



Chief Executive's Department  
Civic Centre  
HARTLEPOOL

20 October, 2014

Councillors Ainslie, C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Barclay, Beck, Brash, Clark, Cook, Cranney, Dawkins, Fleet, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Hind, Jackson, James, Lauderdale, Lilley, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Dr. Morris, Payne, Richardson, Riddle, Robinson, Simmons, Sirs, Springer, Thomas and Thompson

Madam or Sir,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the COUNCIL to be held on THURSDAY, 30 October, 2014 at 7.00 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool to consider the subjects set out in the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

D Stubbs  
Chief Executive

Enc

# COUNCIL AGENDA



**30 October 2014**

**at 7.00 p.m.**

**in the Council Chamber,  
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

- (1) To receive apologies from absent Members;
- (2) To receive any declarations of interest from Members;
- (3) To deal with any business required by statute to be done before any other business;
- (4) To receive questions from and provide answers to the public in relation to matters of which notice has been given under Rule 11;
- (5) To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 September 2014 and the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 13 October 2014 as the correct record;
- (6) To answer questions from Members of the Council on the minutes of the last meetings of Council;
- (7) To answer questions of Members of the Council under Rule 12;
  - a) Questions to the Chairs about recent decisions of Council Committees and Forums without notice under Council Procedure Rule 12.1
  - b) Questions on notice to the Chair of any Committee or Forum under Council Procedure Rule 12.2
  - c) Questions on notice to the Council representatives on the Police and Crime Panel and Cleveland Fire Authority
  - d) Minutes of the meetings held by the Cleveland Fire Authority held on 25 July 2014.

- (8) To deal with any business required by statute to be done;
- (9) To receive any announcements from the Chair, or the Head of Paid Service;
- (10) To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting and to receive the report of any Committee to which such business was referred for consideration;
- (11) To consider reports from the Council's Committees and to receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
- (12) To consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, and to receive questions and answers on any of those items;
  - (a) Supplemental Review of the Council's Constitution – *Monitoring Officer*
- (13) To consider reports from the Policy Committees:
  - (a) proposals in relation to the Council's approved budget and policy framework; and
  - (b) proposals for departures from the approved budget and policy framework;
- (14) To consider motions in the order in which notice has been received; and
- (15) To receive the Chief Executive's report and to pass such resolutions thereon as may be deemed necessary.



# **COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

### **18 SEPTEMBER 2014**

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

PRESENT:-

The Ceremonial Mayor (Councillor S Akers-Belcher) presiding:

COUNCILLORS:

Ainslie	C Akers-Belcher	Barclay
Beck	Brash	Clark
Cook	Cranney	Dawkins
Fleet	Gibbon	Griffin
Hall	Hargreaves	Hind
Jackson	James	Lauderdale
Lilley	Loynes	Martin-Wells
Payne	Richardson	Riddle
Robinson	Simmons	Springer
Thomas	Thompson	

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Chief Executive  
Alyson Carman, Legal Services Manager  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive  
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer  
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health  
Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods  
Dean Jackson, Assistant Director, Education  
Alastair Rae, Public Relations Manager  
Ed Turner, Public Relations and Communications Assistant  
Angela Armstrong, David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

#### 50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

Councillors Atkinson, Dr Morris and Sirs.

#### 51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

None.

52. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

53. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(i) Mr Shane Moore to the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee

“Given the difficulties this council is now experiencing to recover money promised to it from a deal made with the owners of the Sports Comes regarding the lifting of a restrictive covenant on the land, could you confirm whether this covenant has already been lifted despite not receiving the money and party politics aside, will this council give assurances to me and the public that they will not be so eager to spend money before they even get it in future.”

The Chair of the Finance and Policy Committee, Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher stated “that the covenant has already been lifted subject to a legal agreement that provided for annual income payments or a lump sum settlement in the event of the domes being sold.

The Council has a formal clawback deed which was signed in 2012 which protects the Councils financial interest as there is a contractual requirement for the owner of the domes to pay the council either a percentage of the net annual profits or a minimum annual payment whichever is the higher.

As Leader of the Council and as stated at the Finance and Policy Committee Meeting he could assure Members of the public that the Council has not spent the money from the Sports Domes before it is received. The report to Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> April approved the allocation of part of the clawback monies to fund one off initiatives, which will only be implemented when the monies are received, covering:

- £34,000 for Free Swims during the 2014 Summer holidays;
- £80,000 to fund 2 Enforcement Officer posts for 2 years;
- £131,000 to match fund one-off funding provided by the Government for Highways Maintenance issues.

The report also approved the proposal to allocate the majority of the clawback payment, to repay the existing Growing Places interest free loan secured to purchase the Jackson’s Landing site. This proposal would completely remove the financial risk if the site was not developed, or an onward sale was not completed by August 2015. Once this development or onward sale of the site is secured a strategy for earmarking the one off resources which are no longer needed to manage this risk will be developed and reported to Finance and Policy Committee and full Council for approval.

Members were advised that it was not possible to provide the final value of the amount to allocate from the clawback payment to manage risk until the detailed negotiations had been concluded as this would prejudice the Council's financial position. However, as soon as a final figure is agreed, details would be provided to all Members and then reported to a future Council meeting. The recommendations approved by the Finance and Policy Committee and full Council reflected the advice of the Chief Finance Officer to allocate the majority of the clawback funding to manage financial risk.

Owing to the delayed receipt of the Domes money a report to full Council on 3 July 2014 asked Members to note that as a fall back the costs of the free junior swims initiative in summer 2014 may need to be funded from the 2014/15 outturn, but only in the event that the Domes proceeds were not received. This enabled this initiative to progress over the summer. The other proposals are still on hold until this money is received."

In the ensuing debate a Member commented that should the money from the Sports Domes not be received as anticipated, the money to fund the free swims, which had already taken place, would need to be identified from another source. It was considered that the decisions on the potential funding had been rushed without clearly specifying any alternative sources for the initiatives approved in April. The Leader indicated that when the delay in the receipt of the money was reported to Members it was stated that should the Domes money not be received, the funding would be drawn from the 2014/15 financial outturn.

A Member expressed concern at the agreements reached with the parties involved in the Domes deal and that little had been reported to Members. The situation did seem to be a position of "robbing Peter to pay Paul". The Council had to have regard to its current financial position.

(ii) Mr Graeme Measor to the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee

"Regarding the money the council are expecting from the sports domes. What progress has been made regarding the receipt of the money promised? This issue has been brought up at the previous 2 council meetings. Given that it is now three months down the line since this was highlighted. Was an agreement signed by the Domes owners promising the council the money? If so, how is this being pursued? Or was this just word of mouth, giving the council no redress whatsoever. Is the money going to be recovered, or not? I'm sure the good people of Hartlepool would like to see the money recovered, and it put towards our under threat lifeguard service."

The Chair of the Finance and Policy Committee, Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher stated "that the Council has a formal clawback deed which was signed in 2012 which protects the Council's financial interest as there is a contractual requirement for the owner of the domes to pay the council either a percentage of the net annual profits or a minimum annual payment whichever is the higher.

In addition the agreement also allows for the owner to dispose of the overall interest and pay a lump sum amount. The terms that have been agreed with the current owners relate to this element of the contract and although it has taken longer than envisaged for the transaction to complete it is still ongoing and it is hoped will be completed shortly.

This is a complicated transaction in that it involves not only the Council's interest but also the transfer of the business element of the Domes the detail of which has to be incorporated in legal documentation. It is hoped that this will be concluded in the near future, however if it fails to proceed the Council will retain its financial interest in the Domes and receive the value of its interest over the next 15 years or earlier if the Domes is sold to another operator. In response to the suggestion around safeguarding the Lifeguard service I have been working with the Council's Corporate Management Team to safeguard both school crossing patrols and the lifeguard service.

Each and every year the budget process involves a range of recommendations from officers of the Council but it is members who make the decisions and set the Council budget. This year suggested cuts for next year included School Crossing Patrols and the Lifeguards. At the Finance and Policy Committee on Monday we considered a report on the outcome of a review of the Council finances and reserves, which outlines the solution that will safeguard School Crossing patrols and the lifeguard service for not one but for the next two years."

In debate a Member indicated that when the initial decision on the release of the covenant had been made by the Finance and Policy Committee the report placed great emphasis on the risks involved. The issue was that should the sale of the domes not proceed the Council would not receive a single lump sum payment but monies over a fifteen year period. The risks had not been alleviated and the Member sought assurance from the Council's Section 151 Officer that the risk had been mitigated. The Chief Executive stated that the risks for the Council in relation to the Sports Domes were non-existent; if they were sold the Council would receive a lump sum payment, if they were not and continued to operate the Council would receive a proportion of the operating profits. The Council had made no financial outlay; therefore, there would be no loss.

The Member still considered that there was a risk that the Council would receive no income from the Sports Domes and requested that a report be submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee. The Chief Executive clarified the financial arrangement with the operators of the Sports Domes and stated that the legal agreement protected the Council's interests.

A Member considered that the major risk related to the loan for the purchase of Jackson's Landing. If the money was not received from the sale of the Sports Domes, what would underwrite that loan. Had the Council a contingency plan in place to meet that very significant liability. The Chief Executive indicated that when the Council had purchased Jackson's Landing the Sports Domes money was not on the horizon. Arrangements had been put in place to meet 50% of the loan costs with an agreement that a report would be brought forward at the

appropriate time to meet the remaining 50%.

The Chair thanked the two Members of the public for the submission of their questions.

RESOLVED that a report be submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on the financial risks relating to the Council's interests in the Seaton Carew Sports Domes.

#### 54. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

In relation to the minutes of the meeting held on 7 August, 2014 the following addition was proposed and approved by Council for inclusion in Minute 32 (page 4, last paragraph) "The Leader confirmed that under the Council's new administrative arrangements it was the Policy Committees that drive the strategic direction of the Council and Officers who implement and make it operational."

The Minutes of Proceedings of the Council held on the 7 August, 2014, as amended, and the Special Meeting held on 4 September, 2014, having been laid before the Council.

RESOLVED - That the minutes be confirmed.

The minutes were thereupon signed by the Chairman.

#### 55. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ON THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

None.

#### 56. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

- a) Questions to the Chairs about recent decisions of Council Committees and Forums without notice under Council Procedure Rule 12.1

Councillor Brash asked the Chair of the Children's Services Committee, Councillor Simmons, for an update on the implementation of the recent decision of the Committee to introduce healthy breakfasts at schools. The Chair of the Children's Services Committee stated that he had attended a meeting with the Director of Child and Adult Services and the Head Teachers of the town's schools this week where the issue was discussed. The initial pilot was in the process of being extended to measure how schools would cope with the introduction of the proposal. Three schools had already confirmed their interest in introducing healthy breakfasts. The Chair of the Children's Services Committee indicated that the pilot would be examined for hard data in relation to



attendances and improvements in learning but also for 'soft data' from teachers on observations such as concentration levels. Costs for primary schools were estimated to be around £30,000 per school for take up of around 50% to 70%. It was anticipated that the second pilot would commence after the October holidays.

Councillor Brash thanked Councillor Simmons for the update and his leadership in progressing this important project.

Councillor Riddle questioned the Chair of the Regeneration Services Committee, Councillor Payne, on the proposed Tourism Bus Service considered by the Regeneration Services Committee at its meeting earlier in the day and if the proposal had been supported by Members. The Chair of the Regeneration Services Committee indicated that the proposal had been supported by the Committee and officers had been instructed to investigate the potential effects of the service on the existing bus services in the town and to discuss the issue with the Traffic Commissioner.

Councillors expressed their concerns at the potential knock on effects of the service on other commercial services which could be lost and never replaced. The effects on the town's taxi trade should also be considered. Members considered that officer time should not be wasted on a service that was likely only to be used by people from the town to the detriment of the commercial services. The Chair of the Regeneration Services Committee indicated that the discussions with the Traffic Commissioner and the commercial operators may lead to the service not going ahead. However, if such a service did go ahead it could provide a useful boost to the tourist attractions in the town.

- b) Questions on notice to the Chair of any Committee or Forum under Council Procedure Rule 12.2

None.

- c) Questions on notice to the Council representatives on the Police and Crime Panel and Cleveland Fire Authority.

None.

- d) Minutes of the meetings held by the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel held on 26 June 2014.

Received.

Councillors referred to the response received to the letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) sent by the Leader of the Council in relation to anti-social behaviour problems in Hartlepool and their disappointment with the response. It was proposed that the Council should investigate the potential of purchasing policing services from an alternative Constabulary. The Legal Service Manager undertook to provide Council with a written response.

Members commented that locally they were seeing fewer officers and PCSOs on the beat in their ward but there always appeared to be enough officers available to police the large supermarkets and the shopping centre; venues which could afford their own security arrangements. It was suggested that the Council's two representatives to the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel should raise this issue at the next Panel meeting.

The Leader of the Council also commented that there was a Safer Hartlepool partnership 'Face the Public' event on 16 October 2014 and he encouraged all Members to attend and make their comments to the Police and PCC at the event.

57. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

None.

58. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

59. TO DISPOSE OF BUSINESS (IF ANY) REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING AND TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF ANY COMMITTEE TO WHICH SUCH BUSINESS WAS REFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION.

None.

60. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

None.

61. TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS SPECIFIED IN THE SUMMONS OF THE MEETING

None.

62. REPORT FROM THE POLICY COMMITTEES

(a) Proposal in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework

None.

(b) Proposal for Departure from the Budget and Policy Framework

None.

63. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

None.

64. CHANGE OF COUNCIL MEETING DATE

The Chief Executive reported that the Finance and Policy Committee, on 24 November 2014, had considered the finalised 2015/16 budget proposals to be referred to the Council meeting scheduled for 11 December 2014. In the interim period, it would be necessary to incorporate the initial 2015/16 Local Government settlement figures previously issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government into the budget proposals. In view of the anticipated timescale for receipt of the actual 2015/16 Local Government Settlement, it was proposed that the meeting of Council scheduled for 11 December be changed to 18 December to enable any minor changes in the grant allocation to be assessed.

RESOLVED – That the ordinary meeting of Council scheduled for 11 December be changed to 18 December, 2014.

65. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chief Executive reported that he had been informed that Councillor Robinson has resigned from the Audit and Governance Committee and he had been advised that Councillor Cook would be Councillor Robinson's replacement on the Committee.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Cook be appointed to the membership of the Audit and Governance Committee in place of Councillor Robinson.

66. SUPERMARKET LEVY PROPOSAL

The Chief Executive reported that the Finance and Policy Committee had considered a report in relation to the Supermarket Levy Proposal at its meeting on the 15 September 2014, which was submitted as an appendix to the report. A copy of the draft minute of the Finance and Policy Committee was tabled for Members information which showed that after due consideration of the proposal, the Committee recommended to Council that the campaign should not be supported at this time and that further advice from government be awaited.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted and the Supermarket Levy Proposal is not supported by the Council at this time.

## 67 ARMED FORCES CHAMPION

The Chief Executive reported that Hartlepool Borough Council had signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant on the 12th June 2012 in co-operation with fourteen other public bodies and representatives of the Armed Services. The Council was also a signatory via The Association of North East Councils (on behalf of all the twelve Councils in the North East region) to the North East Armed Forces Community Charter on the 9th November 2012.

It was proposed that the Council appoint an Armed Forces Champion who would attend meetings of the Tees Valley Armed Forces Forum to contribute and receive regular updates on specific initiatives from all sources to aid the Armed Forces Veterans in our society. Council was informed that a nomination of Councillor Barclay had been received to be the new Armed Forces Champion for the Authority.

Members discussed raised the potential to increase public involvement in the decision making relating to the awarding of Civic Honours through greater input into the discussions at the Civic Honours Committee. The Mayor indicated that the suggestion would be explored by the Civic Honours Committee.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Barclay be appointed as Armed Forces Champion for the Authority.

The meeting concluded at 7.47 pm.

## CEREMONIAL MAYOR

# **EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**13 October 2014**

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**PRESENT:-**

The Ceremonial Mayor (Councillor S Akers-Belcher) presiding:

**COUNCILLORS:**

Ainslie	C Akers-Belcher	Atkinson
Barclay	Beck	Brash
Clark	Cook	Cranney
Dawkins	Fleet	Gibbon
Griffin	Hall	Hargreaves
Hind	Jackson	James
Lauderdale	Lilley	Loynes
Martin-Wells	Dr Morris	Payne
Richardson	Riddle	Robinson
Simmons	Sirs	Springer
Thomas	Thompson	

**Officers:** Dave Stubbs, Chief Executive  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive  
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer  
Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Louise Wallace, Director of Public Health  
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer  
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager  
Amanda Whitaker, David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS**

Councillor Simmons

### **69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

The Ceremonial Mayor advised he was declaring a prejudicial interest and was leaving the meeting.

**Councillor Fleet, Deputy Ceremonial Mayor, presiding.**

Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher declared a prejudicial and pecuniary interest and left the meeting, due to the Ceremonial Mayor being his civil partner.

The Chief Executive advised Council that the Ceremonial Mayor had submitted a statement. The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor agreed that the statement could be read out by the Chief Executive as follows:-

“I have given tonight’s Council meeting a great deal of thought and remain of the view that the topic to be discussed tonight is a private matter and each and every person has the right to a life outside of politics. Constitutionally the title of Ceremonial Mayor confirms I hold a civic office, which is responsible for civic and charitable duties and the Chairing of full Council meetings. At no time does the office I hold have any connection, communication or involvement with the strategic arm of the Council. I am of the firm belief that the reputational damage being imposed upon our Council has been orchestrated by the signatories to tonight’s request for an Extraordinary meeting of Council and certainly not by me and for that reason I shall not be standing down from the civic office I hold as Ceremonial Mayor for Hartlepool. Please note for legal purposes I have had to arrange for this evening’s meeting to be recorded.”

**70. BUSINESS SPECIFIED IN SUMMONS**

The motion set out in the summons was moved by Councillor Brash and seconded by Councillor Thompson.

The following terms of the Motion were read out by the Chief Executive:-

“That this council believes the dismissal for ‘gross misconduct’ of the Mayor by Newcastle Council, in conjunction with his stated aim of legal action against that council, has undermined confidence in him as the first citizen of the town and that this ongoing and very public situation is causing significant reputational damage to the council as well and undermining our relationship with a key strategic, regional partner.

Council therefore resolves that:

- The Mayor is advised to take a leave of absence from all civic duties, until such time as his legal dispute with Newcastle City Council is resolved.
- In the interim the Deputy should assume all civic responsibilities of the Mayoral office.
- Should his dismissal for ‘gross misconduct’ be overturned the Mayor should be return to his role immediately with council’s full support.
- If the dismissal is upheld then Council resolves to hold a vote of no-confidence in the Mayor.”

The Chief Executive advised that the Motion had been signed by Councillors Brash, Thompson, Lilley, Riddle and Dawkins.

The mover of the Motion opened the debate on the Motion and advised of the rationale for submission of the Motion. It was highlighted that the issue had received significant public attention and that the intention of requisitioning the meeting was to allow Council to consider public perception and the impact of the issue on the reputation of the Council. Following reference by the mover of the Motion to issues not set out in the Motion, the Chief Solicitor advised that an extraordinary meeting shall conduct no business other than that for the purpose of which it was called.

In supporting the Motion, the seconder of the Motion reiterated that the intention of the Motion was to protect the reputation of the Council and referred to the public interest as demonstrated by the large number of public in attendance at the meeting. The seconder reserved his right to speak later in the debate.

Reference was made by a Member to the assumption that the current situation was causing significant reputational damage to the Council and undermining our relationship with a key strategic, regional partner. The Chief Executive responded to a request for clarification of the effect of the current situation on relationships with Newcastle City Council and advised that from a non political, Officer perspective, the relationship with the City Council was as good as it had ever been.

In view of the response provided by the Chief Executive, it was moved by Councillor James and seconded by Councillor Richardson:-

“That the vote be now put and the vote be recorded”

A Member spoke on a point of order.

Concerns were expressed by some Members regarding the affect of limiting debate in terms of fairness and transparency.

The Chief Solicitor advised Members that a point of order related only to an alleged breach of Council Procedure Rules or the law. Members were advised also that if a motion to proceed to next business is seconded and the Chair thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, s/he will give the mover of the original motion a right of reply and then put the procedural motion to the vote.

The view of the Deputy Ceremonial Mayor was sought in relation to whether she considered that the issue had been sufficiently discussed.

The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor advised Council that she would allow further debate.

During the ensuing debate, reference was made to the roles, functions and responsibilities associated with the role of Ceremonial Mayor. Matters associated with requisite respect required for the role of Ceremonial Mayor were highlighted in the context of a poll held by local newspaper and with

regard to recent complaints made by Radio Hartlepool.

The Chief Solicitor intervened in the debate. Members' attention was drawn to the confines of the Motion as set out in the summons to the Council meeting. Members were reminded also, by the Chief Solicitor, of the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and that Members had only qualified privilege in a Council meeting.

The Member who had seconded that the vote be now put reiterated that the reason for moving to the vote was that it was considered that the Motion was flawed and that the vote should, therefore, be put.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that as the Chief Solicitor had explained earlier in the meeting, if a motion to proceed to next business is seconded it was at the discretion of the Chair if she considered the issue had been sufficiently discussed. The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor had advised that she would allow further debate.

Members again attempted to speak on points of order. The Chief Solicitor reiterated his earlier clarification that point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of Council Procedure Rules or the law.

The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor advised that she would allow one additional speech which would be followed by an invitation to the mover of the Motion to exercise the right of reply at the end of the debate.

During the final speech, a Member advised that in terms of defamation and the earlier accusation of reputational damage imposed upon the Council arising from the signatories to the requisition for an Extraordinary meeting of Council, he advised that he had never been a trustee of a charity that had failed to pay the minimum wage and referred to the outstanding debts of that organisation. The Chief Solicitor again reiterated Council Procedure Rules following a further point of order made in response to the comments made by the Member. The Member continued his speech by referring to earlier comments made regarding perception and added that it was also an issue of honesty in terms of the reasons given for the dismissal of the Ceremonial Mayor for 'gross misconduct'. Reference was made also to the status of previous Mayors in comparison to the standing of the current incumbent. He concluded that the situation was not only related to the Newcastle City Council issue and that the Ceremonial Mayor should have resigned some 18 months ago in connection to the charity referred to earlier in his speech.

The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor requested the mover of the Motion to exercise the right of reply before putting his Motion to the vote.

The Chief Solicitor requested confirmation from the mover of the Motion of his acceptance that the vote was to be put.

The mover of the Motion sought confirmation from the Deputy Ceremonial Mayor that no further speeches would be permitted. The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor affirmed that the vote was to be put following the right of reply.



During the right of reply, the mover of the Motion referred in positive terms to the conduct of the public gallery in the early part of Council proceedings and highlighted that unpleasantness had occurred only after it appeared that there had been an attempt to circumvent debate. Tribute was paid to the Deputy Ceremonial Mayor for allowing the debate. It was reiterated that the rationale for the requisition of the Extraordinary meeting of the Council was for the purpose of consideration of the reputation of the Council arising from the dismissal for 'gross misconduct' of the Mayor by Newcastle Council.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5 of the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on the Motion:-

Those in favour:

Councillors Atkinson, Brash, Dawkins, Gibbon, Hargreaves, Hind, Lauderdale, Lilley, Riddle, Springer and Thompson

Those against:

Councillors Ainslie, Barclay, Beck, Clark, Cook, Cranney, Fleet, Griffin, Hall, Jackson, James, Loynes, Martin-Wells, Morris, Payne, Richardson, Robinson, Sirs and Thomas

Those abstaining:

None

The Motion was not carried.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 p.m.

DEPUTY CEREMONIAL MAYOR

---

# CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

## MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

25 JULY 2014

---



- PRESENT:**
- CHAIRMAN:-** Councillor Brian Briggs – Redcar and Cleveland BC  
**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
 Cllrs Marjorie James, Ray Martin-Wells  
**MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL**  
 Cllrs Shamal Biswas, Jan Brunton, Garry Clark, Naweed Hussain  
**REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
 Cllrs George Dunning, Ray Goddard, John Hannon, Mary Ovens  
**STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
 Cllrs Gillian Corr, John Gardner, Paul Kirton, Jean O'Donnell, Mick Stoker, William Woodhead
- AUTHORISED OFFICERS**  
 Chief Fire Officer, Director of Corporate Services, Treasurer, Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer,
- BRIGADE OFFICERS**  
 Director of Technical Services, Head of Corporate Support
- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors Geoff Lilley, Robbie Payne – Hartlepool Borough Council, Councillors Tom Mawston, Peter Sanderson – Middlesbrough Council  
 Councillor Steve Walmsley – Stockton on Tees Borough Council  
 Councillor Norah Cooney – Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

The Chairman placed on record thanks to Councillor Hazel Pearson for her commitment and support shown to the Authority over many years and welcomed Councillor Tom Mawston back to the Authority.

### 26. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

It was noted no Declarations of Interest were submitted to the meeting.

### 27. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** – that the Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Annual Meeting on 6 June 2014 and the Extraordinary Meeting of 25 June 2014 be confirmed.

### 28. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

**RESOLVED** – that the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on 4 July 2014 be confirmed.

### 29. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR

The Chairman confirmed that correspondence had been received from Brandon Lewis MP, Gill Gittings (Local Government Association) and Matt Wrack (Fire Brigades Union) in connection with firefighter pensions and the industrial dispute. Correspondence had also been received from the Retained Firefighter Union regarding Duty Systems.

## 29. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR CONT.

The Chair confirmed that under Standing Order No. 7, he had received the following question from Councillor John Hannon:

*Can you assure us that Cleveland Fire Authority Brigade will continue to attend Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) between 0800 and 2000HRS daily and not follow our North Yorkshire neighbours who have announced their intentions not to do so?*

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) confirmed that nationally, unwanted fire signals accounted for around 250k calls per year with a total cost circa £700m to the public purse for attending them. He confirmed that North Yorkshire's position was in line with many other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) and reported that the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) had recently published guidance for reducing false alarms and unwanted fire signals.

The CFO reported that Cleveland Fire Authority's current policy was to attend AFAs however, in light of recent CFOA guidance, that position would be reviewed and any changes would be reported back to the Authority.

### RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the communications be noted.
- (ii) That any changes to the Authority's position relation to attending Automatic Fire Alarms be reported back to the Authority.

## 30. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER

### 30.1 Business Report 2014/15

The Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) reported that at the Annual Meeting on 6 June 2014, Members opted to defer the appointment to all committees and outside bodies due to the non-appointment to the Fire Authority by two of the constituent councils. This was with the exception of the Executive and Tender Committees which had meetings scheduled before 27 July 2014 therefore membership to these committees had been appointed at the Annual Meeting.

Members were asked to nominate and appoint the membership as detailed within paragraph 4 of the report for the ensuing year.

**RESOLVED – that the nomination and appointment to the roles and membership of committees and outside bodies, as outlined at paragraph 4 of the report and detailed below, be approved.**

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

LAB	STOKER	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	DUNNING	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
LAB	KIRTON	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	GODDARD	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
CONS	COONEY	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
INDEPENDENT	SANDERSON	MIDDLESBROUGH
INDEPENDENT	MAWSTON	MIDDLESBROUGH

### 30.1 Business Report 2014/15 continued.

#### **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - PLUS 2 INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

LAB	BISWAS	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	HUSSAIN	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	JAMES	HARTLEPOOL
LAB	CLARK	MIDDLESBROUGH
CONS	GARDNER	STOCKTON ON TEES
INDEPENDENT	WALMSLEY	STOCKTON ON TEES
INDEPENDENT	LILLEY	HARTLEPOOL

#### **APPEALS COMMITTEE (AD HOC)**

LAB	HUSSAIN	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	BISWAS	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	JAMES	HARTLEPOOL
LAB	KIRTON	STOCKTON ON TEES
CONS	COONEY	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
INDEPENDENT	LILLEY	HARTLEPOOL
INDEPENDENT	SANDERSON	MIDDLESBROUGH

#### **JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

LAB	BRIGGS	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
LAB	CLARK	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	JAMES	HARTLEPOOL
LAB	DUNNING	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
CONS	WOODHEAD	STOCKTON ON TEES
INDEPENDENT	WALMSLEY	STOCKTON ON TEES
INDEPENDENT	HANNON	REDCAR & CLEVELAND

#### **REPRESENTATIVES FOR OUTSIDE BODIES 2014/15**

LGA FIRE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE	Cllr PAYNE
Substitute	Cllr O'DONNELL / STOKER
MIDDLESBROUGH RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES GROUP REPRESENTATIVE	Cllr BRUNTON
REDCAR & CLEVELAND COMMUNITY SAFER PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE	Cllr BRIGGS
STOCKTON SAFER PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE	Cllr KIRTON

#### **MEMBER CHAMPIONS 2014/2015**

IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY (Financial Risk and Performance Management)	Cllr PAYNE
SAFER COMMUNITIES (Neighbourhoods, Safety, National Resilience)	Cllr BRIGGS
PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE (Health and Safety, Employee Health & Wellbeing, Culture, Learning & Development)	Cllr BRUNTON

### **30.2 Protocol for Filming, Recording and Photographing Authority Meetings**

The LAMO outlined Sections 39 and 40 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in relation to the Secretary of State's power to enforce compliance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity and the enablement of residents to film, photograph and audio record public meetings.

He reported that these new powers also allowed citizens or professional journalists to provide commentaries on meetings via social media, including Twitter and Facebook and would come into force on 6 August 2014.

The LAMO referred Members to the Protocol for Filming, Recording and Photographing at Cleveland Fire Authority Meetings (Appendix 1) which outlined the procedure for recording before and during a meeting and the circumstances in which termination or suspension would occur.

Councillor Biswas referred to paragraph 4.3 and requested that consideration be given to the Mental Health Act 1983 and exclude the filming, recording and photographing of any persons who lack capacity. Members agreed that this should be included in the protocol.

Councillor James asked what sanctions existed for a person zooming in on private and confidential documents. The LAMO confirmed this would constitute a breach of confidence and the Authority could decide if action needed to be taken.

**RESOLVED – that the Protocol for Filming, Recording and Photographing at Authority meetings, subject to certain restrictions and conditions as outlined at Appendix 1 and incorporating reference to ‘persons who lack capacity’ at paragraph 4.3, be approved.**

## **31. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

### **31.1 Asset Management Plan Review 2014**

The CFO appraised Members of the outcomes of the review of the Authority's Asset Management Plan (AMP). He reported that the AMP had been approved by the Authority at its meeting on 14 October 2011 and had since been reviewed in line with the annual planning process to ensure it aligned to the Authority's Strategic Plan and more recently, the Community Integrated Risk Management Plan (CIRMP) 2014-18.

The DoTS reported that at the Executive Committee meeting of 4 July 2014, Members considered the outcomes of the review and recommended AMP14 for approval by the Fire Authority. He referred Members to the Asset Management Plan 2014 Outcomes Briefing Report at Appendix 1 which detailed:

- Estates - rebuild / refurbishment projects and financial cost assessment
- Fleet - including Red Fleet Review
- Equipment - including Personal Protective Equipment
- ICT – including projects to be funded from DCLG Fire Control Grant

The DoTS also referred Members to Appendix 2 which outlined the revised AMP14 in detail and reported the overall cost comparison of AMP11 with AMP14 for all AMP projects from 2011 to 2026 to be an increase of £1.969m. He reported that this increased figure was due to the further deterioration of the Authority's estate and also incorporated inflation and 5% contingency which would be funded by efficiencies, thus not increasing the overall cost envelope for the programme.

### **31.1 Asset Management Plan Review 2014 continued**

Councillor Kirton asked if the workshops at Thornaby Fire Station were included in the rebuild programme. The CFO reported that in line with the AMP, the workshops would be based at the Queens Meadow site in Hartlepool.

Councillor Dunning asked what the public's response had been to the Brigade's building programme. The DoTS reported positive feedback from the Headland site and confirmed the Brigade had engaged in extensive consultation over the new premises.

#### **RESOLVED: -**

- (i) That the contents of the Asset Management Plan Outcomes Briefing Report (Appendix 1) and the contents of the reviewed Asset Management Plan 2014 (Appendix 2) be noted.**
- (ii) That the reviewed Asset Management Plan 2014 (AMP14) be approved, as recommended by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 4 July 2014.**

### **31.2 Partnership Opportunities with the Operation Florian Fire & Rescue Service Humanitarian Charity**

The CFO reported that at the Executive Committee meeting on 4 July 2014, Members made the recommendation that the Authority should enter into a partnership with the fire and rescue humanitarian charity Operation Florian and the work it is currently involved with in Harare, Zimbabwe. He reported that the charity had a track record for improving the quality of lives of deprived communities across the globe and offered a unique development opportunity for staff at Cleveland Fire Authority.

The CFO introduced Watch Manager Mike Dayson from Redcar Fire Station who gave a presentation appraising Members of the work of Operation Florian covering the history of the charity, how it is funded, its aims and objectives, what it has achieved and the Authority's involvement to date.

Members thanked Mr Dayson for an excellent presentation. Councillor Ovens reported that she had found it inspirational and was proud that a member of Cleveland Fire Brigade had been so motivated by the work of the charity. Councillor James echoed the same sentiments and asked that work be done to extend the charitable links to schools across Cleveland.

Councillor Dunning questioned whether the Authority had the capacity to involve staff. The CFO reported that the opportunity existed for the Authority to create a long term partnership with Operation Florian and Harare and highlighted that the cost was no more than sending staff to the fire service college on a management development course and he considered it a purposeful and cost effective way for staff to be developed and motivated.

Councillor Kirton asked that in addition to taking equipment, volunteers exchanged their knowledge and learning with the people of Harare, in particular the children. Mr Dayson said the volunteers strive to replicate the teaching that the Brigade does in Cleveland within the locals communities in Harare which includes fire marshalling in schools and carrying out Home Fire Safety Visits.

### **31.2 Partnership Opportunities with the Operation Florian Fire & Rescue Service Humanitarian Charity continued**

The CFO said the chance to forge a partnership with the Charity offered more than the disposal of assets and equipment and extended the principle of making a positive difference to the safety and quality of every citizen's life and advocated the Authority's involvement at the earliest opportunity.

#### **RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.**
- (ii) That Members considered forming a collaborative partnership with the Charity.**
- (iii) That the potential involvement of the Authority in the Charity's latest Project to help the Harare Fire Brigade, as set out at Appendix 1, be considered.**
- (iv) That Members approved entering into a partnership with Operation Florian and supporting the work of the charity through the involvement of staff and the donation of clothes and equipment earmarked for disposal and of negligible value, as recommended by the Executive Committee on 4 July 2014.**

### **31.3 Information Pack – July 2014**

31.3.1 Fire and Rescue Service Monthly Bulletins

31.3.2 Written Ministerial Statement

**RESOLVED – that the Information Pack be noted.**

### **32. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION ORDER) 2006**

**RESOLVED - "That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 & 4 below of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as mended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006", namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) holding that information and namely information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.**

### **33. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Annual Meeting on 6 June 2014 and the Extraordinary Meeting of 25 June 2014 by confirmed.**

### **34. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee, 4 July 2014 confirmed.**

**COUNCILLOR BRIAN BRIGGS  
CHAIRMAN**



**Report of:** Monitoring Officer

**Subject:** SUPPLEMENTAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014, Council received a comprehensive report with recommendations as to a review of the Constitution. That review owing to its wide ranging terms of reference also encompassed the views expressed through a Council Working Group (which exceptionally allowed participation from members of the public) to assist in making recommendations to Council. This report follows on with those supplementary matters that were either canvassed at that meeting and upon which a further report was required or matters that have been raised subsequently with the Monitoring Officer to present within the recommendations contained in this report.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to 'prepare, publicise and keep up to date' a document known as a Constitution which must contain certain 'Procedure Rules', a copy of the Councils Code of Conduct as well as such information as the Secretary of State shall direct and more importantly for the purpose of this report, 'such other information (if any) the Council considers appropriate'. Article 15 of the Constitution indicates that the Monitoring Officer in any review of the Council's Constitution can receive items referred to him through Members, officers, the public and other relevant stakeholders in formulating recommendations for the betterment of the Constitution and the governance of the Council. This report therefore covers those matters either initially canvassed at the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> April, or that have subsequently been brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer.

## **3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **(i) CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES**

The Council's Audit and Governance Committee on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 and the Finance and Policy Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014



considered a revised Code of Conduct for Employees as attached at **Appendix A**. The attached draft code has also been considered through the Joint Local Consultative Committee and also through Trade Unions at their Single Table meeting in September. Although, the Local Government Act, 2000 (Section 82 refers), provided a power to the Secretary of State to issue a code *“as regards the conduct that should be expected of employees within Local Authorities in England....”* such a code, with exception of that produced in Wales, has never been formally introduced in England. However, a locally agreed code was adopted by this Council through the Single Status Agreement circa 2008 and the attached is therefore a revision of that earlier code with necessary updating. As before, the key principles of the standards in public life are prominent within this code with additional references in order to safeguard the overall integrity and operation of the Council. It is therefore recommended that this Code of Conduct for Employees is incorporated within Part 5 of the Council’s Constitution (‘Codes and Protocols’) and all staff are made aware of its contents and that it forms a necessary part of the Council’s constitutional and governance arrangements.

## (ii) **MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

Member Champions are elected Members who act as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council’s business. They are not decision makers and cannot commit the Council to any course of action / decision but have a key role in:

- i) Encouraging communication and positive action in relation to the issue they represent;
- ii) Gathering, and sharing, of specialist knowledge and information;
- iii) Developing effective relationships between Members, officers (across Authorities) and outside organisations / bodies;
- iv) Helping Authorities develop / adapt services to achieve their vision for the identified priority area; and
- v) Supporting the Director of the relevant service area.

The Council values the activities of its Member Champions and currently has four such positions, details of which are attached at **Appendix B**.

In recognition of the importance of these positions, Members are asked to approve formally the inclusion of Member Champions, into Part 7 of the Constitution (‘Appointments to outside organisations and other bodies’).

**(iii) MANDATORY TRAINING FOR MEMBERS OF THE COUNCILS PLANNING COMMITTEE**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2014, the Planning Committee agreed that it's membership should undertake such mandatory training in the fulfilment of their duties as prescribed by the Borough Council. It is therefore a recommendation that the Planning Code of Practice be revised to incorporate this provision with the insertion of the following text;

“A Member shall not participate in decision making at meetings of the Planning Committee if they have not attended the mandatory training prescribed by the Council. Members of the Committee shall also endeavour to attend any other specialised training sessions provided, since these are designed to extend the knowledge of the Member on planning law, regulations, procedures, Codes of Practice and Development Plans and generally assist the Member in carrying out their role properly and effectively.”

**(iv) MEMBERS SUBSTITUTES AT PLANNING COMMITTEE**

At the meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014 Council resolved that the use of substitute Members would not have application to the Councils Planning Committee. I have since received representations seeking the reintroduction of substitutes to this Committee. There is no statutory provision allowing for the operation of substitute Members, but it is generally accepted practice through the governance arrangements of many Council's, not least, to ensure that political balance (where required) is maintained. However, such a system needs to operate with some degree of certainty and there should be due notification of who is substituting for whom. It has been made mention that Planning Committee operates in a quasi judicial capacity, it does not. The Councils' Licensing Committee does act in that capacity and is a statutory committee, in its own right. Planning Committee operates in an administrative capacity, whose decisions are susceptible to judicial review and “ordinary” rights of appeal under the Town and Country Planning Acts. Substitutes are not allowed in Licensing Committee as a matter of law, when dealing with the designated functions under the Licensing Act, 2003. That same principle was therefore applied to Planning Committee in the light of the Peer Review recommendations that a smaller composition of trained Members should determine matters other than those decisions through delegated powers. I am not an advocate of the use of substitutes in Planning Committee. There is certainly no illegality in the operation of a substitute system within the Planning Committee. I do believe such a move to re-introduce substitutes would be regressive, given the regulatory nature of a Planning Committee and that it may not benefit from substitute and therefore transient Members, who would be called upon ‘as and when’ individual needs arise. This is a matter however, ultimately for the determination of Council.

**(v) REVIEW OF DELEGATIONS – PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, allows for the discharge of any of the Council's functions through a "committee, sub-committee, an officer of the Authority or by any other Local Authority". Currently in excess of 90% of all planning decisions are determined by Officers under schemes of delegation operating across the Country, without reference to a committee. Successive Governments have also encouraged the greater use of Officer delegations in streamlining the planning application process. Furthermore, an officers report through the exercise of delegated powers must include all information on relevant considerations relating to the application under the requirements of the Development Management Procedure Order and also the openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations, 2014. Although Local Planning Authorities still operate within a "plan led" system the National Planning Policy Framework also constitutes guidance in planning preparation and also is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It is felt desirable that the following changes be made to the delegation scheme under points i) – iv) as follows.

Existing Delegations	Proposed Delegations
i) In the case of any relevant application which is submitted to the Council for determination, any matter which any Member requests should be referred to the Committee for decision, such request to be received within 21 days of publication of details of the application.	i) In the case of an application for development which is submitted to the Council and where 3 or more Members request for material planning considerations, should be referred to the Committee for determination and such requests have been received within 21 days of the publication of details of the application.
ii) Any matter which fall significantly outside of established policy guidelines or which would otherwise be likely to be controversial.	ii) Any matter which has a significant adverse impact outside of established policy guidelines.
iii) The determination of applications submitted by the Council in respect of its own land or proposed development, except those relating to operational development to which there is no lodged objection.	Suggest deletion, (but note exceptions under i) and ii) above and new iii) below).
iv) The refusal of an application except with the agreement of the Chair of the Committee.	Suggest deletion and replace with;

	iii) The determination of applications for development as submitted to the Council where there is a significant level of objection to an application.
--	---

These suggested amendments strike a balance through allowing for appropriate levels of delegation but also recognising that where an application might have a significant adverse impact or arouses significant levels of local objection that these matters necessarily should be reported to Planning Committee. As regards determinations of applications submitted in respect of land owned by Authority it is contended, that reference should be made to the Committee where there is that significant adverse and demonstrable impact or significant level of local objection so there can be a determination consistent with all applications as received by the Local Planning Authority.

**(vi) CONSERVATION GRANT SCHEME**

A defined budget is currently available to all residential properties in Conservation Areas and to any listed buildings which are also in residential use. The legal powers to provide grant assistance is provided through Section 57 of the Listed Buildings Act, 1990. Generally the criteria for grant assistance is to make properties structurally sound and water tight and to restore and repair traditional details such as windows. Under the terms of the budget grant, eligible works at a rate of up to 50% of the cost of those works up to a maximum of £5,000 per property in any one financial year, has been previously applied. Following earlier approvals through the then relevant Portfolio Holder (when the Council operated executive arrangements), currently a report is provided to the Chair of the Regeneration Services Committee and the Assistant Director (Regeneration) approves the grant, following that consultation. It is therefore recommended that under the remit of the Regeneration Services Committee and more particularly under the 'service area' for conservation areas/ listed buildings there is reference to the conservation grant scheme but with a delegation through the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods. It is deemed appropriate that there should be such delegation as the conservation grant budget (£37,797 at the start of the financial year) and its eligibility criteria entail that while such grant assistance is not insignificant it is a determination more suited to delegated powers rather than formal reporting through this particular policy committee. Clearly, there will always be the opportunity for an Officer to report to the Committee on the operation of the grant scheme as and when requested or which is otherwise desirable to report to the Committee.

**(vii) DESIGNATION OF STATUTORY STRAY DOG OFFICER**

Section 149 of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, provides a requirement for each Local Authority to have a designated officer for the purpose of seizing stray dogs. Although, the exercise of this power is incorporated in Part 3 of the Councils Constitution under a general power to act, it is thought expedient to have this specifically related to the functions of the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods. Accordingly, the following wording should be incorporated under the officer's responsibilities as follow;

'To exercise those functions and responsibilities in relation to the seizure of stray dogs under Part VIII of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, and such other ancillary and related powers under the Act.'

**(viii) ADDITIONAL EXCEPTION FROM KEY DECISIONS**

Although not obliged to do so under a committee system, the Council has retained references to 'Key Decisions' within its constitutional arrangements with the added transparency of its decision making through Forward Plan references. There are a number of exceptions to 'Key Decisions' although they are necessarily limited in application, as outlined within Article 13 (specifically article 13.3) of the Constitution. The Council's Chief Finance Officer has requested an additional exception as follows;

'Expenditure which is inevitable as a result of the Government providing a Section 31 grant ('New Burden' Funding) to help fund the impact of specific legislative commitments where there is no in year cost, or future commitment for the General Fund. Details of any Section 31 grants and the commitments which need to be funded will be reported to the Finance and Policy Committee and the relevant Policy Committee as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter'.

**(ix) SUMMARY OF BUDGET PROCESS – BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROCEDURE RULES**

The Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure rules contains a summary of the budget process in a tabulated format (Figure 1). This process has been somewhat altered as the Medium Term Financial Strategy update is now extended to the end of May/ June whereas the existent document merely refers to the 'end of May'. There is also reference to the individual Policy Committees developing and approving savings proposals to achieve targets set by the Finance and Policy Committee with a deadline presently stated at being 'mid November'. This is being revised to record 'end July/ August'. This therefore allows consideration of proposals by the Finance and Policy Committee at the end of September/ October as opposed to the current reference to 'end November'. Further the budget consultation which is presently stated as occurring in December and late January will now take place in 'October/ November'. Members will note in the attached revisions at **Appendix C**, the timing of the report to the Finance and Policy Committee is dependent on the date of the provisional Local

Government Finance Settlement. This will allow consideration and approval of the draft budget and policy proposals by Council in December with consideration and approvals of the Council Tax level and the statutory calculations underpinning the precepts in February, as in previous years. Members are therefore requested to approve the revised tabulation which summarises the budget process and which appends itself to the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

**(x) Remit of Finance and Policy Committee**

I have been advised by the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods that the Anti Social Behaviour Strategy along with the Community Safety Plan should be referenced under the remit of Finance and Policy Committee as it is a key component of Community Safety. Members are therefore requested to agree this particular recommendation.

Finance and Policy Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> October recommended approval to the merger of the Neighbourhood Management and Empowerment Strategy, and the Community Cohesion Strategic Framework to form a Community Engagement and Cohesion Strategy with a revised delivery model.

The above policy documents are listed within the Other Strategies and Plans element of the Neighbourhood Services Committee functions. This should now be removed and replaced with 'Community Engagement and Cohesion Strategy' and noted within the remit of the Finance and Policy Committee.

**4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

As indicated the matters raised herein canvass changes which will either enhance or clarify the interpretation and application of the Council's Constitution. In one particular case, namely the potential re-introduction of substitutes to Planning Committee, the close attention and consideration of Council, is required. The report which proceeded before Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014 also referred to other more residual issues upon which further work was needed. Accordingly, the reference to 'Member Champions' and the revised budget process are accommodated within this report. It was also indicated the possibility of further clarifying the role of the Children's Strategic Partnership and its relationship, both to the Health and Wellbeing Board but also the Children's Services Committee and the Corporate Parent Forum. Following a meeting with the Chair of the Children's Services Committee this has been definition of the terms of reference, composition and relationship of the Partnership to those entities and it is not considered that any further material change needs to be brought to the attention of Council, at this time. Members were also reminded by letter from the Director of Child and Adult Services and the Chair of Children's Services Committee their role as a 'Corporate Parent'. Members are therefore asked to consider the recommendations set out below.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Council resolves to adopt those constitutional changes at points (i) – (iii) and (v) – (x).
- (ii) That Members' give careful consideration to the proposed re-introduction of substitutes at point (iv) in the operation of the Council's Planning Committee.
- (iii) Council permits delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to make such incidental changes to the Constitution in conjunction with the resolutions of Council.

## 6. CONTACT OFFICER

Peter Devlin  
Chief Solicitor  
Email: [Peter.devlin@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.devlin@hartlepool.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01429 523003

**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES**

**Introduction**

This Code of Conduct for employees explains how the Council expects you to behave as an employee. It is based on the principles established through the Committee on Standards in Public Life ("the Nolan Committee") as set out below. The Code also provides you with guidance about your rights and responsibilities, to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and other stakeholders and to reflect some employee duties, to provide advice to Councillors and fellow employees with impartiality.

The Code is also based on the various national conditions of service and this Code is to be used as a benchmark of good practice where complaints alleging maladministration have been made to the Office of the Local Government Ombudsman.

This Code can also be read in conjunction with those 'Procedure Rules' contained within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution and those codes and protocols contained within Part 5, in particular those governing 'Officer/Member' relations, as well as the Council's Code of Corporate Governance. The Council is committed to maintaining high standards of conduct amongst its elected and co-opted Members and also Officers of the Borough Council and the Council may take disciplinary action if an employee, at any level, breaches the Code. Further, an employee should also comply with this Code so far as is possible if you are a representative of the Council on any Board, Trust, Company or other organisation, in addition to the governance arrangements surrounding those bodies.

The Code is not exhaustive and employees should, where not directly mentioned, adhere to principles of the Code as outlined below. The overriding intention of the Code is to protect employees and provide clarity.

**The Key Principles of Public Life**

<b>Selflessness</b>	Decisions should be based solely on the Council's best interests. Employees should not take decisions which would result in any financial or other benefit to themselves, their family or their friends
<b>Integrity</b>	Employees should always act with integrity and not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to an individual or other organisation which might influence them in their work with the Council.
<b>Objectivity</b>	Any decisions which are made in the course of an employees work with the Council, including making appointments, or writing contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, must be based solely on merit.
<b>Accountability</b>	Employees are accountable to the Council as their employer. The Council, in turn, is accountable to the general public.



<b>Openness</b>	Employees should be as open as possible in all their decisions and their actions that they take. Employees should give reasons for their decisions and should not restrict information unless this is clearly required by Council policy or by the law.
<b>Honesty</b>	Employees have a duty to declare any private interests which might affect their work for the Council.
<b>Respect</b>	Employees must respect all other employees and Councillors and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.
<b>Leadership</b>	Managers should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## **1. Relationships**

### **1.1 The public**

Employees should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups or individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the Council. The Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to eliminating discrimination within its own employment practices and service delivery and therefore you must follow the Council's 'Equality and Diversity in Employment' policy and other policies covering these matters.

### **1.2 Councillors**

Employees are responsible to the Council through its senior managers. Mutual respect between employees and Councillors is essential to good local governance. Inappropriate relationships between employees and individual Councillors can damage the reputation of the Council as well as individuals and should be avoided. Officers are therefore reminded of the guidance contained within the Officer/Member Protocol within the Council's Constitution.

### **1.3 Contractors**

You must be fair and impartial in your dealings with contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers. If you are involved in a tendering process you must comply with Council 'Contract Procedure Rules' and the guidance within the Council's 'Officers Guide to Procurement'. All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers, should be made known to the appropriate manager. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, through fair competition.

If you have access to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors, you must not disclose that information to any unauthorised individual or organisation in accordance with statutory regulations and local procurement protocols.

### **1.4 Other Council Employees**

You may have dealings with the Council on a personal level, for instance as a Council Tax payer, or as an applicant for a grant of any permission, licence, or

consent. You should never seek or accept preferential treatment in those dealings because of your position. You must also avoid placing yourself in a position that could lead the public to think that you are receiving preferential treatment. Similarly, you should never use your position to seek preferential treatment for friends or relatives or firm or body for which you are personally connected.

## **2. Political Neutrality**

- 2.1** Employees serve the Authority as a whole. It follows they must serve all Councillors and not just those of the controlling group and must ensure that the individual rights of all Councillors are respected.
- 2.2** Officers should never compromise their political neutrality. Employees should be aware whether they hold a politically restricted post under the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989, as amended. Further, they should follow the policy of the Council on such matters and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

## **3. Conflicts of Interest**

- 3.1** The best interests of the Council should always be the paramount consideration. You must never allow any private interests to influence your decisions.
- 3.2** You must not offer advice or guidance or participate in or influence any decisions making process where you have a prejudicial or pecuniary interest, or a member of the public may reasonably believe that you have such an interest.
- 3.3** Employees must declare any non-financial and financial interests that they consider bring about any conflict with the Council's interests. Such interests may be a financial in nature or which a member of the public might reasonably believe may affect a person's judgement in the public interest. All interests of a prejudicial or pecuniary nature must therefore be declared using the 'Declaration of Interest' form, found on the Council's Intranet, as soon as you become aware of these interests.
- 3.4** If the interest involves a decision to be taken by the Council, it's Committees or under delegated powers, you should take no part in the process by which the decision is taken.
- 3.5** If you are involved in a business or any commercial enterprise which might result in a conflict of interest or could reasonably be perceived by a member of the public as creating a possible conflict of interest in relation to any aspect of your work with the Council then you should inform your line manager. Again, this may require the completion of the necessary form of declaration to ensure that a full and proper disclosure has been made.

## **4. Information**

- 4.1** The law requires that certain types of information must be available to Councillors, auditors, government departments, service users and the general public. The Borough Council proceeds on the basis of "open government" however certain types of information is necessarily exempt or confidential and

the maintenance of integrity and sensitivity behind that information is therefore essential. The Freedom of Information Act, 2000, provides rights of access to anyone wishing to see information held by the Council (except personal data which is subject to the Data Protection Act, 1998). You must assist any person to gain access to information to which they are entitled by law. The Council's publication scheme issued under the Freedom of Information Act, 2000, outlines those categories of information to which the public have access. The Council will apply any exemptions for the non-disclosure of information only when required to do so in compliance with the law. Accordingly, you must not allow access to information given to you in confidence or information which you believe is of a confidential nature without the consent of the person authorised to give it unless you are required to do so by law. The Data Protection Act, 1998 and the Council's Data Protection Policy sets out key requirements for the handling of personal data. In addition, all employees should be aware and conform with the Council's 'Internet and e-mail' policy. Employees should also familiarise themselves generally with the Council's information security procedures and related guidance which should be followed at all times to protect all information held by the Council.

- 4.2** Employees should not use any information obtained in the course of their duties for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others that might use it in such a way. The Council is committed to ensuring that its information systems are only used for purposes which are lawful and acceptable to the Council. You should be aware that the Council has the right to monitor e-mail, telephone calls, websites visited and all files created by you. You must therefore bear in mind the office environment and respect your colleagues in respect of messages or images on computers, mobile phones etc.
- 4.3** The confidentiality of information received in the course of an employee duties should be respected and must never be used for personal or political gain. Employees must not knowingly pass information on to others who might use it in such a way. If an employee believes that information should be disclosed in the public interest they should follow the Council's adopted procedures under the 'Whistle-blowing' policy and any applicable confidential reporting policies of the Council.
- 4.4** Employees must not communicate confidential information or documents to others who do not have a legitimate right to know. Furthermore, information which is stored whether on computer systems or manually must only be disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 4.5** Information given in the course of an employee's duties should be accurate and fair and never designed to mislead.

## **5. Paid Employment Outside the Council**

- 5.1** Some employees have conditions of service which require them to obtain written consent to take on any outside employment and even where this is not the case, there are presumptions against certain officers taking secondary employment/business activity unless specific consent has been obtained. All employees should be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take any outside employment which conflicts with the Council's interests.

- 5.2** You are not allowed to use the equipment and resources of the Council on any outside employment without permission from your line manager. Employees should also follow the Council's rules on the ownership of intellectual property or copyright created during their employment.

**6. Gifts and Hospitality**

- 6.1** You must not accept any personal gifts, other than those of a modest/token nature (e.g. calendars, diaries or other small articles for obvious use) or being an otherwise inexpensive gift. Guidance should always be obtained either from your line manager or from the Council's Monitoring Officer if you are offered a gift which has or could be construed as being more than of token value. In order to ensure transparency, employees are requested to formally register any gift on the form appended to this guidance.
- 6.2** You must also refer all offers of hospitality to your line manager and generally you should not accept offers of hospitality unless you can answer in the affirmative, the following:
- Can the hospitality be justified to the Council, public and media?
  - Can I be sure the hospitality will not be subject to legitimate criticism?
  - Is the extent of the hospitality reasonable and appropriate?
  - Can a response to the level of hospitality be given in an appropriate fashion?
  - Am I comfortable with the decision to accept the hospitality?
- 6.3** You should only accept offers to attend social/sporting events where these are clearly part of the Council's role in the community and where the Council would expect to be represented. When hospitality has to be declined, those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures operating within the Council.
- 6.4** When receiving authorised hospitality, employees should still be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking which potentially affects those providing the hospitality. Where visits to inspect equipment, vehicles, land or property etc. are required, employees should ensure that the Council meets the cost of such visits without jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.
- 6.5** When an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor the Council activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.
- 6.6** Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or services, neither an employee nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full prior disclosure to the Council of any such interest. Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

## **7. Corruption**

- 7.1** Employees must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, deed, reward or advantage in doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity.
- 7.2** The Bribery Act, 2010, effectively repeals all previous statutory provisions in relation to bribery and instead replaces them with the following offences:
- The crime of bribery
  - The crime of being bribed
  - The bribery of a foreign public official
  - The failure of a commercial organisation to prevent bribery on its behalf.
- 7.3** A person will commit the crime of bribery when a person offers, gives or promises to give a 'financial or other advantage' to another individual in exchange for "improperly" performing a "relevant function or activity". The offence of being bribed, is defined as requesting, accepting or agreeing to accept such an advantage, in exchange for improperly performing such a function or activity.
- 7.4** Employees are reminded that if they are aware that they have an interest whether financial or otherwise in any contract involving the Council they are under a legal obligation (Section 117 of the Local Government Act, 1972 refers) to disclose that interest. Such disclosures should be passed to your senior line manager or if necessary, to the Council's Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service or alternatively to the Council's Monitoring Officer or Section 151/Chief Finance Officer.

## **8. Use of Resources**

- 8.1** Employees must also ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid challenge to the Council.
- 8.2** Employees should always ensure that any facilities such as transport, stationery, computer or secretarial services provided by the Council used in their duties are used strictly for those duties and for no other purpose. This will not prohibit staff from "working from home" and from time taking necessary equipment home for this purpose. However, as a safeguard, you should alert your line manager that you are intending to take home valuable equipment.

## **9 Safeguarding**

- 9.1** All employees must undertake their work (and associated training) in accordance with requirements laid down in support of the Council's duties for safeguarding and protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 9.2** An employee must comply with any legal requirements of the Council to declare any criminal convictions

- 9.3** Employees must not conduct themselves in a way that is contrary to any relevant policy and/or procedure of the Council. This includes conduct which would bring into question their suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 9.4** All employees working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.
- 9.5** There may be times, for example, when an employees' behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in the workplace or indicate unsuitability to work with children or young people. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.
- 9.6** Employees in contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.
- 9.7** The behaviour or actions of an employee's partner or other close family member may raise similar concerns and may require careful consideration by the employee and the Council as to whether there may be a potential risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults in the workplace.

## **10. Equality Issues**

- 10.1** All local government employees should ensure that policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the Council are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law. All members of the local community, customers and other employees have a right to be treated with fairness and equality. The Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to eliminating discrimination within its own employment practices and service delivery and therefore you must follow the Council's 'Equality and Diversity in Employment' policy and other policies covering these matters.

## **11. Appointments**

- 11.1** Policies covering recruitment and selection must be followed to ensure that all appointments are made on the basis of merit.
- 11.2** If you are involved in the recruitment and selection process and have any kind of relationship with any applicant which might affect your ability to be impartial, that relationship must be declared. The existence of such a relationship will preclude your involvement in the recruitment and selection process.
- 11.3** If you have been lobbied by an applicant, a colleague, a Councillor or any other person you must report the matter to your line manager. You must also not lobby a Councillor or a colleague either directly or indirectly to secure your own appointment or promotion, or the appointment or promotion of any other person.

- 11.4** Personal relationships between colleagues who work together can give rise to conflicts of interest. Employees should therefore be mindful of such situations and be prepared to inform their Line Manager. Any information declared or so disclosed should be recorded on the employees' personal files and treated in strict confidence.

## **12. Media**

- 12.1** When acting in matters initiating or responding to contact with the media this should only take place when this has been authorised by the Council. You must follow any guidance issued by the Council particularly in times of particular sensitivity eg. the so called "Purdah period" during the holding of elections and also have regard to the Code on Recommended Practice relating to local authority publicity as issued under the Local Government Act, 1986.

- 12.2** As an ordinary citizen, you are entitled to express your views about the Council, provided you do not make use of any private or confidential information gained through your work with the Council. However, you should not in your capacity as an employee criticise the Council either through the media or at a public meeting or in any written communication with members of the public. This clearly does not preclude an employee of the Council reporting on, or acknowledging improvements required in the work of the Council where this is a requirement of the employee's duties or responsibilities. In more serious cases where an employee reasonably believes the commission or likely commission of an offence would warrant a "protected disclosure" being made in the public interest, then the same is permissible through the Council's "Whistle Blowing" policy and procedure" which is available upon the Council's Intranet and conforms with the Public Interest Disclosure Act, 1998 as inserted into the Employment Rights Act, 1996. The Act covers behaviour which amounts to:

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual
- Damage to the environment; and
- The concealment of information about any of the above matters.

- 12.3** If you have any concerns about any such behaviour and you wish to raise them to report your concerns to your immediate line manager or if you feel you are unable to discuss your concern with your line manager or other Chief Officer within your service area, then you can report your concerns to the Council's Monitoring Office or with a representative of a recognised Trade Union.

- 12.4** This provision will not have application to a Trade Union official, when acting in that capacity.

## **13. Access to your Councillor and the use of Complaints Procedure**

- 13.1** As a member of the public you are entitled to raise with your Councillor any complaint which you have about the services of Hartlepool Borough Council. Employees are expected to do this in their own time and not to use Council resources to express their views or to lobby Councillors. You are perfectly entitled to proceed with a complaint using the Council's own 'Corporate Complaints Procedure'. However, if your complaint concerns any aspect of

your work with the Council you should make use of the Council's Grievance Procedure.

- 13.2** As an employee you are entitled to expect equality of treatment with colleagues, managers and from Councillors. If you feel that you have been unfairly treated or been discriminated against you are perfectly entitled to make use of the appropriate Council procedures. You should also approach a trade union for advice if you are a member or you may choose to take independent legal action, if you prefer.

#### **14. Computer Use**

- 14.1** The Council wants employees to use computers to the full and to feel competent and comfortable about doing so. However, it is essential that computers are used appropriately. Any reference to computers should be taken to mean all computer equipment and any associated technology.

#### **15. Misuse of Computers**

- 15.1** The misuse of Council resources is a serious matter and may result in employees being subject to disciplinary and, where appropriate, legal action.
- 15.2** Guidance documents exist within the Council in relation to the use of computers and information technology. Employees must be familiar with, and abide by the Council's policies on computer use.
- 15.3** Private use of Council facilities, such as computers (including use of the Internet), stationery and fax machines, is governed by these documents. Employees should not arrange to receive correspondence, telephone calls and fax messages in the Council related to outside work or private interests.
- 15.4** An employee who is aware or reasonably suspects that abuse of computers, email or the internet is taking place should consider reporting this information in a timely manner to their Line Manager, if necessary, in accordance with the Council's Whistle-blowing policy. .
- 15.5** The Council will monitor the use of computers etc in compliance with statutory provisions.. A record of any sites accessed by staff is automatically stored on the system and may be examined later if misuse is suspected.

#### **16. Use of Social Networking Sites**

- 16.1** The growing popularity of personal web logs (blogs) and social networking sites, such as Facebook and MySpace, may raise issues for the Council, particularly where employees choose to write about their work and the Council in which they are employed.
- 16.2** In this connection, the Council have adopted an Internet & Email Policy / Social Networking Policy; a copy of which is available from your Line Manager. Employees should ensure that they do not publish or incite or allow anyone else to publish material which may criticise a fellow employee, Councillor or any individual or body which would bring the Council into disrepute.

#### **17. Disciplinary Action**



- 17.1** This Code of Conduct is provided in order to ensure a degree of certainty. Any areas which require clarification should be queried with your line manager as appropriate. Any contravention of the provisions of this Code may lead to the matter being dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure.

PRO-FORMA

<b>Officers Name:</b>	
<b>Service Area:</b>	
<b>Gifts and Hospitality:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Received From:</b>	
<b>Given to or received by:</b>	
<b>Type of gift/nature of hospitality:</b>	
<b>Action taken e.g. accepted/refused/passed to a charity/etc.:</b>	
<b>Relevant circumstances/ comments:</b>	
<b>Employee interest:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Signed: (Officer)</b>	
<b>Counter-signed: (Line Manager)</b>	

## Appendix B

## Member Champions

CHAMPION	POSITION HELD BY	WHERE APPOINTED & TERM OF OFFICE
Armed Forces Champion	Councillor Allan Barclay	Full Council - 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2014 No specified term of office
Mental Health Champion	Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher	Full Council – 5 December 2013 No specified term of office
Older Persons Champion	Chair of Adult Services Policy Committee  – Currently Councillor Carl Richardson	Full Council - Appointed at Annual Council (self selecting)
Heritage Champion	Member of the Planning Committee  – Currently Councillor Jim Ainslie	Planning Committee - 23 October 2013 No specified term of office

**Medium Term Financial Strategy Update**

The Corporate Management Team will present a report to the Finance and Policy Committee to provide an update on the financial position facing the Council for the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**End of May / June**

**Prepare and approve budget framework**

**The Finance and Policy Committee** will prepare the initial proposals for the budget, plan or strategy.

In relation to the budget this will include determining indicative Council Tax increases, corporate / department savings targets and identifying top line savings proposals

**July**

**Individual Policy Committees**

Develop and approve savings proposals to achieve targets set by the Finance and Policy Committee.

**End July / August**

**Finance and Policy Committee**

Consider and approve detailed savings proposal developed by individual Policy Committees and approve draft budget and policy proposals to be referred for consultation in line with agreed consultation arrangements determined by the Finance and Policy Committee (including statutory consultation).

**End September / October**

**Budget Consultation - October / November****Finance and Policy Committee**

The Corporate Management Team will submit a report providing an update on the impact of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Consider consultation feedback and approve final budget proposals to be referred to Full Council.

**November (timing determined on basis of date of provisional Local Government Finance Settlement).**

**Council**

Consider and approve the draft budget and policy proposals based on simple majority vote.

**December**

**Council**

Consider and approve Council Tax level for Hartlepool Council Services proposed by Finance and Policy Committee based on simple majority vote.

**February (meeting 1)**

**Council**

Consider and approve statutory and council tax calculations incorporating precepts approved by Police and Crime Commissioner and Cleveland Fire Authority.

**February (meeting 2)**