

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At an Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 19 July 2017 at 10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor B Kellett in the Chair

Councillors E Adam, J Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, B Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, A Batey, D Bell, E Bell, J Bell, R Bell, H Bennett, J Blakey, G Bleasdale, L Boyd, P Brookes, D Brown, L Brown, C Carr, J Carr, J Chaplow, J Charlton, J Clare, J Clark, M Clarke, I Cochrane, J Considine, K Corrigan, P Crathorne, R Crute, G Darkes, M Davinson, S Dunn, D Freeman, A Gardner, N Grayson, O Gunn, C Hampson, K Hawley, T Henderson, S Henig, A Hopgood, K Hopper, L Hovvels, S Hugill, E Huntington, S Iveson, I Jewell, O Johnson, P Jopling, C Kay, L Kennedy, J Lethbridge (Vice-Chairman), K Liddell, H Liddle, L Maddison, J Maitland, J Makepeace, R Manchester, L Marshall, C Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, S McDonnell, M McGaun, M McKeon, I McLean, O Milburn, A Napier, H Nicholson, J Nicholson, P Oliver, R Ormerod, A Patterson, C Potts, L Pounder, S Quinn, A Reed, G Richardson, J Robinson, J Rowlandson, A Savory, E Scott, P Sexton, K Shaw, J Shuttleworth, M Simmons, A Simpson, H Smith, T Smith, W Stelling, J Stephenson, B Stephens, D Stoker, A Surtees, P Taylor, O Temple, K Thompson, F Tinsley, T Tucker, J Turnbull, A Watson, M Wilkes, A Willis, M Wilson, S Wilson and D Wood

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Bell, J Brown, S Durham, D Hicks, P Howell, A Laing, C Marshall, S Morrison, A Shield, L Taylor, C Wilson, R Yorke and S Zair

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman of the County Council with great sadness reported the death of Councillor Morris Nicholls.

Councillor Nicholls was the County Council's longest serving councillor, having been elected in May 1981. He had also been a Wheatley Hill Parish Councillor since 1983 and had served on the District of Easington Council from 2001 to 2009.

Councillor Nicholls was Chairman of the County Council from 1997 to 1999 and held the Cabinet Portfolio for Adults Services from May 2007 to May 2015 before taking an active role in the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children and Young People's Scrutiny.

Councillor Nicholls contribution to the Council would be a huge miss and the communities he represented had lost a hardworking, dedicated and much loved Councillor.

All Group Leaders or their representatives, and Councillor Hovvels, paid tribute to Councillor Nicholls long and valued service and expressed condolences to his family.

The Chairman informed Council that he had attended the funeral of Bradley Lowery who was laid to rest following his battle with a form of rare childhood cancer. Bradley was a truly inspirational, courageous young person who had touched the hearts of thousands if not millions of people from all corners of the world and was guest at County Hall last year when he switched on the Christmas lights.

The Chairman thanked all those across the Council who supported a dress down day in support of the Bradley Lowery Foundation. The total amount raised by this should be announced by the end of the week.

The Council stood for a moments silence as a mark of respect to Councillor Nicholls and Bradley Lowery.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2017 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 informed the Council that a general security briefing by officers from Durham Constabulary would be made immediately following the meeting and asked Members to remain seated in the Chamber for the briefing.

The Chairman extended a warm welcome and offered congratulations to Councillor Leanne Kennedy, the newly elected Councillor for the Dawdon Electoral Division and hoped she would find her time on the Council both interesting and rewarding.

The Chairman informed the Council that Peter Appleton, Head of Planning and Service Strategy in Adults and Health Services, would soon be retiring from the Council after 43 years of service. The Chairman paid tribute to Peter's long and valued service and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Finally, the Chairman informed the Council that he had attended a special event which brought together some 200 young people from Gateshead and County Durham primary schools to learn about diversity in their own community and working together in partnership. A short film of the day's event had been produced and was screened in the Chamber.

4 Leader's Report

The Leader informed Council that he had attended a number of events across County Durham including Brass, Kynren and the Miners Gala, chaired a meeting of the Cabinet held at Crook and a meeting of the County Durham Partnership Forum in Newton Aycliffe, celebrated the award of twelve green flags to County Durham and marked the latest stage in the expansion of NetPark at Sedgefield, as well as attending an event looking forward to Lumiere this autumn. He had also attended the recent LGA annual conference in Birmingham.

The Leader informed the Council that as he had travelled around the county in the past month it was pleasing to see the amount of economic development which continued to take place, including developments on Durham City riverbanks, Salvus House at Aykley Heads and continuing developments at NetPark, Aycliffe and Seaham, all of which brought jobs to County Durham. Much of this activity had been supported by Business Durham, the Council's economic development arm, and the Leader noted the key contribution made by Simon Goon as Managing Director who would leave Business Durham at the end of the month.

The Leader reminded the Council that the County Durham Plan had been paused at the turn of the year to take account of proposed changes in the Housing White Paper. The key issue was a change to the method for calculating housing figures which could have had significant implications for the amount of land required in County Durham. The changes had been delayed due to the General Election but the Secretary of State had announced that consultation on the methodology would commence before the summer recess. The Council was keen to progress the Plan and this consultation should bring this a step closer. If the consultation did not materialise then the Council would need to review progress in the autumn as it was vital to find a way forward with the Plan as soon as possible.

A meeting had taken place with Unison and further meetings had been arranged with the recognised trade unions to discuss the current position regarding teaching assistants and the next steps. The Council would consider the next steps when these meetings had taken place.

The Leader was pleased to report that the Council had been successful in securing Arts Council funding from their national portfolio funding programme for the next four years for County Durham. This included substantial funding to underpin Brass, the Durham Book Festival, and Lumiere. There was also substantial funding for both Beamish and Bowes museums as well as two other arts groups, News Writing North and Tin Arts. This good news justified the investment the Council was making in securing match funding from a national source and would ensure the Council could keep producing a high class programme of festivals and events which brought people into County Durham.

The Leader wished all Members a good summer recess.

5 Questions from Area Action Partnerships

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

- the timetable for a review of the SCOOT system which would enable the Council to demonstrate “before and after” to evidence the changes the SCOOT had made
- steps being taken to address the issue of eastward bound drivers cutting across traffic on the Milburngate Bridge to drive down to the Sands rather than taking the longer, safer route.
- progress in achieving the ambitions of the Stanley masterplan, including an update on progress with development sites in Stanley

Colin Hillary of Durham AAP Board and Daniel O’Brien, Stanley AAP Coordinator were in attendance to ask their questions.

Councillor C Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration, was unable to be present at the meeting but provided a video response to the first question from Durham AAP. Councillor B Stephens, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships thanked the Durham AAP for their second question and provided a response.

Councillor C Marshall thanked the Stanley AAP for their question and provided a response by video.

6 Questions from the Public

Two questions had been received from Members of the Public regarding the following:

- Whether the Council agreed with, and fully accepted the guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) that the purpose of promoting British values in schools was to ensure young people left school prepared for life in modern Britain.
- the latest position regarding the "Festival Walk" Shopping Mall, in Spennymoor town centre

In the absence of the questioners, the Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed the Council that a copy of the questions, together with the responses would be placed on the Council’s website and a copy of the response would also be sent direct to the questioners.

7 Petitions

There were no petitions from the public.

8 Report from the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council provided the Council with an update of business discussed by Cabinet at its meeting held on 20 June 2017 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Maddison referred to page 15 in the agenda pack and the programme of works for Festival Walk being behind target from March 2017 to September 2017. There had been little or no information regarding highways improvements relating to the Aldi plans for Festival Walk and shopkeepers were operating in an environment of uncertainty. Residents had been informed in April 2017 that the Masterplan was ready to be implemented. Councillor Maddison requested an urgent meeting to bring the issue to a conclusion.

The Leader replied that the Cabinet report referred to was a Performance Management Report. An update to the Spennymoor Masterplan had been agreed by Cabinet in January 2017 with the intent that it was then taken to AAPs for public input. Masterplans were living documents and were refreshed to ensure they were up to date and relevant and input from the public and councillors was always welcomed.

The Leader reminded Members that it would be helpful if questions on the Cabinet report be submitted in advance of the Council meeting so that a more detailed and full response could be provided.

9 County Durham Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan 2017/19

The Council considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which presented the County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2017/18 for approval (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Plan had been approved by the County Durham Youth Offending Service Management Board on 1 June 2017 in line with Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice requirements, by Cabinet on 12 July 2017 and would be submitted to the Youth Justice Board following Council approval.

In **Moving** the report, Councillor O Gunn, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services informed Council that the report set out achievements over the past year and set priorities for the future. The Youth Justice Plan had made a difference to communities and young people and fewer offenders and offences meant fewer victims.

In **Seconding** approval of the report Councillor L Hovvells, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Health Services advised that the Plan showed the impact of the positive work carried out by the County Durham Youth Offending Service.

Resolved:

That the Youth Justice Plan 2017/18 be approved.

10 Elected Member Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

The Council considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and Director of Transformation and Partnerships which advised on the review of DBS checking processes for elected members and presented a new policy framework on DBS checks for approval (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor R Bell asked whether the DBS checks would be shared with organisations that members dealt with and also whether members would need to apply individually. The Corporate Director of Resources replied that Member Support would assist members through the application process and that he would take guidance on the sharing of the checks and provide feedback to Councillor Bell outside of the meeting.

Moved by Councillor Henig, **Seconded** by Councillor Hopgood and

Resolved:

- (a) that the draft Policy for DBS checking of Members be approved;
- (b) that DBS checks be undertaken for all elected Members who were without a check post-election.

11 Honorary Aldermen

The Council considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which sought confirmation of the criteria for the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman upon retiring Members to identify those upon whom the title of Honorary Alderman should be conferred (for copy see file of Minutes).

Moved by Councillor Henig, **Seconded** by Councillor Hopgood and

Resolved:

That the Council:

- (a) acknowledge the criteria for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman is sixteen years' service, or four full terms;
- (b) confer the title of Honorary Alderman on those past Members who meet the sixteen years' service criterion including, on this occasion, because of circumstances set out in the report, those two Members that have served four full terms but whose service falls slightly short of sixteen years as a result of the 2011 election date having been delayed by a month.

12 Adoption of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan and the Whorlton Village Neighbourhood Plan

The Council considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services regarding the adoption of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan and the Whorlton Village Neighbourhood Plan (for copy see file of Minutes).

Moved by Councillor K Shaw, **Seconded** by Councillor S Wilson and

Resolved:

That:

- a) the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan be formally made (adopted) by the Council to become part of the statutory development plan;
- b) the Whorlton Village Neighbourhood Plan be formally made (adopted) by the Council to become part of the statutory development plan; and
- c) the Head of Legal and Demographic Services be authorised to satisfy the necessary publicity requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 in respect of both the Great Aycliffe and Whorlton Neighbourhood Plans.

13 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2016/17

The Council considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2016/2017 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor R Crute, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny informed Council that the Annual Report contained details of key Scrutiny activity and achievements during 2016/17 and also the work programmer for Overview and Scrutiny.

The County Council had been successful in being awarded the Excellence in Governance and Scrutiny category of the 2016 Municipal Journal Achievement Awards for its approach to scrutiny, community engagement and consultation and governance arrangements. Councillor Crute congratulated all those involved in achieving the award.

Councillor Crute also thanked the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all Scrutiny Committees and also the Scrutiny Support Team.

Resolved:

That the Council receive the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2016/17.

14 Statement of Returning Officer - Dawdon By-Election

The Council noted the Statement of the Returning Officer following the Dawdon Electoral Division By-election held on 29 June 2017 (for copy see file of Minutes).

15 Motions on Notice

In accordance with a Notice of Motion it was **Moved** by Councillor Hovvels and **Seconded** by Councillor Johnson:

The Rural Services Council is calling on local authorities in rural areas to support a motion calling on the Government to provide extra funding to attract rural GPs. Whilst Clinical Commissioning Groups in County Durham have not identified GP pay as an issue in recruitment within the County, there have been other challenges, for example, an ageing GP demographic.

As GPs get older and wish to retire, it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract, recruit and sustain new GPs as there is a national shortage, which needs a national solution.

Local Clinical Commissioning Groups are taking forward a range of initiatives to support General Practice.

There is the potential that the challenges in GP recruitment may create additional pressures on other parts of the health care system, such as Accident and Emergency in the future, although local CCG's have provided assurance that patients across the County are able to access GP services in a timely way. To further support this, in County Durham, plans are progressing to introduce Teams Around Patients (TAPs) where local GPs work more closely together in order to improve access to services, however, this work is in its infancy.

I urge this Council to call on local Members of Parliament to lobby the government for the further development of initiatives for the continued recruitment and retention of GPs, which may include a weighting system to support areas across the country where there are difficulties in recruiting GPs. Such a system will create a positive incentive for the GPs to work across the north east, including County Durham, bringing benefits to individuals, as well as our entire communities.

Councillors J Robinson, Brookes, Stoker and R Bell spoke in support of the motion.

Resolved:

That the motion be **carried**.

In accordance with a Notice of Motion it was **Moved** by Councillor Thompson and **Seconded** by Councillor Maddison

That Durham County Council begin immediately to video all Full Council Meetings, and make them available for the public to view.

Councillor Henig considered there was merit in referring the subject of video recording Full Council meetings to the Constitution Working Group, which was a cross-party Group, for consideration and to enable the cost implications to be investigated.

Councillors Gardner, Hopgood and Wilkes spoke in support of the Motion.

Councillor Thompson replied that while he would be pleased for the matter to be referred to the Constitution Working Group he did not wish to withdraw his Motion.

Councillor Allen considered that it was appropriate to refer this to the Constitution Working Group and **Moved** the following amendment:

That Durham County Council's Constitution Working Group consider the feasibility of videoing all full Council meetings and making these available for the public to view.

Seconded by Councillor Corrigan.

Upon a vote being taken the amendment was **carried**.

In accordance with Standing Order 16.4 Councillor K Thompson sought a named vote on the substantive motion. The requirements were met.

Upon a further vote being taken the substantive motion was **carried**

For

Councillors E Adam, J Allen, J Atkinson, P Atkinson, B Avery, A Bainbridge, B Bainbridge, A Batey, D Bell, R Bell, H Bennett, J Blakey, G Bleasdale, L Boyd, P Brookes, D Brown, L Brown, C Carr, J Carr, J Chaplow, J Charlton, J Clare, J Clark, M Clarke, I Cochrane, J Considine, K Corrigan, P Crathorne, R Crute, G Darkes, M Davinson, S Dunn, D Freeman, A Gardner, N Grayson, O Gunn, C Hampson, K Hawley, T Henderson, S Henig, A Hopgood, K Hopper, L Hovvells, S Hugill, E Huntington, S Iveson, I Jewell, O Johnson, P Jopling, B Kellett, L Kennedy, J Lethbridge, K Liddell, H Liddle, L Maddison, J Maitland, J Makepeace, R Manchester, L Marshall, C Martin, E Mavin, L Mavin, S McDonnell, M McGaun, M McKeon, I McLean, O Milburn, A Napier, H Nicholson, J Nicholson, R Ormerod, A Patterson, C Potts, L Pounder, S Quinn, A Reed, G Richardson, J Robinson, J Rowlandson, A Savory, E Scott, P Sexton, K Shaw, J Shuttleworth, M Simmons, A Simpson, H Smith, T Smith, W Stelling, B Stephens, J Stephenson, D Stoker, A Surtees, P Taylor, O Temple, K Thompson, F Tinsley, T Tucker, J Turnbull, A Watson, M Wilkes, A Willis, M Wilson, S Wilson and D Wood.

Against

No Members

Abstain

No Members

Resolved:

That Durham County Council's Constitution Working Group consider the feasibility of videoing all full Council meetings and making these available for the public to view.

16 Questions from Members

No questions had been received from Members.