

BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
Minutes of the meeting 21 May 2024
Held at Bishop Auckland Town Council Offices, Kingsway Court, Bishop Auckland

In Attendance: Cllr S Zair (retiring chair) Councillors Balmer-Howieson, M Harker, K Lawson, M Siddle, A Zair, L Zair

Also Present: Vicki Booth (Acting Town Clerk)

TC 013/24 Election of Mayor - for the 2024-5 Municipal Year. Cllr Mike Harker nominated by Cllr Adam Zair and seconded by Cllr Kimm Lawson.

Resolved: that members supported the nomination and Cllr Harker agreed to be the 2024/25 Mayor

TC 014/24 Declaration of Acceptance of Office - The Mayor will signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

Resolved: that the Mayor Councillor Mike Harker signed the declaration of office

TC 015/24 Presentation to Retiring Mayor - A vote of thanks was taken for the retiring Mayor, who was then be presented with a medal and photobook to commemorate his term of office.

Resolved: that members thanked retiring mayor for the commitment and efforts he made to the role over the past 12 months

TC 016/24 Apologies for absence – were receive from Cllr A Legge, Cllr J Blackburn, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr K Fryatt

Resolved: that members accepted the apologies

TC 017/24 Declarations of Interest - To invite members to declare any interest they may have.

Resolved: that no declarations of interest were made

TC 018/24 Election of Deputy Mayor - To elect a Deputy Mayor for the 2024-5 Municipal Year. Cllr Lawson was nominated by Cllr Balmer-Howieson and seconded by Cllr Siddle. Cllr A Zair was nominated by Cllr L Zair and seconded by Cllr Harker. The casting vote was abdicated by the Chair and the item was deferred until the next Town Council in June.

Resolved: that the members agreed that the appointment of Deputy Mayor would be be deferred until the next meeting where a new vote will be taken

TC 019/24 Declaration of the Acceptance of Office for the Deputy Mayor - The Deputy Mayor will, to sign a declaration of acceptance of office.

Resolved: that the item be deferred due to TC018/24 above.

TC 020/24 To re-confirm the Articles and, Responsibilities Rules of Procedure, Codes and Protocols of, Members Allowances of Bishop Auckland Town Council Constitution and General Power of Competence.

To Consider the Constitution and any changes, this includes the adoption of the Members Code of Conduct, to include the Declaration of Pecuniary Interests.

Resolved: that members agreed the report and the reconfirmation of the above articles, responsibilities, rules, procedures, codes of protocols of Bishop Auckland Town Council and adopted General Power of Competence, no amendments to be made at this time.

That Part 4 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to be deferred until the new regulations are established and any changes required brought to Council.

That members agreed the members allowance will remain unchanged at £440 per year for elected members with a special allowance for the Mayor of an additional £440. Members noted that local government is a big commitment and in financially difficult times doesn't make the role of a town Councillor very appealing and may need consideration in the future.

TC 021/24 Appointments to Committees, Panels, Outside Bodies and Working Parties -

Resolved: that members agreed that to readopt the members who attend Committees, Panels, Outside Bodies and Working Groups remains unchanged with the exception of the Policy and Resources Committee. Members agreed to defer this appointment until the next meeting.

Policy and Resources Committee 6 Members	Deferred item
Allotments and Environment Committee 5 Members	MS – Chair AL – Deputy SZ, KF, KL
Community Committee 6 Members	KL – Chair LZ – Deputy Chair MH, KF, HBH
Disciplinary and Grievance Appeals Panel 3 Members, (2 Labour, 1 Independent) N.B. Cannot sit on both Policy and Resources and Disciplinary and Grievance Appeals Panel.	LZ - Chair HBH, KL
General Appeals Panel	3 Members drawn from a list of all Councillors by the Town Clerk.

TC 022/24 Diary of Meetings 2024-25 - To consider a diary of meetings for 2024-25 (see file Copy)

Resolved: that June and July dates to be amended. Committees to remain shelved and discussed at Town Council for the foreseeable future. That the agenda be more flexible in order to align with the capacity of the acting clerk.

TC 023/24 Bishop Auckland Town Council End of Year Finance Report – including AGAR and Internal Audit Report was presented (see file Copy)

Resolved: that members thanked the staff for a comprehensive report and agreed the recommendations.

That the members welcomed and accepted the internal auditors and report and whilst no recommendations they wished to continue to improve systems and processes.

That the Annual Governance Accountability Return (AGAR) was agreed and that the Chairman signed section 1, and the Clerk and Chairman signed section 2.

That the RFO is now to submit the return to the External Auditor on behalf of the Council and ensure that the exercise of public rights is appropriately met.

TC 024/24 Public Participation - To hear from any members of the public subject to [Public Participation Policy](#)

Resolved: no members of the public were present

TC 025/24 Minutes - To approve the Minutes of the following meetings:

- Town Council 23 April 2024

Resolved: that the minutes were accepted.

TC 026/24 Matters Arising - To receive any matters arising from the above Minutes which are not included elsewhere on the agenda (for information only).

Resolved: that members agreed no matters arising

TC 027/24 Report of Acting Town Clerk

a. Finance

i. Payments for authorisation – the report was presented (see appendix 1)

Resolved: that members approved the payments contained within the paper

ii. Borrowings and Savings (see file Copy)

Resolved: that members supported the proposed account balances and authorised the monies to be moved accordingly

b. Events update(see file Copy)

Resolved: that members agreed with the reallocation of the events and the ward & in year events budget (as per events paper attached). That members were keen on the Heritage Fair to go ahead rather than the 1940's event and were in support of reallocating the funds to ensure the Heritage Fair is a success.

c. Allotments Update (see file Copy)

Resolved: that members noted the allotment report update and were keen on ensuring we support the community and agreed to offer Robert Proud CIC a new plot at Woodhouse for the Dads and Kids group that he supports for mental wellbeing.

d. Land Update

Resolved: that members agreed to write to Halfords regarding the land around the building to support the Green Matters group. Cllr Lawson to take this forward.

TC 028/24 Correspondence – to consider items of correspondence received by the Council, including draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements (standard item)

Resolved: that members noted a letter received regarding the bees at Pollards allotments

TC 029/24 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.

TC 030/24 Correspondence - details of any Correspondence (letters or email received) (standing Item)

Resolved: no correspondence

Mrs V Booth steeped out of the meeting

TC 031/24 HR Update (standing Item) – An update of the current HR issues was provided.

Resolved: that the HR Situation be monitored in line with agreed policies, and that an Honorarium payment be allocated to Mrs Booth.

Net	VAT	Total	Cashed Date	Description	Payment Ref
338.33	16.92	355.25	30.04.24	Corona Energy (Kingsway)	EP
20.00	n/a	20.00	30.04.24	Mayors VE Day tickets	EP
9.99	2.00	11.99	30.04.24	Amazon - Pack of Thumb drives	EP
83.32	16.67	99.99	30.04.24	Amazon - New monitor for Sarah (other broke)	EP
51.58	4.32	25.90	30.04.24	Amazon - phone handset to connect to PC	EP
116.62	23.34	139.96	30.04.24	Amazon - 2 sets of under desk drawers	EP
260.00	n/a	260.00	30.04.24	AK Garden Clearance (Longstaff) Tindale 41/42 clearance (1)	EP
300.00	n/a	300.00	30.04.24	DCC - HR Advisory Service (Annual Fee)	EP
350.00	n/a	350.00	30.04.24	F Clerk	EP
273.75	54.75	328.50	02.05.24	Vinovium Associates (security)	EP
2,000.00	n/a	2,000.00	02.05.24	DCC - Summer Activity Programme (Town Hall)	EP
118.80	23.76	142.56	02.05.24	Bluecom services (broadband & phone system)	ep
		355.00	30.04.24	Event Management for Youth Awards Promotion	EP
36.94	1.85	38.79	07.05.24	EDF Skatepark	DD
200.00	40.00	240.00	14.05.24	J Holliday (remove gates WH, build flat pack, fix gate Pollards)	EP
150.00	n/a	150.00	14.05.24	King James WI donation for wool for bollard covers c/mas Town	EP
279.00	55.80	334.80	14.05.24	Aycliffe Fabrications (refabricate Beacon for D Day)	EP
240.00	n/a	240.00	14.05.24	AK Garden Clearance (Longstaff) Tindale 41/42 clearance (2)	EP
260.00	n/a	260.00	14.05.24	Twinkle Cleaning	EP
108.50	18.75	112.50	14.05.24	Deco Trophies (Mayors Medal and 31 medal boxes)	EP
10,000.00	n/a	10,000.00		DCC - Food festival Contribution	
377.00	n/a	377.00		DCC - Trade Waste Service	
5,456.62		6,547.94		My Civil Engineering - Woodhouse Road Surface	
324.53	64.91	389.44		Phoenix Software - extra Office 365 License	
10,000	0	10,000	15.05.24	transfer from Business Bank Lloyds Acc to Treasurers Acc	BT

