

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2013** at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Race (in the Chair), and Councillors, Anderson, Brownson, Golightly, Wilson, A. Zair and S. Zair.

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

TC.75/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blackburn, Fleming,. Lethbridge and L. Zair

TC.76/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted

TC.77/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No issues were raised under this item.

TC.78/13 NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Inspector Martin Peace attended the meeting to give an update with regard to neighbourhood policing in Bishop Auckland.

Inspector Peace reported that the Neighbourhood Policing Team was back to full strength. Carl Blenkinsopp and Theresa Moore would be working in Bishop Auckland with Alistair Hendry working as Beat Officer.

Crime statistics were reported at the meeting. Insp. Peace explained that there had been a slight increase in reported crimes regionally, however statistics for Bishop Auckland indicated that reported crime had reduced slightly and that detection rates had increased.

There had been a good rate of take up of the Secure Retailers Scheme. Burglaries from retail premises had reduced by 35%.

Incidents at Boucher Court had settled down although some minor issues persisted. Police were working from an office within Boucher Court and had developed good working relationship with residents and local people.

Police were using unmarked police cars to target motorists using mobile phones whilst driving.

On the subject to sentencing it was noted that a number of alternatives to imprisonment were used by Magistrates which had a high degree of success in reducing re-offending. These included offender management programs, restorative justice and electronic tagging.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted

TC.79/13 FOOD FESTIVAL – FEEDBACK AND OUTCOME

Members noted that Melanie Sensicle and Kate James, Visit County Durham, had been invited to the meeting to provide information requested by the Council's Auditor, however they were both unable to attend.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Members were extremely disappointed and increasingly frustrated in Visit County Durham's unwillingness to engage with the Town Council and provide information about the 2013 Food Festival.

A further attempt be made to meet with Visit County Durham. Arrangements were to be made for a meeting to be held with Melanie Sensicle at a time convenient to her. All Members who were available would then meet with Melanie.

Members noted that an invoice had been received for the Council's £10,000 contribution to the 2013 Food Festival. It was suggested that payment of the invoice be deferred until the requested information had been received and arrangements had been made to ensure appropriate engagement with the Council in future Festivals.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That a further attempt be made to meet with Visit County Durham.
 2. That the invoice received from Visit County Durham for the Town Council's contribution to the 2013 Food Festival be deferred until the requested information had been received and arrangements had been made to ensure appropriate engagement with the Council in future Festivals

TC.80/13 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30th JULY 2013

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

There were no matters arising.

TC 81/12 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

- a. Planning Committee, 30th July 2013
- b. Events Committee, 2nd September 2013
- c. Policy and Strategy Committee, 3rd September 2013
- d. Finance Committee, 10th September 2013

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be approved and adopted.

There were no matters arising

TC.82/13 REPORT OF TOWN MAYOR

In the absence of the Mayor a schedule was circulated detailing the events he had attended since the last Council meeting.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING EVENTS

TC.83/13 TOWN TEAM

Clive Auld, Bishop Auckland Town Team, reported that since the last meeting the Car Show had taken place on 23rd August which had been a great success. The revenue from the car show would be used to enable events to be held throughout the year aimed at increasing footfall in the town centre.

Signed:
Town Mayor

It was noted that the targeted amount of £20,000 had almost been achieved. A funding grant from Durham County Councillors was being considered by the AAP which, if approved, would enable lights in Newgate Street, Fore Bondgate and those on the Town Hall to be replaced. It was hoped that all these would be replaced for Christmas 2013, although some technicalities had to be overcome in respect of Fore Bondgate.

The Town Team Website would be launched soon. A number of local retailers had signed up. The Newgate Centre and Cable Taxi's had signed up to be major sponsors of the website. Two further major sponsor advertising spaces were available. All proceeds from advertising would be used to fund future events and promote the town.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.84/13 THE BIG LOCAL

Clive Auld reported that Durham Rural Community Council had been engaged to carry out consultation with local people to identify uses for the Big Local funds.

A meeting would be held the following week to establish a development group.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

TC.85/13 RESIGNATION OF ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK

Members noted that a letter of resignation had been received from the Assistant Town Clerk, Linda Goldie. Linda, who had been with the Town Council since April 2008 would leave at the end of September 2013.

A meeting of the Human Resources Committee would be held to consider the future staffing structure of the Council.

Members wished to record their gratitude for Linda's hard work and support and wished her a long and happy retirement.

RESOLVED: That the resignation of the Assistant Town Clerk be noted

TC.86/13. APPLICATION FOR S106 MONIES.

Council at its meeting held on 30th July 2013 considered a request from Auckland Youth and Community Centre for 'all available S106 money' (Minute No TC.73/13 refers). At that time it was understood that only £6,000 S106 money was available for allocation. However further information had been received from Durham County Council indicating that £56,448 was available for allocation as follows:-

Scheme Address/Name	Electoral Division	Sub Division Geographical Constraint?	Available to Allocate by S106 Group	Purpose Of 106
Demolition & Redevelopment at St Andrews Road Estate Bishop Auckland	Woodhouse Close	none given	£25,317	off site provision and maintenance of play and recreational facilities

Signed:
Town Mayor

Land at Greenfields Road Bishop Auckland	Woodhouse Close	locality	£25,131	off site recreation and play
Demolition of The Two Blues Public House & erection of 10 dwellings at Bishop Auckland	Woodhouse Close	locality	£6,000	off site recreation and play
Total			£56,448	

Members therefore gave further consideration to the request.

In view of the circumstances Durham County Council has extended the deadline for comments to 18th September 2013.

RESOLVED: That Durham County Council be advised that the Town Council has no objections to the allocation of all S106 money relating to Woodhouse Close in the sum of £56,448 to Auckland Youth and Community Centre.

TC.87/13 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The following would be invited to attend an appropriately timed meeting to update the Town Council on their activities:

- Rowena Hackwood – Auckland Castle Trust
- Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner

Food Festival

In accordance with Minute No TC.79/13 above a meeting was to be arranged with Visit County Durham to discuss issues relating to the Food Festival.

Bishop Auckland Town Centre

Councillor Neil Foster (Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration), together with Sarah Robson (Head of Economic Development), Chris Myers, (Regeneration Projects Manager) and Stuart Timmiss (Head of Planning Services) had been invited to a special Town Council meeting to be held on 24th September 2013 to discuss:-

- a. the decline of Bishop Auckland Town Centre
- b. the possible adverse implications of the next stage of development of the Tindale Crescent out of town retail park
- c. Durham County Council's plans for the economic regeneration of Bishop Auckland Town Centre.

However it was noted that Councillor Foster and Sarah Robinson were unable to attend this meeting. A further meeting was to be arranged to discuss the above issues.

TC.88/13 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 excluded the press and public for the remaining items on the agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.89/13. BISHOP AUCKLAND MARKET

Consideration was given to a documentation which had been prepared in respect of a bid for the licence to manage Bishop Auckland Markets.

Following careful consideration Members were of the opinion that the market was not viable in its current state and required significant investment in terms of finance, time and effort to achieve a quality market that would make best use of the investment Durham County Council had made in the physical regeneration of the market place and to support the projected growth in tourism.

Members considered the minimum licence fee of £6,000 p.a. was too high for a market that was operating at a loss at the current time, which undermined the strategic aims for the revitalisation of the market rather than supporting it.

Members major concern, and driving force in pursuing licence was the prospect of a commercial operator running a low quality market that would detract from the regeneration of the market place and investments made to increase tourism.

It was however agreed that should there be no suitable bid the Town Council would consider working together with Durham County Council to revitalise the market. Depending on the outcome of the bidding process consideration would be given to the possibility of arranging a number of specialist markets to support the Town Centre.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Town Council does not submit a bid for the license to manage Bishop Auckland Markets.
 2. That, should there be no suitable bid for the licence, the Town Council consider options to work in partnership with Durham County Council to revitalise the market.
 3. That, depending on the outcome of the bidding process, consideration be given to the possibility of arranging a number of specialist markets to support the Town Centre.

Signed:
Town Mayor