

## Bishop Auckland Town Council

### Council Meeting

26 July 2022

#### Minutes of the Town Council Meeting Held at 54 Kingsway, Bishop Auckland at 6pm

**In attendance:** Cllr Siddle (Chair) and Cllrs J Blackburn, L Chappell, K Eliot, H Balmer-Howison, D Wilson, A Zair and S Zair

**Also Present:** Mrs Harris, Town Clerk, Mrs Booth Mr G Wood, Durham County Council and a member of the public.

**TC28/22 Apologies for Absence** - Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs I Zair

**TC29/22 Declarations of interest** - no declarations were made.

**TC30/22 Minutes** of the following meetings were presented:

- Town Council 14 June 2022
- Events Committee 25 July 2022
- Finance Committee 25 July 2022
- Allotment & Environment Committee 26 July 2022

Cllr A Zair noted the need for a correction to the party designation of two members in appendix one of the Town Council Annual meeting minutes from 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

**Resolved:** That the Town Council meeting on 14 June be noted, accepted and approved as a correct record and recommendations contained therein be adopted. The other minutes listed above be deferred and considered at the next meeting.

**TC31/22 Public Participation** – No public questions were raised.

#### TC32/22 Reports

**TC232.1/22 Future High Streets Fund update** – Mr G Wood from Durham County Council attended the meeting and gave an informative presentation on the status of the £19.8 million pound investments from the successful future high streets fund for bishop Auckland. **A copy of the presentation is on the file.**

He confirmed that the monies needed to be spent by March 2024. There were several projects including:

- Redevelopment works at the bus station with a new car park
- Development of the Kingsway car park

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- Investment into the market place area around the Spanish gallery
- Hotel and food outlet developments
- Public realm works and
- A property re-use scheme to give grant funding to encourage business investment.

Pre- planning consultation on some of the works is expected by the end of the summer and assurances were given that the Town Council would be appropriately consulted.

Issues with communication to residents on the projected was discussed. The council were assured that more communication was going to be coming out in a bid to be open and transparent.

**Resolved:** Members thanked Mr Wood for the update and welcomed more information and future updates.

Mr Wood left the meeting

**TC32.2/22 – DCC Update** - Cllr S Zair kindly gave some updated. Focused around the news that the Leisure Transformation on the Woodhouse site. The proposal is that the current site is redeveloped and invested in. The consultation is open for feedback

The Recreation field has received green flag status for being a good park. There is some potential investment into the park ahead such as the potential for a small mock bandstand.

**Resolved:** that members thanked Cllr Zair for the updated and agreed a letter of support to go to DCC on the proposal to leave the leisure facility at the Woodhouse site.

**TC32.3/22 – Mayors update** – the Mayor updated that he had attended the Jubilee thank you event, which was a wonderful afternoon, as well as an event at Henknowle for the launch of the Girls Friendly society group, a bugle breakfast at the Castle with the 8<sup>th</sup> Rifles and the Deputy Mayor had kindly attended a 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration in his absence. Events has also been attended at Seaham and Shildon with their Mayors, and the opening of the Gaming Hideway.

**Resolved:** That Members noted the report.

### **TC33/22 Town Clerk Report**

**TC33.1/22 - Co-option of a Councillor** - There is still an outstanding vacancy for a Councillor in the Henknowle Ward. This vacancy was not called to election. The vacancy can now be advertised requesting expressions of interest in writing and specifying what information the candidates are to include with their application. This is needed to identify the person's competency/suitability as well as their eligibility for co-option. A draft advert is attached for consideration.

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**Resolved::** That Members noted the report, and that at the advert for a co-opted member be issued, with a closing date in September, and the October Council meeting to consider the applications and make the appointment.

**TC33.2/22 - Mayoral Chain Repairs** - In order to obtain comprehensive quotes the Chain will need to be sent away for appraisal. DCC have said it is not possible to gift the former Wear Valley District Chain back to Bishop Auckland Town Council. Discussion ensued and members made the decision to retire the current chain and just use the deputy chain which was in good condition and held the insignia of the council.

**Resolved:** That Members agreed that the Deputy Chain and Medallion should now be used to the Mayor and passed to the deputy in their absence. The 'old damaged chain and medallion' to be displayed in the display cabinet, and the costings of a new chain be sought and brought to a future meeting.

**TC33.3/22 - SLCC Conference Feedback** - The Clerk attended the regional SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) at Hardwick Hall in early July. It was a beneficial training and networking session. Good informative information was received to enable comprehensive forward planning for the Council. There was a fun quiz where the Bishop Auckland Clerk was crowned 'Best Clerk' in the room, and won a voucher for an online training seminar.

**Resolved:** That Members noted the update and receive feedback from the Clerk once the online training has been had to receive an update on the outcome.

**TC33.4/22 - Council Plan update** - At the SLCC conference good direction and contacts were made to help enable the agreed update and deliver of an updated Parish Plan to give direction to the Council. The Clerk wishes to invite members to a closed planning session to help clarify future direction and vision, looking at where the Council wishes to be in the next 5 and 10 years etc.

**Resolved::** that Members noted the update and agree a plan development session in early September. The clerk to share the date.

**TC33.5/22 - County Training Partnership Approach** - The County Training Partnership are starting to look at our training programme for the autumn and they are planning to put on a new clerks event on Tues 6<sup>th</sup> Sep from 6-8pm. They are keen to do it as an in person event and in the past have used County Hall but they now don't stay open beyond 7pm anymore so they want to spread our wings. They visited the Town Council office in June for the CDALC meeting, and really liked it. They have asked if we are happy for them to use the room. They can pay however due to the VAT issue. I have asked if they would consider enabling the Clerk and Deputy to attend the training in lieu of payment.

**Resolved:** That Members considered and agreed to the County Training Partnership using the room in September free of charge.

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**TC33.6/22 - Car Park Update** - DCC are preparing the design. Trail holes are being made In the next week to ensure that the base of the car park is sound. Town Clerk is obtaining copies of land registry plans to ensure what areas we have remit over. Contact is also being made with Norther Gas Networks regarding any permissions and cautions needed for works near to the gas meter exchange. The footpath on the opposite side of the access road, is DCC's therefore they are going to see if they can make improvements to it rather than us having to incorporate an accessible footpath into the design. Further procurement advice has been sought regarding the tender process, as seeking contractors is challenging at present. Due to delayed other works, and the opportunity to potentially combine some jobs DCC may be in a position to move on the car park works sooner than initially anticipated.

**Resolved:** That Members noted the update, and that the design and costings will be brought to next meeting.

**TC34.0/22 - Finance –**

**TC34.1/22 - Statement of Payments for authorisation** – was presented. See appendix 1.

**Resolved:** That the payments be approved.

**TC34.1/22 - Community Fund Applications** – An application was received from the Peoples museum for some interpretation boards and a bench. The application was missing one financial document.

**Resolved:** that the application would be supported by Member on the condition that the missing financial document was received. The boards would be supported and ideally a bench could be provided from those being received from the Town Council as part of the public realm works in Newgate Street. However separate consideration would be given to the support for a bench if the timescale took too long. Finance committee to consider.

**TC35.0/22 - Correspondence** – details of any Correspondence (letters or email received)

**Resolved:** that there are no items of specific correspondence to note.

*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.*

**TC36.0/22 Town Clerk Report** - Staffing Workloads & Training needs – The Clerk reported on the workloads of staff and the annual leave period was upon us, this had been further impacted with a covid outbreak where 2 of the 3 staff were ill which was also having an knock on effect on the workload of the council.

**Resolved:** That Members would note the report and that they appreciated the circumstances which the Council had been faced with. They will regularly receive updates from the Clerk on progress.

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**Appendix 1 – Monthly Payments and Payments for authorisation Payments for authorisation 26 July 2022**

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Sub Total £	VAT £	Total £
2022	Anderson and Co	Payroll Services, April, May and June	157.5	31.5	189
EP	Staff	Payroll - July	6813.9		6813.9
EP	Members	Allowances - July	366.7		366.7
EP	DCC	Pension Contribution - July	1786.66		1786.66
EP	Vinovium	June key holding	93	18.6	11.6
EP	A1 Events	25% final payment	205.8		205.8
EP	corona energy	Electricity	112.9		112.9
EP	SLCC t	training seminar	102		102
EP	total business	printing	50		50
EP	Twinkle Cleaning	kingsway cleaning June	270		270
EP	wave utititles w	water at allotment sites	900.07		900.07
EP	EDF	Kingsway Gas	87		87
EP	DCC	Chairman's Dinner tickets	70		70
EP	Grenk Leasing	photocopier	107.89		107.89
EP	corona energy	electric kingsway	112		112
				<b>total</b>	<b>11185.52</b>

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