

Present: Councillor Brownson (Mayor), and Councillors Anderson, Blackburn, Fleming, Golightly, Lethbridge, Race, Wilson, A. Zair and L. Zair.

Also Present: David Anderson (Town Clerk)

Public in Attendance: C. Auld and L Harris

TC.1/16 ELECTION OF MAYOR

Councillor Fleming proposed and Councillor Lethbridge seconded a nomination for Councillor Ann Golightly to be elected Mayor for the ensuing year. There being no further nominations, Councillor Golightly was duly elected Mayor for the 2016/17 municipal year

RESOLVED: That Councillor Ann Golightly be elected Mayor for the 2016/17 municipal year.

TC.2/16 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The newly appointed Mayor made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and expressed her appreciation.

The Mayor announced that she would be supporting Butterwick Hospice and Dementia Friends as her chosen charities during her term of office.

TC.3/16 PRESENTATION TO RETIRING MAYOR

Councillor Lethbridge thanked the retiring Mayor on behalf of the Town Council and congratulated him on his successful year of office, which he undertaken in the spirit of the position. With his natural enthusiasm and ability to promote Bishop Auckland he had provided an excellent service to the town.

Particular attention was given to the many events that Councillor Brownson had attended to support many local and community groups and to raise the profile of the Town Council across the region.

Councillor Lethbridge then presented Councillor Brownson with a Mayor's Medal.

Councillor Brownson expressed his gratitude to his fellow Councillors saying that it had been a great honour and a pleasure to serve as Mayor of Bishop Auckland. During his term of office he had attended many events and celebrations which covered every aspect of Bishop Auckland communities.

He was also delighted that he was able to raise funds for Help for Heroes and thanked everyone who had supported him in these fundraising events.

TC.4/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S. Zair.

TC.5/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Blackburn and Golightly declared an 'other registerable interest' in respect of Item No 15.6 'Youth Awards – Coaches and Volunteers' and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.6/16 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Lethbridge proposed and Councillor Brownson seconded a nomination for Councillor David Fleming to be elected Deputy Mayor for the ensuing year.

Councillor Race proposed and Councillor L. Zair seconded a nomination for Councillor Adam Zair to be elected Deputy Mayor for the ensuing year.

On a vote being taken Councillor Fleming was duly elected Deputy Mayor for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: That Councillor David A. Fleming be elected Deputy Mayor for the 2016/17 municipal year.

TC.7/16 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The newly appointed Deputy Mayor made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and expressed his appreciation.

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND WORKING 2016/17

TC.8/16 FINANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Finance Committee.

- Councillor A. Anderson, (Chairman).
- Councillor, L. Brownson (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor J. Blackburn
- Councillor A Golightly
- Councillor C. Race
- Councillor D. Wilson
- Councillor S. Zair

TC.9/16 POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Policy and Strategy Committee.

- Councillor J. Blackburn (Chairman),
- Councillor A. Anderson (Vice Chairman)
- Councillor A. Golightly
- Councillor J. Lethbridge
- Councillor L. Zair

TC.10/16 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Planning Committee.

- Councillor D. Wilson, (Chairman)
- Councillor A. Anderson, (Vice Chairman)
- Councillor L. Brownson
- Councillor D.A. Fleming
- Councillor A Golightly
- Councillor L. Zair

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.11/16 ALLOTMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Allotments and Environment Committee.

Councillor A. Anderson (Chairman)
Councillor J. Blackburn
Councillor L. Brownson
Councillor D. Fleming
Councillor A. Golightly

TC.12/16 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Human Resources Committee.

Councillor A. Anderson
Councillor J Blackburn
Councillor L Brownson
Councillor D. Fleming
Councillor L. Zair

TC.13/16 DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE APPEALS PANEL

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Disciplinary and Grievance Appeals Panel.

Councillor A Golightly
Councillor D. Wilson
Councillor A. Zair

TC.14/16 EVENTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Events Committee.

Councillor A. Golightly (Chair)
Councillor A. Anderson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor J. Blackburn
Councillor L. Brownson
Councillor J. Lethbridge
Councillor L. Zair

TC.15/16 YOUTH COUNCIL COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Youth Council Committee.

Councillor L. Brownson (Chair)
Councillor J. Blackburn (Vice-Chair)
Councillor A. Anderson
Councillor A. Golightly
Councillor A Zair

TC.16/16 GENERAL APPEALS PANEL

RESOLVED: That 3 members be drawn from a list of all Councillors by the Town Clerk as and when required. Councillors involved in the decision which is the subject of the appeal should not sit on the Panel.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.17/16 ACCOMMODATION WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to the Accommodation Working Group.

Councillor S. Zair (Chair)
Councillor A Anderson
Councillor D. Fleming
Councillor A. Golightly
Councillor C. Race
Councillor L. Zair

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2015/16

TC.18/16 BISHOP AUCKLAND AND SHILDON LOCAL COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That Councillors D. Fleming and A. Anderson, together with Town Clerk, represent the Town Council on The Bishop Auckland and Shildon Local Council's Committee

TC.19/16 BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN TEAM

RESOLVED: That Councillors A. Anderson and L Brownson be appointed as Town Council representatives. All other members were encouraged to attend the open forum.

TC.20/16 BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN TEAM – CORE TEAM

RESOLVED: That Councillors A. Anderson and L Brownson be appointed as Town Council representatives on the Core Team of the Bishop Auckland Town Team.

TC.21/16 CDALC LARGER LOCAL COUNCIL'S FORUM

RESOLVED: That Councillors A. Golightly and D. Fleming, together with the Town Clerk be appointed to the CDALC Larger Local Council's Forum

TC.22/16 COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (A.G.M.)

RESOLVED: That Councillor A. Anderson represent the Town Council at the A.G.M. of County Durham Association of Local Councils

TC.23/16 DURHAM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – BISHOP AUCKLAND COMMUNITY PANEL

RESOLVED: That Councillor A. Anderson represent the Town Council on the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Bishop Auckland Community Panel

TC.24/16 DIARY OF MEETINGS 2016/17

Consideration was given to a number of options for the diary of meetings for the 2016/17 municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the diary of meetings for 2016/17 be approved.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.25/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Lee Harris requested information relating to an item considered at the Council meeting held on 10th May 2016 regarding the Lightfoot Centre. The Town Clerk replied that the report was considered in private as it contained information of a confidential nature and therefore he was unable to give the details he requested.

Mr Harris indicated that he would request the information via a Freedom of Information request. The Town Clerk replied that he would take advice as to whether the information could be released if a request was made.

Mr Harris also raised a query with regard to the former Mayor, Councillor Brownson, having his photograph taken wearing the Mayoral chain at the recent Food Festival with Helen Goodman M.P. and others whilst they were campaigning for the forthcoming European referendum.

The Town Clerk had received the complaint from Mr Harris earlier that day and had replied to him by email prior to the meeting. For clarity and for the benefit of those at the meeting it was explained that whilst attending the Food Festival as Town Mayor, Councillor Lee Brownson had his photo taken with a group of people campaigning for the forthcoming European referendum, whilst wearing his chains of office. This was then posted on a personal Facebook page without Councillor Brownson’s knowledge. The photo had subsequently been removed at the Town Clerk’s request. It was understood that it had not been posted elsewhere or used for political campaigning.

TC.26/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Town Council	12 th April 2016
Planning Committee	12 th April 2016
Allotments & Environment Committee	27 th April 2016
Events Committee	10 th May 2016
Town Council (special)	10 th May 2016
Events Committee	17 th May 2016

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and recommendations contained therein be adopted.

There were no matters arising

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING EVENTS

TC.27/16 TOWN TEAM

Clive Auld updated members with regard to the activities of the Town Team.

Members noted that preparations were being made for the new car show which would take place in August. A buskers show would be held on 8th August. Bishop the Boar had been on show in the town centre.

Councillor L. Zair thanked Mr Auld for the use of bunting in Fore Bondgate.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.28/16 THE BIG LOCAL – GAUNLESS GATEWAY

Clive Auld updated members on the Gaunless Gateway project. Members noted that the project had been approved. The Board had advertised for an organisation to deliver the project. Four applications had been received, which would be considered in

Signed:
Town Mayor

due course with a view to awarding a contract following an interview process. A co-ordinator from the Big Local was assisting with the process.

Members were reminded that the project was to offer apprentice and training opportunities to people from the Big Local area. Initially a pilot project was to be undertaken but it was envisaged that multiple projects would be run with local organisations being able to be involved.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.29/16 CORE TEAM

Councillor Anderson updated members with regard to the activities of the Core Team. It was explained that the Core Team was the central body of the Town Team and was made up of 12 members, 3 members drawn from the Community Sector, Business Sector, Regeneration Partners and local Councillors.

The main priority for the Core Team was to prepare for the influx of visitors expected for Kynren. The objective was for people to enjoy their visit to Bishop Auckland and hopefully make a return visit.

It had been hoped to create a street food event, which would include suitable entertainment, in the market place on Kynren days however this had been postponed until experience had been gained on the effect of the additional traffic and possible congestion.

Representatives of the Enterprise Agency and Durham County Council were visiting food premises to ensure they were of what was happening and of the possible opportunities presented by Kynren.

World Host training was being offered to traders with the hope that, with sufficient sign up, Bishop Auckland could be promoted as a World Host Town.

Booklets were being prepared containing useful information for businesses and also to encourage businesses to make the most of the opportunities.

Durham County Council were heavily involved in work to improve the infrastructure and environment.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.30/16 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT 2015/16 – REPORT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Detailed consideration was given to the report of the Internal Auditor for 2015/2016, together with a proposed action plan prepared by the Town Clerk. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members noted that by the very nature the audit was a critical process, however this was welcomed as it helped the Council make further improvements to its systems and procedures.

The main matters requiring attention were as follows:-

Funds held by CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

The auditor had recommended that the policy of investing the majority of the Council's substantial investments in one account, which was not apparently covered by the FSCS Compensation scheme, should be reviewed.

Signed:
Town Mayor

He acknowledged that whilst a considerable amount of the Council's balances might be required at short notice, towards the purchase/refurbishment costs for some new offices, it should nevertheless consider other deposit accounts covered by the FSCS scheme initially with instant access. Once the possible purchase of the new premises was a little clearer the Council should then be in a position to decide if it could make any long term deposits and clarify what rates are available from organisations covered by the FSCS.

The Town Clerk reported that until very recently the Society of Local Council Clerks was advising that local councils were not eligible under the Financial Service Compensation Scheme. A new advice note had been issued following a query by the Town Clerk which stated that 'small local authorities' were eligible depositors. Local Councils were however advised to check with banks/building societies whether the compensation scheme applied.

As the scheme was restricted to banks and building societies the funds held with the CCLA were not covered. Members noted that the Public Sector Deposit Fund was rated AAA by Fitch Rating and was on the lowest risk point of the scale, i.e. rated 1 out of a scale of 1 – 7.

It was proposed that, given the amended advice, the Finance Committee should be requested to consider alternative investments for the Council's funds.

Office accommodation

The Auditor noted that the Council had almost reached the point of committing some substantial capital into new offices. He recommended that a valuer's report be obtained to support any price which might be paid by the Council for the property, or for any other property which it might wish to purchase.

The Council had however withdrawn from the purchase of the premises referred to in the Auditor's report. The Council would of course obtain all necessary professional services to ensure value for money of any similar project in the future.

Members also noted a number of comments made by the Auditor that whilst were not highlighted as recommendations were useful for the Council to consider. These had been incorporated into the proposed action plan.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Auditor's report be noted and actions proposed be endorsed

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

TC.31/16 ANNUAL AUDIT 2015/16 – ANNUAL RETURN, SECTION 1 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Consideration was given to the Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2016, which related to the Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED: That Section 1 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement, be approved.

TC.32/16 ANNUAL AUDIT 2015/16 – ANNUAL RETURN, SECTION 2 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

Consideration was given to the Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2016, which related to the Accounting Statements.

Signed:
Town Mayor

RESOLVED: That Section 2 of the Annual Return, the Accounting Statements, be approved.

TC.33/16 REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a review of the Council's Constitution, which was made up of the following documents:-

- Part 1 Summary and Explanation**
- Part 2 Articles of the Constitution**
 - Article 1 The Constitution
 - Article 2 Members of the Council
 - Article 3 Citizens and the Council
 - Article 4 The Full Council
 - Article 5 Chairing the Council
 - Article 6 Committees
 - Article 7 Officers
 - Article 8 Decision Making
 - Article 9 Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters
 - Article 10 Review and Revision of the Constitution
 - Article 11 Suspension, Interpretation and Publication of the Constitution
- Part 3 Responsibility for Functions**
 - 1. Committee Structure
 - 2. Terms of Reference of Committees
- Part 4 Rules of Procedure**
 - 1. Standing Orders
 - 2. Financial Regulations
- Part 5 Codes and Protocols**
 - 1. Members' Code of Conduct
 - 2. Employees' Code of Conduct
 - 3. Protocol on Member/Officer Relations
 - 4. Employment Procedure Rules
- Part 6 Members' Allowances Scheme**
- Part 7 Organisation Structure**

Members noted that a new model financial regulations had been issued by the National Association of Local Councils. Amendments had therefore been made to the Councils Financial Regulations to take into account changes in the model. Consideration was given to the amended document (For copy see file of Minutes).

There were no other amendments necessary to the Constitution.

RESOLVED: That the amended Financial Regulations be approved.

TC.34/16 REVIEW OF POLICY FRAMEWORK

Consideration was given to a review of the Council's Policy Framework, which was made up of the following documents:-

- 1 Allotment Rules and Regulations
- 2 No amendment required
- 3 Comments and Complaints Procedure
- 4 Community Engagement Policy
- 5 Community Fund Policy and Guidance
- 6 Data Protection Policy
- 6 Disciplinary Procedure

Signed:
Town Mayor

- 7 Equal Opportunities Policy
- 8 Freedom of Information
- 9 Grievance Procedure
- 10 Health and Safety Policy
- 11 Public Filming, Recording, Reporting Policy
- 12 Public Participation Policy
- 13 Publication Scheme
- 14 Risk Management Policy
- 15 Social Media Policy
- 16 Training Statement of Intent

Members considered a draft Risk Management Policy which was proposed to be included in the Policy Framework. (For copy see file of Minutes).

No other amendments were required to the Policy Framework.

RESOLVED: That the Risk Management Policy be agreed.

TC.35/16 MEMBER TRAINING

Consideration was given to attendance at the following training events

- a. SLCC Regional Roadshow, Wednesday 6th July 2016, Sedgefield
- b. Introduction to Social Media, 5th July 2016, Durham

- RESOLVED:**
- 1. That Councillor Anderson, together with the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk attend the SLCC Regional Roadshow
 - 2. That the Assistant Town Clerk and Administrative Assistant attend the Introduction to Social Media training.

TC.36/16 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

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

- Kate James, Durham County Council Events Team, re Feedback on the 2016 Food Festival (June 2016)
- Julie Costello, Cultivate 4 Life
- John Wiseman, Woodhouse Church

TC.37/16 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.

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)

TC.38/16 REQUEST RE ALLOTMENT RENT

Consideration was given to a request seeking a discount on the rent of an allotment due to the disabilities of the tenant. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Signed:
Town Mayor

Members were reminded of the Council's policy to grant a 50% discount on rent if an allotment was more than half cultivated to incentivise cultivation. There was no policy relating to discounted rent for tenants with disabilities.

Careful consideration was given to the circumstances of the tenant, together with the merits and implications of granting either a one-off discount or introducing a policy to grant a discount to tenants with disabilities.

Whilst having sympathy with the request it was thought that granting a one off discount may result in discrimination claims from other tenants with disabilities. Members were not qualified to judge the extent of a tenant's disability and their ability to cultivate a allotment.

Consideration was also give to the merits of introducing a policy to grant a discount to tenants registered as having a disability. However given the demographic of tenants a large proportion were likely to qualify for a discount, which would mean that rents would need to increased to offset the discount and provide sufficient income to fund the service. It was therefore thought that implementing a disability discount would be counterproductive.

RESOLVED: That the request be denied

N.B. Councillor Golightly vacated the Chair for the duration of the following item.

Councillor D.A. Fleming in the Chair

TC.39/16 YOUTH AWARDS – COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

Consideration was given to a schedule detailing nominations received for the Youth Award's Coach and Volunteers category. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Consideration of nominations had been referred by the Events Committee who couldn't consider the nominations as the meeting became inquorate due to a number of members declaring interests.

Nominations had been anonymised to ensure impartiality.

RESOLVED: That nominee number 5 be awarded the Coaches and Volunteer's Award.

TC.40/16 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

Consideration was given to the details of two possible properties which may be suitable for Council accommodation.

RESOLVED: 1 That a viewing be arranged for the one property (TS) and further information be sought on the other.

Signed:
Town Mayor