

Bishop Auckland Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of 18th April 2023

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

In attendance: Cllr M Siddle (Mayor – Chair), Cllr Harker, Cllr A Legge, Cllr K Lawson, Cllr L Zair, Cllr A Zair, Cllr D Wilson

Also In attendance: Mrs Sarah Harris, Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk Vicki Booth.

TC108/22 Apologies for absence - apologies were received and noted from Cllr S Zair, Cllr H Balmer-Howieson, Cllr J Blackburn

Resolved: That the Members noted and accepted their apologies.

TC109/22 - Declaration of Interests –

Cllr Siddle declared that Bacchanalia booking system is being used for free the Steaming from Past to Future exhibition which he is hosting as a Mayoral event.

Cllr K Eliot declared that she is supplying the sound system and working for Bacchanali for the Food Markets

Cllr K Eliot declared interest with Bishop FM

Resolved: Declarations were accepted

TC110/22– Minutes the minutes of the following meetings were presented.

Resolved:

- 4 February 2023 - Finance Committee
- 21st March 2023 – Town Council Meeting
- 6th April 2023 - Allotment and Environment Committee
- 11 April 2023 - Finance Committee

Cllr Harker requested that all meeting notes should confirm if apologies were accepted or not he wished for them to be not accepted due to continued non attendance of some members. The meeting minutes did have apologies accepted where apologies had been given.

Resolved: That the above 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. All other minutes accepted.

TC111/22 Matters Arising - To from the above Minutes which are not included elsewhere on the agenda (for information only). The Clerk provided updates on:

- Allotment eviction Plot 31 Edge Hill, that no further correspondence had been received, and that items were now in storage following the plot clearance.
Resolved: that Members agreed that the invoice should be issued for the clearance of the plot.

- That the shared AAP seat for the Town and Parish Councils was currently with Shildon AAP. However due to concerns over communication, the Clerk would liaise with them and the AAP to look to set up a deputy situation.

Resolved: that members accepted and agreed the matters arising.

TC112/22 Public Participation -no members of the public were in attendance.

However DCC Member Cathy Hunt stated that she sits on AAP board, and members are welcome to go along anytime and Cathy happy to raise queries and questions etc.

TC113/22 Reports –

TC113.1/22 Durham County Council - DCC Cllr Hunt– review of AAP happening but no changes likely to happen before 2025 and currently out for consultation. The main consensus that that AAP’s work differently and there is a set criterion which should be followed by all. Called for by County Councillors as they have not been reviewed for several years. Boundaries review might also change the boundaries of AAP’s in the future.

Cllr J Howey – Monthly meetings at Henknowle now going really well. Meeting coming up with Believe Housing next week regarding the Proudfoot scheme and the ongoing issues.

Cllr Hunt – Drop curb approved and progress happening. Parking wardens now circulating Cockton Hill area due to congestion. Also pushing for the installation of a zebra crossing opposite Spar on Watling Road.

Resolved: that the Clerk is to circulate the AAP presentation to all members, and to collate a response to DCC.

That members accepted and agreed

TC113.2/22 Mayor’s Report –the Mayor reported that he had attended a range of events during April. The Mayor is hosting an event on 5th May at Town Hall around railways and plans are going well.

Resolved: that members noted the activities attended and future events to attend.

TC113.3/22 Outside Bodies – HAZ has now technically ended. There will be an end of project event in June and the evaluation work is in process. Overseeing former group to be formed to ensure that link remains.

Brighter Bishop Board took place 17.04.23. Pre planning out and hope to submit application by end of April 2023, regarding the bus station. The Future High Street Fund monies must be spent by March 2024. Stack demolition is due to commence. The Public realm works (43 to Cooplands) will be the last work to happen so not processing yet, as the infrastructure for Stack needs to happen first. There has been a delay on the camino water fountain, as the stone sent to Spain has a fault. Members questioned how much the fountain was costing and it was confirmed that Future high street fund had £105,000 to outline changes to the highway and install water fountain. Community Wi-fi is not going to be renewed as it does not work, therefore this will save the Town Council £1533 for the year.

Resolved: that members noted the report, and welcomed the saving brought by the WIFI ending, but agreed that the funds for the fountain was a poor use of public monies.

Signed Chair
May 2023

TC112.4/22 Stronger towns Board – the funding must be spent by March 2026 and it is still unsure if the Eastern Corridor works will get approved, as that project is delayed whilst the environmental impact studies are produced for the business case.

Tindale Development – to upgrade road junctions, unsewered. There had been some concerns over the other development at Tindale as it was being said that the developer was off site due to unpaid wages, however DCC reported back to the Town Council that the developer gave staff an extended break (over 1 week) for the Easter however members have heard from individuals that they turned up on site and the site was locked and salaries had not been paid.

Resolved: that members noted the report however they felt that they need to be kept informed and aware of issues and the truth as the Town Councillors will be the ones that are approached by the public.

TC114/22 Finance –

TC114.1/22 Account Balances as of 31st March 2023 & Bank Account updates.

Account Balances were presented (See file). The Additional Account at Unity Trust was now open, and that a second account with NatWest was also being sought.

Resolved: that Members noted the account balances, and bank account update.

TC114.2/22 Bank Reconciliations at end of Quarter 4 - were presented.

Resolved: that the chair of Finance sign these and they are agreed.

TC114.3/22 Quarter 4 report and Provisional outturn 2022/23 – the new format report was presented.

Resolved: that members welcomed the new report and welcomed the Q4 report and were pleased to see progress and understood where underspends and overspends were and why. (see file copy)

TC114.4/22 AGAR 2022-23 - the Internal Audit was scheduled, and all payments on the system. The Accountant was assisting with some elements and his report would be available for the next meeting.

Resolved: that the members welcomed the update and were pleased with the prompt action on the preparation of the AGAR. They look forward to receiving the AGAR at the next meeting.

TC114.5/22 Authorisation of Payments i. Written under delegated powers ii. Presented for authorisation (see appendix 1).

Resolved: that the members approved and payments as presented, and authorised the payments.

TC114.6/22 Community Fund Applications & Donation Requests were presented for Four Clocks Centre – for a carpet replacement.

Resolved: that the £500 grant be awarded, after considering the grant.

Monthly Street Food Market (Baccanalia) - to support the provision of the market.

Resolved: that members they needed some additional information as to why the funds are needed and what will happen regarding any profit. Clerk to request additional information from Baccanalia for the next meeting.

Support towards room hire for the Green Fair (via Bishop FM)

Resolved: that members want to support the green fair and agreed to support as ward and in year events to the value of £600, for venue hire, but payment to come from the Ward and In Year events budget, and to be paid direct and not via Bishop FM.

St Anne's fund prize for food festival activities with positive Bishop Auckland with school children (wider project as linked to schools)

Resolved: that members agreed a donation of £100

TC114.7 Water Report from Allotment and Environment Committee - a report setting out the water charges for allotment sites was given. Adding a charge to for water, means that there would be more funds available to ensure that the sites are better maintained.

Resolved: that members agreed to implement a water charge for 2023/24 agreed plots up to 149sqm a charge of £15 and plots over 0150sqm £25. Town Council need to take environmental commitments seriously and the fitting of push taps would be recommended, as part of the replacement and maintenance programme.

TC115/22 Report of the Town Clerk

TC115.1/22 Forward Plan of Meeting Dates 2023-24– including change of date for Annual Town Meeting was presented.

Resolved: that members welcomed the inclusion of other committee dates and that they adopt the plan, with the inclusion of an allotment committee in late may early June and event committee in September.

TC115.2/22 Car Park Update – the Contractor and Clerk had met with the Gas network agent and works were agreed and supported by them. A start date of late may was expected.

Resolved: that the update be noted and start date communicated to Members as soon as it was received. The Clerk to pursue the way leave for the gas pumping station.

TC115.3/22 DCC SLA contract agreements - a revised agreement had been offered from DCC to the sum of 15hrs advice and access to the procurement catalogue for £590 per annum for a two year deal with no uplift on year 2.

Resolved: that members agreed sign up to for £590 per year for two years.

TC115.4/22 Events Update

Food Festival Stall 2022 was taking place at the weekend. Members we asked what support they were able to provide. If U care Foundation are sharing the stall with the council for the weekend.

Resolved: that members with availability would let the Deputy clerk know and would support over the weekend.

Coronation – a summary was provided which showed each primary school were receiving a party box, each care home were receiving a cake, and a social media competition for a cake was also to be run. Applications had been received from 8 organisations for the coronation donations.

Resolved: that the report was noted and welcomed. That the following grants be agreed, as the members were happy to proceed with requested amounts despite originally stating £1000 per ward, as they felt the activity was fitting for the celebration.

- Wear Valley Community Action – Grant Supported £500 despite the event not falling within the two week time frame, the organisation had tried to change the date, but the performer which they had provisionally booked and venue was not available at another time.
- Girls Friendly Society – Supported £300
- Bridge Creative – grant declined as members were not happy with the ‘pay a you feel element.’
- AYCC Grant supported £1000
- Aclet Close Nursery School – Grant supported as this was a good addition to the primary school party box programme. £400
- St John’s - grant supported for £1000
- Bacchanalia - Street Food Market – Grant not supported as they felt that the application didn’t strongly demonstrate how the additional funding would add to the already established event.
- TAP – grant declined as applied after close for applications.

Youth Awards Progress was updated, and that the panel needed to be agreed.

Resolved: that the members agreed that the selection panel should be the events committee. Therefore, the date of the meeting would be set and circulated asap.

Green Fair – Members are invited to a Litter Pick Event 24th June 2023 – 9am

Resolved: that Cllrs would consider attending, Cllr K Lawson committed to try to attend.

TC116/22 Correspondence –

TC116.1/22 Dental services – was advised that another dental practice was closing in the town.

Resolved: Clerk to write to Sam Allen CEO of integrated care board for health as they are taking on contracts for dentists. Also raise with Amanda Healey. Open letter and will put on website.

TC116.2/22 Bus Station Development Response – had been received from DCC following the comments submitted to DCC.

Resolved: that the response is noted and that the planning application is awaited.

TC116.3/22 Registry Office – Council had been informed that the registry office was to be disposed of and centralised service at the ‘Story’ in Durham.

Resolved: that members were saddened that another service was being lost from the town, and a centralised service was not appropriate due to rising costs of travel etc. they wished for the service to be located more appropriately within say the family hub. That the Clerk to write to registry office regarding concerns raised by members.

TC116.4/22 Pension Contributions - had been update and increased from April 2023.

Resolved: that the Council note the update and the clerk to inform the Payroll provider.

Appendix 1 - Monthly Payments & Payments for Authorisation – 12 th April 2023						
Ref	Supplier	Detail	Net	VAT	Gross	Notes
Allotments (power to provide allotments Smallholding and Allotments Act 1908 S 23, 26 and 42)						
EP	Northern Counties Allotment Association (NCAA)	NCAA Membership 01/04/2023-31/03/2024	£65.00		£65.00	
EP	Michael Warden Waste Removals	Clearance of Plot at Edge Hill Allotment and Items into Storage	£320.00		£320.00	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Broken Banks 10/12/22 – 31/03/23	£104.35		£104.35	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Edge Hill 01/03/23-31/03/23	£27.27		£27.27	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Pollards 10/12/22 – 31/03/23	-£592.94		-£592.94	Account in credit (For information)
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Tindale Crescent 10/12/22 – 31/03/23	£273.05		£273.05	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: West Mills 09/01/23 – 31/03/23	£106.55		£106.55	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Woodhouse Close 10/12/22 – 31/03/23	£147.22		£147.22	
Events – Youth Awards (LGA 1972 S 145 – Provision of entertainment of the arts including festivals and celebrations)						
EP	Channy - C. Thompson	Present and Perform at Youth Awards, 19th June 2023	£200.00		£200.00	
Mayoral Donation (Local Government Act 1972, S 137)						
EP	Daisy Arts	Mayoral Donation 2022/23	£1,385.90		£1,385.90	Funds raised during 17/05/22-31/03/23
Mayoral Activities (LGA 1972 S 145 – Provision of entertainment of the arts including festivals and celebrations)						
EP	Ferryhill Town Council	2x Tickets, Surtees Arms & Yard of Ale Brewery Tour - 19th April 2023	£30.00		£30.00	
ICT – (Power – Local Government Act 1972, S 111)						

Signed Chair
May 2023

EP	Starboard Systems Limited. T/A Scribe Accounts	Scribe Accounts Annual Subscription 01/04/23-31/03/24	£745.20	£149.04	£894.24	
Ongoing Contracts and Obligations – (Power – Local Government Act 1972)						
EP	Corona Energy Retail 2 Limited	Kingsway: Gas February - March 2023	£250.24	£12.51	£262.75	Council Financial Regulation 5.6 list of going contracts and obligations.
EP	Salaries, Superannuation	March 2023	£6,042.32		£6,042.32	
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Salaries	March 2023	£2,070.29		£2,070.29	
EP	D.C.C. Pension Scheme	March 2023	£1,941.53		£1,941.53	
EP	Members Allowances	March 2023	£315.10		£315.10	
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Members Allowance	March 2023	£51.80		£51.80	
DD	Grenke Leasing Ltd.	Photocopier Lease 01/04/23-30/06/23	£101.79	£20.36	£122.15	
DD	EDF Energy	Kingsway: Electricity 01/03/23-31/03/23	£85.79	£4.29	£90.08	
DD	EDF Energy	Skatepark: Electricity 01/03/23-31/03/23	£21.66	£1.08	£22.74	
EP	Fire Parts	Fire Extinguisher Service 2023/24, 6L Fire Extinguisher and Signage	£103.50		£103.50	
EP	Total Business Group	Printing Costs: March 2023	£20.75	£4.15	£24.90	
EP	Wave (NWG Business)	Water: Kingsway 16/12/22 – 31/03/23	£61.06		£61.06	
EP	Salaries, Superannuation	April 2023	£6,150.34		£6,150.34	
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Salaries	April 2023	£2,142.55		£2,142.55	

Signed Chair
May 2023

EP	D.C.C. Pension Scheme	April 2023	£1,980.07		£1,980.07	
EP	Members Allowances	April 2023	£316.30		£316.30	
EP	HMRC - Tax and NI, Members Allowance	April 2023	£50.40		£50.40	
Kingsway – Capital Programme (Power – Local Government Act 1972, S 133 Community Centres)						
EP	R. Lightfoot Electrical & Alarm Engineers	LED Lighting, Emergency Lighting with Associated Wiring and Fire Alarm System, Panel, Detectors, Sounders, Call Points with Associated Wiring	£9,757.15	£1,951.43	£11,708.58	LED / Emergency Lighting and All Associated Wiring - £3,115.05 (Net) Fire Alarm Panel, Isolator Switch, Smoke Alarms, Sounders, Call Points and All Associated Wiring - £6,642.10 (Net) Supplementary approval made at Town Council 21/03/23
EP	J Terry Electrical Ltd.	Supply and Installation of Intruder Alarm System and Associated Wiring	£1,499.00		£1,499.00	
Subscriptions – (Power – Local Government Act 1972, S 111)						
EP	County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)	CDALC Annual Membership Fee 2023/24	£2,130.87		£2,130.87	£1,203.20 - Electorate 12,032 @ 10p per Elector for CDALC £927.67 - Electorate 12,032 @ 7.71p per Elector for NALC
Consumables/Supplies (Power – Local Government Act 1972, S 111)						
DC	Post Office Ltd.	50x 2nd Class Large Stamps and 50x 2nd Class Stamps	£86.50		£86.50	Purchased before announced increase on 3rd April 2023.
EP	Wilko (Reimbursement - Assistant Town Clerk)	1x Pack of Command Strips	£3.75		£3.75	
Total:			£37,994.36	£2,142.86	£40,137.22	

Signed Chair
May 2023

