

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER, 2014

Present: Councillor B Burn Snr (Presiding)
R Arthur, Mrs M Baird, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell,
Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn Jnr, SCudlip,
R Meir, Miss S Morrison, K Shaw,
C Snowball, R Whitehead, K Younger

Apologies: Councillor B Allen, Mrs B E Allen,
Mrs H Cahill, Mrs S Forster, I Paul,
B Taylor

Observers: Mrs W Berry, Mrs M Simpson

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

2. OPEN SESSION

In accordance with established policy the Council provided a fifteen minute opportunity for any members of the public to raise questions. During this period the following issues were raised:

- 2.1 A member of the public raised concerns about the perceived inaccurate recording of a meeting which she attended on 30th September in relation to community work undertaken by Seaham Have Your Say. The minutes published by the Town Council indicated that Deneside volunteers had undertaken the work. The Town Clerk stated that he had personally listened to the recording and could state categorically that Seaham Have Your Say was not mentioned and he detailed why the Deputy Town Clerk had referenced the activities were undertaken by Deneside Voluntary Group. Members were advised that Seaham Have Your Say was the group responsible for organising the regeneration activities which were undertaken and involved many residents of Seaham.

RESOLVED the Council note the efforts undertaken by Seaham Have Your Say.

- 2.2 It was queried by a member of the public whether any feedback had been received in relation to the stance to be taken by Durham County Council in respect of underground coal gasification. A Member advised that the meeting at Durham County Council was to take place next week and notification would be subsequent to that.

Members were advised that an invitation had been extended to all Councillors to attend a public meeting at Dawdon Welfare on 25th November commencing at 6.30 pm. The purpose of the meeting was to inform Seaham residents about the issue of underground coal gasification.

RESOLVED the Council note the public meeting to be held on 25th November and the invitation for any Member of Seaham Town Council to attend.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 22ND OCTOBER, 2014

RESOLVED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved, and they be signed as a correct record by the Mayor.

4. REPORTS OF SERVICE COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the reports of the following Committees, copies of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved:-

- a) Report of Arts and Information Committee held on 28th October, 2014;
- b) Town Promotion and Development Committee held on 28th October, 2014;
- c) Parks and Events Committee held on 28th October, 2014;
- d) Report of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4th November, 2014;
- e) Report of Planning and Environmental Committee held on 4th November, 2014;
- f) Report of the Clerk's Advisory Sub-Committee held on 4th November, 2014.

5. UNDERGROUND COAL GASIFICATION

In respect of the issue of underground coal gasification and the 70 extraction process a Member moved the following resolution:

Due to the perceived potential on environmental issues and damage associated with this new energy extraction process Seaham Town Council resolves to be totally against any underground coal gasification within the town boundaries of Seaham or the immediate coastal waters. At such time that further information is available, the Town Council reserves the right to reconsider or reaffirm its position.

A Member queried in respect of the coastal waters, how far out the process was intended to take place? It was clarified that the model that Seaham would fall under would be that the coal would be gasified out at sea and would be transferred on land to process industrially on the coastline at a location deemed to be financially viable to mine the resources by a contractor.

RESOLVED the Council agree the motion put forward.