

# ***Minutes***



## Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CIVIC CENTRE on WEDNESDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor R Heron) in the Chair

Councillors	Anderson	Foster	Miller, G	Trueman, D
	Ball	Francis	Oliver	Trueman, H
	Bell	Gibson, E	Price	Turton
	Blackburn	Gibson, P	Richardson	Tye
	Bonallie	Gofton	Scanlan	Wakefield
	Copeland	Howe	Scaplehorn	Walker
	Curran	Jackson	Scott	Waller
	Davison	Kay	Shattock	Watson, P
	Dixon	Lauchlan	Smith, D	Williams
	Ellis	Lawson	Smith, P	Wilson, D
	Emerson	McClennan	Snowdon, D	Wiper
	Errington	MackKnight	Snowdon, DE	Wood
	Essl	Marshall	Speding	Wright, N
	Farthing	Martin, L	Stewart	Wright, T
	Fletcher	Martin, T	Tate	
	Forbes	Miller, F	Thompson	

The notice convening the meeting was read.

### Minutes

48. RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 5<sup>th</sup> March and those of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 (copies herewith) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared interests as follows: -

Item 10 – Notice of Motion – Proposed Closure of the City’s Central Fire Station

Councillor Forbes

Council appointed Member of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

## **Announcements**

### **(i) Retirement of Councillors Maddison, Oliver, Richardson and Tate**

The Mayor advised that Councillors Maddison, Oliver, Richardson and Tate would be retiring from office and not standing at the next Local Government Elections. On behalf of the Council, he expressed gratitude for their past service and wished them well for the future.

### **(ii) North East Better Health at Work Award**

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Walker reported that the Council had been successful in being awarded Gold Standard under the 'North East Better Health at Work' Award.

Councillor Walker advised that the award is a culmination of three years of fantastic work by a number of teams across the organisation, focusing on improving the health and wellbeing of Council employees with many development, campaigns and activities completed throughout that time and that work was now ongoing towards achieving the continuing excellence level of the award.

### **(iii) European Cities and Regions of the Future Awards**

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor P. Watson reported that the city and Council had been successful in the European Cities and Regions of the Future Awards.

Councillor Watson informed the Council that Sunderland has been ranked as one of the top four small European cities for foreign direct investment strategy, and eighth top Northern European city for FDI strategy in a study carried out by the Financial Times. This was the first year Sunderland had entered the European Cities and Regions of the Future Awards and it was a great achievement to receive top rankings in two categories of this European-wide competition.

## **Reception of Petitions**

49. RESOLVED that the under - mentioned petitions, submitted by the Councillors named, be received and referred for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme:-

Councillor Sheila Ellis - Petition from the residents of Railway Cottages, Dubmire, requesting regular maintenance of the garages facing their houses – Gentoo.

Councillor Sheila Ellis – Petition from the residents of Railway Cottages, Dubmire requesting regular maintenance or removal of the hedges to the front of their properties.

Councillor Peter Wood – Petition to restore the proposed pedestrian crossing on Strawberry Bank, Tunstall Road, Sunderland.

Councillor Lee Martin – Petition requesting that the Council add Sydenham Terrace to the list of streets to be consulted on inclusion in Phase 3 of the Hospital Area Parking Management Scheme.

Councillor Lee Martin – Petition requesting that the Council add Ewesley Road to the list of streets to be consulted on inclusion in the third phase of the Hospital Parking Management Scheme.

Councillor MacKnight – Petition requesting improvements to road safety and congestion around Castletown Primary School and that a planned controlled pedestrian crossing is in place before the start of the school year in September, 2014.

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Allan, Atkinson, Farr, Kelly, Maddison, Mordey, Padgett, Porthouse, Taylor and A. Wilson.

### **The Human Resources Committee reported and recommended as follows:-**

#### **1. Localism Act 2011 – Pay Policy Statement 2014-2015**

That they have given consideration to a report of the Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development (copy attached) on an update and a proposal to publish the Pay Policy Statement for 2014-2015, a draft of which is set out in the report, in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

Accordingly the Committee recommended to the Council to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2014-2015 and its subsequent publication on the Council's website by 31 March, 2014.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor P. Watson, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor H. Trueman moved the report of the Cabinet.

Accordingly it was:-

50. RESOLVED that the report of the Human Resources Committee be approved and adopted.

### **Written Questions under Rule 8.2**

Pursuant to Rule 8.2 of the Council Rules of Procedure, Members of the Council asked questions of the Leader and Members of the Executive.

### **Action Taken on Petitions**

The Council received the under mentioned report on action taken in relation to the following petition which had been presented to Council.

**(i) Farrington Residents Association - Petition to Sunderland City Council to Provide Additional Parking - Presented by Councillor Porthouse on 26 September, 2012**

The petition was considered by the Head of Streetscene, who following investigations declined the proposal as the relatively high construction cost of the necessary works could not be justified. It was considered that the cost of providing additional parking by the removal of raised bitmac strip, at rear of footway in areas, replacing with flags and lay bitmac footway to front, changing current kerbs for splayed kerbs, is significant and could not be justified. The costs of these potential works, estimated to be in the region of £105,000 to £290,000 depending on the option chosen, far outweigh any benefit to the local residents. This was supported by receiving no previous reports from residents, emergency services or other local services regarding the issues within the petition.

Although not providing additional parking, consideration was given to the placing of bollards around the radii on the corners of Amara Square and Alnwick Square to protect visibility splays and reduce obstructive parking. Given the relatively high cost of the scheme, the fact that there have been no reported accidents at this location and the scheme would actually reduce available parking, the proposals can not be justified at this time.

At their meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 West Area Place Board Members, acknowledged that the costs of the proposals are prohibitive when balanced against any minimal benefits likely to be gained from the proposals. Consequently they considered that the use of monies from the Strategic Initiatives Budget, as an alternative funding source, could not be justified at this time.

Councillor Porthouse and the petitioners have been notified.

**(ii) Petition from the residents of Barmston Close – Presented by Councillor Padgett on 25 September 2013**

The petition was considered by the Head of Streetscene, who following investigations declined the request for the closure of Station Road to through traffic at the railway overbridge. However, the request for the introduction of road restrictions, an “Environmental Weight Limit” at this location as an alternative to the closure, is upheld.

A closure request had been made on three previous occasions and had been turned down each time following objections from two of the Emergency Services. In addition no injury accidents had been recorded by Northumbria Police in the last three years, and this road was considered to be relatively safe for the movement of traffic. However, given the nature and geometry of the road there was benefit in the introduction of an “Environmental Weight Limit” which would prohibit the driving of goods vehicles exceeding a maximum gross weight of 7.5T. Subject to a positive outcome to the required statutory consultations, a scheme is to be considered as part of the mass action element of the 2014/15 local transport programme of works.

Councillor Padgett and the petitioners have been notified.

**(iii) Petition from Mrs D. Taylor and the “Hands off Sunderland Libraries” group stating their opposition to the closure of any Sunderland Library – Presented by Councillor H. Trueman on 25 September 2013**

The petitioners stated their opposition to the closure of any Sunderland Library, their belief that library services are vital for all sectors of the community and that the most vulnerable, including children, are likely to lose out.

The Executive Director of People’s Services had considered the petition. The Council notes the petitioners’ concerns and was taking all necessary action to ensure that the new library services service model meets the needs of the people of Sunderland including those who will most benefit. During the consultation and planning processes a full Equality Impact Assessment was completed and is publicly available. The Council considered and identified mitigations for any potential negative impacts and sought additional detailed information from service users during the second phase of the consultation process. Reasonable measures have been put in place. For example the Books at Home service is offered to any customer who cannot make the journey to a static library because of disability.

Services are being delivered from 11 static service points, which are used by 88% of library customers and are being taken out into communities by a new Community Engagement Team, focusing on encouraging access by those who can most benefit, including children and their families.

The lead petitioner has been informed of the decision.

## Notices of Motion

### (i) Notice of Motion – Proposed Closure of the City’s Central Fire Station

Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Wood moved the following motion in relation to the proposed closure of the City’s Central Fire Station:-

‘This Council expresses its total opposition to the proposed closure of the city’s central fire station.’

Councillor Price, seconded by the Councillor T. Wright moved the following amendment:-

Before the word ‘This’ insert ‘Following this Government’s funding cuts’

Upon being put to the vote the amendment was unanimously carried with 60 Members voting in favour, and accordingly it was:-

51. RESOLVED that:-

Following this Government’s funding cuts this Council expresses its total opposition to the proposed closure of the city’s central fire station.

### (ii) Notice of Motion – Election Promises

Councillor P. Watson, seconded by Councillor Speding moved the following motion in relation to Election Promises:-

‘This Council notes the catalogue of failed Tory 2010 election promises.’

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried with 51 Members voting in favour:-

The Mayor (Councillor R Heron) in the Chair

Councillors	Ball	Fletcher	Miller, F	Tate
	Bell	Foster	Miller, G	Thompson
	Blackburn	Gibson, E	Price	Trueman, D
	Bonallie	Gibson, P	Richardson	Trueman, H
	Copeland	Gofton	Scanlan	Turton
	Curran	Jackson	Scaplehorn	Walker
	Davison	Kay	Scott	Waller
	Dixon	Lauchlan	Shattock	Watson, P
	Emerson	Lawson	Smith, P.	Williams
	Errington	MacKnight	Snowdon, D	D. Wilson
	Essl	McClennan	Snowdon, DE	Wright, N
	Ellis	Marshall	Speding	
	Farthing	Martin, T	Stewart	



And 5 Members voting against:-

Councillors	Forbes Howe	Oliver	Wiper	Wood
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Accordingly it was:-

52. RESOLVED that:-

This Council notes the catalogue of failed Tory 2010 election promises.

### **Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions**

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report (copy circulated) on executive decisions which had been taken under Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

53. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **Appointments – Scrutiny Committee, Independent Persons, Northeast Disabilities Resource Centre, Wear Water Sports Clubs Association**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought approval for the appointment to the vacant position of Church of England Diocese representative on the Scrutiny Committee, the extension of the appointment of the Council's Independent Persons, an appointment as a Trustee to the Northeast Disabilities Resource Centre and an appointment to Wear Water Sports Clubs Association.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

54. RESOLVED that the Council:-

- (i) appoint Mr. Steve Williamson, Headteacher of Northern Saint Primary School, Sunderland to the vacant position of Church of England Diocese representative on the Scrutiny Committee;
- (ii) extend the period of appointment of Mr. Anthony Atkinson and Mrs. Sheeba Joseph to the posts of Independent Person as set out in the report for an additional period of three years so as to expire on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2017;
- (iii) appoint Councillor Mordey as a Trustee on the Committee for Northeast Disabilities Resource Centre; and
- (iv) appoint Councillor Shattock as the Council's representative on the Wear Water Sports Clubs Association.

## **Appointments – Combined Authority**

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (copy circulated) which sought approval for the appointment of the Council's representatives to the Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland Combined Authority (the Combined Authority). The report also sought approval to delegate initial nominations to the committees of the Combined Authority, following its creation to Cabinet.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

55. RESOLVED that the Council:-

- (i) appoint the Leader of the Council as the Combined Authority Member;
- (ii) appoint the Deputy Leader of the Council as the Combined Authority Substitute Member; and
- (iii) delegate authority to Cabinet to nominate councillors to the Committees established by the Combined Authority, such delegated authority to operate in the period until Annual Council.

(Signed) R. HERON,  
Mayor.