

Bishop Auckland Town Council

Minutes of Town Council

24 March 2026

In attendance: Cllr M Siddle Deputy Mayor (Chair), Cllr M Harker, Cllr S Grey, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr R Elloitt and Cllr T Redmond

Also Present: Sarah Harris Town Clerk

TC111/25 - Welcome: Cllr Siddle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

TC112/25 - Apologies for absence - Apologies were submitted from Cllrs S Zair, Cllr L Zair, Cllr D Wilkinson, Cllr J Fox, and Cllr A Legge.

Resolved: Members received and approved the absences for Cllr S Zair, Cllr L Zair, Cllr J Fox and Cllr Wilkinson and Cllr Legge.

TC113/25 - Declarations of interest -No declarations were made.

TC114/25 - Minutes - Minutes of the following were presented:

- a) Allotment and Environment Committee 20 January 2026 – proposed by RE seconded by MH
- b) Town Council 17 February 2026 – proposed by MH seconded by SG
- c) Community Committee 24 February 2026– proposed by RE seconded by DW
- d) Policy and Resources 3 March 2026– proposed by SG seconded by MH
- e) Allotment and Environment Committee 3 March 2026 – Inquorate - – proposed by MH seconded by MS

Members were reminded by the that attendance at meeting was important and that inquorate meetings did not reflect well on the council.

Resolved: Members received, approved and adopted the minutes and all of the decisions contained within.

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TC115/25 - Matters Arising & Action Log update – The Clerk gave an overview of the action log and matters arising, not covered on the agenda. This included an update regarding street food markets, as Community Committee (minute ref CC049/25) has agreed to provide funding support for the Street Food Market delivered by Bacchanalia, and appropriate arrangements are now in place to ensure the Town Council's involvement is correctly represented in all marketing and promotional activity. Previous Bishop Auckland Street Food Markets have operated in partnership between Bacchanalia and Bridge Creative, however the current application which was agreed was submitted solely by Bacchanalia, who will now run the Bishop Auckland market as part of their county wide Street Food Carousel independently. Since that time, Bridge Creative have established a separate Friday Food Market event and, they used the Town Council logo without permission. This has now been removed, although it did appear in The Bishop's Press after they were asked to remove it from before the correction was made.

Resolved: that Members noted the updates and action logs, and confirmed that the market they were supporting was the Street Food Carousel with Bacchanalia.

PRC008/25 Boundary review – Cllr Grey said he had prompted DCC to respond to the email and they had promised that they would.

Resolved: that members agreed for SH to resend the email and copy Cllr S Grey in.

TC116/25 Reports

TC116a/25 Durham County Council

Cllr Gray provided a DCC update which covered:

- Local Area Networks – were being re-launched next month. Governance structures will have the board and a stakeholder panel. Town and Parishes are to be included where they can. Current staffing based in Spennymoor but it is being looked at to get them back to the areas.

Resolved: that members agreed a conversation could be had with the Town Council regarding office accommodation and hot desking.

- High Street Rental Auctions – paper had gone to cabinet and powers were in place, won't see any real outcomes until the 6 month and 12 month periods.

Cllr Elliott asked why DCC hadn't informed the town council that they were selling land/ property at Woodhouse Close, and Henknowle, and next to the football Club.

Cllr Gray – confirmed that he didn't know why the council hadn't been informed but would find out. The land at the football club is being sold as Economic development, and he wasn't aware of the other property/ land but would endeavour to find out.

Resolved: that Members noted the update, and Cllr Gray would feedback.

TC116b/25 Outside bodies representation feedback such as the Local Networks, Stronger Towns Board and CDALC, Etc.

Cllr Harker gave an update regarding CDALC. The council now had a place on the Exec. They had had an extra AGM to approve constitution. There had been a meeting with the Cabinet Member

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Nicola Lyons, which had been very positive about working with Town Councils. She had also requested to come to speak to the Council about Allotments as Bishop Auckland was now known as a good authority on the topic and noted for their good management practices.

Resolved: that Members noted the update

TC116bi/25 Request for Letter of Support from Bishop Auckland Rugby Club

Resolved: that Members noted the request and agreed that a letter of support be given to help the Rugby Club access S106 funding, subject to liaison with the Environment Agency regarding the flood defence measures and that appropriate permissions are in place with DCC and Planning.

TC117/25 Report of Mayor – The Mayor was not in attendance due to annual leave, but Cllr Siddle as Deputy advised that he had attended Dinners at Sunderland and Durham. Cllr Siddle had attended the 10th Anniversary of the railway exhibition at the Four Clocks Centre, King James School for their science fair, AYCC with Wear valley Community Action for their easter event, and Weardale Railway for a northern rail excursion. All had been very good and organisers were pleased to have the council in attendance.

Resolved: that members noted the update.

TC118/25 Finance –

TC118a/25 Payments for Authorisation

Resolved: Members noted the report and agreed that the payments be made.

TC118b/25 Predicted Q4 outturn and request for virement of funds

Resolved: Members noted the report and agreed for the virements for protection of funds be made, including Legal and Professional Services.

TC118c/25 Approval of works for allotment sites

Resolved: Members noted the report and agreed

- That a site visit to Woodhouse Close be arranged, and following this Policy and Resources committee to agree the discuss the work programme when they meet on 7th April.
- that the works for water at Mill Race are very costly, and at this time the council are not in a position to seek further quotations and fund the works. The Clerk is to write to tenants to advise that new supply is at this stage too costly and not a good use of public funds. Further discussions to be at allotment committee regarding mitigation, this may include supply of additional IBC tanks.
- the works at South Church boundary.

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TC119/25 Consultations –

TC119a/25 CDDFRS Community Risk Management Plan

Resolved: Members noted the response and agreed for it to be submitted.

TC119b/25 DCC Housing Allocations Policy Review

Resolved: Members noted the response and agreed for an addition to be made regarding an emphasis on local lettings where local residents would have greater priority and for it to be submitted.

TC120/25 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.

Resolved: Members agreed to the exclusion on the press and public.

TC121/25 Council Strategy – verbal update was given on strategy development.

Resolved: Members noted the update and welcomed the revised documents at the April 2026 committee meetings.

TC122/25 Town of Culture Bid Expression of Interest – update from working group ahead of submission, inc. proposal for Annual Parish Meeting date.

Resolved:

- Members agreed that the working group are to submit the EOI when completed before the 31 March 2025 deadline, and where possible. Members were welcome to attend the working group on Friday. Submitted that the EOI be circulated but it is to remain confidential.
- Members agreed that the 'mini programme' to link to the TOC bid and the annual parish meeting be brought to 7th April 2026 Policy and Resources Committee.

TC123/25 Sale of Land at Broken Banks – Update was given, regarding the remained of plot 4. The sale of Plot 1 is now complete.

Resolved: Members noted the update and agreed that the 80% threshold should be applied and therefore as the additional offer was to be turned down and the tenant be offered one last chance to meet the 80% threshold with an increase of £910. If this is not met then the remaining portion of plot 4 is to be sold with plots 6 and 7, on the open market.

TC124/25 Council Resourcing –

TC124a/25 Training follow up was given regarding the regional training seminar and notice of the NALC Annual Conference in June.

Resolved: Members noted the update and agreed that the Clerk and Deputy are to attend NALC Conference, with overnight accommodation in separate rooms, and travel by train the day prior. The council would cover the costs, from the legal and professional fees budget, and the costs to be kept to a minimum, but a reasonable standard of accommodation to be

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secured. A reasonable level of subsistence to be claimed for the trip and a report back to council given.

TC124b/25 outcome of recent recruitment exercise for the posts of Community Support Officer, and Governance Support Officer (both 20hrs per week) Members noted the process for recruitment, in total we received 18 applications for 1 role and 16 for the other. A high caliber of candidates had applied, and for each role 6 persons were interviewed for each role. The shortlisting and interview panel was the Clerk, Deputy and Chair of Policy and Resources Committee – as HR sits within its TOR. A scoring matrix had been used to assess against the job description, for shortlisting and set format questions used for the interviews, married with a scoring matrix. The Community Support Role interview included a short task. Two suitable candidates had been selected with suitable reserves identified. Offers subject to satisfactory references have been made to those candidates.

Resolved: that members noted and welcomed the rigorous process used looked forward to the new persons joining the team in the near future.

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Appendix 1 – Payments for Authorisation

Minute Reference: TC118a/25

Scribe Ref	Date	Net	VAT	Gross	Description	Supplier	Payment Type	Status
Admin								
639	16.03.2026	£2,004.38	£0.00	£2,004.38	Pensions - March 2026	Durham County Council	EP	Contract
638	26.03.2026	£65.40	£0.00	£65.40	HMRC, Tax & NI for members - March 2026	HMRC	EP	Contract
637	26.03.2026	£3,463.20	£0.00	£3,463.20	HMRC, Tax & NI for staff March 2026	HMRC	EP	Contract
636	26.03.2026	£301.30	£0.00	£301.30	Members Allowance - March 2026	Bishop Auckland Town Council (BATC)	EP	Contract
635	26.03.2026	£8,534.00	£0.00	£8,534.00	Staff Salaries - March 2026	Bishop Auckland Town Council (BATC)	EP	Contract
634	16.03.2026	£10.80	£0.00	£10.80	MA mileage 01.07.25-13.03.26	Michael Armstrong	EP	Paid
633	16.03.2026	£18.45	£0.00	£18.45	Allot Officer travel expenses	Boody Spelk	EP	Paid
626	16.03.2026	£55.70	£0.00	£55.70	Vicki Booth - Mileage Claim 01/10/2025-11/03/2026	Vicki Booth	EP	Paid
590	26.02.2026	£2,685.87	£0.00	£2,685.87	Staff Pensions - Feb 2026	Durham County Council	EP	Contract
555	17.02.2026	£17.08	£0.00	£17.08	Lloyds Banking Fees 10/12/2025-09/01/2026	Lloyds Bank Plc.	DD	Contract
589	26.02.2026	£87.80	£0.00	£87.80	HMRC, Tax & NI - Members Feb 2026	HMRC	EP	Contract
588	26.02.2026	£3,381.08	£0.00	£3,381.08	HMRC, Tax & NI for Staff - Feb 2026	HMRC	EP	Contract
587	26.02.2026	£388.91	£0.00	£388.91	Members Allowance - Feb 2026	Bishop Auckland Town Council (BATC)	EP	Contract
586	26.02.2026	£8,534.00	£0.00	£8,534.00	Staff Salaries - Feb 2026	Bishop Auckland Town Council (BATC)	EP	Contract
618	31.03.2026	£98.20	£19.64	£117.84	Job Advert in Recruitment Today National Booklet Issue 144	Hutchinson Marketing Ltd. (Recruitment Today)	EP	Outstanding
610	16.03.2026	£62.09	£12.42	£74.51	Orange/Gray Vinyl Wrap, 8x Andrex Toilet Rolls (9 Pack), Avery Print Labels etc.	Amazon Business EU S.á r.l. UK	EP	Paid
609	16.03.2026	£25.92	£5.18	£31.10	2x Boxes of A4 Paper, 80gsm (5 Reams)	Amazon Business EU S.á r.l. UK	EP	Paid
608	26.02.2026	£46.91	£9.38	£56.29	Photocopier Usage 28/01/2026-27/02/2026	Totals Business Computers Ltd. (Total Business Group)	EP	Paid
619	17.03.2026	£18.88	£0.00	£18.88	Lloyds Banking Fees, 10/01/2026-09/02/2026	Lloyds Bank Plc.	DD	Contract

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627	13.03.2026	£207.50	£41.50	£249.00	Apple Magic Keyboard Folio, White	Currys Business	DC	Paid
625	31.03.2026	£10.00	£2.00	£12.00	Annual charge for .GOV.UK Domain Name	Durham County Council	EP	Outstanding
629	13.03.2026	£1.94	£0.00	£1.94	SumUp Card Transaction Fees - Allotment Rents 2025/26, 12/03/2026	SumUp Payments Ltd.	53Tindale (12/03/2026 SumUp)	Contract
606	10.03.2026	£187.07	£37.41	£224.48	Mobile Phones	O2 - Telefónica UK Limited	DD	Contract
605	26.02.2026	£149.12	£29.82	£178.94	mouse, print labels, t/rolls etc	Amazon Business EU S.á r.l. UK	EP	Outstanding
599	24.02.2026	£83.50	£16.70	£100.20	Rialtas Software, Setup on New Laptop and Data Transfer	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd.	EP	Paid
614	06.03.2026	£150.00	£30.00	£180.00	Create Town of Culture 2028 Bid Page on BATC Website	Curious 12	EP	Paid
601	24.02.2026	£2.67	£0.53	£3.20	Refreshments for Town of Culture Meeting	Heron Foods	DC	Paid
562	05.02.2026	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00	Gambling and Small Society Lotteries Licence	Durham County Council	EP	Paid
578	17.03.2026	£52.00	£0.00	£52.00	Info Commissioners Office Renewal Fee	Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)	DD	Outstanding
572	10.02.2026	£175.50	£35.10	£210.60	VAT Training Part 2 VB	Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)	EP	Paid
570	10.02.2026	£135.00	£27.00	£162.00	SLCC Regional Training Seminar	Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)	EP	Paid
Allotments								
628	16.03.2026	£440.00	£0.00	£440.00	Glass etc from Bank Side at Rear of Pollards Allotments	AK Garden Maintenance & Waste Removal	EP	Outstanding
630	16.03.2026	£70.00	£0.00	£70.00	Northern Counties Allotment Association Membership	Northern Counties Allotments Association (NCAA)	EP	Outstanding
631	16.03.2026	£57.64	£0.00	£57.64	materials for fencings	Boody Spelk	EP	Paid
624	16.03.2026	£3,468.00	£693.60	£4,161.60	12x Full Page Adverts in Bishop Press, Annual Advertising Campaign	South West Durham News CIC	EP	Paid
621	09.03.2026	£20.83	£4.17	£25.00	Squire 50mm Combination Padlock	B&Q Limited	DC	Paid
620	05.03.2026	£61.20	£0.00	£61.20	road plains for Tindale	Clement Haulage Ltd.	EP	Paid
613	03.03.2026	£5.82	£1.17	£6.99	Fortress Trade Silver Matt Zinc Galvanising Spray Paint, 400ml	Screwfix Direct Ltd.	DC	Paid
592	26.02.2026	£431.74	£0.00	£431.74	Edge Hill Association 10% contribution	Edge Hill Allotment Association	EP	Paid

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591	26.02.2026	£325.55	£0.00	£325.55	Pollards Allotment Association 10% Contribution	The Pollards Allotment Association	EP	Paid
541	15.01.2026	£7.49	£1.50	£8.99	Minotaur Cable/Wire Cutter 200mm	Toolstation Ltd.	DC	Paid
556	20.01.2026	£7.66	£1.53	£9.19	faithful plastic pipe cutter	Screwfix Direct Ltd.	EP	Paid
580	11.02.2026	-£7.66	-£1.53	-£9.19	Credit: Faithful Plastic Pipe Cutter, 3-28mm	Screwfix Direct Ltd.	DC	Refund
Community Support								
607	26.02.2026	£15.19	£3.04	£18.23	2x Heavy Duty Can Crushers , Blue and Red	Amazon Business EU S.á r.l. UK	EP	Paid
583	19.02.2026	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	Community Fund - Trips for BACP Groups (Pending Receipts)	Bishop Auckland Community Partnership	EP	Paid
582	16.03.2026	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	Community Fund - Community Defibrillator (Pending Receipts)	Cornerstone	EP	Paid
581	19.02.2026	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	Community Fund - Men's Group Activities (Pending Receipts)	Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre	EP	Paid
604	26.02.2026	£25.28	£0.00	£25.28	Phoenix Toilet Rolls, 3Ply, White (10x 9 Packs) St Annes	Alta & Co. Trading Ltd (Amazon Business)	EP	Outstanding
603	26.02.2026	£18.85	£0.00	£18.85	Selpak Z Fold Paper Towels, 2 Ply, White (12x200) St Annes	We Can Source It Ltd. (Amazon Business)	EP	Outstanding
563	06.03.2026	£51.25	£2.56	£53.81	Skatepark, Electricity 01/01/2026-31/01/2026	EDF Energy (Skatepark)	DD	Contract
473	26.02.2026	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	comm grant for website	Bishop Auckland RUFC	EP	Paid
612	01.03.2026	£0.10	£0.00	£0.10	SumUp Card Transaction Fees - Mayor's Tapas Event, 04/02/2026	SumUp Payments Ltd.	Mayor's Tapas (04/02/2026 SumUp)	Contract
Kingsway								
623	11.03.2026	£1.67	£0.33	£2.00	2x TILLGANG Trays, 37x29cm	IKEA (Gateshead)	DC	Paid
602	26.02.2026	£360.00	£0.00	£360.00	Kingsway Cleaning	Blitzed 24/7 Cleaning	EP	Contract
584	13.02.2026	£75.49	£15.10	£90.59	grit box	Roadware Ltd.	EP	Paid
593	03.03.2026	£257.87	£51.57	£309.44	Kingsway Gas Jan-Feb 2026	Corona Energy Retail 2 Limited	EP	Contract
617	17.03.2026	£87.45	£4.37	£91.82	Kingsway, Electricity 01/02/2026-28/02/2026	EDF Energy (54 Kingsway)	DD	Contract
611	02.03.2026	£134.75	£26.95	£161.70	Telephone and Broadband, March 2026	Bluecom Services Ltd.	DD	Contract
585	26.02.2026	£12.46	£2.49	£14.95	blue roll	Luxtros Ltd.	EP	Paid
596	23.02.2026	£74.17	£14.83	£89.00	Round Wooden Fence Posts, 1.8m x 75mm (10 Pack)	Wilko.com	DC	Paid

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595	23.02.2026	£49.99	£10.00	£59.99	Spear & Jackson, Fence Post Hammer	Screwfix Direct Ltd.	DC	Paid
Mayor								
594	19.02.2026	£90.00	£0.00	£90.00	Mayor of Durham City Civic Dinner	The Charter Trusts for the City of Durham (Durham County Council)	EP	Paid
598	05.03.2026	£3,495.43	£0.00	£3,495.43	Mayors fundraising to Butterwick (maybe about £70 more when count change)	Butterwick Hospice	EP	Outstanding
597	23.02.2026	£40.45	£0.00	£40.45	Wendy Supreme Aran Wool, 15x Red and 2x Black	Boyes	DC	Paid
Events								
622	11.03.2026	£112.50	£22.50	£135.00	15x SNUDDA Lazy Susan	IKEA (Gateshead)	DC	Paid
600	05.03.2026	£31.40	£0.00	£31.40	potato seed for food fest activity	The Pollards Allotment Association	EP	Paid
632	05.03.2026	£4,667.00	£0.00	£4,667.00	third contribution to partnered events 2026	Baccanalia	EP	Paid

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