

BOROUGH COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2024

BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Borough Council was held on Thursday, 14 November 2024 in the Civic Centre, Ridley Street, Redcar, Yorkshire, TS10 1TD.

PRESENT His Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor N Bendelow),
Councillors I Attwood, P Berry, A Brook, A Brown,
C Cawley, B Clarke, P Chaney, S Crane, G Cutler,
C Curr, W Davies, U Earl, M Fairley, M Fletcher, T Gray,
P Grogan, C Hannaway, N Hargreaves, I Hart, J Hart,
M Head, B Hunt, J Joy, S Kay, K King, J Lavan,
T Learoyd, S Martin, C Massey, J McCue, P McInnes,
C Morgan, G Nightingale, M O'Donoghue, A Oliver,
M Ovens, D Powlay, C Pugh, C Quartermain,
C Richardson, V Rider, L Rynn, P Salvin, S Smith,
B Suthers, J Symon, D Taylor, P Thomson and L White.

OFFICIALS B Archer, E Dale and A Pearson, P Rice,
C Styles, D Swainston and P Winstanley.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors
R Clark, J Craven, K Evans, G Jeffery, C Jones, J Neal, L Pallister,
L Robson and J Thompson.

Minute's Silence.

The Mayor announced the sad death of former Councillor and Mayor of the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland Eric Jackson. Members joined him in a minute's silence as a mark of respect and then Members paid tribute to him.

134 **To receive Declarations of Interest.**

The Mayor announced the sad death of former Councillor and Mayor Eric Jackson. Members joined him in a minute's silence as a mark of respect and then Members paid tribute to him.

Councillor Joy declared an interest in all matters relating to Guisborough Eco Group as a co-founder.

135 **To confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

136 **To note the attendance matrix from the last meeting**

RESOLVED that the attendance matrix be noted.

To receive any Announcements from the Mayor, the Leader of the Council or Cabinet Members.**Mayor Announcements**

The Mayor thanked everybody involved with the Remembrance events last weekend, there had been a great turnout throughout the Borough, which had been great to see. He thanked all the organisers and everybody involved including the Council staff who ensured that everything was in place for the events to take place with the road closures and cleaning of the cenotaphs.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Linda White and everybody at Loftus Social Club for working so hard to ensure over £1000 was raised at his charity night last Friday, it was a good night and he thanked those Councillors that attended or made a donation.

He advised that he would be holding a Christmas Choir Concert on Saturday, 7th December at St John's Church, South Bank and he hoped that Members would be able to come along to support the event.

He stated that it had been great to welcome town twinning visitors from Troisdorf, Germany to our area, including two Deputy Mayor's.

He recently hosted two receptions to thank the many litter pickers we had in our Borough, we were very lucky to have so many volunteers who went out in all weathers to ensure the area was litter free and showed great civic pride.

The Mayor advised that Zetland FM had been presented the Kings Award, which was the highest award a local volunteer group could receive, the equivalent of an MBE for an organisation. The Mayor congratulated everybody at Zetland FM.

Leader's Announcements.

"I just want to mention something that took place this week. After the Local Election in 2023 a gentleman sat in front of me with a newspaper article from Fyfe regarding a Multi Bank. He said I want to bring this to the region. I just want to pay testament to the work of Councillor McCue and his tenacity and drive in regard to this matter. The Labour Group will pay testament that we have had more updates than on any other subject. Councillor McCue has done a marvellous job bringing this facility to the region which will now help families and children in poverty in all the five Boroughs of the Tees Valley."

Councillor McCue thanked the Council for supporting this project and said that he was so pleased to see the Tees Valley Multi Bank officially launched into action against child poverty. The multi bank aimed to make

family life happier and more comfortable so that they can meet with confidence the opportunities in society and their communities.

“I would like to thank everybody involved in the many remembrance events across the Borough last weekend.

It is vital that we never forget the sacrifice and service of all the servicemen and women who have served their country with distinction over the years.

Once again, the ceremonies in Redcar and Cleveland were well attended and well respected and I would like to pay tribute to all those who give their time and efforts to make sure that the fallen will always be remembered in our Borough.

A couple who fostered hundreds of children over nearly 42 years of caring have finally started a much-deserved retirement.

Janette and Neil Dewsbury, from Liverton Mines, have spent most of their lives giving children in need of help and support the very best start in life. Helping so many children is an incredible achievement and their commitment over so many years is simply remarkable. Giving children the best start in life is a key priority for our council and the Dewsbury's have more than played their part in achieving this.

They were awarded MBEs in 2020 and their retirement was marked by a special reception with our Mayor.

I would like to thank the Dewsbury's for all they have done and wish them a very happy retirement.

Also honoured by our Mayor were people who make our Borough a much better place to live.

Around 80 litter pickers, who give up their time to clear our Borough of rubbish for no personal reward attended reception events.

They are wonderful and selfless people, and I would like to add my thanks for all the time and effort they put into clearing beauty spots of litter.

Finally, it is excellent news that residents in Loftus whose homes have been flooded will see measures to make their properties secure.

The project, which is a partnership between residents, the Environment Agency and the Council, will make safe 22 properties which are at risk from high water levels in Loftus Beck.”

Councillor Quartermain

“Today I am pleased to share some positive news that reflects our commitment to supporting local communities and our responsiveness to the needs and requests of our residents, business owners and local representatives. Over the last few weeks and months I have received numerous requests from residents, Ward Councillors and our two local Members of Parliament to bring back free parking in the run up to Christmas and I am aware that today I have a question from Councillor J Hart. I trust this announcement answers that question. This asks that I go further than the one hour free parking already in place in Redcar and the one hour free parking being ready for Guisborough and I am pleased to announce that I am doing just that. From Sunday 1 December through to the Tuesday 31 December there will be free parking in selective car parks from 1pm.

This initiative aims to attract shoppers to our town centres and give much needed support to our local businesses during what we all hope will be a busy and successful Christmas period. The car parks affected in Redcar include parking spaces on the High Street, Station Road, King Street, Grafenberg Street, Turner Street and both West Dyke Roads South and North car parks. In Guisborough Church Square Car Park, Reid Terrace car park, Fountain Street East and West and Patten Lane car park will be included in the scheme. Motorists need only park in the pay and display car parks after 1pm and there is nothing else for them to do. There will be yellow stickers on the pay and display machines and information boards will make this arrangement clear. This action is more than just about free parking it is about making a concerted effort supporting our local economy, bolster our fantastic local shops and encourage visitors and residents to spend more time and money in our Town Centres.

Our independent retailers offer high quality services, gifts and experiences that can make the Christmas Season truly special and we want to make it as easy as possible for people to shop locally. I want to thank everyone who has pressed me for this, your voices have been heard and together we are demonstrating our commitment to making this Borough a thriving place for both businesses and shoppers alike. This is a great opportunity to support our local economies, spread some festive cheer and make the Christmas season a great success for everyone.”

138 **To receive any Announcements from the Managing Director (Head of Paid Service).**

There were no announcements from the Managing Director.

139 **To consider Questions from the Public for which Notice has been given.**

Question from Dale Patterson to Councillor Brook , Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.

“What is happening with the pump and electrics at the boating lake”

Councillor Brown replied as follows:-

“I would like to thank Redcar Model Boat Club for their patience. It is frustrating when you meet there so many times. From speaking to the Chair of the Boating Club, it is more than just sailing boats, it is a social club it is your interaction and you can rest assured I gave the Chair and yourself a deadline of spring to be fully where we want to be but that involves drawing in some funding from other pots. However, because I know how vital it is we are working as quickly as we can to get a fill of water.

Unfortunately, the Surveyor/Engineer who went out identified a number of spots and I know you have your theories of where the problems are and you are right on some of them but there are other cracks that have been found and identified. We have already cleaned it and it was filled but you would see the water did not last very long. That was not the bung which we have already replaced, the sluice gate is not watertight and there are a number of areas that we have identified that do have cracks and are leaking water.

I do think and I am not blaming Labour because it was the Council before then that have put plasters on it for years and it has been slowly leaking for years. As a member of the town I want it right hence why things are getting done properly this time. We are going to endeavour to fix the cracks and the sluice gate and get it watertight as quickly as possible and filled with water for you. All I can do is apologise however, it was not within my powers 8 years ago to start the process and I cannot help the way concrete depreciates. I appreciate your patience and the Model Club’s patience and I have been out to see you a number of times. You know I am passionate about it and we will get it right for you as quickly as we can.”

Supplementary question by Dale Patterson:-

“Why have you put a bung in the inlet pipe?”

Councillor Brown replied as follows:-

“I am not an engineer. To stop water leaking out I suppose but I will find out and get back to you.”

140

To receive Reports from Portfolio Holders.

Cabinet Member for Health and Welfare

Councillor Earl presented a report which gave an update on his portfolio and answered Member’s questions.

:-NOTED.

141 **To consider Reports.**

The Managing Director submitted a report which sought approval to Councillor Graham Jeffery's absence from the Council due to reasons of ill health.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Councillor Graham Jeffery's absence due to illness be regarded as a valid reason for absence from the Council.
2. Councillor Jeffery's absence be authorised in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 for a further period of six months terminating on 14 July 2025;
3. Members and Officers of the Authority send their best wishes to Councillor Jeffery and wish him well with the treatment of his condition.

142 **To consider Motions.**

Motion 1.

MOVED by Councillor Thomson and duly seconded by Councillor Smith that:

"In 2022 an independent study of traffic and parking in Saltburn was conducted by WSP/Capita on behalf of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council at the cost of £50,000.

This was entitled The Saltburn Transportation Masterplan.

The Council published the study and invited comment from Saltburn residents.

This Council resolves that the proposals in the Capita Report and the response from Saltburn residents now be given due attention and a report detailing the relevant considerations along with detailed proposals and recommendations for implementation be brought to Cabinet for discussion and decision making and that this be done at the earliest date, but within three months."

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried whereupon it was:

RESOLVED on the successful motion of Councillor Thomson and duly seconded by Councillor Smith that:

"In 2022 an independent study of traffic and parking in Saltburn was conducted by WSP/Capita on behalf of Redcar & Cleveland Borough

Council at the cost of £50,000.

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This Council resolves that the proposals in the Capita Report and the response from Saltburn residents now be given due attention and a report detailing the relevant considerations along with detailed proposals and recommendations for implementation be brought to Cabinet for discussion and decision making and that this be done at the earliest date, but within three months.”

Motion 2.

MOVED by Councillor Thomson and duly seconded by Councillor Hannaway that:

“In response to a Full Council motion in 2022 the Council has issued the following; “MARSKE, NEW MARSKE AND SALT BURN (WAITING AND LOADING AND PARKING PLACES) CONSOLIDATION ORDER 2003 (AMENDMENT) ORDER NO 1 2024.

The order would prevent the parking of motor caravans in sections of Glenside and along Marine Parade between 8pm and 8am daily (Appendix 2a & 2b). A motor caravan would be defined as means a motor vehicle which is constructed or adapted for the carriage of passengers and their effects, and which contains, as permanently installed equipment, the facilities which are reasonably necessary for enabling the vehicle to provide mobile living accommodation for its users (Motorhome Definition from Motor Vehicles (Type Approval) (Great Britain) Regulations 1984)”

In accordance with standard practice residents were invited to register objections and a decision based on responses was made under delegated powers based on the response of a ‘significant majority’ of Saltburn residents objecting and a petition received.

A press release advising of the Council’s decision not to implement the proposed Order advised the decision was based on resident response and the submission of a petition.

Given that the advertising of the Order only invited objections, and the petition did not qualify as a relevant document in accordance with the Council Constitution, it is requested that given the protocol for advertising and requesting response to TRO responses and guidance for evaluating responses is not at all clear, it is requested that Council agrees to review the protocol for TRO promotion and response evaluation, and to do so within six months.”

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried whereupon it was:

RESOLVED on the successful motion of Councillor Thomson and duly seconded by Councillor Hannaway that:

“In response to a Full Council motion in 2022 the Council has issued the following; “MARSKE, NEW MARSKE AND SALTBURN (WAITING AND LOADING AND PARKING PLACES) CONSOLIDATION ORDER 2003 (AMENDMENT) ORDER NO 1 2024.

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143 **To appoint Members.**

RESOLVED that the following change to Committee Membership be approved:-

Councillor Richardson to replace Councillor Fairley on Employment, Health and Safety Committee.

144 **To reply to Questions from Members of the Council.**

Question 1: Question from Councillor Learoyd to Councillor Morgan, Chair of Governance Committee:

“An FOI from 25th July 2024 served on the Council's Monitoring Officer reveals an interesting thread.

It reveals a Councillor from the political group that you lead quizzing the Monitoring Officer if there was enough evidence to take another Councillor to a code of conduct hearing. The Monitoring Officer, rather rash in his approach on this occasion, engaged in the conversation. Worryingly, you were then sent the email by the Councillor as though you were part of the plotting.

A previous FOI showed you having an email exchange with the Managing Director regarding a desire to remove a Councillor from a chairmanship.

These revelatory FOI's question your standing and ability to act as Chair of the Governance Committee, and the fiduciary responsibility it holds.

Considering the evidence your willingness to be involved in skullduggery and vendetta, why should any Councillor in this chamber trust that the code of conduct is being administered with any reasonableness and neutrality?”

Councillor Morgan replied as follows:-

“With regards to the first FOI you refer to, the group members simply forwarded the conversation to me and the Lib-Dem group as a whole, for information only. There was no plotting on my part whatsoever.

Regarding the second FOI you refer to, there was a request from me to have a brief catch up with the Managing Director, to hear first hand, instead of rumours, of any concerns relating to the Councillor's position as Chair before meeting with the Councillor themselves. At the meeting with the Councillor, which was also attended by Councillor Nightingale, I said openly that Officers do not have an issue with the Councillor being Chair. Nor separately did they have an issue with their campaigning, but that it was the combination of the two that was concerning. At this same meeting the Councillor agreed to switch from one committee to another, thereby giving themselves more freedom to campaign, but then later withdrew from the agreement. The Councillor then said at a future Lib Dem meeting they would step down from the Chairmanship in a couple of months.

There has been no skullduggery, conspiracy or vendetta. No one has put pressure on me or asked me to remove the Councillor as Chair. As to the code of conduct being administered with reasonableness and neutrality, there is a full audit trail and an Independent Person has been involved from the very beginning. And should that person agree that it should be taken further, to an Assessment Sub-Committee, that is chaired by an Independent Member alongside two other members of the Governance

Committee, who then come to a majority decision. The views of the Independent Person are considered and a Principle Legal Officer is in attendance for guidance and advice. Code of conduct cases are then reported to the next Governance committee meeting. Therefore, I believe this to be a reasonable and neutral process.”

Supplementary Question from Councillor Learoyd-

“I became aware of a case where a bitter political rival of a councillor chaired their code of conduct case. What are the checks and balances to prevent this from happening in future?”

Councillor Morgan replied as follows

“I do not have enough information to answer that at this time.”

Question 2: Question from Councillor J Hart to Councillor Quartermain, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

“In the last council meeting I asked questions regarding free car parking for Guisborough to which I was told I would receive a written response.

In the absence of any such response by email, despite my reminders, can you please tell me:

1. When will the 1 hour free parking in Guisborough be introduced?
2. Will Guisborough receive its traditional free afternoon parking in December?”

Going back to the free 1-hour parking where we have had to go through all the regulations to get that going did we get a date for that?”

Councillor Quartermain replied as follows:-

“I do not think we have a specific date. I think it was going to be around the 22nd December but if it was going to be so late we would have put a temporary order in there anyway. I think what this free parking will do now from the 1st to the 31st December you will see when January starts that 1 hour free parking will be in place.”

Supplementary Question from Councillor J Hart

“Obviously the free 1-hour parking would be all day? If someone was shopping at 9am they get one hour free? The last time I asked that question you said come the 1st December we would be assured of that anyway so could I just ask for that confirmation that it would start from the morning? I know this has been a difficult decision the way we are looking to balance the budgets and I am so grateful on behalf of all the businesses both in Guisborough and Redcar for how hard you have

worked. We don't take this for granted but we do need it, thank you so much."

Councillor Quartermain replied as follows

"I will have a look into it. My intention was always that if we could not get it in time for the run up to Christmas then we would do something to make that happen anyway. I will come back to you with the specifics of that as I do not have a date in my head."

Question 3: Question from Councillor Grogan to Councillor Brook, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

"We've seen an increase of Anti-Social Behaviour within Kirkleatham, especially on Greengates Field, with the children's playground being burned down not once but twice, which causes upset amongst the community and extra cost to the taxpayer.

One day later, I witnessed 3 motorcycles and a gang of youths in the centre of the field with a petrol can after the last arson attempt. Police were called but failed to turn up, unfortunately.

We have 1 CCTV camera on the lamp post that I've been informed is NOT monitored, and on the CCTV control system, only accessed by a select few.

I'm concerned that people's safety is not being prioritised by the Council. With the hopeful investment brought in with regards to the football pitch and other entities that follow on from the hard work of Cllr Brown to bring it to Kirkleatham, the last thing our communities need is for them to potentially pull out due to safety concerns.

Can you please tell me what plans you are going to put in place to increase the deterrent to these vandals that plague our fields and children's playgrounds?"

Councillor Brook replied as follows

"It is correct that there has been an increase in anti social behaviour during October and early November, including the playground fire.

I would like to assure you that community safety is both mine and this Council's top priority.

During this period the Council work alongside the Fire Brigade, Cleveland Police and Beyond Housing on Operation Autumnus – an annual operation specifically designed to reduce the opportunity of fires and anti-social behaviour on and around Mischief and bonfire night across the borough. As well as these proactive operations, as a result of mine and the Leader's request the Police and Crime Commissioner funded anti-

social behaviour patrols were also temporarily reinstated at Kirkleatham.

The Council are also supporting Cleveland Police, Operation Endurance specifically in response to off road bikes.

We do have one long standing rapid deployment camera at Greengates field, and whilst it is not currently continually monitored it is regularly reviewed in order to try to identify perpetrators however today I can confirm that it will be replaced following my request, with a permanent camera as part of the CCTV refurbishment and directly linked with our CCTV control room.

It should be noted that both the council as well as partners in the Fire Brigade and Cleveland Police are also reliant on residents reporting incidents to ensure appropriate resource allocation as well as intelligence with regard to where off road bikes are being stored and the identification of perpetrators.

The Neighbourhood Team are also working with colleagues in the Climate team to look at potential projects that would look to bring back Roseberry Field into greater community use and reduce the opportunity for anti-Social Behaviour.”

Supplementary Question from Councillor Grogan

“Getting a CCTV camera installed is what the residents in the area are asking for to act as a deterrent so these idiots can be seen, detained and dealt with correctly. When speaking to the police inspector, they commented that the CCTV team needs more funds to get more people on the beat. Luke Myer MP has been lobbying the Police Minister. Can this Council support the effort to get more money from Central Government and it would be helpful if there is anything you can do to assist our Police and Crime Commissioner in this matter.”

Councillor Brook replied as follows

“This administration is in full support.”

Question 4: Question from Councillor Martin to Councillor Brook, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.

“In May I asked you a question regarding increasing enforcement numbers so our streets could be safer.

Your answer was that the income in fines is only 30% of the total cost of the Enforcement Officers, and that we don't want to become known for fining, we are going more down the education route.

However, in the Managing Director's August statement it says that the Council will be increasing enforcement to increase income.

My question to you is, which is it? Are we going down the education route, and if so, what are the Council's plans? Six months after my question we have heard nothing.

Or are we going by the Managing Director's statement and if so are we recruiting more officers?

Either way can we please have clarity on the council's plans for enforcement?"

Councillor Brook replied as follows

"I can confirm that the Managing Director's statement was that we would look to increase our income from enforcement and fines, not that we would increase Enforcement Officers

Any enforcement undertaken by the Council must be proportionate and reasonable, in line with good practice and legislative requirements. Public awareness and education are extremely important to ensure residents are aware of their responsibilities under the law and therefore helps to minimise the potential of them becoming subject to enforcement action. This is generally done in real time and on site.

We have a very experienced enforcement team who know where the hot spots are on any given day and will deploy resources appropriately. It is about being more proactive in terms of targeting these hotspots where we know there are particular problems due to complaints, for instance, so it's a case of refocussing existing resource and trying to make it more impactful, rather than increasing officer numbers. Education still plays a key part of our role, though, so any enforcement will still be proportionate. With regards to the increase in income this is something we are looking at across the Council as part of our financial position and does not relate to your question in May."

Supplementary Question from Councillor Martin-

"Councillor Taylor and I spent some time with our enforcement team who issued 4 tickets in 4 hours. The biggest issue the Enforcement Officers have is the 5 minute waiting time but if we had the blips on the kerbs next to the double yellow lines it is a zero waiting time. Where there are 'blips' on the curb Enforcement Officers do not need to wait five minutes to issue a ticket. Can we look at increasing the number of 'blips' on the curb to assist our Officers?"

Councillor Brook replied as follows

"Yes I agree and that is something I will follow up with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation."

Question 5: Question from Councillor Learoyd to Councillor Brown, Leader of the Council.

“After all the discussion about the cost of hosting housing appeals at previous full council meetings, I was surprised to see an expensive barrister representing the Council at the Silverdale Gardens planning appeal. An appeal this chamber agreed not to defend, with notable upholders of democracy opposing such folly. The barristers presumably handsomely rewarded contracted employment for the day appeared to consist of needlessly reading out a pre-prepared council statement. A statement to tell the Planning Inspector of how wrong I was on a technical point of unconnected case law, with no relevance to that day's subject matter. Was the Council Leader aware of this frivolous use of funds?”

Councillor Brown replied as follows

“No I was not.

For context, a decision had been taken not to instruct counsel to attend the hearing because, as the question points out, the appeal was not being defended.

However, in the lead up to the inquiry, an allegation was raised that the Council's decision not to defend the appeal was unlawful.

The Leader was not consulted as it was a routine decision that related to legal proceedings.

The Independent Inquiry absolved the Monitoring Officer of any wrong doing whatsoever and due process was followed through the entire Silverdale Gardens process.”

Question 6: Question from Councillor Learoyd to Councillor Brown, Leader of the Council.

“In 2018, an incinerator was opened in the northwest corner of Wilton (Wilton 11). It burns 400,000 tons of rubbish from Merseyside. The history of this incinerator is interesting, Merseyside, or specifically Halton Council, didn't want to host it. Maybe they considered something Redcar didn't?

Particle (PM) 2.5µm is a microparticle in respirable range that causes cancer, cardiovascular and chronic respiratory disease.¹ The specification of the limits of Wilton 11 are PM 2.5. 30 mgM⁻³, this is 10 mgM⁻³ over WHO safe air quality standards.

The incinerator was greenwashed as an “energy recovery facility”.

Similarly, the proposed TVERF incinerator project at Teesworks, a proposed site which is walking distance from Wilton 11, is also proposed as PM 2.5 30 mgM⁻³ according to the report produced at the planning committee 20th July 2023.

The volume of PM 2.5 from the two incinerators combined with average wind speeds and directions at coordinates 54.581831, -1.140933 looking at the topography and turbulent flow patterns, will project wind direction dependent damaging levels of PM 2.5 for 6 miles. A range including Guisborough, all of Redcar and most of Middlesbrough.

In the notes of the TVERF paperwork, provided to me by the responsible officer, there was no study on the cumulative effects of the close-by incinerator. Indeed, I am the only PhD aerosol scientist to have reviewed the files.

Is the Council Leader aware of the proximity of the two incinerators and is he concerned by the effect such concentrations of PM2.5 will have on quality of life, life expectancy, mortality rates, and economic health burdens, within the six-mile radius?"

Councillor Brown replied as follows

"As Leader I am always conscious of the health of the Borough as a whole which is why issues like this rely on expert information from the Environment Agency including their assessment of stack omissions and the cumulative impacts of emissions from nearby facilities. The implication in the question that the emission levels in the area could be dangerous or harmful would need to be substantiated and submitted to the Environment Agency. I am not sure if you contributed your concerns to the Environment Agency when the open public consultations took place. The environmental permit application but the assessments concluded there would be no significant impacts on air quality or health and the permit has been granted by the Environment Agency. Councillor Earl corrected some of your claims earlier regarding these omissions but of course we are concerned in particular for the children who live in this borough and we are always looking for the best outcome for our families who will be here when we are not. I know that you brought a number of alternatives and Councillor Richardson has listened to a lot of them however, a lot of them are not working, the one that costs the gasification cost one council £90m and they are now having to pay compensation of a further £52m to try and repair it. I know you have set up an alternative meeting to look at the one that has been built in Spain but we are not sure if it would work yet as there are no working examples. We are listening and I am concerned when I hear things about omissions because I am a layman, I do not know the ins and outs however, there is a lot of refuting information from what you regularly claim in this Chamber."

Supplementary Question from Councillor Learoyd

“So gasification is operating in over a 100 sites in the UK, it is simply not true that it is not working Milton Keynes being one of those Labour Councils. There is an actual site in Middlesbrough using gasification from residual waste which is producing carbon fuels right now. The contract is over 30 years at 30 micrograms per metre cubed as I have said already but the WHO limits are below those, indeed these are the Labour Government’s targets 10 micro grams per metre cubed, pollution exposure to be reduced by 35% compared to 2018 whilst we are increasing them. Chronic respiratory disease in the area is the fourth biggest killer of people of our age group. It is an outlier compared to the rest of the country.

Keir Starmer announced an 81% reduction in emissions inside 10 years yet the Council is trebling its carbon output before 2030 when it has a zero target. Indeed when we look at the finances behind this plan they do not take into consideration the 2028 carbon trading scheme which will result in an annual 68 million carbon bill.

I would just like to point out because Councillor Brown said that Councillor Earl had corrected me, which indeed she had not, and I did not get the chance to come back, she referenced that UK HSA had set up acceptable limits on its incinerators, they do not , it is DEFRA and the limit that was quoted was incorrect, I have just corrected it.

Please can we look at the finances of this and realise that it will bankrupt the Council and pull out of this ridiculous 30 year contract?”

Councillor Brown replied as follows

“We will look at the finances when we look at the business plan next year.”

Question 7: Question from Councillor Brown to Councillor Massey, Cabinet Member for Resources

Councillor Massey, with the recent announcement of additional government funding, could you share how this will assist us in addressing some of the key pressures, particularly in social care and in achieving a balanced budget? How will this support the Council's efforts to maintain essential services and deliver stability for residents across Redcar and Cleveland?

Councillor Massey replied as follows

Thank you for the question. The recent government announcement and the government budget provides some relief for the Council, but I do want to speak to all sides and to all Members in the chamber in the response to this, to the positive things that came out of the budget which I do welcome that there will be a £1.3b increase in funding for the next

financial year 2025/26. We need to do the sums on this, we need the Government to do theirs to find out what our share of that will be but we would hope that it is the region of £2-£3m. Obviously that £2-£3 will greatly help this Council when it comes to balancing our budget next year but that does not prevent us in having to make difficult decisions this year. We are still predicting we may overspend by just over £7m this financial year and indeed next year which anyone who came to the Task and Finish Groups or the Member's Conference, which unfortunately I had to work during, will know there is a £9m pressure next year. So due to this reprieve we still will have to have some risks but hopefully those risks will be mitigated but we have difficult decisions ahead. The one thing I think the Government could do and is certainly something that Councillor Brown has led on in his discussions with Ministers and is something that as a Council we will continue to lead on also is that we know the Government has announced plans to reset the Local Government Funding Formula. This is not until 2026/27 but that is where Councils like this really need to have a voice at the table as Councils like this are unable to raise the same amount of council tax from our residents as we do not have large scale properties with big council tax bill. So when Government says council tax can go up in Local Authorities what that means to Redcar and Cleveland is (a) very difficult decision because we know the demography of our Borough and the socio economic status of our residents but (b) we can naturally raise less even if our council tax goes up. We will continue to pressure Government about that. We welcome the £1.3b and we welcome what our share will be when we find out exactly what our share will be but it does not mitigate the fact that we will have some difficult decisions moving ahead but any money the Government wants to provide us is more than welcome as we start with the £1.3b which we think will mean approximately £3m for us."

The Mayor thanked Members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.