

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 1ST MAY 2018** at 6.15 p.m.

Present: Councillor A. Zair (Mayor), and Councillors Allen, Blackburn, Brownson, Chappell, Cullen, Fleming, Wilson, L. Zair and S. Zair.

Also Present: David Anderson (Town Clerk)

Public in Attendance: Alan Anderson, C. Auld, N. Bryson and I Simpson

TC.199/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tucker.

TC.200/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

TC.201/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Four members of the public were present with regard to Item No 4.1 Council Accommodation. No other queries were raised.

TC.202/17 COUNCIL ACCOMMODATION

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk regarding the proposed purchase of accommodation for the town council. (For copy see file of Minutes)

Members were reminded of the criteria previously agreed for new premises, together with a maximum budget set in 2015 for the purchase of a suitable building or to build new premises if suitable land council be acquired.

The Council has been searching for suitable premises for a number of years and had viewed and rejected 15 properties as they did not meet the criteria. At a meeting of the Council held on 24th October 2017 Members considered a further 14 properties which were on the market for purchase together with an additional 17 premises which were available to let. None of these properties were suitable for the Council's purposes and therefore the Council agreed in principle to pursue the purchase of the property which is subject of the report.

The identity or exact location of the premises could not be revealed at the current time for commercial sensitivity. The current owner of the building had requested that the identity be kept confidential so as not to adversely affect the current occupiers business.

An article had appeared in Bishop's Press and the Council's website seeking comments from the public. Members noted the comments received via email together with comments from members of the public present at the meeting. Of the emails received one was against the proposal, while two were in favour. Three of the members of public present at the meeting who spoke were all in favour of the proposal.

Members also commented that the views of local people they had spoken with were overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal.

Members were therefore agreed to purchase the premises.

Signed:
Town Mayor

Detailed consideration was given to the financial options appraisal at Appendix 1 to the report.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the premises be purchased
 2. That option 3 of the financial appraisal be agreed to fund the building
 3. That an application be made to the Secretary of State for permission to borrow money from the Public Works Loans Board.

TC.203/17 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.

TC.204/17 APPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR

This item was deferred to the next Council meeting.

Signed:
Town Mayor