

Minutes of a **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY, 31ST JANUARY 2012 at 6.00 p.m.**

Present: Councillor Lethbridge (**in the Chair**) and Councillors Anderson, Fleming, Golightly, Kay, Laurie, Wilson,

Also Present: Linda Goldie (Town Clerk) and Dani Webb (Northern Echo)

TC 152/12 PRESENTATION BY MICHAEL O'NEILL ON THE PRESENT POSITION REGARDING THE OLD BOYS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Mayor introduced Michael O'Neill, Chairman of the Stan Laurel Committee which was a community group who was endeavouring to acquire and renovate the Old Boys Grammar School.

Michael outlined the history surrounding this building which would need approximately £400,000 to bring it up to a reasonable standard of safety.

In April, the group would become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which would then allow it to access large funding pots but at the moment it had been successful in raising some funds by alternative means with various schools and organisations getting involved.

Michael went on to say that the group had support from Prince Charles and Tony Blair and English Heritage and Architectural Heritage had been contacted.

Members agreed that the potential of the building was immense and acknowledged that the group had a challenge on its hands. However, the Council agreed to support the venture any way it could and wished the group every success in its endeavours.

Michael thanked the members for their support and said he would keep the Town Council informed of any developments, after which he then left the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted with interest.

TC 153/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Huntington, Lee, Lesley Zair and Sam Zair.

TC 153 /12 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

TC 154/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Kay declared an interest in Minute No. TC 165/12(b) - Remembrance Sunday – Request from Bishop Auckland Labour Party to lay a wreath at the War Memorial - as he was Secretary of the Labour Party.

TC 155/12 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13TH DECEMBER 2011

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th December 2011 be approved and adopted.

TC 156/12 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC 157/12 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES –

(a) Planning Committee – 13th December 2011

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 13th December 2011 be approved and adopted.

There were no matters arising.

(b) Finance Committee – 17th January 2012

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 17th January 2012 be approved and adopted.

TC 158/12 MATTERS ARISING –

**(a) Acceptance of Certificate of Appreciation Given
by Durham Constabulary
(Minute No: FIN 89/11 refers)**

Councillor Laurie enquired when the Certificate of Appreciation was to be presented to the Woodhouse Close Allotments.

Councillor Anderson said John Raw, the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator would be getting in touch shortly.

RESOLVED: That when the invitation is received, members for the Woodhouse Close Ward be invited to attend the event along with the Chair of the Allotments and Environment Committee.

**TC 159/12 MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN TEAM WORKING PARTY
HELD ON 9TH JANUARY 2012**

Minutes of a meeting of the **TOWN TEAM WORKING PARTY** held in the Town Clerk's Office on Monday, 9th January 2012 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Fleming, Golightly, Kay, Laurie, Lethbridge and Sam Zair.

Introduction

Arising out of the Council Meeting held on 13th December 2011, a Working Party had been set up to discuss the feasibility of establishing a Town Team for Bishop Auckland in view of the demise of the Town Centre Forum and the loss of the Town Centre Manager's position.

Councillor Lethbridge reported that he had held initial discussions with Chris Myers, Town Centre Development and Regeneration Officer, Durham County Council who had indicated that the County Council would be keen to work in partnership with the Town Council for the benefit of Bishop Auckland and had offered to attend any future meetings.

Reference was made to The Portas Review and its recommendations which was an independent review into the future of our high streets, some of which could be pertinent to Bishop Auckland.

Points raised during discussion

- The Town Team should be Council led with the Mayor as Chair

Signed:
Town Mayor

- It should comprise people who are interested in the future of the town, bringing together elected members, business people, churches, the voluntary sector, hoteliers, The Weardale Railway, Civic Society and former Town Centre Forum Members to discuss the best way forward to prevent a deterioration of the town centre
- The Town Team to be a pressure group on the County Council with officials being invited to meetings to discuss relevant and important issues.
- Need to discuss with developers, i.e. Gentoo and Ravenhill regarding future development of the town.
- Need to know what attracts people to the town centre and what new magnets could be introduced, e.g. crèche facilities and free parking
- Need for publicity by way of a survey to identify all interested parties and invite comments via the Council's website and leaflets
- Cost implications to be considered, i.e. room hire, clerking, postage and printing – could Town Council cover these costs?
- Meetings of the Town Team to be held on a Monday evening at 5.30pm for about 2 hours on a bi-monthly basis.
- Date of next meeting of the Working Party to be held on Monday, 6th February at 6.00pm in the Town Clerk's Office at which Chris Myers be invited to attend.

RECOMMENDED: (i) That the Town Council sponsor a Town Team.

(ii) That the Working Party be authorised to set up the 1st meeting of the Town Team

(iii) That 5/6 representatives of the Town Council be appointed to sit on the Town Team.

RESOLVED: That the report and recommendations of the Town Team Working Party be approved and adopted.

TC 160/12 REPORT OF TOWN MAYOR

The Mayor reported that he had attended the following:

9 th December	-	Mayor's Charity Night, Shildon Town Council
12 th December	-	Carol Service – Ferryhill Town Council
14 th December	-	Carol Service – Seaham Town Council
15 th December	-	Re-opening of British Heart Foundation Shop
28 th January	-	Jackass Youth Theatre – Jack Drum Arts

TC 161/12 UNITARY AUTHORITY UPDATE

- Councillor Lethbridge reported that the cuts were ongoing and multiplying – there was an increase in fuel costs and less people were retiring and the wage bill increasing.
- The future of the libraries was guaranteed

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC 162/12 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES, AD HOC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- (a) Proms at the College – Sunday, 1st July 2012 –
Meeting with Andy Jackson from the Cobweb Orchestra – 21st December 2011**

Councillors Anderson, Lesley Zair, Kathleen Hammerton (Bishop Barrington School), Sue Snowdon and the Town Clerk met with Andy Jackson of the Cobweb Orchestra on 21st December 2011 to discuss the format of the Sunday Proms event.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Various suggestions had been put forward and Andy was to meet with the Orchestra at the end of January when a programme would be put together for future consideration.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

(b) Bishop Auckland and Shildon Local Councils Committee – Meeting held on 19th January 2012

Councillors Anderson and the Town Clerk had attended the Bishop Auckland and Shildon Local Councils Committee on 19th January when members discussed the format of the agenda for the forthcoming A.A.P. Board Meeting.

The Meeting discussed the A.A.P. priorities for 2011/2012 which were voted on by the Forum.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

(c) Music and Arts Festival – Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 29th, 30th June and 1st July 2012 – Meeting held on 24th January 2012

Councillors Anderson, Laurie, Lesley Zair and the Town Clerk attended a Music and Arts Festival Meeting on 24th January when an update on progress was given by Kevin Burns from the College.

The question of setting up a separate bank account away from the College's accounts was discussed but the general consensus of opinion was that the accounts should remain within the Colleges finances.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(d) Area Action Partnership Meeting – 26th January 2012

Councillors Anderson and Laurie together with the Town Clerk attended the Area Action Partnership meeting on 26th January when the 3 priorities were discussed – these being:

- Employment and Job Prospects
- Community Safety
- Public Transport

However, discussion took place as to whether the rest of the priorities could be linked in with the main three priorities thus broadening their scope. Further information was awaited.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Report of Town Clerk. The Town Clerk reported as follows:-

TC 163/12 PLANNING APPLICATION – FORMER FOCUS SITE, TINDALE CRESCENT – REPLY FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

In accordance with instructions from the November Council Meeting, a letter was sent to the Secretary of State asking for the above planning application to be called in.

A reply had been received on 15th December stating that the Secretary of State had considered very carefully the proposal including the detailed representations but had decided, on balance, not to call in the application, which had been referred back to Durham County Council, as the Local Planning Authority, for determination.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC 164/12 ASSET REGISTER 2011-2012

An updated copy of the Asset Register had been circulated.

RESOLVED: That the updated copy of the Asset Register be approved.

TC 165/12 REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE 2012 –

(a) Bishop Auckland and District Pipes and Drums

The Pipe Major of Bishop Auckland Pipes and Drums had written asking if the Town Council would like a lone piper to attend and play a lament while wreaths were laid at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

RESOLVED: That Bishop Auckland Pipes and Drums offer to provide a piper to play a lament at the Remembrance Day Service be kindly accepted.

(b) Bishop Auckland Labour Party

The Secretary of the Bishop Auckland Labour Party had written asking if the Town Council would allow the Labour Party to lay a wreath on the war memorial at the Remembrance Day Ceremony.

RESOLVED: That the request be granted.

**TC 166/12 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR –
YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2012**

The Council needed to appoint an Internal Auditor to carry out the Internal Audit for the year ending 31st March 2012.

Mr. Mike Ackroyd had carried out the Town Council's audit over the last 4 years and his fee for this year would be £17 per hour plus expenses.

RESOLVED: That Mr. Ackroyd be appointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for the year ending 31st March 2012 at the above rate.

**TC 167/12 OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY ROUTE – BISHOP AUCKLAND –
SUNDAY, 17TH JUNE 2012**

The specific details of the Olympic Torch Relay Route had not yet been announced by the organising body LOGOC but an overview of the route could be found following the link: <http://www.london2012.com/olympic-torch-relay-map>. The route would pass through many parish areas including Bishop Auckland and the expected but not confirmed date was Sunday, 17th June.

This was an opportunity to showcase the town, as the Torch passed through and to encourage the community to line the route and show their support for this prestigious event that was happening right on our doorstep. A community celebration that tied in with the relay could be organised.

There would be a presentation, giving more details, for the Town Council to attend on Thursday, 2nd February at 6.00pm in Committee Room 2 at County Hall and up to three representatives were invited to attend this meeting.

RESOLVED: (i) That Councillor Anderson together with the Town Clerk be authorised to attend the presentation.

(ii) That attendance at the meeting be authorised as an approved duty.

Signed:
Town Mayor

**TC 168/12 JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS –
SPECIAL 4-DAY DIAMOND JUBILEE BANK HOLIDAY –
SATURDAY, 2ND JUNE – TUESDAY, 5TH JUNE 2012**

(a) The Big Lunch – Sunday, 3rd June 2012

The fourth annual Big Lunch would fall on the same weekend as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Parish and Town Councils were encouraged to support or organise their own Big Jubilee Lunch to celebrate and commemorate the Queen's 60 year reign. Some 10 million people came out in sunny 1977 to celebrate the Silver Jubilee so it was hoped that a large number of people would take part in The Big Lunch for the first time in 2012.

The beauty of The Big Lunch was that people themselves decided everything about their own event. The venue could be wherever you want or have space, the theme whatever you fancy – food and people were the key ingredients.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council draw attention to the event via press and website coverage.

(b) Beacons – Monday, 4th June 2012

The Lord Lieutenant had indicated that he hoped there would be 29 Beacons in the County Durham area and the County Council had committed to funding 14 Beacons, one in each A.A.P. area.

The Town Council would be able to work with the A.A.P. to help them determine the best spot to host the Beacon within the A.A.P. area. However, if the Town Council would like to host its own Beacon itself or in conjunction with other organisations in the community, help and publicity would be provided by the Local Councils Support Officer, DCC.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council work with the A.A.P. to determine the best spot to host the Beacon within the A.A.P. area.

**TC 169/12 GREEN DOG WALKERS CAMPAIGN LAUNCH, BISHOP AUCKLAND –
DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – CIVIC PRIDE TEAM (SOUTH)**

In the south area of the County, the Civic Pride Team had decided to roll out the Green Dog Walkers Scheme in all 6 H.I.L. areas and for Bishop Auckland there were both the Town Centre and Woodhouse Close areas. The Green Dog Walkers initiative could be rolled out in both of the H.I.L. areas or just the Town Centre area and details of the scheme together with estimated costs were circulated.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council acknowledges the Civic Pride Team's initiative with regard to their Green Dog Walkers Campaign, but agreed to purchase and supply its own dog bags for distribution to its residents.

**TC 170/12 COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE –
INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN – CONSULTATION**

The County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service was seeking the Council's comments on their Integrated Risk Management Plan via a consultation document.

Integrated Risk Management Planning was about allocating resources in the most effective way to improve public safety, reduce the number of fire incidents and save lives. Their aim was to continue to protect local communities during a period of sustained and unprecedented cuts in public spending.

The consultation process gave everyone the opportunity to have their say about the changes being proposed and involvement from Parish/Town Councils was key to the success of the consultation. Consultation ended on Friday, 2nd March, feedback from the 12 week consultation process would be used to inform future plans of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Signed:
Town Mayor

The full Integrated Risk Management Plan was available at www.ddfire.gov.uk

However, consultation proposals had been summarised in the following link Fire Service Survey <<https://www.smart-survey.co.uk/v.asp?i=44199hcnlr>>.

RESOLVED: That anyone wishing to comment on the proposals would do so via the above website.

TC 171/12 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- **Bus Station Toilets** – D.C.C. representative to attend February Meeting
- **Area Action Partnership** – Angeline Maddison, A.A.P. Co-ordinator to attend the March meeting to discuss the work of the A.A.P, and gather views for the 2012/13 work programme

Signed:
Town Mayor