

Minutes of a **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **MONDAY, 25TH JANUARY 2011** at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor L. Zair (**in the Chair**) and Councillors Anderson, Fleming, Laurie, Lethbridge and S. Zair.

Also Present: Linda Goldie (Town Clerk), Michael Armstrong (Temporary Admin Assistant) and Lizzie Anderson (Wear Valley Mercury)

TC 150/10 PRESENTATION – BISHOP AUCKLAND STATION TRUST

The Mayor welcomed Andrew Everett, member of Bishop Auckland Station Trust who had been invited to the meeting to give a presentation on the history of Bishop Auckland Station and plans for the future.

The powerpoint presentation covered three aspects of Bishop Auckland:-

- The history of the town as a place worth visiting (especially by train);
- The reason for there being a station;
- The rise, fall and regeneration of the station

Andrew outlined the aims of the Trust which were:

- To campaign and work to improve the infrastructure, services and facilities of Bishop Auckland Station, based on sound environmental principles for the overall benefit of passengers using trains and of the wider local community.
- To encourage participation of the community in the work of the Trust by seeking volunteers, sponsorship and partnerships with local and national concerns.
- To promote a children's group to encourage younger members to participate in the Trust aims.

The Mayor thanked Andrew for his interesting presentation and wished him success on his plans for the future of the station, after which he then left the meeting.

TC 151/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Golightly, Huntington, Kay, Lee and Wilson.

TC 152/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 153/10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

TC 154/10 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30TH NOVEMBER 2010

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30th November 2010 be approved and adopted.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC 155/10 MATTERS ARISING

**(a) Future Jobs Fund – Park Wardens
(Minute Nos. TC 125/10 and TC 132/10 refer)**

The Town Clerk informed Members that she had been informed by Groundwork North East that due to the Future Jobs Fund programme coming to an earlier than expected end, due to cutbacks, they would be unable to process any more vacancies. This meant that no funding would be available for the employment of Park Wardens under this scheme.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

**(b) Food Festival Website
(Minute No. TC 136/10 (c) (ii) v refers)**

Councillor Sam Zair informed Members that Shaun York had transferred the domain name to Durham County Council and the Food Festival Website was now up and running. A thankyou letter had been sent to Shaun.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

**(c) Website Development
(Minute No. TC 138/10 refers)**

The Town Clerk informed Members that the website development meeting was to take place on Thursday, 27th January.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC 156/10 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Planning Committee - 13th December 2010

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 13th December 2010 be approved and adopted.

There were no matters arising

(b) Finance Committee - 18th January 2011

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 18th January 2011 be approved and adopted.

There were no matters arising.

**(c) Allotments and Environment
Committee - 18th January 2011**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Allotments and Environment Committee held on 18th January 2011 be approved and adopted.

There were no matters arising

(d) Planning Committee - 24th January 2011

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 24th January 2011 be approved and adopted.

There were no matters arising.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC 157/10 REPORT OF TOWN MAYOR

During the month, the Town Mayor reported that she had:-

- 1st December – Opened the Fenwick’s style Christmas window display in the Newgate Centre
- 2nd December – Attended the Christmas Tree Lighting event at the Castle Gates and then presented prizes in the Town Hall to children who won the Children’s Painting Competition
- 3rd December – Attended Spennymoor Town Council Civic Dinner and Ball
- 5th December – Attended the Santa Run at Hardwick Park along with the Chair of Durham County Council
- 5th December – Attended the Civic Carol Service of the Chairman of the County Council at Sunderland Bridge
- 8th December – Attended the Theatre Hooligans Christmas presentation at King James
- 9th December – Along with the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Lethbridge and husband Sam, attended St. Andrew’s Primary School and presented prizes to the children who won the Children’s Painting Competition
- 10th December – Attended Shildon Town Council Charity night
- 11th December – Councillor Lethbridge attended a Civic Carol Service at Spennymoor Town Hall
- 12th December – Attended Shildon Town Council Civic Carol Service
- 13th December – Attended Ferryhill Town Council Civic Carol Service
- 13th December – Judged the Christmas window dressing along with the Town Centre Manager and the Reverend Brenda Jones
- 13th December – Presented prizes to the children of St. Wilfrid’s Primary School who won the Children’s Paining Competition
- 14th December – Attended Durham County Council Chairman’s Civic Dinner
- 15th December – Presented prizes to the children of Etherley Lane Primary School who won the Children’s Paining Competition
- 15th December – Presented prizes to the children of Cockton Hill Primary School who won the Children’s Painting Competition
- 16th December – Attended Chilton Mayor’s Civic Carol Service
- 19th December – Attended Great Aycliffe Christmas Carol Service

TC 158/10 UNITARY AUTHORITY UPDATE

- Councillor Sam Zair reported that due to the severe cutbacks, many events were under threat and the Fireworks Display was potentially one of them unless a sponsor could be found
- Councillor Lethbridge said that the level of cuts was appalling and listed reductions in King James shared use facilities, the Citizens Advice Bureau, local bus services and tourism.

TC 159/10 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING EVENTS

(a) Bishop Auckland and Shildon Local Councils Committee – 20th January

The Town Clerk reported that she had attended the above meeting when the contents of the agenda for the next Area Action Partnership meeting was discussed. The Area Co-ordinator, Angelina reported that there was a possibility that the Area Budget could be cut from £150,000 to £120,000.

(b) Bishop Auckland Town Centre Forum – 21st January

Councillor Laurie reported that she had attended the above meeting when Melanie Sensicle, Chief Officer for Tourism had informed members that Regional Agencies had been abolished but a Visit England was being set up consisting of 80 destinations of which Durham County was one. Durham County Council funding was to be halved and all public money was to be matched by private money which would involve partnership working.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Councillor Laurie went on to say that the Town Council should encourage tourism and asked whether the members thought that the Town Council should be the point of liaison for tourism in County Durham.

RESOLVED: That the County Council be informed that the Town Council would like to be the point of liaison for tourism in County Durham.

(c) The Zurbaran Paintings at Auckland Castle

Councillor Laurie reported that she had attended a recent meeting regarding the Zurbaran Paintings and informed members that Helen Goodman M.P. was trying to raise money in order to buy the paintings. However, the Arts Council needed sufficient evidence of public support and she urged everyone to sign the petition against their sale.

TC 160/10 AUCKLAND CASTLE AND THE ZURBARAN PAINTINGS (Minute No. TC 137/10 refers)

In accordance with the above Minute, a letter had been sent to the Church Commissioners from the Mayor, on behalf of the Town Council expressing concern at the proposed sale of the Zurbaran paintings. A copy of their reply had been circulated for information.

The Mayor was then invited to a meeting at the Castle on 5th January to meet the diocesan representatives along with the Lord Lieutenant, Helen Goodman, the Vice-Chancellor of the University and representatives from the County Council.

The Mayor, asked Andrew Brown, Secretary to the Church Commissioners if he would come along and address the Town Council to keep members up-to-date with developments. Andrew had agreed to attend the March Council meeting to answer any questions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

TC 161/10 PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The County Council's Standards Committee had recently appointed a Parish and Town Council Sub-Committee.

The Committee comprised three County Councillors, three Parish/Town Councillors and three independent members.

The remit of the Committee was to support Parish and Town Councillors and their Clerks in maintaining high standards of conduct, whether through training or otherwise, and for this purpose to maintain close links with the County Durham Association of Local Councils and further details had been submitted thereon.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

TC 162/10 RECENT DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS

The County Council had recently asked for comment on eight individual consultations, details of which had been e-mailed to members.

The following information provided a snap shot of why these Consultations had been released and a very brief précis of the content of these documents.

Signed:
Town Mayor

(a) County Durham Settlement Study

The County Durham Settlement Study assessed the extent to which all 268 settlements in the County were accessible to a range of services and facilities such as schools, employment or shopping. It therefore gives an indication of this one aspect of the sustainability of each settlement. This work would inform the settlement hierarchy, which informs the distribution of new development, in the Core Strategy together with two further pieces of evidence, which were currently underway:

- work to establish relationships between settlements and identify 'clusters'; and
- consultation with communities to identify their aspirations for the future development of their settlement.

Public consultation over the summer on the previous draft of the Settlement Study resulted in a number of representations which suggested amendments. These amendments had now been made and the County Council needed to test whether the document was now robust.

(b) Durham City Green Belt Assessment Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Green Belt Assessment provided a detailed assessment of the eight Green Belt sites identified as potential locations for the new housing proposed in the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report. The Assessment identified those sites with the least constraints that could be taken forward for more detailed concept planning to establish their capacities and an order of preference for their development. The Assessment also gave detailed justification for those sites that would not progress. The five sites taken forward were:

- Sniperley
- North of Arnison
- Sherburn Grange
- Sherburn Road
- Mount Oswald/Merryoaks

Publication of the Assessment would provide transparency on the site selection process and give land owners, developers and the wider community the opportunity to agree or disagree with the approach taken and sites that have been chosen or not chosen.

(c) Need for a North West Durham Green Belt

The North East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) originally advocated the need for a Green Belt to be designated in North West Durham to protect the Derwent Valley from development pressure and to prevent the sprawl of the Tyne and Wear conurbation. It was therefore expected that the Core Strategy would go on to define the strategic extent of the new Green Belt.

In response to the consultation on the Issues Options some respondents queried the need for a Green Belt in this location and given that RSS had been revoked. This paper therefore questions the principle of a North West Durham Green Belt and asserts that existing planning policies have successfully protected this area since the proposal for a Green Belt was first put forward in 1993.

Although RSS was now again part of the Development Plan following the recent legal decision, the Government had made it clear that RSS would be revoked as part of the imminent Localism Bill. It was likely that this would be enacted before the Core Strategy was adopted so asking a question over the principle of the Green Belt was still thought to be valid.

(d) Towards a Minerals Delivery Strategy for County Durham

The Core Strategy must be clear in how much mineral working is needed, where it is located, when it is needed and who will deliver it. Following on from the Issues and Options stage, this report will seek to address these important matters.

Signed:
Town Mayor

It would set out the County Council's views on the scale of aggregates and non aggregates extraction required over the plan period and develop an approach to where new working could occur in the future.

The report would confirm their view that no further magnesian limestone and high grade dolomite sites would be required (over and above those already permitted and those which members had resolved to grant). However it would indicate that a new brick clay site at Todhills was required and that significant quantities of carboniferous limestone and sand and gravel would be needed in order to guarantee the availability of the range of minerals that were required. These decisions would have clear implications for the future of a number of existing magnesian limestone sites which would close over the plan period as production shifts to other existing sites and for other areas of the County where further working would need to be delivered.

(e) Towards a Waste Delivery Strategy for County Durham

This report would clarify the position on the need for new waste management facilities for all waste types and would consult further on where and when new waste development should take place.

The report would clarify that significant new waste recovery capacity was needed to manage future municipal waste (MSW) arisings, in order to meet waste recycling and recovery targets and requirements to divert waste from landfill. Further detailed modelling work was continuing in relation to the waste procurement process and would only become clearer later in that process. It may be that at least in the short to medium term, some of this capacity could be met through waste treatment capacity that was already permitted and available outside the County.

Facilities would need to be identified to offer additional capacity to manage waste arisings from those areas that would receive the highest amount of population growth within the County, with a particular emphasis on Durham City as the main focus of development. However, D.C.C. may need to consider whether it was desirable to seek a greater concentration around the County's larger centres, or seek to build on the current pattern of facilities by expanding or co-locating facilities. The report would set out these issues in more detail.

(f) Energy Minerals

Following the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy it would set out D.C.C. approach to surface mined coal, including whether there were any issues and options for coal, the need and scope of a locally distinctive surface mined coal policy, and the approach that could be taken to provide guidance on areas where coal extraction could be guided by developing a constraint based approach.

In addition, it would consider the potential approach to a variety of new technologies to recover energy from deep coal including Underground Coal Gasification. Given that it was vital to be clear in how D.C.C. addressed the legacy of coal mining the report would set out how they intended to address this matter.

(g) Safeguarding Mineral Resources for the Future

National Policy required the Council to safeguard economically important minerals through the designation of Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs). It also required D.C.C. to safeguard other mineral handling, processing and transportation infrastructure. The report would undertake further consultation on their approach to safeguarding and considered how safeguarding could be delivered through the County Durham Plan.

(h) Proposed New Minerals and Waste Sites

The Core Strategy would allocate only new strategic minerals and waste sites where they were of strategic significance and central to the delivery of the Plan. All other new sites would need to be considered through the preparation of our Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations DPD. This report would:

Signed:
Town Mayor

- provide an update on sites proposed by operators and landowners;
- reconsider our suggested criteria for identifying strategic sites;
- consult further on a number of 'operator proposed' sites;
- clarify how we intend to address non-strategic sites; and
- undertake a further call for mineral and waste sites to be considered as non strategic allocations.

It was noted by members that the only new Waste Transfer Station in the Town Council's area was the proposed site at The Old Brickworks, Toronto.

The date for return of responses was 11th February and further information relating thereto could be found on the County Council website.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

TC 163/10 COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP)

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service have launched its public consultation on the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and were consulting with every sector of the communities and were requesting completion of a questionnaire about the service they provided to communities and their future plans.

Integrated Risk Management Planning aimed to reduce the risks to communities from fire and other emergency incidents. It was also about learning the lessons from past fires and emergency incidents. The Service had made significant progress over recent years in improving the safety of residents and businesses across County Durham and Darlington. Their aim was to continue to protect local communities as we enter a period of unprecedented cuts in public spending.

The consultation process gave everyone the opportunity to have their say about the changes being proposed and the questionnaire was available for completion at www.ddfire.gov.uk

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

TC 164/10 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- **Annual Fireworks Display** – to be discussed at the Finance Committee
- **Park Warden(s)** – to be discussed at the Finance Committee
- **Tourism** – to be discussed at the March Council Meeting

Signed:
Town Mayor