

AGENDA 6, Enc i) ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL, DRAFT Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 6:00pm on Tuesday 25th June 2024, at Ashington Town Hall, Council Chamber, 65 Station Road, Ashington, NE63 8RX

COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Cllr Mark Purvis (Chair), Cllr Louis Brown, Cllr Glyn Davies, Cllr Pauline Thompson, Cllr John Tully, Cllr Caroline Ball, Cllr Sophie Robinson, Cllr Lynne Grimshaw, Cllr Matthew Cuthbert, Cllr Gemma Hemsley, Cllr Paul Wright and Cllr Graeme Wright.

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Eden – Executive Officer/RFO, and Gary Holmes – Administration Assistant.

FC24/024 WELCOME BY THE CHAIR

Welcome by Cllr Mark Purvis.

FC24/025 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Victor Bridges, Cllr Marjorie Chambers and Cllr Jim Lang.

FC24/026 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

Members are also reminded that they need to regularly review their declarations of interest forms and ensure they remain up to date.

FC24/027 DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

FC24/028 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one member of public present.

FC24/029 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was **AGREED to RECEIVE and SIGN** as a true record, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 28th May 2024.

FC24/030 DRAFT MINUTES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the Climate Change and Environment Committee meeting held on Tuesday 30th April 2024 were **RECEIVED**

FC24/031 REPORT FROM THE CIVIC HEAD OF ASHINGTON (CLLR CAROLINE BALL)

It was **AGREED to RECEIVE** a report from the Civic Head of Ashington.

Councillor Caroline Ball reported on her recent activities representing the council. She had the honour of laying wreaths at two significant commemorative events: the D-Day memorial service and the Miner's Picnic. Cllr Ball expressed that participating in these ceremonies was a great privilege and an important part of her duties as a council representative.

FC24/032 REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (CLLR JOHN TULLY)

It was **AGREED to RECEIVE** a verbal report from the Leader of the Town Council.

Councillor John Tully reported on his attendance at the Ashington Town Board meeting. He noted that there was broad support for Ashington's development initiatives. However, Cllr Tully expressed concern about the lack of democratic control within the Town Board structure. He quoted questions from Tony Benn on democratic control and power, with five questions:

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1. What power have you got?
2. Where did you get it from?
3. In whose interests do you use it?
4. To whom are you accountable?
5. How do we get rid of you?

Cllr Tully commented on attendance at NALC County meetings, and lack of confidence in the role of NALC at this level. Cllr Tully advised that a proposal was made to establish a larger council forum that would convene three times annually, aiming to improve representation and oversight at County Council.

Cllr Tully also brought attention to the upcoming subscription renewal in July. He requested that this matter be included in the agenda for the next Finance and General Services Committee (FGS) meeting for further discussion and decision-making.

FC24/033 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2023/24

It was **AGREED to RECEIVE** a receive a financial overview of year ending March 2024, as detailed in the Council's Accounts and Annual Report.

There were no questions for the Executive Officer.

FC24/034 UPDATED FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT RISK ASSESSMENT, JUNE 2024

The documents presented by the Responsible Financial Officer were **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED**.

FC24/35 INTERNAL AUDIT 2023/24

- a) It was **AGREED** to receive the Annual Internal Audit Report for year ending March 2024, carried out by Susan Saunders, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, part 2 (5). There were no points for consideration by the Council.
- b) It was **AGREED** to receive the Audit Checklist, carried out by Susan Saunders in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, part 2 (5). There were no points for consideration by the Council.

FC24/36 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) YEAR ENDING MARCH 2024

- a) The Annual Governance Statement, Section 1 was **READ OUT**, with Cllrs acknowledging agreement. Following **AGREEMENT** Section 1 was signed by the Chair and the Executive Officer.
- b) The End of Year Bank Reconciliation, March 2024 was **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED**.
- c) The Accounting Statements, Section 2, for the year ending March 2023 was **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED**. The statements were signed already by the RFO, and it was **AGREED** they should be signed by the Chair.
- d) The submission of the AGAR for year ending March 2023, and publication on the Town Council website was **APPROVED**.

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FC24/37 NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

The dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights of inspection as 27th June 2024 – 7th August 2024 were **APPROVED**.

FC24/38 INTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25

It was **AGREED** to reappoint Mrs Susan Saunders as the internal auditor for 2024/25.

It was **AGREED** that the Executive Officer should sign the terms of engagement

FC24/39 MINERS' MEMORIAL MEADOWS

It was **AGREED** to defer this item to the next meeting of the Finance and General Services Committee.

The meeting ended at 18:12pm

DRAFT