

Bishop Auckland Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of 18 October 2022

Held at 6pm in Town Council Offices, Kingsway Court, Bishop Auckland

In attendance: Cllr Siddle (Chair), Cllr S Zair, Cllr J Blackburn, Cllr K Eliot, Cllr K Lawson, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr A Zair and Cllr L Zair

Also In attendance: Mrs S Harris, Town Clerk, Mr T Wales, Bacchanalia, and Mr B Tinkler Bridge Creative, Rep from Believe Housing, and two reps from Pollards Allotment Association.

TC48/22 Apologies for absence - apologies were received and noted from and Cllr H Balmer-Howison.

TC 49/22 - Declaration of Interests – No declarations were made.

TC50/22 – Minutes the following minutes were presented

- Planning Committee 6th September 2022
- Town Council 6th September 2022
- Finance Committee 11th October 2022
- Allotment & Environment Committee 26th September 2022
- Allotment & Environment Committee 13th October 2022

Resolved: that the above Committee and Town Council Minutes have been received, and that the Town Council agreed to adopt all recommendations contained within them. Copies of the minutes will be available on the town council website.

TC51/22 Matters arising – matters arising were are covered by agenda items.

TC52/22 Public Participation – A representative of the Pollards Allotment Association raised the following

- Do we have a draft memorandum for Allotment Association's yet?
- They would like a different process for structure approvals
- Want to know what is happening with outstanding issues following the inspections at the Pollards.
- When we will be moving on with the site mapping exercise?
- Liz has sought advice from National and wants clarification from Cllr Blackburn as the why they should provide copies of association accounts to the Town Council

Cllr Blackburn commented that the Association needs feedback from the committee and not just myself but you are using the council land for something so if money was to go missing then the fall back may come to us as land owners.

Cllr S Zair asked if there was problem with them sharing the accounts?

The rep confirmed that some members did have an issue with that.

Resolved: to prepare look into the queries raised and bring a response back to the Council before issuing to the Association.

TC53/2022 – Presentation from Believe Housing

Joanne from the Community Investment Team presented on the grant scheme which Believe housing have available for activities within their areas. The believe housing area covers the former Wear Valley District area, City of Durham and East Durham. They have over 18k tenants.

They have two grants available a larger grant which is open twice per year for £10-20K for capital projects with a revenue element. The second is a revenue grant of £5-10K must be of benefit to tenants and have links to the set criteria.

Larger grant open in January with decisions in April

Signed Chair:
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Smaller grants considered by grants panel which includes tenants. Town and Parish Councils are eligible to apply.

They have provided funding in Bishop Auckland area

- Primary school for healthy cooking and eating with parental involvement
- Northern heartlands – social prescribing and art sessions
- Various sports projects
- Various jubilee celebrations

TC54/22 Co-option of a Councillor to the Henknowle Ward – the applicant gave a presentation on why they thought that they were suitable for the position of Councillor in the Henknowle Ward. Members asked questions. The Candidate then stepped outside whilst the members considered the appointment.

Resolved: That Members voted unanimously in favour, and applicant be invited back in and accepted as Councillor for Henknowle.

That Mr Mike Harker, duly accepted and signed an Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting, as Cllr Harker.

TC55/22 Reports

TC55.1/22 Durham County Council Update – Cllr Zair provided a brief DCC Update. No other DCC members were present.

Resolved: That the Clerk to continue to ensure that the dates of meetings is passed to other DCC Members.

TC55.2/22 Mayors Update – the Mayor updated that he had made proclamations in relation to the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth, and the accession of King Charles. A service had been held at St Andrew's Church, as it was larger. A moment of reflection had also been held at the Market Place.

He had also attended Mayoral events at Shildon, met with Heritage Action Zone representatives for updates, attended a Durham Amateur football trust exhibition at King James, He attended the CDALC AGM, and had also attended the Harvest Festival at Woodhouse Close Church.

TC55.3/22 Outside bodies update – the Clerk advised that there had been a meeting of the Stronger Towns Board earlier in the day. Information was shared on consultation for the urban revitalisation projects consultation, which did not include any evening events and the drop ins would be taking place in No.43 Market Place. The Clerk had strongly advised the board that public sessions out of hours were needed in a neutral space, and a public meeting needed.

A public meeting date was being arranged by the clerk for January and DCC had agreed to attend.

Resolved: That an Open letter to Stronger Towns Board be drafted to state the communication is poor, that consultations drop ins need to be in neutral premise, and out of hours, and need to be in all wards. Communication needs improving. Draft letter needs to be put on the website.

That a letter be sent to DCC as a reminder that previously the Council have asked for first refusal of any car parks that are being leased on peppercorn rent.

TC56.0/22 Conclusion of the External Audit and internal Audit recommendations - The Town Clerk informed Members that the external auditor had issued an qualified limited assurance opinion on the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022.

The internal audit had noted that the following minutes needed to be received and that the recommendations contained within be adopted:

- Town Council 14 October 2021
- Town Council 9 November 2021
- Finance Committee 28 September 2021
- Finance Committee 25 January 2022

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Resolved: That the that the Town Council approves and accepts the audited Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2022 and approves the proposed actions to be taken to address the issues raised by the external auditor.

That the finance committee will receive update reports from the Clerk on the progress on achieving the recommendations.

That the Town Council will Continue to receive minutes from all committee meetings and to adopt the decisions within.

That the above Committee and Town Council Minutes have been received, and that the Town Council agreed to adopt all recommendations contained within them. Copies of the minutes will be available on the town council website.

TC57.0/22 – Town Clerk Report

TC57.1/22 Allotment Rules and Regulations - the Allotment committee had undertaken a consultation which was open to tenants, and associations to comment on proposed changes and updates to the Town Council Allotment Rules and Regulations which apply to all Council allotment sites. The Chair and vice Chair of the Committee had met with all associations as part of the consultation. Members were asked to adopt the updated rules and regulations.

Resolved: That Members adopted the new updated Rules and Regulations, and that the new Rules would form part of the new tenancy packs for the tenancy year starting on the 1st November.

TC57.2/22 Events Update - A update on the process of the Christmas Town Event, The Events committee wished to discuss with the Council the proposal for Christmas celebrations. The Town Council are providing the funding for the Friday night element of the celebrations and entertainment over the weekend. The Bandstand is booked, entertainment slots are being filled, a host has been secured for free, and the snow globe attractions has been booked. So far only one DCC Member has supported the proposal. Leaving a gap so £3k. however it is hoped that savings can be made to reduce the gap. Other funding opportunities would be looked at.

Resolved: Members noted the and report and were happy with the progress. If the funding gap remains this this is to be reported back to council for further consideration.

TC57.3 Car Park – a design had been received, a couple of elements were missing such as the gate, however this had been fed back. The tender process would be able to start as soon as the brief was agreed.

Resolved: That Members agreed that the tender brief be developed, with the tweaked design spec.

TC58.0/22 Finance

TC58.1/22 Budget Setting 2023-24 – an initial provisional tax based had been received from the principle authority. Therefore, initial discussions with finance were underway for financial planning. Final tax base figures were expected to be confirmed in November. A full report would come to Council in November.

Resolved: That the report be noted and the future report welcomed.

TC58.2/22 Statement of Payments – the Clerk presented the payment report (see appendix 1).

Resolved: Members approved that the payments presented be made.

TC59.0/22 Correspondence – The Clerk advised that Correspondence on: he national Civility and Respect Pledge had been received as well as correspondence from a resident in Toronto who is proposing to rewild approximately 15 acres of prime arable land., with a large number of trees including a fruit orchard, and multiple native species such as Oak, Elder, Horse chestnut to name but a few. This is to create a wildlife haven for the bird population and they are proposing to plant wild flower meadows, to encourage a more diverse insect life.

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Resolved: That a report on the Civility and Respect would be brought to the November meeting to consider adoption of the pledge.

That the resident of Toronto's plan to rewild 15 acres of land was unanimously supported by all Members. The Town Clerk to communicate this to the resident via letter.

Exclusion of the 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 item on the agenda by reason of confidential nature of the business to be transacted since the publicity would be prejudicial to public interest.

TC 60/22 Town Clerk Report – HR Update – the Clerk updated the Members that annual appraisals had been completed for staff.

Resolved: that Members noted the update.

Appendix 1 – Item 11c – Monthly Payments and Payments for authorisation 08.10.2022 – 14.10.2022

Payment Type/ No	Payee	Detail	Net (£)	VAT (£)	Gross (£)	Authorised By	Notes
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Mill Race/West Mills 09/01/22-08/04/22	£104.29		£104.29		
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Woodhouse Close 10/06/22 – 09/09/22	£525.28		£525.28	By Council for Financial Regulation No 5.6	11/10/22 Account resolved - Refund of admin charges to be included on the next bill.
EP	Twinkle Cleaning Services	Office Cleaning (22.5hrs) - September 2022	£270.00		£270.00	Town Council	
2238	Durham County Council	2x Tickets to Chairman's Civic Dinner, 4th November 2022	£70.00		£70.00	Town Council	
EP	AK Garden Maintenance and Waste Removal	Dismantle of Large Shed and Waste Removal from Pollards Allotments	£500.00		£500.00	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	3x Screen Protectors for Office Mobile Phones	£4.81	£0.96	£5.77	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Thin Whiteboard Tape - Assorted Colours	£4.16	£0.83	£4.99	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Magnetic Flipchart Easel	£59.07	£11.82	£70.89	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	32GB USB Flash Drive	£5.23	£1.05	£6.28	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	10x Reams of A4 Copier Paper	£53.28	£10.66	£63.94	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	Large Wall Mounted Drywipe Magnetic Whiteboard	£72.50	£14.50	£87.00	Town Council	
EP	Amazon Business	12 Pack of Fine Tip Whiteboard Pens	£5.82	£1.17	£6.99	Town Council	
EP	Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance	Amendment to Insurance and PLI Policy 21/09/22-30/09/23	£287.27		£287.27	Town Council	Amended the sums insured as per the Cardinus survey by £179,993, will increase the annual

Signed Chair:
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							premium by £287.27 inclusive of IPT.
EP	Santa's Village Entertainment Ltd.	Giant Snow Globe Hire, 18th November 2022	£995.00	£199.00	£1,194.00	Town Council	
EP	Victorian Bandstand Ltd.	Hire of B Green Bandstand, 18th-20th November 2022 (50% Deposit)	£1,750.00		£1,750.00	Town Council	Outstanding balance of £1,750 to be paid after the event. £3,500 Total.
Total:			£4,706.71	£239.99	£4,946.70		