

Minutes of a **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 25TH JUNE 2013** at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor C Race (Deputy Mayor, in the Chair), and Councillors, Blackburn, Brownson, Golightly, Lethbridge, Wilson, L, Zair and S. Zair.

Also Present: David Anderson (Town Clerk), Clive Auld (Bishop Auckland Town Team).

TC.41/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anderson, Fleming and A. Zair.

TC.42/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lethbridge declared an interest in respect of Item No. 7b, 'Minutes of Committees, Finance Committee 18th June 2013' (Minute No 49/13 refers) and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor S. Zair declared an interest during discussion on Item No 11a, Town Team, in relation to the discussion on Christmas Street Lights (Minute No TC.51/13 refers).

TC.43/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No issues were raised under this item.

TC.44/13 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS 2013/14

Further to consideration at the Annual Council meeting held on 14th May 2013 (Minute No's TC.9/13 to TC.16/13 refer), a schedule was circulated detailing Committee and Panel membership, which included nominations received from the Wear Valley Independent Group.

Further discussion took place relating to the appointment of members to Committees and Panels, Chairmanship of Committees and Panels and the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The Wear Valley Independent Group remained unhappy with the outcome.

RESOLVED: That the membership of Committees and Panels as detailed in the schedule be approved.

TC.45/13 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28TH MAY 2013

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:-

Minute No's TC.9/13 to TC.16/13 to read:

'It was noted that the Wear Valley Independent Group did not wish to make an appointment to this Committee at this time, *subject to further discussions in the Group.*

Minute No TC.29/13 'Town Team' to read:

'Councillor *Brownson* reported on recent activities of the Town Team'

Signed:
Town Mayor

Minute No TC.30/13 'Big Local' to read:

Clive Auld, and Councillors Anderson and *Brownson* had attended a recent meeting of the Big Local.'

TC.46/13 MATTERS ARISING

Town Team – Christmas Lights Appeal (Minute No TC.29/13 refers)

Councillor Golightly commented on the decision made at the previous meeting to donate Members Allowances for the remainder of the financial year to the Town Team Christmas Lights Appeal. She had been unable to attend that meeting and was surprised that such a decision had been made without notice. Whilst she had no objection to the donation being made, the issue should have been debated with appropriate notice rather than spontaneously.

Other members present at the meeting stated that they had felt pressurised into making the decision. It was however agreed that the decision should stand.

Clarification was sought whether the intention was to include the Mayor's Allowance in the donation. It was commented that the position of Mayor involved representing the Council and the Town at functions and events which inevitably had a cost implication. Although the Mayor's allowance did not cover the total cost of Mayoral activities it was a contribution and an acknowledgement of the commitment necessary. It was agreed that the Mayor's allowance should not be included in the donation made to the Town Team appeal.

RESOLVED: That the donation of the Members Basic Allowances for the remainder of the current financial year to the Town Team Christmas Lights Appeal be confirmed.

TC.47/13 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD ON 4th JUNE 2013

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

TC.48/13 MATTERS ARISING

Forward Plan, Quality Status - Promotion of Local Democracy (Minute No PS.4/13 refers)

It was suggested that the Council could use Bishop Auckland Lifestyle Magazine to promote local democracy.

RESOLVED: That the use of Bishop Auckland Lifestyle Magazine be deferred to an appropriate Committee.

TC.49/13 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2013

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

There were no matters arising

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.50/13 REPORT OF TOWN MAYOR

In the absence of the Mayor a schedule was circulated detailing events that the Mayor had attended since the previous meeting.

It was also noted that the Mayor would be officially opening Saffron, a new Indian restaurant located in North Bondgate, Bishop Auckland. All members had been invited to attend.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING EVENTS

TC.51/13 TOWN TEAM

Clive Auld thanked Town Councillors for their generous gesture in donating their Members Allowances to the Town Teams Christmas Lights Appeal.

He explained that representatives of the Town Team, together with a representative from Durham County Council’s Street Lighting Service and the Town Clerk had met with three suppliers of Christmas lights with regard to the procurement of new lights.

Each of the three companies had been requested to propose two design options for consideration.

It was noted that whilst the initial proposal was to replace Christmas lights in Newgate Street, if the budget would allow Fore Bondgate would also be included in the scheme. Options for the provision of lights in the Market Place were limited, but this area would also be included if possible.

Mr Auld reported that unfortunately the Fashion Show had been cancelled due to the low numbers of businesses wishing to take place.

Arrangements were ongoing for the Car Show which would be held on Friday, 23rd August.

Members were disappointed that some events had not come to fruition, but acknowledged that the Town Team Events Sub-Group were limited in numbers and were working hard to accomplish what they could.

Members thanked Mr Auld and the Town Team Events Sub-Group for their efforts in organising events and promoting the Town.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.52/13 THE BIG LOCAL

Clive Auld and Councillors Anderson, Brownson and Lethbridge had attended a recent meeting of the Big Local.

It was noted that Clive Auld had been elected Chair of the Big Local.

It was a condition of funding that proposals must be resident led. An information campaign was therefore taking place to attract the involvement of local residents that were not involved with any community associations, the Town Council or the Town

Signed:
Town Mayor

Team. It was acknowledged that this would be difficult as it was likely that community minded people would be already involved with community initiatives and organisations.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.53/13 LARGER COUNCILS FORUM – 17TH MAY 2013

Councillor Fleming and the Town Clerk had attended the Larger Councils Forum meeting held on 17th May 2013.

The Town Clerk reported on items of note including:-

Localisation of Council Tax

It was reported at the meeting that the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks had decided not to lobby for a change to the legislation to resolve the unintended consequences to local council funding. Instead they were trying to ensure that principal authorities passed 100% of intended grant to local councils.

A letter was to be sent to NALC and SLCC to express members disappointment. Local MP's were also to be contacted to ensure they understood the implications of the legislation, particularly for local councils in the North where there were a high proportion of benefit claimants affected by the Localisation of Council Tax legislation.

Double Taxation

Efforts were continuing to seek the reinstatement double taxation payments to local councils.

Partnership Working with Durham County Council

It was noted that since the last meeting of the Forum Oliver Sherratt, Head of Service Direct, Durham County Council had met with a number of local councils with a view to identify possible partnership arrangements that would be of benefit to all parties.

It has also been proposed that local councils could benefit from membership of the North Eastern Purchasing Organisation via Durham County Council. This was to be pursued by CDALC.

NALC Larger Councils Committee

Debate took place on representation on NALC's Larger Councils Committee. It was felt that there was a lack of representation from Northern Region which could account for the lack of response on the implications of Localisation of Council Tax Benefits.

This was to be raised at an Executive meeting to be held week commencing 20th May 2013.

Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner

Ron Hogg gave details of his priorities, which were:-

- Community engagement
- Tackling Hate Crime
- Tackling Domestic Abuse
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour
- Tackling Alcohol and Drugs
- Motoring Offences
- Police Visibility and Accessibility

Signed:
Town Mayor

He reported that crime had been reduced by 15% and anti-social behaviour by 23% on the previous year.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.54/13 SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS REGIONAL CONFERENCE – 5th JUNE 2013

Councillor Anderson and the Town Clerk had attended the SLCC Regional Conference held in Gateshead on 5th June 2013.

The following presentations and workshops were held.

- Localism, the Reality – Community Right
- A Guide to Parish Council Insurance – ‘What you need and Why You Need It’
- Department for Communities and Local Government Briefing
- Legal Workshop and Update
- Employment Workshop – Absence Management
- Ruin To Renaissance – Restoring a Victorian Railway Station and Regenerating a Village.
- Communication and Public Engagement

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

TC.55/13 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES

Further to consideration by the Policy and Strategy Committee at its meeting held on 4th June 2013, (Minute No PS.5/13 refers) terms of reference for the Town Council’s committees were submitted to Town Council for consideration and adoption

RESOLVED: That the terms of reference be approved and adopted.

TC.56/13 MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk updating Members on arrangements for the 2013 Music and Arts Festival.

Arrangements had been finalised for the Music Festival to take place inside the College on Saturday 29th June. Due to the reduced scale of the Festival the Council’s contribution would be reduced to £2,000.

Proms – Sunday 30th June

Members noted that it had been intended to hold the Proms in the College Sports Hall as the usual outdoor venue could not be used. It was hoped that the Hall could be dressed to create a suitable environment and atmosphere. However following a review of arrangements it became clear that it would not be viable to stage the proms in the Sports Hall due to physical constraints, issues relating to health and safety and increasing costs. It was also felt that the event would not be of the usual appeal which may adversely affect future Proms.

The decision had therefore been taken, in consultation with the Mayor and Chair of Finance, to cancel the Proms.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Although a contract with the Cobweb Orchestra had not been signed, it was acknowledged that it had incurred expenses prior to the cancellation. A meeting was to take place with representatives of the Orchestra regarding reimbursement of costs incurred.

Members expressed their disappointment at the scaled back Festival this year, but it was hoped that it could return to an outdoor event in 2014 with a full programme.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted and action endorsed.

TC.57/13 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The following topics for future discussion were noted.

- Beryl Anderson/John Thurlbeck, Durham County Council – Velo 29 (July meeting)
- Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development and Chris Myers, Regeneration Projects Manager from Durham County Council.
- Martin Peace, Neighbourhood Inspector
- Kate James and Melanie Sensicle, Bishop Auckland Food Festival

It was also suggested that the following be invited to a future Council meeting.

- Rowena Hackwood – Auckland Castle Trust
- Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning Services, Durham County Council, re out of town development policy and effect on Bishop Auckland Town Centre
- Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner

Signed:
Town Mayor