

Minutes of the meeting of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 30th OCTOBER 2018** at 6.00 p.m.

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

Also Present: A. Anderson and C.S. Auld (Bishop Auckland Town Team)
David Anderson (Town Clerk)

Public in Attendance: None

Prior to the start of the meeting the Mayor requested that all electronic equipment be turned off so that Members could devote their full attention to the business to be considered on the agenda.

Councillor Tucker refused to turn off her iPad stating that she received agendas electronically. The Mayor offered her a paper copy of the agenda. Councillor Tucker refused the paper copy and left the meeting.

TC.88/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Councillor Allen.

TC.89/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item No 7 - Minutes, Finance Committee held on 23rd October 2018

Councillors Blackburn and S. Zair declared a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' in respect of Minute No FIN.32/18 Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19-2021/22 and withdrew from the meeting for the duration of the discussion on that entry.

Item No 10.5 - Bishop Auckland Traffic Regulation Order - Various Amendments

Councillors Brownson declared a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' in respect of proposed amendments to existing restrictions along North Bondgate to introduce coach parking, and withdrew from the meeting for the duration of the discussion on that proposal.

TC.90/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions were raised by members of the public

PRESENTATIONS

TC.91/18 BISHOP AUCKLAND FOOD FESTIVAL

It was noted that Jill Wood, Events Officer, Durham County Council was unable to attend the meeting. Arrangements had been made for her to attend the meeting to be held on 11th December 2018.

Consideration of this item was deferred.

TC.92/18 BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN TEAM

Core Team

Alan Anderson, Bishop Auckland Town Team, updated members with regard to recent activities of the Core Team.

The Core Team had last met on 19th September 2018. Further discussion had been given to the creation of a shared vision for the town centre taking into account the wide

Signed:
Town Mayor

variety of projects and activity taking place. It was thought that this would help co-ordination and collaboration where possible and practical to add value to outcomes. It would also help to inform local people of the efforts being made to regenerate the town centre. Further discussion was to be given when the Master Plan exercise had concluded.

Updates were given by Kynren and Durham County Council Regeneration, together with an update on social media activities. The following was noted:-

- **Master Plan** (Brighter Bishop Auckland)
The second round of consultation had achieved 650 responses. Analysis was being undertaken. There had been a relatively low response from under 18's. Focus groups were being organised with secondary schools in the next 2 - 3 weeks.
- **Community Wifi** (DCC, BATT, BATC)
A survey had been undertaken of the town centre investigating where apparatus could be located. Stress tests would be undertaken on appropriate lampposts. It was anticipated that the physical infrastructure would be installed mid-November.

DCC would be Data Controller and Data Processor. A framework of use and protocols would need to be established between DCC, BATT and BATC

- **Signage to Fore Bondgate** (DCC)
Graham Hopper had been commissioned to design suitable signage. Consultation would be undertaken.
- **Heritage Action Zone**
Walking tours had taken place with 27 people participating. Majority had been from the local area, but had also included people from Wakefield and Australia.

An economic study was to be commissioned of the town centre (mid-October) investigating empty units and 1st floor space accommodation. Looking at English Heritage grant to take this forward.

A marketing plan was being developed with the aim of attracting developers, investors, agents to the potential opportunities in the town centre.

- **Kynren**
Kynren had achieved the most successful season in terms of:-
 - greatest audience numbers
 - 5* rating from over 85% of reviewers on TripAdvisor
 - Rated as top 3 best shows in UK.

Events Team

Clive Auld, Chairman of the Events Team, gave an overview of recent activities of the Events Team.

It was noted that Bishop Celebrates Together had taken place on 29th September, which coincided with the Town Council's Horticultural Show and a preview of Auckland Tower. The event had been very successful. Turnout had been magnificent.

Monster Saturday had taken place in the Newgate Centre on 27th October.

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Town Mayor

Advent Window project was being organised to run from 1st December through to 24th December. It was noted that there had been a great deal of interest from retailers wishing to be involved in the project. With only 24 days available the project was oversubscribed. There were new shops involved although around 90% had also supported the project the previous year.

An evaluation had been undertaken of Town Team events which showed 90% of businesses surveyed had increased takings on days that events were held.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted

TC.93/18 PROPOSED CLOSURE OF WARD 6, BISHOP AUCKLAND HOSPITAL

Consideration was given to a formal response to the proposed closure of Ward 6, Bishop Auckland Hospital.

It was **Moved** by Councillor Blackburn, **seconded** by Councillors Chappell, Cullen and Wilson that 'The Council oppose the closure of Ward 6 of Bishop Auckland Hospital in the strongest terms'

On a vote being taken the motion was unanimously agreed.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Council oppose the closure of Ward 6 of Bishop Auckland Hospital in the strongest terms.
 2. That a letter be sent to the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust seeking clarification on whether Ward 6 was to be closed.

TC.94/18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

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

There were no further matters arising

TC.95/18 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

TC.96/18 VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES

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

- RESOLVED:**
1. That Councillor L. Zair be appointed to the Allotments and Environment Committee

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Town Mayor

2. That Councillor A. Zair be appointed to the Planning Committee
3. That the vacant seat on the Finance Committee be deleted.
4. That seats on committees be apportioned in accordance with political balance at the next Annual Meeting.

TC.97/18 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2017/18 - EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

Consideration was given to the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 which included the External Auditor's Certificate and Report. (For copy see file of Minutes).

There were no significant matters arising from the audit. Members noted 'minor scopes for improvement' which were contained in the Auditors letter.

Members also noted progress on action taken in relation to the Internal Auditors recommendations. Consideration was given to actions which had not yet been completed relating to deposits, member training and review of staff salaries.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 and External Auditors Report be noted.
 2. That the situation regarding the number of accounts held by the Council be reviewed in 3 months.
 3. That advice regarding the process to review of staff salaries to reflect increased responsibilities be sought from CDALC.

TC.98/18 TRAINING

Consideration was given to attendance at a finance training event to be held on Tuesday 13th November 2018 at 6.00 pm at County Hall.

RESOLVED: That Councillor S. Zair and the Town Clerk attend the training.

TC.99/18 COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to a report suggesting that a number of workshops be arranged to so that detailed consideration could be given to the development of a Council Plan. Proposals emerging from the workshops would be formally considered at a future Council meeting.

RESOLVED: That workshops be held on 20th November 2018 and 4th December 2018 to develop a Council Forward Plan.

TC.100/18 BISHOP AUCKLAND TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER - VARIOUS AMENDMENTS

Consideration was given to various proposed amendments to waiting restrictions to:-

- Introduce waiting restriction along Durham Road.
- Introduce waiting and loading restrictions around the fountain area on Gib Chare
- Extend and amend permit parking along Escomb Road
- Introduce permit parking on High Bondgate
- Amend existing restrictions along North Bondgate to introduce Coach parking

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Town Mayor

With regard to the proposed amendment of existing restrictions along North Bondgate to introduce coach parking, Members were opposed to the proposed amendments as it would result in the net loss of disabled bays, a number of bays offering 1 hour parking and loading bays. The removal of these facilities would have a detrimental effect on disabled drivers, local residents and businesses. Concerns were also raised about the proximity of coach parking to adjacent buildings, which included at least one residential property.

The remainder of the proposals were supported, although concerns were raised about the displacement of cars utilising current on-street parking availability and the possible effect in other parts of the town.

RESOLVED: That Members comments be forwarded to Durham County Council.

TC.101/18 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 (11th December 2018)
- Liz Fisher, The Auckland Project ((15th January 2018)
- Debbie Connell, Feedback on Summertime Activities
- WiFi Demonstration - informal sessions to be arranged

TC.102/18 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.103/18 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk updating members on progress made in relation to the purchase of office accommodation.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the information be noted and the action taken be endorsed.
 2. That the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer be authorised to make an application to the Public Works Loans Board of £181,266 on the basis of an annuity loan over a 50-year period.
 3. That Bradley Hall be requested to advise on appropriate terms for the lease of office space.

TC.104/18 CODE OF CONDUCT - MONITORING OFFICERS DECISION NOTICE

Members noted a Decision Notice that had been issued by the Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED: That the Decision Notice be noted

Signed:
Town Mayor