

FERRYHILL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **EXTRAORDINARY** meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Ferryhill, on **WEDNESDAY, 7th SEPTEMBER 2016** at **7.00 p.m.**

PRESENT: *Councillor:* P Atkinson (Chair)

Councillors: M Walton, K Conroy, D Harrison, J Makepeace, B Lamb,
P Crathorne, K Campbell, G Barker, B Gibson, M Seymour,
D Richardson, Z Roddam, D Allen M Brown T Garrett
A Rimington

OFFICIALS: D.Snowball, Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: None

44.16-17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies received

45.16-17 MEMBERS DISPENSATION

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

46.16-17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any items of business on the agenda.

47.16-17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The meeting was addressed by Jacqueline Cansella in respect of agenda item 6. Ms Cansella read out a statement in connection with the issue raised as agenda item six in connection with comments she had made on social media. Ms Cansella then stated that Councillors T. Garrett, B. Gibson and J. Makepeace should resign over concerns that they have breached the code of conduct in connection with the copying of the details from her personal Facebook status and calling a Town Council meeting to discuss the issue.

The meeting was then addressed by Mr David Farry who asked the question:

Under the circumstances would the Council agree and look into submitting a document to Durham County Council reporting the said councillors which is a total breach of the councillors code of conduct and also agreeing with Ms Cansella because they have brought their position as councillor into disrepute because they have brought Ferryhill Town council under this notice into disrepute because they are also members of a charitable organisation I would therefore ask those Town Councillors to stand down. I hope that Ferryhill Town Council in their recommendation for this motion that's moved or agenda item to throw it in the bin where it belongs because it is no more than one individual person asking again for tax payers' money to satisfy his own needs.

The chair explained that a decision could not be made and that the decision will be made at the consideration of the agenda item and that decisions cannot be made on allegations.

The meeting was then addressed by Maria Cansella who presented a statement;

Ms Cansella disputes that the comment that is up for consideration tonight can be classed as a public statement, as it had been taken from a restricted profile and can only be seen by people with whom Jacqueline is friends with on Facebook.

No formal notice of the meeting was given to Jacqueline and any reasonable person would surely agree that it is totally improper to name a resident in this context in noticeboards around the town.

Being held to account and scrutinised is part and parcel of being an elected representative and in my opinion, this meeting being called and Cllr Gibson's recent emails to Jacqueline clearly show absolute contempt for this aspect of their duties.

I'm frankly disgusted by the recent bullying and other inappropriate conduct of some of our independent town councillors towards Jacqueline which has caused us both great distress and anxiety. In my honest opinion, they are completely wasting public funds, using their positions for personal gain, which is not in the public interest, bringing Ferryhill Town Council into disrepute, bringing the charitable organisation which councillors Makepeace, Gibson and Garrett represent into disrepute, and are showing a total disregard for freedom of expression. Surely this is a serious breach of the code of conduct and I strongly believe that councillors Gibson, Garrett and Makepeace should resign with immediate effect.

48.16-17

TO CONSIDER IN DETAIL THE RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT BY A RESIDENT OF FERRYHILL

Councillor B. Gibson stated that by his reading of this email/social media statement everything refers to council agendas, councillors and any reasonable person looking at this would believe they are talking about the Town Council and it is in that context that I am going to move:

'Take legal Advice on the content of the statement that has been posted publicly'.

Councillor T. Garrett seconded the motion.

A named vote was requested.

Councillor Richardson stated that on her reading of the letter that it is all of us not just the three, that indicates that we are all in the same boat.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	NOT PRESENT
B Gibson	P Crathorne	M Brown	
G Barker	K Campbell		
T Garrett	P Atkinson		
D Richardson	Z Roddam		
D Allen	A Rimington		
M Seymour	B Lamb		
J Makepeace	D Harrison		
	K Conroy		
	M Walton		

(7)

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RESOLVED that the motion to seek legal advice on the social media statement was defeated.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.45pm.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....