

Minutes of a **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY, 26TH JULY 2011**.

Present: Councillor Lethbridge (**in the Chair**) and Councillors Anderson, Golightly, Kay, Laurie, Lee, Wilson, Lesley Zair and Sam Zair.

Also Present: Linda Goldie (Town Clerk).

Before starting the meeting, the Mayor referred to the tragic events which had recently occurred in and around Oslo saying that we cannot imagine the anguish and sorrow which the people of Norway are suffering at this sad time and asked members for their approval in sending a letter of condolence to the people of Norway. Members unanimously agreed to this course of action.

TC 61/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Fleming.

TC 62/11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

TC 63/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 64/11 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28TH JUNE 2011

RESOLVED: That, subject to the deletion of Councillor Sam Zair from the list of Members present, the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28th June 2011 be approved and adopted.

TC 65/11 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

TC 66/11 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Finance Committee - 19th July 2011

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 19th July 2011 be approved and adopted.

TC 67/11 MATTERS ARISING

**(a) Matters for Future Discussion –
Provision of Plaque commemorating the life and work of Tom McGuinness**

The Mayor referred to the item which was raised under Matters for Future Discussion relating to the provision of a plaque commemorating the life and work of Tom McGuinness and pointed out that he was informed at the recent Town Centre Forum meeting that the Civic Society already had this matter in hand therefore there was no need for the Town Council to take any further action.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

Signed:
Town Mayor

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Allotments & Environment Committee held on 19th July 2011 be approved and adopted.

TC 68/11 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

This meeting had not been held due to it being inquorate.

The Mayor reminded members that it was important for them to inform the Town Clerk if they were unable to attend any future meetings of the Planning Committee.

TC 69/11 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

TC 70/11 REPORT OF TOWN MAYOR

The Mayor reported that he had attended the following:-

- 29th June - Great Aycliffe Town Council Mayor at Home
- 1st July - Witton Park Methodist Chapel Flower Festival (Deputy Mayor)
- 1st July - Chilton Town Council Mayor's Charity Night
- 2nd July - Music & Arts Festival
- 3rd July - Proms at the College
- 4th July - Four Clocks Quarter Judging of logo
- 5th July - Four Clocks Quarter Presentation of Prize for logo at St. John's School
- 7th July - Launch of King James 1st Academy
- 8th July - Auckland Hospital Radio Marathon
- 8th July - Official Opening of KPM Disability Services, West Auckland
- 10th July - 40th Anniversary as an Ecumenical Partnership, Woodhouse Close Church
- 12th July - B.A.T.H. Official Reception to welcome Jamaican Guests, King James Academy
- 14th July - Aucklandgate Centre to meet German Band
- 14th July - Woodhouse Close Primary School – To promote junior savings scheme
- 19th July - Fund Day – Aclet Nursery
- 21st July - Music & Arts Festival & Proms – Debriefing meeting
- 24th July - Great Aycliffe Town Council – Civic Service

TC 71/11 UNITARY AUTHORITY UPDATE

- Councillor Lee informed members that the review of Leisure Centres and Libraries was out for consultation.
- Councillor Sam Zair said a meeting was to be held shortly regarding the future of the Civic Centre at Crook.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC 72/11 RELOCATION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE

Councillor Anderson informed members that now the Town Clerk had a part-time Admin Assistant, the office accommodation in the Four Clocks Centre was now too small for the Town Council to function efficiently .

Signed:
Town Mayor

The possible exchange of offices with the Senior Youth Worker was considered an option but storage space would need to be found for the youth project's music equipment.

Members agreed that the Town Council needed to be centrally located with a more visible presence and various venues were suggested.

RESOLVED: That tentative enquiries be made of the various suggested venues as to their suitability.

TC 73/11 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING EVENTS

(a) Bishop Auckland and Shildon Local Councils Committee – 21st July 2011

Councillor Anderson reported that the A.A.P. Co-ordinator had outlined the contents of the A.A.P. agenda in advance of the A.A.P. Forum meeting which was to be held in the Locomotion Building at Shildon on Thursday, 28th July at 6.00pm. Anyone wishing to attend should register in advance.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Councillor Anderson then left the meeting

(b) Bishop Auckland Town Centre Forum – 22nd July 2011

Councillor Laurie reported that:

- as part of Durham County Council's Spending Review, it was no longer possible for it to give administrative support to the Town Centre Forum after the meeting on 22nd July.
- as a further part of this review, the Town Centre Manager's service area was commencing a restructuring process. The proposals for restructure did not accommodate the post of Bishop Auckland Town Centre Manager and, as such, it was possible that the town would no longer benefit from that provision.

Member's expressed serious concerns regarding this prospect with Councillor Kay commenting that he could not see the logic in the County Council's argument as Bishop Auckland was the largest town in the county in terms of population but Durham had retained a position of Town Centre Co-ordinator.

Councillor Lethbridge said he had been invited to meet with Peter McDowell, Chris Myers and Sarah Robson of the County Council on Monday, 8th August at 2.00pm to discuss this item and other issues regarding Bishop Auckland and asked if any other members wanted to accompany him to this meeting.

- Dr. McManners had attended the meeting and gave an update regarding Auckland Castle and the Zurbarans.
- an update on the Bishop Auckland Urban Renaissance had been given by Jeanette Armin – Senior Delivery Officer, Strategic Investments, D.C.C. of which the issue of car parking was discussed.

Councillor Sam Zair reported that free car parking was going to be introduced at South Terrace and more car parking was to be introduced in Bondgate.

Councillor Laurie informed members that Durham County Council was no longer carrying out car parking enforcement in the Morrisons Car Park. This had been taken over by European Car Parks who had changed the system by allowing parking for only 2 hours at a time after which shoppers had to remove their car. This was quite a blow to the prosperity of the town.

Signed:
Town Mayor

RESOLVED: (i) That a letter be sent to the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development, Durham County Council expressing the Council's serious concerns regarding the possible withdrawal of the Town Centre Manager's post and the subsequent repercussions it would have on the vitality of Bishop Auckland.

(ii) That Councillors Lee and Sam Zair accompany Councillor Lethbridge to his meeting with representatives of D.C.C. on 8th August.

Councillor Kay then left the meeting.

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK. The Town Clerk reported as follows:-

TC 74/11 BISHOP AUCKLAND IN BLOOM COMPETITION 2011

Councillor Golightly together with the Town Clerk met with Mike Whatmore, the judge of the Bishop Auckland in Bloom Competition on Sunday, 10th July and visited those gardens/yards/businesses and allotments who had entered the competition.

The presentation of the prizes and certificates would be held in the Town Hall on Wednesday, 31st August at 7.30pm.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC 75/11 MEETING OF WORKING PARTY – EMPLOYMENT OF PART-TIME PARK WARDEN(S) – THURSDAY, 21ST JULY 2011

Councillors Anderson, Laurie, Lee and Lethbridge and the Town Clerk attended a meeting on Thursday, 21st July and discussed the possible employment of part-time park warden(s).

The members were due to meet Mark Farren, Education & Enforcement Manager (South), Durham County Council, but due to admin problems, he was unable to be present.

Mark had previously submitted an e-mail (copy of which had previously been circulated) outlining three main options open to the Council which the Working Party considered:

- **OPTION 1 - Pay for the deployment of one of the County Council's Relief Neighbourhood Wardens for specified shifts**

The only 'drain' on the Town Council was the need to identify which dates/times the Town Council wanted the Relief Warden and to pay the invoices that DCC would send for any hours worked. All other aspects related to employing the Warden (e.g. training, provision of equipment, supervision, authorisation to use powers, links to police, etc) would be picked up by the County Council. The one down side to this approach was that the nature of the Relief Warden role meant DCC could not guarantee to supply a Relief Warden for every date/time that was requested. In simple terms, the Relief Wardens were free to take up or turn down any shifts that were offered to them so if none of them volunteered for the shifts that were offered there would be nobody provided.

- **OPTION 2 – Provide funding to the County Council to allow it to employ a Neighbourhood Warden on the Town Council's behalf**

This would be the next easiest option from the Town Council's perspective. This would operate in a similar vein to the current arrangements between the County Council and Stanley Town Council whereby the Town Council provided funding for the County Council to employ a Neighbourhood Warden who was then normally deployed in the manner that the Town Council request. All other aspects of employing those Wardens would then be picked up by the County Council except any terminated costs if the Town Council decided to cease the funding.

Signed:
Town Mayor

- **OPTION 3 – Employ own Neighbourhood Warden**

This was by far the hardest from the Town Council’s perspective. Apart from the need to undertake the recruitment exercise and to have arrangements in place to effectively manage the employee on a day-to-day basis, the Town Council would also need to address the matters listed below:

- Equipment
- Training
- Authorisation
- Legal Support
- Police Accreditation
- Partnership Links
- Communications
- Customer Services Support

The Working Party were of the opinion that Option 2 would probably be the easiest option.

However, the Town Clerk informed members that she had been speaking to Oliver Graham, Area Programme Manager, Groundwork North East who had drawn attention to a scheme they had been operating with Stanley Town Council and which they could operate with the Town Council.

- **GROUNDWORK – GOVERNMENT BACKED SCHEME**

A proposal for the Bishop Auckland area would be to provide a similar team that would be made up with a Supervisory and local placements from its employment team; this number would vary over the programme but would be up to 5 people and a Supervisor at any given time. The team could be branded as ‘Bishop Auckland Town Council’ so would offer a visible presence for the Town Council in and around Bishop Auckland. The works delivered by them could range from general clearance work to specific projects with training opportunities for the placements. In addition to this work, Groundwork and the Town Council could work with other partners including the Police, the A.A.P. etc to secure additional funding and training to provide Street Warden cover for areas selected by the Town Council.

The Working Party felt they needed more information as to what the Town Council could expect for the amount in the budget for the Option 2 scheme or the Groundwork scheme.

Council Members then discussed the advantages and disadvantages of both schemes with some members commenting that the Groundwork Scheme offered more benefits to the town whilst Councillor Lee was concerned that the local placements would not be paid for this work. Councillor Sam Zair commented that further details should be obtained before a final decision was made.

The Town Clerk pointed out that the A.A.P. currently funded an outreach worker aimed at addressing youth related street drinking and they had been asked to visit the Town Recreational area on a Friday and Saturday night but this was not permanent as the worker was directed by the Lmap, to hot spot areas across Bishop Auckland and Shildon.

RESOLVED: That more detailed information regarding this scheme be obtained and presented to a future meeting of the Working Party for their recommendation.

**TC 76/11 MUSIC FESTIVAL – DEBRIEFING MEETING –
THURSDAY, 21ST JULY 2011**

Councillors Anderson, Laurie, Lethbridge and Lesley Zair and the Town Clerk attended a debriefing meeting on Thursday, 21st July with various other interest parties regarding the Music Festival.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Kevin Burns, the College Marketing Manager reported that approximately 8,000 visitors had enjoyed the weekend festival. This had been the biggest and best yet. Accounts and costings had not yet been finalised but would be made available as soon as possible.

Although hailed a success, a few concerns were expressed – these included queues at the bar and not enough toilet facilities. Kevin said that these would be addressed for next year.

Various ideas to improve and enhance the festival were suggested and these would be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**TC 77/11 REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE – 13TH NOVEMBER 2011 -
MEETING WITH DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL –
FRIDAY, 22ND JULY 2011**

In accordance with Minute TC 179/10 of the Council Meeting held in February, it was resolved that the Town Council was prepared to take over the organisation of the Remembrance Day Service with assistance from Durham County Council during the first transitional year, arrangements had been made for the Mayor and the Town Clerk to meet with Jocasta Lawton (Senior Committee Services Officer), Durham County Council to discuss the necessary arrangements. This meeting was scheduled to be held on Friday, 22nd July 2011. However, due to traffic problems, Jocasta arrived at the meeting too late for anything to be discussed as she and Councillor Lethbridge had another meeting to attend.

In the circumstances, therefore, another meeting is to be arranged.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

TC 78/11 TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

The Town Clerk informed members that the website was scheduled to 'go live' on Friday, 29th July and members were asked to let her have any comments they might like to make on its format and content.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

**TC 79/11 HYPERACUTE STROKE SERVICES –
FORMAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Information had been received from County Durham and Darlington NHS regarding the formal consultation which was underway to seek local people's views on proposed changes to hyperacute stroke services in County Durham and Darlington. This consultation was being led by NHS County Durham and Darlington, the organisation which plans and pays for health services locally.

A thorough options appraisal had been undertaken to evaluate different ways in which stroke hyperacute services could be provided – closely analysed by stroke service clinicians and managers, with input from service users and carers through a range of representatives from local groups and organisations.

NHS County Durham and Darlington was now in a position to recommend a preferred option – to consolidate hyperacute stroke services at the University Hospital of North Durham. This was based on faster access to specialist services and clinicians and greater existing capacity for diagnostic services for the majority of stroke patients.

Signed:
Town Mayor

The NHS would like to encourage everyone to become involved during the consultation period and had included some information. They would like thoughts and views on their proposals and these could be given in one of the following ways:

- Complete the online consultation response form at www.haveasay.org.uk
- Complete a paper consultation response form contained in both the full and summary consultation documents
- Attend one of the eight public meetings across County Durham and Darlington; details of which are in the consultation documents
- Emailing your views to stroke@haveasay.org.uk
- Writing to use at Hyperacute Stroke Consultation, Freepost, RRXK-CZGR-TJJA, Unit G, Lumley Close, Thirsk, YO7 3TD
- Requesting a dedicated consultation for a group or organisation by contacting Mary Bewley on 0191 374 4253, 07554 459 298 or mary.bewley1@nhs.net

More information including copies of documents to download could be found at www.haveasay.org.uk which also included the online consultation questionnaire.

No decision would be made until after the consultation had closed on **11th September 2011**.

Members expressed concerns regarding the proposed changes to consolidate hyperacute stroke services at the University Hospital of North Durham with Councillor Sam Zair also expressing concern with regard to the Maternity Unit being closed for 2 months and with these concerns in mind he and County Councillor Neil Harrison were to meet with Steven Aims of Durham & Darlington NHS Trust

RESOLVED: Members express their opinions via the website.

**TC 80/11 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL –
REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

Under the Electoral Administration Act 2006 every four years an authority must complete a review of its polling districts and polling places. The initial review took place in 2007. The next scheduled review for County Durham commenced on 1st July and ends on Wednesday, 31st August 2011.

The review must be carried out to make sure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.

The County Council was looking for feedback on any aspect of polling districts and/or polling places currently used, and any suggestions for possible alternative venues and invited representation and comment from Parish and Town Councils.

All comments must reach the County Council by Wednesday, 31st August 2011.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council has no comments to make on this matter.

Signed:
Town Mayor