

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting for Bishop Auckland Town Council on 22 June 2021 at 6.00pm, St Mary's Church Bishop Auckland.

In attendance: Cllrs K Eliot (Mayor), J Blackburn, H Balmer-Howieson, M Siddle, D Wilson, L Chappell, L Zair, A Zair and S Zair

Also Present: Sarah Harris, Town Clerk
Debbie Connell, DCC
Nigel Bryson, Town Team

TC. 38/21 Notice of Meeting – Public Notice of the meeting has been given in accordance with Paragraph 7 & 10 (2)(b) of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED: That the Notice was approved

TC. 39/21 Agree Notice of Motion - to call the meeting to be held on 22 June 2021.

RESOLVED: That it was approved to call the meeting on the 22nd June 2021

TC. 40/21 Apologies for absence –apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lee Brownson as he was at work.

REVOLVED: The Apologies were received and approved.

TC. 41/21 Declarations of interest –_No Declarations of interest were made.

TC. 42/21 Minutes - To approve the Minutes of the following meeting:

- Town Council 24 May 2021
- Events Committee 14 June 2021
- Town Council 27 August 2020
 - Amendment inclusion of **F.C. 39.00/2020– Finance**

RESOLVED: Minutes were approved and the amendment to the 27th August 2020 approved.

TC. 43/21 Matters Arising – Events committee update was given based upon the minutes of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That a maximum budget of £500 for NHS and Front-Line Workers Day be agreed.

That No 42 is used for the Horticulture show, on 25th September and that the budget for £3500 be kept to and the costs for judges etc. be kept the same and used from within the budget.

That the Youth Awards be kept on the agenda and looked to be held as soon as practicable.

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That a larger PA system be used for Remembrance be used and that the budget be reviewed when budget setting for 2022-23.

That Christmas activities be focused in the market place and work undertaken with the schools.

TC. 44/21 Public Participation – No members of the public had registered to speak under the [Public Participation Policy](#)¹.

RESOLVED: That no members of the public had registered to speak.

TC. 45/21 Reports on the following were presented:

TC.45.1/21 Debbie Connell, Community Culture Development Coordinator (South & West Durham) from Durham County Council provided an update about the activities at Bishop Auckland Town Hall over the summer. The Jorvik exhibition is currently running, and work is underway for the ‘Through a soldiers eyes’ exhibition starting in September which will run till November, and will be open on Remembrance Sunday to support the Town Council parade activities. The Town Hall is now open with the new cinema offer available with new releases showing. There has been issues with marketing of the new services due to covid however things are improving. BATC committed to helping to promote the activities.

TC.45.2/21 Cllr Sam Zair provided an update from Durham County Council. The New alliance is getting to grips with things, they plan on undertaking a review into former administration decisions including the closure of the DLI, the new Council Office development in the City, and a review of the Leisure strategy before any planning decisions are made. DCC Councillor neighbourhood budgets have increased to £30k an in increase of £10k. Public health are reporting increases in Covid cases and ask that communities try to remain vigilant. BATC will continue to share Covid messages to help keep the community safe, and will see if there are any plans to bring the vaccination bus to Bishop Auckland.

TC45.3/21 A Town Team update was provided by Nigel Bryson. The group were originally set up to help regenerate the Town Centre, however the activities of the Stronger Towns Board and Brighter Bishop Board have taken over. Therefore it has been decided to change the constitution and disband the core group – however the group have said that the Town Council may wish to take over a quarterly meeting. The group will change to solely focus on events in the town.

They are planning to bring the vintages buses back into the town on 15 August, a bringing bishop together event on 4 September in association with Christian burns which will have a stage and party atmosphere. Then they are planning a Christmas winter wonderland event throughout December. The Town Team Events will happily supply voluntary stewards to events such as the Horticulture show.

¹ The policy is available on the website at <https://bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk/council/constitution-and-policies/>

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In 2019 the Council Provided the Town Team with £5k of funding for events, which they drew down on production of receipts, they were unable to use any funding in 2020 due to covid and they would like the Council to consider giving them an advance on funding as they currently only have enough funding to make their final payment for community wifi.

RESOLVED: That the Council will consider if they wish to create a quarterly meeting with partners.

That the Council will consider funding for the Town Team Events.

TC. 45.4/21A Mayors Report was given by Katie Eliot – She had attended the unveiling of a blue plaque to mark the visit by Paganini to the assembly rooms on Fore Bondgate, it was a lovely event and is hoped to bring additional visitors to the town. Other events haven't yet started to come through given the ongoing covid restrictions. Planning is in place for BATC Mayoral events and dates are hoped to be confirmed by the end of the week. These will be circulated ASAP.

TC. 46/21 Finance The Town Clerk presented a range of finance reports.

TC. 46.1/21 Asset Register - The asset register for 2021-22 was presented.

RESOLVED: That the register be agreed subject to the title of one item being tweaked.

TC. 46.2/21 The Town Clerk presented a report on the 2020/21 accounts. It included updates on:

TC. 46.2.1/21 The Internal Audit report for 2020-21, and associated action plan.

RESOLVED: That the report be accepted and the recommendations within the action plan be addressed.

TC. 46.2.2/21 The External Audit Process was set out and the AGAR – Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 section One be presented for acceptance.

RESOLVED: **To note that** box B of the Annual internal Audit Report AGAR submission can be is answered as No, but Members are assured that the issues will be resolved with the adoption of the internal audit action plan as per minute no above.

That Section 1 of the AGAR be accepted and endorse the assurances of part one of the AGAR Submission. All but question 3 have been answered as yes. Members are assured that the associated action plan following the internal audit will rectify the issues shown. Section one the AGAR was signed by the Chair of the meeting and the RFO.

TC. 46.2.3/21 Section 2 the AGAR – Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 was presented for acceptance.

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RESOLVED: That Section 2 of the AGAR be accepted and endorsed for 2020/21. Section two of the AGAR was signed by the Chair of the meeting and the RFO.

That the Balance sheet to the 31st March 2021 be accepted and was signed by the RFO and Chair at the meeting, ready for submission with the AGAR.

TC. 46.2.4/21 Details of the public inspection of accounts was presented.

RESOLVED: That the accounts and associated notices would be uploaded to the website by 24th June 2021 and the inspection period would commence on Friday 25th June for 30 working days.

Members asked for their thanks to be passed on to the Admin Assistant for all their work in helping the Clerk prepare the AGAR for submission.

TC. 46.3/21 The **Monthly Statement of Payments** for the period 24 May 2021 to 16 June 2021 were presented for authorisation

RESOLVED: Members authorised the payments and a copy of the list is attached to these minutes for information.

TC. 47/21 **Amendment to Town Council Minutes 2020-21** - A report regarding the Amendment to Town Council Minutes 2020-21 was presented, this was to ensure that the approved payments lists were included with the minutes of the Town Council Meetings during 2021-21. All of the payments lists had been authorised at the meetings, and had been signed by the chair of the meeting and the chair of the Finance Committee. However, attachment to the minutes would mean that the process would meet the financial regulations and ensure a fair and transparent process.

RESOVLED: That the minutes would be receive and amendment and that the payments lists would be attached to the following meetings:

- 28 July 2020 – F.C. 7.0/2020
- 27 August 2020 F.C. 39.00/2020
- 15 September 2020 F.C. 48/.0/2020
- 22 October 2020 F.C. 66.02/2020
- 17 November 2020 F.C 80.00/2020
- 15 December 2020 F.C. 90.02/2020
- 19 January 2021 FC104.05/2020
- 11 February 2021 FC118.04/2020
- 16 March 2021 FC131.4/20

That all future agendas and minutes also have the payment list attached.

That minutes from the 22 October 2020 meeting be amended to not only include the list of payments but an addition the following be added to the minutes:

The two cash payments (amounting to £284.00 each) for the hire of 2 skips was made under exceptional circumstances. The provider was not accepting cheque payments, and the Clerk did not have access to electronic banking due to the access not yet

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being received from the bank. The Council were facing additional charges therefore agreement was given from the Chair of Allotments and Chair of Finance to use monies collected as allotment rents to make the payment for the service. It was fully acknowledged that this was not the usual or appropriate way to handle payments however given the unprecedented circumstances the Council didn't have any other option at that time.

TC. 48/21 **A report was presented on the Town Council Constitution & appointment to Committees** by the Town Clerk. The Council Constitution was considered at the last meeting as was Member allocation to committees. However, the Standing Orders do not currently state the number of members to be allocated to the Youth Council Committee, therefore allocations should not have been made.

RESOLVED: That the allocations be left as they agreed at the last meeting and that the committee be tasked with defining the role of the committee to fulfil the role of exploring opportunities for the development of a youth council.

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 do now exclude the press and public for the remaining item 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. 49/21 To approve the Minutes of the following meetings:

- Town Council 24 May 2021
- Accommodation Committee 10 June 2021
- Human Resources Committee 14 June 2021

RESOLVED: That the Minutes were agreed.

TC. 50/21 **Matters Arising** - To from the above Minutes which are not included elsewhere on the agenda (for information only).

RESOLVED: That the recommendations from the Accommodation Committee be adopted, including using the Procurement service at DCC to tender for the external works as one project, the approval of the Fire Doors and fire boarding, and the approval of an amended spend of £150 for the handyman service to install soap dispensers, pictures etc.

TC. 51/21 **Human Resources** - The Clerk verbally presented information from the HR Committee on the human resources issues facing the council including the vacancy of for the Deputy Clerk position. The HR committee had made recommendations. Details of the proposed staffing structure and associated changes were presented from the Chair of HR as to why those recommendations were being made.

RESOLVED: That the Job evaluation recommendation be adopted, via variation of contract to those affected.

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That the Staffing be restructured as per recommendations from the HR Committee.

That the Staffing restructure be undertake following a due and fair process with advice and support from the HR Service at DCC.

TC. 52/21 Allotment issues update - A further update following actions from the last meeting was given regarding an issue at an the allotment site. The tenant did not wish to take the alternative plots offered and would be leaving the site at the end of the growing season.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report

Item 9c – Monthly Payments and Payments as authorised in **TC. 46.3/21** for the period 24.05.2021 – 16.06.2021

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
Monthly Payments – June 2021					
DD	Telefonica UK Ltd. (O2 / Ariel Direct)	Mobile Phones 24/05/21 - 23/06/21	£85.39	By Council for Financial Regulation No 5.6	
DD	British Gas	Electricity: Skate Park 22/04/21- 22/05/21	£8.04		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Edge Hill 01/03/21- 31/05/21	£50.72		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Broken Banks 10/03/21- 09/06/21	£80.50		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Broken Banks 10/03/21- 09/06/21	£379.79		
EP	Amazon Business	Blue Papers Rolls & Lockable Dispenser Unit (Replacement Order)	£27.95	Council	
DC	Morrison's	Bouquet of Flowers	£15.00	Council	Gift for outgoing Mayor
DC	Post Office Ltd.	72x 2nd Class Stamps	£47.52	Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Thank You NHS Flag	£10.99	Council	
EP	Twinkle Cleaning Services	Kingsway: Cleaning 15 th , 22 nd & 29 th May - 5 Hour Sessions	£180.00	Council	To obtain permission to pay electronically. As per previous cleaners agreement.

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2066	The National Allotment Society	Membership Renewal 2021/22	£66.00	Council	
2067	Vinovium Associates Ltd.	Kingsway: Key-holding Services April 2021 - May 2021	£219.60	Council	
2068	Evolve Group Ltd.	Kingsway: Telephone & Broadband - June 2021	£218.29	Council	
2069	Wrights Office Supplies	Various Office Stationery	£74.14	Council	
2070	National Dahlia Society	Subscription 2020/21	£22.50	Council	
Total			£1,486.43		

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