

A meeting of Bishop Auckland Town Council was held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on Tuesday, 18th February 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

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

Also Present: David Anderson (Town Clerk).

Public in Attendance: None

TC.119/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Councillor L. Zair.

TC.120/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

TC.121/19 RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR NEWTON WOODS

Members noted that Darren Newton Woods resigned from the Town Council with effect from 30th January 2020. Durham County Council's Electoral Services had been informed. A Notice of Vacancy had been prepared by DCC and had been posted on the Town Council's website and physically posted in the notice board and within the ward.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

TC.122/19 VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES

Consideration was given to a report highlighting vacancies on a number of committees, which had increased as a result of the resignation of a councillor. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Seats had been allocated in accordance with political balance rules as agreed at the Council meeting held on 7th May 2019. (Minute No's TC.9/19 to TC.17/19 refer). Vacancies detailed in the report identified where nominations were sought. Vacancies which had arisen from the resignation of the councillor were to be allocated to the new councillor, when elected, to ensure that seats on committees continued to reflect political balance.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That Councillor S. Zair be appointed to the Allotments & Environment Committee.
 2. That Councillor Leanda Chappell be appointed to the Human Resources Committee.
 3. That Councillor A Zair be appointed to the Policy and Strategy Committee.
 4. That Councillor S. Zair be appointed to the Youth Council Committee.

Signed:
Town Mayor

TC.123/19 WATER SUPPLY, MILL RACE ALLOTMENTS

Consideration was given to a report setting out quotations received to replace a leaking water supply pipe to Mill Race Allotments. (For copy see file of Minutes).

RESOLVED: That the quotation from Teesdale Building and Construction be accepted.

TC.124/19 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.125/19 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk updating Members on the current situation regarding the purchase of premises and lease of offices. A risk assessment and financial appraisal was distributed at the meeting for consideration. (For copies see file of Minutes).

It was noted that due to changes in circumstances the company that currently occupied the premises no longer required to lease office space. Concerns were expressed that the anticipated rental income of £5,813 would now not be realised immediately after purchase of the property. It was however noted that income would still be achieved from the office to be rented to Durham County Council.

Members noted that the office space that would now not be let to the company would allow the Town Council to occupy the premises during the construction of the extension. Work was underway to identify alternative tenants for the surplus office space following completion of the extension.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Council confirms its decision to purchase the property identified in the report, subject to the vendor continuing to provide or fund professional planning and architectural services to the completion of the building work.
 2. That solicitors be instructed to complete the purchase of the property on 28th February 2020.
 3. That notice be given to Bishop Auckland Community Partnership that the current office rental at the Four Clocks Centre be terminated on 31st March 2020.

Signed:
Town Mayor