effort by everyone involved.

The Leader referred to some of the Council's environmental initiatives to clean up the county, which he reported earlier in the year, and was pleased to report on some real successes. It was a record breaking year for the big spring clean with over 4,000 people involved in 272 litter picks right across County Durham.

Northumbria in Bloom was thriving across the County, with the County's towns and villages leading the way regionally in the competition. Judges had recently visited Durham City, shown displays such as the RAF100 carpet bed recently launched with 234 (City Of Durham) Squadron Air Training Corps and pupils from Gilesgate Primary School, ahead of the weekend's RAF Centenary Service, Review and March Past.

Operation Spruce Up, which aimed to improve the appearance of key areas within towns and villages, continued to be very well received as it moved around the County, most recently in Gilesgate and later in the month in Shildon.

The Council was well underway with the Green Move Out with Durham University, where last year 2,650 bags of reusable items from pots and pans to books and electrical equipment were collected, to avoid them being disposed of.

Following agreement to release an additional £950,000 of capital funding, work on the replacement Stainton Grove Household Waste Recycling Centre started on 23 April. It was expected to take 27 weeks so would be open to residents and businesses around the Barnard Castle area by the end of 2018. This would be the first facility to incorporate a trade waste recycling area as well as a furniture reuse retail shop.

The Leader reported that the next stage of the County Durham Plan, the Preferred Options stage, was approved by Cabinet ahead of a six week consultation which would start on the 22 June. All Members were invited to a Members briefing session and there would also be weekly member drop in sessions from the 29 June as well as a range of consultation events across the county.

Following last week's Cabinet meeting in Crook, Cabinet Members saw the impressive refurbishment of the council building, which was now home to almost 500 employees having been completely remodelled into a modern workplace. It was an important part of the Council's present and future plans that a greater proportion of our workforce was based outside of Durham City and the work at Crook formed a key early part of the Transformation Programme.

The Leader informed the Council that there were currently approximately 800 Looked After Children in Durham. Over 80% of these children lived with foster carers and the rest lived in residential care; with family members or in residential schools. The council was the corporate parent for these children and had statutory duties to ensure that it acted in their best interests, supported them to achieve good outcomes and ensured that it had sufficient carers and placements available for them to receive the highest standards of care. In short the council was charged with being the best corporate parent it could be for these children.

As the numbers of Looked After Children had grown nationally, regionally and locally there had been an increased pressure to ensure that the Council had enough carers for the children. There had been targeted recruitment campaigns in Durham for foster carers and adopters over recent months with a specific focus on targeting carers for older children, children with special needs and for children who were part of larger sibling groups as these were the carers for whom there was the

greatest need. These had been successful in recruiting more than 28 new sets of carers this year alone but the Council continued to need more as carers retired and more children needed their support.

The Corporate Parenting Panel, chaired by Councillor Peter Brookes, had been actively involved in working with officers to develop new strategies to support recruitment activity and they had developed a short film which was designed to explain the role of foster carers, debunk some of the more popular myths that existed around who could foster, and explain what was required of potential carers who went through the recruitment process. It was the ambition of the Corporate Parenting Panel that the film would be seen by as many people as possible within County Durham and that it would be seen by people who historically may not have been targeted through more traditional recruitment campaigns. The Council believed that it could encourage more local people to see themselves as potential foster carers and take on this challenge.

The film provided the contact details within the fostering service for anyone who was interested or who had further questions. The biggest impact that the Council could have on improving the lives of Looked After Children was to ensure that there were sufficient high quality carers to care for them and the Council was confident that it could encourage many more people to come forward and do this valuable and highly rewarding work.

The Council viewed the film which had been produced.

5 Questions from Area Action Partnerships

Questions had been received from the Durham Area Action Partnership and the Stanley Area Action Partnership relating to the following:

- The provision of student accommodation in Durham City
- Plans to develop derelict sites on the Front Street at Stanley;

Craig Morgan, Durham AAP Co-ordinator and Daniel O'Brien, Stanley AAP Co-ordinator were in attendance to ask their questions.

Councillor C Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration thanked both the Durham AAP and the Stanley AAP for their questions and provided a response to both.

6 Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

7 Petitions

There were no petitions for consideration.

8 Report from the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council provided the Council with an update of business discussed by Cabinet on 11 April and 16 May 2018 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted

9 Appointment of a Director of Integrated Community Services

The Council considered a report of the Corporate Director of Adult Services which sought approval for the creation of a post of Director of Integrated Community Services (for copy see file of Minutes).

Moved by Councillor Hovvels, **Seconded** by Councillor Laing and

Resolved:

- (i) That the creation of the post of Director of Integrated Community Services be approved
- (ii) That recruitment arrangements progress to ensure that there are effective governance arrangements in place with regards to the continuing integration of Health and Social Care Services.

10 Motions on Notice

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Motion which had been submitted had been withdrawn.

11 Questions from Members

There were no questions from Members.