

Bishop Auckland Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 22 March 2022, at No.42 Market Place, Bishop Auckland at 6pm

Present: - Cllr. J Blackburn - Chairman, S. Zair, L. Zair, L. Chappell, M Siddle, A Zair and T Tucker.

Also in attendance: - Mrs S Harris Clerk
Liz Fisher and Claire Gibbons from the Auckland Project
Peter Lonsdale, Durham Constabulary
6 Members of the Public

TC 99.0/2021 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Eliot, Brownson and Wilson

TC 100.0/2021 Declarations of interest – Cllrs L & S Zair declared an interest in the Community Toilet Scheme, due to being a participant. Cllr Tucker declared an interested in the application to the Community Fund from Tindale Homing society.

TC101.0/2021 Minutes - The following minutes were presented for approval:

- Planning Committee 16 March 2021
- Planning Committee 22 June 2021
- Planning Committee 11 January 2022
- Town Council 08 Feb 2022
- Town Council 02 March 2022 – extraordinary meeting
- Events Committee 14 February 2022
- Finance Committee 1 March 2022
- Events Committee 17 March 2022

Resolved: That the minutes be approved.

TC102.0/2021 Matters arising – The Clerk reported that microphones, speakers, recording equipment and smart devices were being costed and would be reported to the next meeting.

Resolved: That a report would be brought to the next meeting.

TC103.0/2021 Public Participation – The Secretary of the Pollards Allotment Society asked to speak, where she raised concerns that the Society felt that communication was lacking from the Council and lots of their concerns hadn't been acknowledged or addressed. A letter was presented to the meeting Chair, who acknowledged that the last year had been a challenge, and that work was ongoing in the background.

Resolved: That the letter would be appropriately responded too and an allotments committee would be called.

Another member of the public asked if they could raise their question after item 7 had been presented.

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Resolved: this was agreed by the Chair.

TC104.0/2021 Reports

TC104.1/2021 Police Inspector Report – Inspector Lonsdale thanked the Members for having him attend. He updated that the command structure of the police was having a restructure which was having an impact on team numbers but that was set to improve. Four PCSOs are moving on to become PCs, new PCSOs should be in place soon. ASB was a main focus with more reports coming in. It is being addressed as a holistic approach, as not just the offender the family are being looked at as a whole to see what the root causes are. This is a partnership approach with DCC, Social services etc. PACT is back up and running, looking to add an additional online element to capture the views of those who don't come to meetings.

Looking to get funding for E-bikes for PCSOs to get them around town easier, this has worked well in other neighborhood areas.

Looking at what ANPR improvements are needed as the cameras in the town are in serious need of upgrading.

Motorbikes and off road bikes are being targeted.

Members were keen to know if one of the four PCSOs moving on was Beth, they were pleased to hear that she is staying as a PCSO.

Cllr L Zair provided praise and positive feedback and asked for thanks to be shared for the prompt response of the police upon apprehending thieves who stole a bike from outside of her shop.

Resolved: That Members noted the report, and thanks be passed on to Beth and officers involved in the apprehension of the bike thieves. Inspector Lonsdale was also recommended to apply to the AAP for DCC member funding for the ANPR works.

TC104.2/2021 County Council Update Report – Cllr Sam Zair updated Members that Durham had been shortlisted to the final four for the capital of culture 2025. The final winner would be decided in the early summer.

Footfall in the town is averaging 1700 per day which for a town of this size is low, the monitoring system was still in need of some tweaks.

For the first time Durham County Council had a zero increase in council tax.

Resolved: That Members noted the report.

TC104.3/2021 Mayors Report – Due to the absence of the Mayor this would be deferred to the next meeting.

Resolved: To hear the report at the next meeting.

TC104.4/2021 Refugee Support – The Auckland Project. – Liz Fisher and Claire Gibbons from the Auckland Project updated the council and sought their feedback regarding an approach they had received from

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Bishop Paul to see if they had a building suitable for resettlement of refugees. They had identified a building however lots of would be needed and they were not sure of what the protocols would be yet. They were seeking the views of the Council to see if they were in favor of such a project.

Resolved: That the Council were unanimous in their support for refugee support in the town, and the Council asked the Auckland project to keep them briefed and that they would help in any way they were able too.

TC. 105.0/2021 – Public Meeting Feedback & next Steps – The notes of the meeting were circulated. It was advised that their had been one Stronger Towns Board Meeting, and then there had been a ‘Urban revitalisation’ working group, which was looking at alternative options as the Canopy had been taken off the table. Government had been advised of a change of submission and a month long extension had been granted. The working group were looking at alternative options and suggestions had been taken from the feedback from the meeting, and follow up meetings with the DCC Councillors. It was likely that the 6.1 million would be focused in three zones, Fore Bondgate, market place and Newgate street. Property re-use grants were likely to be considered as one project. The Board are still awaiting the coms plan. DCC have invited the Mayor and Clerk only, to be part of a new group called the Bishop Auckland Advisory Board who are due to meet at the end of the Month. However it is not known who else has been invited. Feedback will be given.

Members felt that the community were still not being involved, and engaged with. There is still a lack in transparency and there is no open debated.

The Chair welcomed Public Participation – One member of the Public stated that there was clearly a lack of communication and transparency from the Council or the Board. There are multiple boards/ groups working and there should be one clear agenda -= Bishop Auckland. Another meeting would be welcomed.

Another Member of the public echoed those thoughts, and said that the Board and Council were not being transparent. It is the DCC officers who score the projects and put them forward, the Board hold very little power. It is DCC making the decisions. The projects cannot be massively changed as they don’t have enough time to re-do the business cases. The Town Council need to take to task the Board and DCC.

The issue of the sculpture on canny hill roundabout was also raised. It was asked if we could look to stop it going ahead. There were already rumours that it was halted.

Resolved: That Members were unanimous in the need for another public meeting, as further updated has been promised for late Feb/ early March. Therefore the Town Clerk to contact DCC and the Chair of the Board asking for the next steps public accountability meeting for residents of the Town.

That the Town Clerk would speak with the Future High Streets fund for an update on the sculpture on the roundabout and convey the lack of support for it.

That feedback from the Bishop Auckland Advisory Board would be brought to the next meeting.

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TC. 106.0/2021 – Cllr Zair proposed motion from Cllr S Zair regarding Car Parks - *We as a Town Council start to explore negotiations with DCC regarding the adoption of all current and proposed Durham County Council car parks. If successful we as a Town Council would undertake all Durham County Council car parks old and new so that all revenue can be reinvested back in Bishop Auckland. We would adopt DCC car parking policy which would protect the vibrancy of the town centre.*

Resolved: That the motion be explored and that the Town Clerk arrange a meeting with DCC to explore the proposal.

TC. 107.0/2021 – Town Clerk Report

TC. 107.1/2021 – Code of Conduct – the New DCC adopted code was presented seeking adoption.

Resolved: that the Town Council Would adopt the new DCC Code of Conduct.

TC. 107.2/2021 - the Risk Management report was presented for approval.

Resolved: that the Town Council agreed the report.

TC. 107.3/2021 - the Audit Planning Diary was presented for approval.

Resolved: that the Town Council agreed the report.

TC. 107.4/2021 – The effectiveness of the System of internal Audit report was presented for approval.

Resolved: that the Town Council agreed the report & that Mr Ackroyd be approached for 2021-22 and Mr Shingleton be approached to look at the end of year reports before submission.

TC. 107.5/2021 - Details of the outstanding issues with the Accommodation were given, including the slow progress of obtaining the car park design for tender. The details of the Accommodation Maintenance contract was presented Audit Planning Diary was presented for approval.

Resolved: that the Town Council agreed the reports and approved the maintenance contract at a cost of £1864.30.

TC. 107.7/2021 - The Council were updated that the Kingsway office is now a Refuge Support drop off point for Ukrainian aid.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

TC. 107.7/2021 - Up and Coming events – updates on the forthcoming Food Festival 2022 & Queens Platinum Jubilee were given. There are potentially some gaps in the funding needed for the jubilee celebrations. An events committee to be held in early April for discussion.

Resolved: that the updates be noted and further updates on funding needed be brought forward.

TC. 107.7/2021 – The Clerk updated Members that Partnership working with HAZ, Peoples Museum, Durham Amateur Football Trust, & Civic Society were being explored to help support the organisations. An approach to see if information about the heritage organisations could be shared on the Town Council stand at food festival.

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Resolved: that update was noted and that information could be shared on the Town Council Stand.

TC. 107.7/2021 - a report on updating the Meeting cycle back to 6 weekly where possible was given

Resolved: that the meeting cycle be agreed.

TC.108/2021 Finance

TC.1080.1/2021 Statement of Payments was presented for approval

Resolved: that the Payments be agreed (see appendix 1)

TC.108.2/2021 Community Fund Applications – updates on the Community Fund applications was provided

Resolved: that the following be granted:

- For Reinvent Community Hub up to £500 was approved to reimburse for the Cooker – grant made under *Power to provide and equip buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or recreational objectives Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19*
- Girl Friendly Society to pay items which had been used to sum of £251.90 and resubmit for additional project. Grant made under Power to incur expenditure not otherwise authorised on anything which in the council's opinion is in the interests of the area or part of it or all or some of the inhabitants, Local Government Act 1972,s139
- Bishop Auckland Theatre Society to sum of £500 towards the 2022 panto grant made under the power of Provision of entertainment and support of the arts, Local Government Act 1977,s145.
- Tindale Homing Society to sum of £500 towards baskets. Grant made under Power to incur expenditure not otherwise authorised on anything which in the council's opinion is in the interests of the area or part of it or all or some of the inhabitants, Local Government Act 1972,s137

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.109/2021 Town Clerk Report

TC.109.1 /2021 Allotment Issues

That there had been delays with allotment tenancies due to staffing. To fit with Growing season, tenancies would be changed to Nov – October allocations to fit with growing season, and a full allotment review to take place over the summer. A specific tenancy issue was discussed regarding a plot issue on a site, to alleviate the concern a managed move could be considered.

Resolved: That the tenancy year be moved to Nov – October with a 7 month tenancy in place initially. That a managed move be offered to the plot holder mentioned above.

TC.109.2 /2021 Assistant Town Clerk – Members were advised that Mrs Vicki Booth will take post on 4th April 2022.

Resolved: That the start date be noted by Members.

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TC.109.3 /2021 Staffing Workloads – due to the gap in staffing workloads have been high for staff. whilst a new staff member was starting this was to share current load and the Clerk asked that Members remain patient as training a new staff member would take time so no new tasks were able to be taken on at present until capacity was built back up.

Resolved: That the update be noted by Members.

Appendix 1 – Monthly Payments and Payments for authorisation 01.03.2022 – 21.03.2022

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
EP	Twinkle Cleaning Services	Kingsway: 22.5 Hours Cleaning - March 2022	£270.00	By Council for Financial Regulation No 5.6	
EP	Salaries, Superannuation	March 2022	£5,579.90		Includes NALC Pay Award backdated to 1 st April 2021
EP	Staff Travel & Subsistence (T&S)	Admin Assistant Mileage April 2021 - March 2022	£20.25		
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Salaries	March 2022	£2,398.45		
EP	D.C.C. Pension Scheme	March 2022	£1,900.29		
EP	Members Allowances	March 2022	£410.64		
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Members Allowance	March 2022	£29.60		
DD	Public Works Loan Board (PWLb)	Kingsway: Repayment 01/04/22 - 31/09/22	£4,151.01		
DD	Grenke Leasing Ltd.	Photocopier Lease 01/04/22-30/06/22	£107.98		
EP	Vinovium Associates Ltd.	Kingsway: Keyholding Services - March 2022	£111.60		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Edge Hill 01/12/21-28/02/22	-£21.38		Account is in credit
EP	Evolve Group Ltd.	Kingsway: Telephone & Broadband - March 2022	£152.29		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Woodhouse Close 10/12/21-09/03/22	£235.82		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Broken Banks 10/12/21-09/03/22	£22.09		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Pollards 10/12/21-09/03/22	£62.47		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Tindale Crescent 10/12/21-09/03/22	£39.25		
EP	Corona Energy Retail 2 Limited	Kingsway: Gas February - March 2022	£223.36		
2171	Anderson & Co. Accountancy & Taxation	Payroll Services: January - March 2022 (Cancelled - See Cheque 2174)	£0.00	Town Council	Issue with processing cheque. Returned and reissued.
2174	Anderson & Co. Accountancy & Taxation	Payroll Services: January - March 2022 (Reissued)	£180.00	Town Council	Request received to pay future invoices electronically

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Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
2175	Total Business Group	A4 & A3 Copier Paper, Lever Arch Files, Subject Dividers and Tape Dispenser	£81.27	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	1x Deep Water Sign	£1.31	Town Council	Pond at Tindale Crescent Allotments
EP	Amazon Business	Samsung Galaxy A41 Screen Protectors	£5.97	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	USB C Cables	£8.59	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Schneider Slider XB Ballpoint Pens	£15.49	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	2x 17" Laptop Bags	£69.98	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	3x Acer Laptop Chargers (Model C19C1)	£67.95	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Console Table with Large Drawer - Black	£49.99	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Portable Standing Desk – Black	£46.24	Town Council	
2176	Abel Alarms Company Ltd.	Kingsway: Intruder Alarm Support Charge 25/03/22-24/03/23	£490.80	Town Council	
2177	Durham County Council	Room Hire and Tech Support - Full Public Meeting 18/02/22	£275.00	Town Council	
EP	Deco Trophies & Engraving (Reimbursement)	Mayor's Medal Engraved - Camino Ingles at Spanish Art Gallery, 18th March 2022	£4.00	Town Council	Town Clerk to be reimbursed
2178	Mr. J. Lumsden	Edge Hill Allotment Lease: 08/03/22-09/09/22	£387.50	Town Council	
2179	Bishop Auckland Community Partnership (Time For You Tearooms)	Community Toilet Scheme: March 2021 - February 2022	£360.00	Town Council	
2180	Frazer Kidd LLP (Newgate Shopping Centre)	Community Toilet Scheme: March 2021 - February 2022	£360.00	Town Council	
2181	Zair's Café (Mr. Sam Zair)	Community Toilet Scheme: March 2021 - February 2022	£360.00	Town Council	
2182	Durham County Council (Bishop Auckland Town Hall)	Community Toilet Scheme: March 2021 - February 2022	£360.00	Town Council	
2183	Jude Richardson (Fifteas Vintage Tearooms)	Community Toilet Scheme: March 2021 - February 2022	£360.00	Town Council	

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2184	The Auckland Project (No. 42)	Community Toilet Scheme: March 2021 - February 2022	£360.00	Town Council	
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Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
DC	Wilko	Kingsway: Crockery, Mugs and Glassware Sets	£75.15	Town Council	
2185	County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)	Completing your AGAR and Managing Assets Training Sessions – Town Clerk	£20.00	Town Council	
Total			£19,632.86		

To be authorised

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Amount £	Authorised By	Notes
Cheque	Durham County Council	Building Compliance Service Level Agreement (SLA) 2022/23	£1,864.30	Town Council	Boiler Service Air Conditioning Service Fire Alarm Service CCTV Service Legionella Asbestos Emergency Lighting etc.
EP	Jamie's Taxis (Reimbursement)	Mayor's Travel to Holi Festival Event - 20th March 2022	£96.00	Town Council	Mayor, Cllr Katie Eliot to be reimbursed.
Total			£1,960.30		

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