

Minutes of the meeting of **Bishop Auckland Town Council** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019** at 6.00 p.m.

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

**Also Present:** Chris Myers and Sabina McGing (Durham County Council)  
Nigel Bryson (Bishop Auckland Town Team)  
David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**Public in Attendance:** J. Nicholson, D. Tully and J. Tully

**TC.63/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Brownson, Chappell, Fleming and Newton Woods

**TC.64/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Item No 4. King James' School Foundation**

Councillor J. Allen declared an 'other registerable interest' in respect of this item and did not take part in the voting thereon.

**Item No 9.1 Bishop Auckland Town Team, Event Funding**

Councillors J Allen and J Blackburn declared an 'other registerable interest' in respect of this item and did not take part in the voting thereon.

**TC.65/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No public were in attendance

**PRESENTATIONS**

**TC.66/19 TOWN HALL REFURBISHMENT**

Chris Myers, Sabina McGing, Regeneration Services, Durham County Council, gave a presentation regarding proposed change to the King James' School Foundation Trust as detailed below to allow the trustees to look at alternative uses to the building.

- Change the governing document to give the trustees power of sale
- Separate the building from the Trust
- Allow the Trustees to dispose of designated land without replacing it

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council has no objection to the proposals, subject to any assets held by the Trust being used for the benefit of the Trust's designated area.

**TC.67/19 BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN TEAM**

**Core Team**

Nigel Bryson, Chairman of the Town Team, gave an overview of various regeneration activities within the town centre which were being undertaken by partner organisations, including the following: -

- **Kynren** The final show of the current season would be held on 14<sup>th</sup> September. The shows had been well attended throughout the season and had continued to

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**

received excellent reviews. The addition of the Viking village had been a great success.

It was noted that a 'pyromusical' fireworks display would be held at the Kynren site on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

- **Auckland Castle** would be opening on 2<sup>nd</sup> November
- **Heritage Action Zone** a heritage festival would be held from 13<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September.
- **Free Public WiFi** progress was being made on the installation of the Wi-Fi equipment, which would be installed and tested in the coming months, before being made available to the public. Members were reminded that DCC were leading the project and funding capital costs of the project. The Town Team and Town Council were helping to fund the revenue costs.

### **Events Team**

Nigel Bryson also gave an update with regard to recent activity of the Events Team.

The Events Team had helped the 'Future of Fore Bondgate' group organise a street party on 31<sup>st</sup> August. The event had been successful with an increase in footfall in Fore Bondgate. It was hoped that this would be the first of many events in the street.

Arrangements were being made for the Bishop Celebrates Together to be held on 28<sup>th</sup> September, which would coincide with the Town Council's Horticultural and Produce Show and other attractions.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted

### **TC.68/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

|                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Town Council              | 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2019    |
| Planning Committee        | 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2019    |
| Human Resources Committee | 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2019   |
| Finance Committee         | 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019 |

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

There were no matters arising

### **TC.69/19 REPORT OF MAYOR**

Members noted a report of the Mayor detailing the events attended since the last meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

### **REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

### **TC.70/19 BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN TEAM - EVENT FUNDING**

Consideration was given to a request from Bishop Auckland Town Team to draw down £1,878.14 in relation to the 1940's event from an allocation made by the Town Council to help fund Town Team events to increase footfall in the town centre. (For copy see file of Minutes)

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor

Members noted that although the event had to be cancelled on the day due to health and safety concerns relating to severe weather conditions costs had still been incurred.

**RESOLVED:** That the request from Bishop Auckland Town Team to draw down £1,878.14 in relation to the 1940's event be approved.

**TC.71/19 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2018/19 - EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT**

Consideration was given to the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19 which included the External Auditor's Certificate and Report. (For copy see file of Minutes).

There were no significant matters arising from the audit.

Members also noted progress on action taken in relation to the Internal Auditors recommendations. Consideration was given to actions which had not yet been completed relating to allotments, and a review of staff salaries.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19 and External Auditors Report be noted.
  2. That progress in relation to the Internal Auditors recommendations be noted.

**TC.72/19 REVIEW OF ASSET REGISTER**

Consideration was given to a review of the Council's Asset Register. (For copy see file of Minutes)

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the obsolete office equipment be disposed of responsibly taking into account the requirements of GDPR.
  2. That the serviceable Christmas decorations be offered to a local charitable organization, with those that are no longer fit for purpose being disposed of.
  3. That the Mayoral framed photographs be removed from the asset register.
  4. That the Asset Register be amended appropriately.

**TC.73/19 TRAINING EVENT - VAT**

Consideration was given to attendance at a VAT training event. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That The Town Clerk attend the training event

**TC.74/19 INSURANCE COVER 2019/20**

Consideration was given to quotations received in relation to insurance cover for 2019/20. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Three insurance companies had been requested to each provide two quotes. One based on the Council's current requirements, the other based on requirements following purchase of premises.

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor

It was noted that only 2 quotations had been received and therefore it was suggested that the Town Clerk be authorised, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of Finance Committee, to accept the most appropriate quotation.

**RESOLVED:** That The Town Clerk be authorised, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of Finance Committee, to accept the most appropriate quotation

**TC.75/19 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION**

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

- Jill Wood, Bishop Auckland Food Festival 2019 (evaluation)
- Sue Jacques, Chief Executive, County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, regarding proposed changes to services at Bishop Auckland Hospital

**Informal briefing**

- Public WiFi Demonstration (5<sup>th</sup> November 2019)

**TC.76/19 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.77/19 TOWN CLERK'S WORKLOAD**

Members noted a position statement prepared by the Town Clerk setting out his current workload, the number of additional hours being worked and amount of annual leave being accrued. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That the situation be noted.

**TC.78/19 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

Consideration was given to a report updating members on the current situation regarding the purchase of office accommodation. (For copy see file of Minutes)

The report particularly dealt with tenders received in relation to the building of an extension and other work. A revised financial appraisal was considered which confirmed the business case for the Council purchasing the premises.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That VEST (Construction (LIVECO Ltd) be appointed as contractor.
  2. That discussions take place with VEST (Construction (LIVECO Ltd) with a view to value engineer the contact.
  3. That arrangements be made to draw down a loan of £207,161 from the Public Works Loans Board payable at a fixed rate of interest over a 50 year period.

Signed: .....  
Town Mayor