

## Bishop Auckland Town Council

The Four Clocks Centre, 154a Newgate Street,  
Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham DL14 7EH

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**Town Clerk: David Anderson**

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

24<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Dear Councillor,

I hereby give you notice that the next meeting of **Bishop Auckland Town Council** will be held in the **Wesley Room** at **The Four Clocks Centre** on **Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 6.00 p.m.**

Yours sincerely

**David Anderson**  
Clerk to the Council

### AGENDA

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

To invite members to declare any interest they may have.

**3. Public Participation**

(Subject to Public Participation Policy)

**Presentations**

*\*The Mayor will be flexible with the amount of time allocated where it is helpful to the debate.*

*Time  
Allocation\**

**4. Bishop Auckland Food Festival**

Jill Wood will be in attendance to update members on the outcome of the 2018 Food Festival and discuss arrangements for the 2019 Food Festival.

*10 mins  
presentation  
5 mins  
questions*

The Evaluation Report for 2018 had previously been circulated.

**5. Town Team**

1. Core Team (Chairman, Nigel Bryson)
2. Events Team (Chairman, Clive Auld)

*10 mins  
presentation  
5 mins  
questions*

**6. Proposed Closure of Ward 6, Bishop Auckland Hospital**

This item has been placed on the agenda to allow the Town Council to consider a formal response to the proposed closure of Ward 6, Bishop Auckland Hospital.

**7. Minutes**

To approve the Minutes of the following meetings:-

Town Council	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Planning Committee	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Town Council (Special)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Finance Committee	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2018

**8. Matters Arising**

To receive any matters arising from the above Minutes which are not included elsewhere on the agenda (for information only).

**9. Report of Mayor**

To receive a report from the Mayor detailing activities attended to represent the Council since the last meeting.

**10. Report of Town Clerk**

1. Vacancies on Committees
2. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 – External Auditor's Report
3. Training
4. Council's Forward Plan
5. Bishop Auckland Traffic Regulation Order - Various Amendments

**11. Topics for Future Discussion**

To consider topics for future presentations and discussions which are of relevance to the town.

- Liz Fisher, The Auckland Project
- Debbie Connell, Feedback on Summertime Activities
- WiFi Demonstration

**Exclusion of Press and Public**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council do now exclude the press and public for the remaining item on the agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

**12. Report of Town Clerk**

6. Council Accommodation. (A report will be circulated at the meeting)
7. Code of Conduct - Monitoring Officers Decision Notice

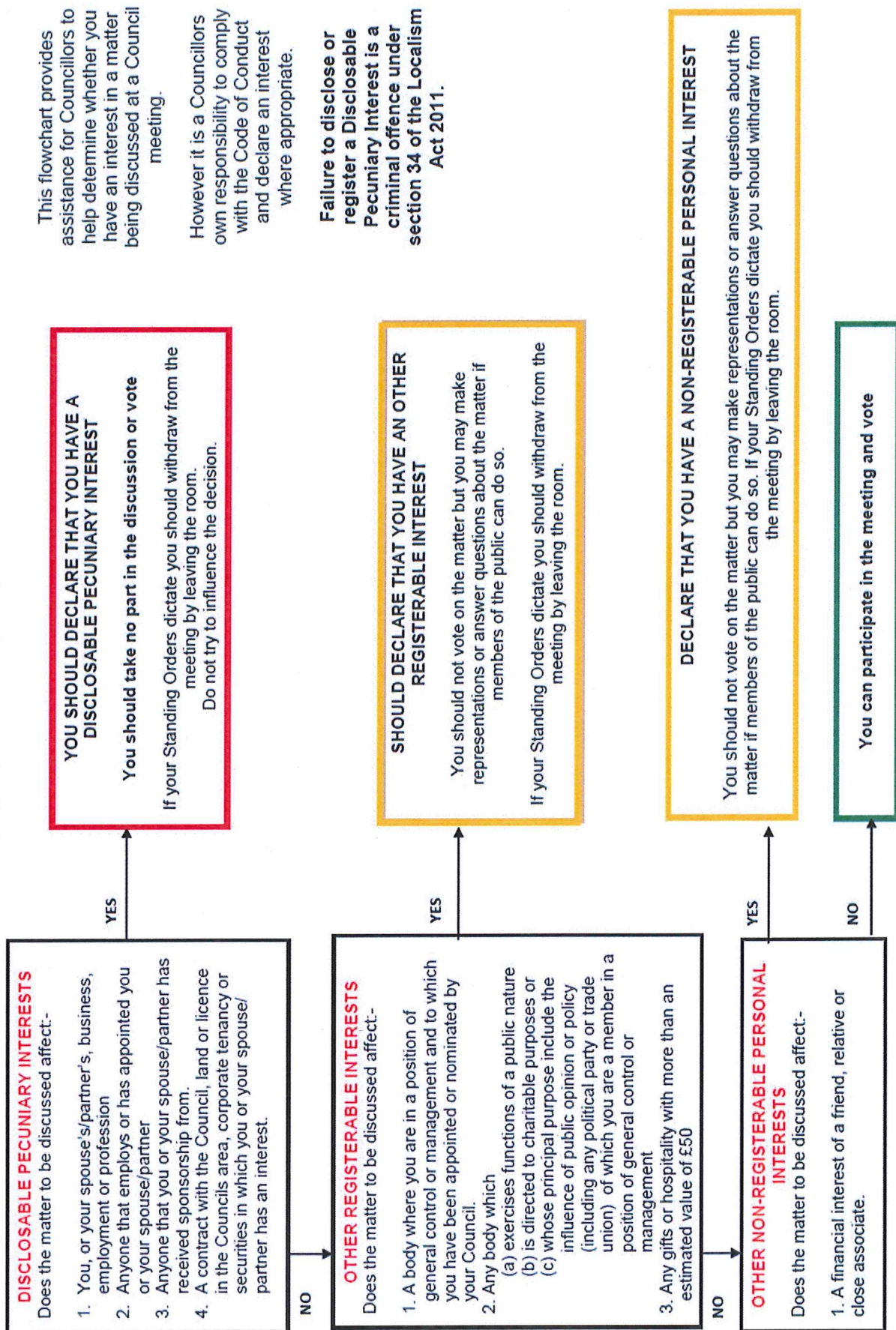
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**Item for information**

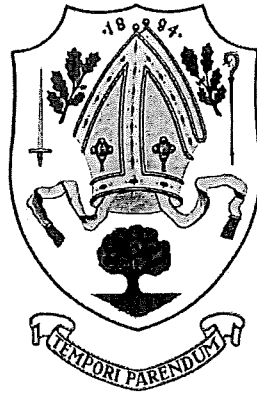
**13. Delegated Decisions Under Financial Regulation 4.5**

None

## DO I HAVE AN INTEREST?







# **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES 2018/19 Book 4**

### **Contents**

Town Council	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Planning Committee	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Town Council (Special)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Finance Committee	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2018



Minutes of the **MEETING of BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018** at 6.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Allen (Deputy Mayor), and Councillors Brownson, Cullen, Tucker and Wilson

**Also Present:** N Bryson (Bishop Auckland Town Team)  
David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**Public in Attendance:** None

**TC.70/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Blackburn, Chappell, Fleming and A Zair, L. Zair and S. Zair

**TC.71/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Item No 5. Minutes, Finance Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

- **Minute No FIN.21/18 Authorisation of Cheques - Delegated Powers**  
Councillor Brownson declared an 'other non-registerable personal interest' in respect of cheque no 1642 and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Allen declared an 'other non-registerable personal interest' in respect of cheque nos 1646 and 1651 took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

**TC.72/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No questions were raised by members of the public

**PRESENTATIONS**

**TC.73/18 BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN TEAM**

Nigel Bryson, Chairman of the Town Team, updated members with regard to recent activities of the Town Team.

It was noted that a meeting of the Town Team was held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018, which had been attended by 35 local people.

A presentation was given on the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) by Dr Bob McManners, Chair of the HAZ Steering Group and Annalisa Ward, HAZ Project Manager, who outlined the background and aims and objectives of the HAZ.

Presentations were also given by The Auckland Project and Kynren.

It was noted that Kynren had achieved a five-star rating by 85% of reviewers on TripAdvisor and had been rated as one of the top 3 UK shows. It had been reported that audience numbers were higher than the previous year. In addition Kynren's cast and crew had been awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The Auckland Tower would be open for a preview on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2018 to coincide with the Bishop Celebrates Together event and the Town Council's Horticultural Show.

Auckland Castle would be re-opening in spring 2019. The Spanish Art Gallery was planned to open in 2019.

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**

Consultation on the Master Plan led by Brighter Bishop Auckland had concluded. Results were being analysed. Further consultation was being undertaken with young people as part of the process.

The procurement process for the Community WiFi had concluded. Documentation had to be finalised prior to announcing the winning bidder. The project was on track to go live in December 2018.

It was clarified that Durham County Council was the lead organisation on the wifi project, i.e. undertaken procurement, financing capital spend, acting as data controller and processor, the Town Team and Town Council was funding revenue expenditure for the first 3 years and would participate in the management of the system, perhaps via the establishment of a working group.

The Town Team's annual Car Show had been held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2018. Feedback from the day was positive. Further feedback had been requested from participating dealers.

Bishop Celebrates together would take place on 29<sup>th</sup> September and would coincide with the Town Council's Horticultural Show and a preview of Auckland Tower.

Monster Saturday would take place in October. An application for funding to support the Advent Window project had been made to Durham County Council via Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP.

In terms of the events sponsored by the Town Council it was noted that the 1940's event had been a great success. It had been particularly encouraging that a number of town centre businesses had joined in the event. Attendance for the street entertainment arranged for four Saturdays had not been as great as anticipated. The events had been provided within budget. A report was being prepared for future consideration by the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted

#### **TC.74/18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Town Council	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2018
Planning Committee	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2018
Events Committee	7 <sup>th</sup> August 2018
Finance Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Allotments & Environment Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2018

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and recommendations contained therein be adopted

There were no further matters arising

#### **TC.75/18 REPORT OF MAYOR**

Members noted a report of the Mayor detailing the events attended since the last meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

#### **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor



**TC.76/18 VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES**

Consideration was given to a report setting out vacancies on a number of committees. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Due to the number of Members absent from the meeting this item was deferred to the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

**TC.77/18 NALC LARGER COUNCILS COMMITTEE - NOMINATION**

Consideration was given to a report regarding the nomination of Councillor D.A. Fleming for re-election to the NALC Larger Council's Committee. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Fleming's nomination to the NALC Larger Council's Committee be endorsed.

**TC.78/18 CHRISTMAS EVENT 2018**

Consideration was given to a report regarding the provision of fairground rides at the Town Council's Christmas event to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018. (For copy see file of Minutes)

**RESOLVED:** 1. That the Showman's Guild's offer to charge users £1.50 per ride be accepted.

2. That no pitch fee be requested of the fairground ride provider.

**TC.79/18 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION**

The following would be invited to attend an appropriately timed meeting to update the Town Council on their activities:

- Jill Wood, Feedback on Food Festival (30<sup>th</sup> October 2018)
- Debbie Connell, Feedback on Summertime Activities
- WiFi Demonstration

**TC.80/18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council excluded the press and public for the remaining items on the agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)**

**TC.81/18 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

The Town Clerk gave an update with regard to the purchase of office accommodation.

**RESOLVED:** That a special meeting of Council be arranged to consider options to fund the purchase of the premises.

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor



Minutes of the Meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY, 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018** at 7.50 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Tucker (Chairman) and Councillors Allen, Cullen and Wilson

**Also Present:** David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**PL.11/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor L Zair

**PL.12/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

**PL.13/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

**PL.14/18 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL: PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Consideration was given to a schedule of planning applications received since the last meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council has no objections to the planning applications detailed on the schedule.

**PL.15/18 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – PLANNING DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to schedule of planning decisions that had been determined under delegated authority. (For copy see file of Minutes)

**RESOLVED:** That the schedule be noted.

**Signed:** .....  
**Chair**



Minutes of the **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018** at 6.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Fleming (Deputy Mayor), and Councillors Allen, Blackburn, Brownson, Chappell, Cullen, Tucker, Wilson, L. Zair and S. Zair

**Also Present:** David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**Public in Attendance:** None

**TC.82/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were submitted by Councillor A Zair.

**TC.83/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted.

**TC.84/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

**TC.85/18 COUNCIL ACCOMMODATION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk regarding the proposed purchase of accommodation for the town council. (For copy see file of Minutes)

Members were reminded that at its meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, Council agreed to pursue the purchase of premises to be used as the Council's offices to help meet its current and long term requirements and also to project a positive and professional image to the public and partner organisations. In reaching this decision the Council considered responses to the public consultation exercise together with a number of options to fund the purchase. (Minute No TC.202/17 refers).

It was noted that due to commercial sensitivity the identity or exact location of the property could not be revealed at the that time.

Members reviewed the options to fund the projected taking into account the internal auditor's recommendation to increase projected balances in the general reserve following the purchase to maintain a minimum threshold of 25% of precept as recommended by Mazars, the Council's external auditor. Members noted that the available funds for the capital project was £127,099. A loan was to be sought from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) to help fund the capital project. Interest rate at the PWLB was 2.89% fixed for the duration of the loan.

Detailed consideration was given to five options to fund the purchase of the premises, which ranged from 80/20 to 50/50 ratio of loan to earmarked reserves. The range of options shown could be accommodated from within the Council's current budget allocation to rent accommodation which is £9,000 p.a. Each option identified an amount of contingencies to be used for any unforeseen issues. Any unused contingencies would be used to minimise borrowing and to provide earmarked funds for future repairs and maintenance.

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**

Councillor Tucker wished it to be recorded that she could not support the purchase of office premises at the current time due to the uncertainty of the economic climate.

It was proposed by Councillor Blackburn and seconded by Councillor S. Zair that Option 1 of the financial options appraisal be agreed.

On a vote being taken the motion was passed. (9 votes for, 1 vote against).

- RESOLVED:**
1. That option 1 of the financial options appraisal be agreed to fund the project
  2. That an application be made to the Secretary of State for permission to borrow money from the Public Works Loans Board

**TC.86/18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council excluded the press and public for the remaining items on the agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)**

**TC.87/18 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk (for copy see file of Minutes) with regard to the sequencing of the purchase and building work and the lease of office space following the purchase. The report also summarised details of meeting with the vendor

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.
  2. That the tender documentation be agreed and the companies listed in the report be invited to tender.

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor

Minutes of the Meeting of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2018 AT 5.00 P.M.**

**Present:** Councillor Wilson (Chairman) and Councillors Blackburn, Brownson, and S. Zair

**Also Present:** Councillor Fleming and David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**FIN.24/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Allen and Chappell

**FIN.25/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Item No 4.5 Medium Term Financial Plan**

Councillor Blackburn declared an 'disclosable pecuniary interest' in respect of the budget allocation entry for Citizens Advice Durham and withdrew from the meeting for the duration of the discussion on that entry.

Councillor S. Zair declared an 'disclosable pecuniary interest' in respect of the budget allocation entry for the Community Toilet Scheme and withdrew from the meeting for the duration of the discussion on that entry.

**FIN.26/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

**FIN.27/18 ACCOUNT BALANCES AS AT 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

The Town Clerk reported account balances as follows:-

Lloyds Deposit Account	£23,881.94
Lloyds Current Account	£7,631.59
Darlington Building Society	£107,516.12
Nationwide	£98,681.58
Santander	100,000.00

**RECOMMENDED:** That the information be noted.

**FIN.28/18 AUTHORISATION OF CHEQUES – DELEGATED POWERS**

In accordance with delegated powers, payments totalling the amounts below had been made as detailed in the report. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Current Account	£31,142.46
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**RECOMMENDED:** That the action taken be confirmed.

**FIN.29/18 CHEQUES PRESENTED FOR AUTHORISATION**

No cheques were presented for authorisation.

**FIN.30/18 BANK RECONCILIATIONS AT END OF QUARTER 2**

Members noted and confirmed that accounts held by the Council had been reconciled and signed by the Chairman of Finance Committee.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the bank reconciliations be noted and confirmed.

**Signed:** .....  
**Chair**

**FIN.31/18 SPEND AGAINST BUDGET AS AT 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018 (QUARTER 2)**

A schedule detailing spend against budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 (end of Quarter 2) was circulated and considered. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RECOMMENDED:** That the information be noted.

**FIN.32/18 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2018/19 - 2021/22**

Consideration was given to a report setting out the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2018/19-2021/22 which had been updated to take into account latest information with regard to the anticipated revenue costs relating to the purchase of accommodation. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members noted that the MTFP would be subject to change as a result of discussions on the Council's forward plan and budget setting for the next financial year.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 - 2021/22 be approved.

**FIN.33/18 APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY FUND AND DONATIONS**

Members considered an application for community fund grant from Bishop Auckland Branch NE Keep Fit Association. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Following careful consideration Members felt unable to support the event as it was not being held in the town.

**RECOMMENDED:** That no grant of be made to Bishop Auckland Branch NE Keep Fit Association



**BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL****30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018****REPORT OF MAYOR**

The Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor has represented the Town Council at the following engagements since the last Council meeting.

<b>Date of Event</b>	<b>Event Detail</b>	<b>Mayor Attendance</b>	<b>Deputy Mayor Attendance</b>
<b>07-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland Town Hall / Durham County Council Invitation to Exhibition Private View Bishop Auckland Town Hall, Market Place		Y
<b>10-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland Town Ambassadors Quiz Night Fundraiser Spice Lounge, Fore Bondgate, Bishop Auckland		Y
<b>16-Sep-18</b>	Spennymoor Town Council Civic Service St. Paul's Church, Whitworth Terrace, Spennymoor		Y
<b>21-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland & Coundon in Bloom Murder Mystery Night Bishop Auckland Golf Club	Y	
<b>22-Sep-18</b>	Church View Care Home Diamond Wedding Anniversary Church View Care Home, South Church, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>25-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland St. Marys Junior FC Community Fund - Cheque Presentation Clubhouse, Bishop Auckland College, Woodhouse Close	Y	
<b>26-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland Table Tennis Club Community Fund - Cheque Presentation Bishop Barrington School, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>27-Sep-18</b>	Woodhouse Close Church Judging of Photograph Competition Woodhouse Close Church, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>28-Sep-18</b>	Macmillian Coffee Morning Chocolate Café, Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>29-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland Town Council Horticultural Show – Presentation of prizes Town Hall, Market Place, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>30-Sep-18</b>	Bishop Auckland Table Tennis Club Bishop Auckland Briar 2 Star Tournament – Presentation to Finalists Bishop Barrington School, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>03-Oct-18</b>	Cockton Hill Junior School Cooking Workshop Cockton Hill Junior School, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>06-Oct-18</b>	Bishop Auckland Choral Society Messiah Concert Bishop Auckland Town Hall	Y	

<b>16-Oct-18</b>	Henknowle Community Association Community Fund - Cheque Presentation Cumbria Place, Henknowle Bishop Auckland DL14 6TJ	Y	
<b>18-Oct-18</b>	Richmond Fellowship Community Fund - Cheque Presentation 14-16 High Bondgate, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>19-Oct-18</b>	The Auckland Project Lunch to celebrate the opening of Auckland Tower Castle Lodge, Market Place, Bishop Auckland	Y	
<b>20-Oct-18</b>	Head in the Clouds Art Studio Open Day Fore Bondgate, Bishop Auckland	Y	

**RECOMMENDED:** That the information be noted

**BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

**1. VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES**

Nominations are sought to fill vacancies on the following committees

**ALLOTMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Current membership:-

Councillor Dave Fleming (Chairman)  
Councillor Jack Cullen (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Jamie Blackburn  
Councillor Tanya Tucker  
Vacancy

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Current membership:-

Councillor David Wilson (Chairman)  
Councillor Lee Brownson (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Joy Allen  
Councillor Jamie Blackburn  
Councillor Leanda Chappell  
Councillor Sam Zair  
Vacancy

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Current membership:-

Councillor Tanya Tucker (Chairman)  
Councillor Jack Cullen (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Joy Allen  
Councillor David Wilson  
Councillor Lesley Zair  
Vacancy

**2. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2017/18 – EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT**

The External Auditor has completed the audit for the year ending 31 March 2018. A copy of the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return, which includes the External Auditor's Certificate and Report ((Section 3) is attached at Appendix 1.

There are no significant matters arising from the audit, however the following 'minor scope for improvement in 2018/19' has been highlighted in the Auditor's letter.

1. The internal control objective (f), *'petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for'* was ticked 'yes' by the internal auditor when no petty cash was held by the Council. The box should have been ticked 'not covered' or N/A and an explanation provided if no petty cash held. In future, the Council should ensure the annual return is accurate and complete.

2. The initial bank reconciliation appeared not to balance because figures at the bottom were actually from the ledger rather than the cash book. The cash book figures should be as Box 8 of the AGAR so the two sides of the reconciliation are the same without the needing to refer to a separate reconciliation of boxes 7 and 8. In future, we recommend the Council ensures the cash book and net balances on the bank reconciliation agree with each other and Box 8 of the AGAR before submitting the bank reconciliation for audit.

Appropriate notices have been placed in the Council's notice board and website.

#### **Internal Auditors Recommendation**

A schedule showing action taken in relation to the Internal Auditors recommendations is attached at Appendix 2 to update Members on progress.

- RECOMMENDED:**
1. That the audited Annual Return and External Auditors Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 be noted.
  2. That the progress made in relation to the Internal Auditors recommendations be noted.

### **3. TRAINING**

To consider attendance at the following training

#### **Finance Training**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 6.00 pm, County Hall Durham

The session will cover:-

- How budgets can be set
- How precepts are calculated
- How council tax demands are set using your council tax base and what it means for your council tax payers
- How budgets are monitored throughout the year including Internal Audit
- The importance of bank reconciliations
- Reserves
- Asset Registers
- Producing and completing your Annual Governance and Accountability Returns.

All of this is covered in the guidance provided in The Practitioners' Guide for governance and accountability for smaller authorities in England. Every council and all councillors are encouraged to be aware of this document and for it to be used throughout the year to ensure consistent and correct financial procedures are adopted.

- RECOMMENDED:** That consideration be given to attendance at the finance training session.

### **4. COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN**

The Council needs to consider its forward plan taking into account of the issues raised during consultation of the parish plan, together with other issues members may wish to address.

It is suggested that a workshop be arranged so that detailed consideration can be given to proposals prior to formal consideration at the next Council meeting. This would allow any proposals to be considered whilst undertaking a budget review for 2019/20 and its effects on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

- RECOMMENDED:** That a workshop be arranged to consider proposals for the Council's Forward Plan.

**5. BISHOP AUCKLAND TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER - VARIOUS AMENDMENTS**

Notification has been received from Durham County Council of various proposed amendments to waiting restrictions as follows:-

- Introduce waiting restriction along Durham Road - Requested by Durham Constabulary to address road safety issues
- Introduce waiting and loading restrictions around the fountain area on Gib Chare - requested by the local Councillor in a bid to improve the quality of the area
- Extend and amend permit parking along Escomb Road - Requested by local residents
- Introduce permit parking on High Bondgate - Requested by local residents
- Amend existing restrictions along North Bondgate to introduce Coach parking - Requested by the Auckland Project
- No further action is required against the Newgate Centre as proposals have already been consulted upon

Maps have previously been circulated showing the proposed amendments. These will also be displayed at the meeting.

Comments have been requested by Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

**RECOMMENDED:** That consideration be given to the proposed amendments.



# Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities in England Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 Part 3

## To be completed by:

- all smaller authorities\* where either the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; and
- any other smaller authorities that either:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt; or
  - have requested a limited assurance review.

## Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with Proper Practices.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
  - The annual internal audit report is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - Sections 1 and 2 are to be completed and approved by the authority.
  - Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved **before 2 July 2018**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or requesting a limited assurance review, **must** send to the external auditor:
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1, 2 and 3, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2018
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - your notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2017/18

Unless requested, do not send any original records to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed and is able to give an opinion on the limited assurance review, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return including **Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority.

## Publication Requirements

Smaller authorities with either income or expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** publish on a public website, under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return:

- **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2017/18**, page 4
- **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2017/18**, page 5
- **Section 3 – The External Auditor Report and Certificate 2017/18**, page 6
- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

\*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

## Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide*\* which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (i.e. no empty highlighted boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making amendments to the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return. Any amendments must be approved by the authority, properly initialled and accompanied by an explanation. If the Annual Governance and Accountability Return contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report prior to approving the annual governance statement and before approving the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before sending it to the external auditor.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, you **must** inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide*\*.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the explanation.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs will be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2017) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2018).
- Please enter the authority's name **only** in Section 3 on Page 6. **Do not complete the remainder of that section**, which is reserved for the external auditor.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation provided?	N/A	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been provided?	✓	
	The bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2018 is agreed to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority is a sole managing trustee? <b>NB:</b> do not send trust accounting statements unless requested or instructed.	N/A	

\*More guidance on completing this annual return is available in *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, which can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.slcc.co.uk](http://www.slcc.co.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)



# Annual Internal Audit Report 2017/18

## Bishop Auckland Town Council

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2018.

The internal audit for 2017/18 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	YES		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	YES		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	YES		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	YES		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	YES		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	YES		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	YES		

K. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
			N/A
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed). **SEE ATTACHED REPORT**

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

21/05/18

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Michael Geoffrey Ackroyd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

*Michael Geoffrey Ackroyd*

Date

21/05/18

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2017/18

We acknowledge as the members of:

Bishop Auckland Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified.

This Annual Governance Statement is approved by this authority and recorded as minute reference:

TC. 47/18  
19/6/2018

dated

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval is given:

Chairman

Clerk


Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

www.bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2017/18 for

### Bishop Auckland Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2017 £	31 March 2018 £	
1. Balances brought forward	172,887	202,877	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	160,411	168,539	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	59,088	49,068	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	82,038	83,781	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	107,471	111,555	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	202,877	225,148	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	206,595	222,561	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	18,557	18,606	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2018 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return present fairly the financial position of this authority and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer

*D. And*

Date

21/05/2018

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

19/6/2018

and recorded as minute reference:

TC. 48/18

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where approval of the Accounting Statements is given

*J. A. King*

## Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2017/18

In respect of

Bishop Auckland Town Council

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2018; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

### 2 External auditor report 2017/18

(~~Except for the matters reported below~~)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2017/18

We ~~certify~~~~do not certify~~\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2018.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

Mazars LLP, Durham, DH1 5TS

External Auditor Signature

Mazars LLP

Date

24 September 2018

\*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2017/18 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))

**BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Internal Auditors Report 2017/18 - Updated Actions**

Auditor's Recommendations	Actions
<p><b>1 The Councils projected Reserves for year end 2018/19</b>  The Council's external auditor has given guidance that reserves should be between 25% and 110% of precept.</p> <p>Unless the Council reviews its decision on the option to be progressed on the purchase/refurbishment of new offices then there could be serious implications on the projected level of reserves at the year end.</p> <p>I would anticipate that the projected reserves could possibly fall foul of the external auditor's advice unless the Precept is increased considerably and then run the risk of a local referendum being called.</p>	<p>Anticipated reserves following purchase of office accommodation reconsidered at Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018. General reserves of 25% of precept agreed. (Minute No TC.85/18 refers).</p> <p><b>No further action required</b></p>
<p><b>2 Deposits</b>  The Council should endeavour to spread its deposits with a view to keep the maximum balance with any Bank below the £85,000 threshold. If possible use first the current accounts with balances exceeding £85,000.</p>	<p>Considered at Finance Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> July. In considering the Internal Auditor's recommendation Members were conscious that a large amount of the funds held would be used to help purchase office accommodation in the near future. It was also noted that it had previously taken a number of months to open a new account as banks processes to authenticate signatories was lengthy.</p> <p>It was agreed that the situation regarding the number of accounts held by the Council be reviewed in 3 months. (Minute No. FIN.10/18 refers)</p>
<p><b>3 Use of Council debit card</b>  The Clerk to clarify whether the Council's insurance cover includes the use of a Council debit card and the amount of such cover included.</p>	<p>Zurich Municipal has advised that the Council is covered if an employee fraudulently uses the card (Fidelity Guarantee) however, not if it is lost or stolen.</p> <p>Lloyd's Bank have advised that the debit card would be cancelled with immediate effect when it is reported lost or stolen. Their Debit and Disputes Team will deal with any fraudulent transactions on the account with a view to recovering funds.</p> <p><b>No further action required</b></p>

Auditor's Recommendations	Actions
<b>4 Money in Transit</b> The Clerk to arrange for this risk to be added to the Council's insurance cover.	The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of Finance Committee, has arranged 'Money in Transit' cover to be included in the Council's insurance at a cost of £28  <b>No further action required</b>
<b>5 Tree Survey</b> The Clerk to include reference in the Council's Audit Planner a tree survey in 2019/20.	A tree survey was undertaken in June 2018.
<b>6 Business Interruption</b> The Clerk to add this risk to the Council's cover in the event of moving offices.	<b>Action:</b> Insurance cover be reviewed when new offices are purchased.
<b>7 The General Data Protection Regulations and Transparency Code</b> The Clerk to clarify whether any implications arising from these Regulations need to be included in the Council's insurance cover.	Zurich Municipal has advised that GDPR cover applies as previously in relation to data protection. The Council's policy will cover legal costs but not fines.  <b>No further action required</b>
<b>8 Members Training</b> The Clerk to clarify whether there are implications to the Council in Councillors not attending sufficient training sessions.	<b>Action:</b> Members be encouraged to attend training where applicable and appropriate
<b>9 Staff Salaries</b> The Council should review staff salaries on a regular basis.  With the likelihood of extra work and responsibilities arising from the purchase of new offices, and the recent changes, in the Transparency code and GDPR it might now be an opportune time for the Clerk to submit a detailed report on the matter.	<b>Action:</b> Consideration be given to undertaking a review of staff salaries to take into account additional work and responsibilities, including those associated with the purchase and management of council offices, GDPR, increased activity relating to the outcome of the Parish Plan.