

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Ferryhill, on **WEDNESDAY, 19th February 2020** at **7.00p.m.**

PRESENT: *Councillor:* J Makepeace (Chair)

Councillors: C Atkinson, P Atkinson, G Barker, K Campbell, J Cansella,
D Farry, K Graham, J Lindsay, N Jones, Z Roddam, M Seymour,
L Smith, R Smith, M Walton, C Woods

Officials: D. Shingleton, Acting Town Clerk
R. Seymour, Works Manager
K. Younghusband, Events & Projects Officer
S. Hewitson, Committees & Civic Administrator
P. Readman, Readman Associates
M. Barlow, Logic Architecture

To save disruption to the meeting Councillor J Makepeace moved to bring forward items 16 and 17 of the agenda, this was seconded by Councillor R Smith. All members agreed.

147.19-20 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor K Conroy.

148.19-20 **MEMBERS DISPENSATION**

There were no members' dispensations in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

149.19-20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Z Roddam declared an interest in item no. 12(b) as she is a director of Endeavour Woodcrafts.

150.19-20 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no public questions in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

151.19-20 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Members were requested to move the following motion:

"That in accordance with the provision of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do now exclude the public and press for the remaining items on the Agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to public interest."

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the next section of the meeting. All members of the public left the meeting.

152.19-20 **DEAN BANK BUNGALOW – TENDERS**

Members considered a report from the Events & Projects Officer and discussed this matter in great detail.

Mr Phil Readman of Readman Associates and Mr Mark Barlow of Logic Architecture were in attendance. Mr Readman updated Members on the tendering process and the responses received. He explained his recommendation to the Council.

Moved by Councillor D Farry, **Seconded by** Councillor J Cansella that Members note the contents of the report and agree to award R. Tindale Ltd the contract to deliver the project subject to a satisfactory value engineering exercise taking place and receipt of the necessary documentation as listed in the report. Council allow Tindale Contractors a further £30,000 to add to the estimate and request confirmation of his estimate as a quote, with no upfront monies being required. If no satisfactory response has been received from Tindale’s within 7 working days from the date of our letter this matter be brought back to Council for further consideration.

Mr D Shingleton expressed serious concern at this proposed decision and stated that he would prefer to have all necessary information available and the reaction of the funders before appointing R.Tindale to do the work.

Mr Readman advised members that if they were to go against his recommendations he would not be able to be involved any further in the project.

A named vote was requested.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
G. Barker	C. Atkinson		K. Conroy
J. Cansella	P. Atkinson		
D. Farry	K. Campbell		
K. Graham	J. Lindsay		
N. Jones	Z. Roddam		
J. Makepeace	M. Walton		
M. Seymour	C..Woods		
L. Smith			
R. Smith			
9	7	0	1

RESOLVED

That Members note the contents of the report and agree to appoint Tindale’s Ltd the contract to deliver the project subject to a satisfactory value engineering exercise taking place and receipt of the necessary documentation as listed in the report. Council allow Tindale Contractors a further £30,000 to add to the estimate and request confirmation of his estimate as a quote, with no upfront monies being required. If no satisfactory response has been received from Tindale’s within 7 working days from the date of our letter this matter be brought back to Council for further consideration.

At this point Mr Readman and Mr Barlow were thanked for their attendance whereupon they left the meeting.

Councillor J Lindsay also left the meeting.

153.19-20 STAFFING STRUCTURE

Members considered a report from the Works Manager and Finance & Administration Manager.

Mr D Shingleton advised members that this was a pressing issue as the season starts soon and the seasonal gardeners are needed. The Council have also taken back the management of more allotment sites and the resulting staffing issues need addressing.

Moved by Councillor J Cansella to accept the appointment of Mr B Turner, on his current rate with the same terms and conditions and confirmation that he will meet the requirements of the person specification as soon as possible, this role to be subject to re-evaluation by the new Town Clerk. All other appointments, new roles, titles and staffing restructure be deferred. No changes to be made without the agreement of the new Town Clerk. **Seconded by** Councillor N Jones.

Councillor J Makepeace confirmed that he will ask the new Town Clerk to prioritise this matter.

Members agreed that the seasonal gardeners are part of the current structure and can therefore be employed as has been done previously.

RESOLVED

To accept the appointment of Mr B Turner, on his current rate with the same terms and conditions and confirmation that he will meet the requirements of the person specification as soon as possible, this role to be subject to re-evaluation by the new Town Clerk. All other appointments, new roles, titles and staffing restructure be deferred. No changes to be made without the agreement of the new Town Clerk. The Seasonal Gardeners be employed as in previous years.

154.19-20 LEASE OF MARKET PLACE KIOSKS

Members considered a report from the Acting Town Clerk.

Moved by Councillor D Farry, to allow both kiosks to be rented to the Vegan Café and Juices business at a discounted rate of £333 per calendar month with the first month being free. All members agreed. Members also agreed that the use of the advertising signs be decided by the new Town Clerk.

Councillor N Jones asked if a clause could be added to the agreement to re-look at the rental agreement if the tenant decides in the future only one kiosk is required.

RESOLVED

That the request to rent both kiosks be approved with a monthly rental fee of £333 per month and the first month being free, a clause to be added to the agreement if only one kiosk is required in future. The use of the advertising signs be decided by the new Town Clerk.

155.19-20 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – ICO DECISION NOTICE

Members received a verbal report from the Acting Town Clerk regarding a freedom of information request that he had refused on the grounds of confidentiality. Correspondence had been received from the Information Commissioners Office confirming that the Council have the right to decline requests to provide confidential information.

A letter was read out to Members from a concerned resident congratulating Ferryhill Town Council on the way this matter had been dealt with.

RESOLVED

That this be received.

At this point the press and public were re-admitted to the meeting.

156.19-20 MINUTES

- a) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22nd January 2020

Councillor P Atkinson expressed his disappointment and stated there was an issue with the minutes and he did not agree they were a true and accurate record, with regards to the flag issue minute no. 137.19-20, a named vote had been requested on this item and was not shown in the minutes, Mr Shingleton had sent an email to members explaining the reasoning for this.

Councillor P Atkinson made members aware of second point regarding the banner group minute no. 139.19-20, it was **Moved by** Councillor P Atkinson, **Seconded by** Councillor C Atkinson that an amendment be made to the minutes and the following statement be added 'Ferryhill Town Council had no intention of interfering with the organisation of the miners banner parade'.

A named vote was requested.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
C. Atkinson	G. Barker	K. Graham	K. Conroy
P. Atkinson	J. Cansella	L. Smith	J. Lindsay
K. Campbell	D. Farry	M. Walton	
Z. Roddam	N. Jones		
C.Woods	J. Makepeace		
	M. Seymour		
	R. Smith		
5	7	3	2

The motion was defeated.

Moved by Councillor J Cansella, **Seconded by** to move the minutes as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendments, minute no. 135.19-20 Councillor D Shingleton be amended to Mr D Shingleton and minute no. 139.19-20 amend the word 'spoke' to 'spoken'.

A named vote was requested

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
G. Barker	C. Atkinson	K. Graham	K. Conroy
J. Cansella	P. Atkinson	L. Smith	J. Lindsay
D. Farry	K. Campbell	M. Walton	
N. Jones	Z. Roddam		
J. Makepeace	C. Woods		
M. Seymour			
R. Smith			
7	5	3	2

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22nd January 2020 be agreed as a true and accurate record subject to the above changes.

157.19-20 COMMITTEE MINUTES

- a) To receive as a correct record the minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 4th December 2019

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 4th December 2019 be received.

158.19-20 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND INCOME

Members considered the monthly Statement of Accounts & Income.

Councillor Cansella queried £620 paid to Barcham Trees for 3 Poplar trees in the cemetery and referred to Councillor Farry's previous motion where members agreed in principle to a tree planting scheme and it was agreed the appropriate officer bring back to Council a report including a suggested plan and costs. Councillor Cansella also asked if the £150 grant which was available from DCC had been applied for. Mr Shingleton confirmed the grant had been claimed and used for the poplar trees in the cemetery. Councillor Cansella asked if the report mentioned above could be brought to the next Policy & Resources Committee meeting.

Councillor Makepeace queried if the £300 paid for a concrete base to install benches at the cemetery was for one bench. Mr Shingleton advised this would be for all benches.

RESOLVED

That the Statement of Accounts & Income be accepted. Members agreed that no further trees are bought or planted and that a report be brought to the next Policy & Resources Committee meeting.

159.19-20 PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

Members considered a report from the Events & Projects Officer.

Councillor Farry congratulated Mrs K Younghusband on the amount of grants and funding she has brought in to the Council.

Members considered the recommendations of the report:

- a) Members note the contents of this report and agree that the potential projects detailed within it be progressed as soon as is practicably possible.

Councillor J Cansella proposed that Council agree to a), subject to full input and involvement of Members of the Events and Community Engagement Sub-Committee.

- b) Members agree to contribute a maximum of £3,500 from its Unallocated Reserves to repair/resurface the footpath leading from Dean Bank Park to the A167

Councillor D Farry proposed that that this money should only be taken from the unallocated reserves if absolutely necessary, and subject to the receipt of quotations from 3 local contractors to repair/resurface the footpath leading from Dean Bank Park to the A167.

- c) Members agree that a maximum amount of £6,000 be taken from the Town Council's Unallocated Reserves to purchase a porta-cabin for use by outside staff as a welfare facility.

Councillor D Farry proposed that, rather than spend money on a porta-cabin, investigation should be made for the outside staff to use one of the existing buildings within the park, such as the bowls pavilion or the sports facility. Mrs Younghusband reminded members that the decision made by Council previously was to demolish the bowls pavilion, the whole point being not to have 2 buildings to maintain. Councillor Farry queried if the bowls pavilion could be used as a temporary measure, Mrs Younghusband advised she would look into this. Mr Shingleton suggested members agree to look at alternative arrangements.

- d) Members inform the Events & Projects Officer of any additional project ideas that they may have as soon as possible.

Councillor D Farry proposed that investigations are undertaken into the grant availability and/ or cost implications for the following projects:

- Repairs to the clock and light on the Beacon of Europe

- Repairs to the fountain in the Town Hall Gardens
- At least one, possibly two 4G football pitches
- Repair the stained glass boar window
- Re-lay the cricket & football pitch at Mainsforth
- Effective drainage of football pitches
- Re-opening of Steetley Ponds for the use by the fishing club
- Future-proof all of our buildings; for example with the use of solar panels, battery storage and bio-mass

Councillor Cansella proposed that investigations for grant funding or costs be looked into, as well as the feasibility of live conifer trees at The Station, Surtees Corner, the Praxis Site, Manor Farm and Kates Corner, with a view to being utilised as Christmas trees.

Councillor J Makepeace asked that the motion considered and resolved by Council in November 2019 regarding electric charging points in the town centre be included.

RESOLVED

That:

- a) the projects detailed in the report be progressed as soon as is practicably possible subject to full input and involvement of Members of the Events and Community Engagement Sub-Committee;
- b) Members agree to contribute a maximum of £3,500 from its Unallocated Reserves to repair/resurface the footpath leading from Dean Bank Park to the A167 money should only be taken from the unallocated reserves if absolutely necessary, and subject to the receipt of quotations from 3 local contractors to repair/resurface the footpath leading from Dean Bank Park to the A167;
- c) rather than spend money on a porta-cabin, investigation should be made to look into alternative arrangements for the outside staff.
- d) investigations are undertaken into the grant availability and/ or cost implications for the projects listed above.

160.19-20 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Members considered the following motion which was **Moved by** Councillor J Makepeace, **Seconded by** Councillor D Farry

- a) *“That Ferryhill Town Council writes to the Probation Service requesting their assistance in decorating the hall, toilet and kitchen upstairs in the Town Hall”.*

Councillor J Cansella asked that no work be carried out until the new Town Clerk is in position.

RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to the Probation Service to ascertain if they can provide assistance in decorating the upstairs room in Ferryhill Town Hall but no work be carried out until the new Town Clerk is in position.

- b) *“Endeavour Woodcraft - That Ferryhill Town Council writes to Durham County Council (DCC) requesting an urgent review of the rental situation*

moving forward, and a freeze until agreement can be reached that will preserve the service. Far from raising the rent of the centre, DCC should recognise the essential and valued input this service offers, and should further consider considerable reduction in rent to a "peppercorn" status in recognition.

It should be recognised that if the centre closes, DCC will have yet another closed building in Ferryhill for sale, accompanied by all the responsibility and cost of managing that building, including heating, security etc. They will also be faced with the prospect of finding day care placement for up to 50 special needs individuals, and the ensuing adverse publicity that will inevitably result in closure and eviction in the run up to elections in May 2021.

Councillor Makepeace advised members that this issue is now being seriously looked at by Durham County Council and things are happening, he subsequently moved to leave this matter be, this was seconded by Councillor G Barker.

Councillor Z Roddam made members aware that an article regarding this issue had been published in this weeks Chapter and Endeavour Woodcrafts had received umpteen phone calls from concerned users.

RESOLVED

That no action be taken on this motion.

161.19-20 ATTENDANCE AT SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Members considered a report from the Acting Town Clerk who questioned if there is a case to review membership of sub-committees.

Councillor P Atkinson asked if member of a sub-committee is unable to attend a meeting could they send a substitute and proposed that a substitute system be introduced. Councillor D Farry advised that the right time to do this would be the AGM when membership of Committees and Sub-Committees is discussed. Members agreed to revisit this issue at the AGM in May.

RESOLVED

That no action be taken at the present time and the possibility of introducing a substitute system be discussed at the AGM.

162.19-20 CORRESPONDENCE

a) Email from the Redhills Team, Durham Miners Association

Moved by Councillor D Farry, **Seconded by** Councillor J Cansella to place the larger advert in the Northern Echo 100mm x 56mm with the following wording:

'Ferryhill Town Council wholeheartedly and actively supports the continued good work of the Durham Miners' Association in its quest to preserve and celebrate our mining heritage for future generations.

As one of the largest ex-mining towns in the county, we felt the closure of the Dean & Chapter and Mainsforth collieries very harshly. Our family, social, financial and work

traditions and an entire way of life changed overnight with the closures, and it was the determination of that generation that pulled us through.

Ferryhill Town Council is proud to contribute towards preserving and celebrating our history. To this end, with the help of Bernicia Homes, we have recently saved several knocky up boards for local institutions and the National Mining Museum. In addition, the Council wishes to financially support and secure the brass band and parading of our banners, both in our town and at the Durham Miners' Gala for many years to come, and to secure representation of our Town Mayor at future parades.

Underground mining is a thing of the past in County Durham but the miners' spirit lives on - preserve our proud history, support the Durham Miners' Association.'

RESOLVED

That a 100mm x 56mm advert be placed in the Northern Echo with the wording as above.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.55pm.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....