

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Wesley Room at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016** at 6.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Brownson (Mayor), and Councillors Anderson, Fleming, Golightly, Lethbridge, Race, A. Zair, L. Zair and S. Zair

**Also Present:** Sheila Horner (Assistant Town Clerk) and David Anderson (Town Clerk)

**Public in Attendance:** C. Auld, and L. Harris

#### **TC.152/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Blackburn and Wilson

#### **TC.153/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Lee Harris, raised a query about the condition of Town Rec. His concerns related to the general condition of the Rec, litter and general maintenance, and in particular the condition of the children's play equipment which, in his opinion, was not fit for purpose and was in need of upgrading.

Mr Harris stated that he was aware that the facility was owned and managed by Durham County Council, but wanted to raise the matter with the Town Council for referral.

Members agreed that the Town Rec was prone to vandalism and a number indicated that they no longer used it due to its condition.

It was agreed that the issue be referred to Durham County Council

**RESOLVED:** That Durham County Council be requested to investigate concerns raised by Mr Harris.

#### **TC.154/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted

#### **TC.155/15 RIVER GAUNLESS FOR PEOPLE PROJECT**

Peter Nailon, Managing Director, Wear Rivers Trust was in attendance to give a presentation on the 'River Gaunless for People Project'.

Peter gave an overview of the project that aimed to improve the condition of the River Gaunless and surrounding area, which had suffered from increasing levels of pollution, fly tipping and antisocial behaviour. The Trust would work with local people, communities, landowners and businesses to return the river to the best possible ecological condition.

The project would focus on 2 key areas of the river. A community wildlife project would be established at South Church/Henknowle providing training and voluntary opportunities to improve the neglected area. A formal management plan would be developed for the area. In addition a by-pass channel would be created at West Auckland to assist with fish and wildlife movements along the river.

Benefits of the project included volunteering and training opportunities, reduced flood risk, cleaner and more attractive environment which would improve water quality thereby increasing invertebrate and fish population and interconnecting habitats.

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**

The total value of the project was £720K. A funding application had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund requesting a grant of £499K. Match funding of £221K would be required. A decision was expected in June 2016. If successful, project development would take place between June 2016 and March 2017.

It was expected that the project would be delivered between June 2016 – June 2020.

**RESOLVED:** 1. That the information be noted

**TC.156/15 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016 AND 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2016**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**TC.157/15 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

- a. Planning Committee, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016
- b. Events Committee, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016
- c. Finance Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes be approved and recommendations contained therein be adopted

**TC.158/15 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising

**TC.159/15 REPORT OF TOWN MAYOR**

The Mayor reported that he had attended a number of events since the last Council meeting including.

19 January 2016	Officiated at prize giving evening at King James I Academy
25 January 2016	Hosted Carvery and Quiz night at The Pavilion, Bishop Auckland to raise funds for Help for Heroes
08 February 2016	Officiated at opening of FebFest Arts Festival, Town Hall
09 February 2016	Attended 40th anniversary of Henknowle Community Centre
09 February 2016	Presented with cheque for money raised at the Help for Heroes Dinner held in November
11 February 2016	Attended launch of Four Clocks Heritage Project and Banner Unveiling
13 February 2016	Attended 'Strictly come Sedgefield' fundraising event
19 February 2016	Attended Great Aycliffe Town Council's Charity Civic Dinner
20 February 2016	Attended event to raise profile of Bishop Auckland Junior FC
27 February 2016	Officiated at opening of Castledene Sales & Lettings
27 February 2016	Attended Mayor of Ferryhill's Brass Band Concert in aid of St Cuthbert's Hospice

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

**REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TRAINING EVENTS**

**TC.160/15 TOWN TEAM**

Clive Auld updated Members on recent activities of the Town Team.

Members noted that a mascot, Bishop Boar, had been created to promote the town and would appear at local events.

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**

A shop local scheme was being developed to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016 as an incentive for visitors to the Food Festival to explore the town's retail attractions. A boar hunt would also be held as an additional encouragement. Bishop Boar would make an appearance to promote the shop local and boar hunt.

Sponsorship had been obtained from local businesses to again install banners in Newgate Street. The aim was to install the banners before the Food Festival.

Members expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication shown by Town Team volunteers.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

**TC.161/15 THE BIG LOCAL – GAUNLESS GATEWAY**

It was noted that the project bid had been assessed by a representative of the Big Local and had received positive feedback. A formal decision was expected in the next few weeks.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK**

**TC.162/15 TRAINING – YOUR REGION, YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR EVENT**

**9TH MARCH 2016, 9.30 A.M. – 3.00 P.M. SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE**

Consideration was given to attendance at a training session regarding the management of events.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors Anderson and Golightly, together with the Assistant Town Clerk, attend the training event.

**TC.163/15 SKATEPARK LIGHTING PROJECT**

Consideration was given to a report regarding the Town Council's involvement in the Skatepark Lighting project. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members noted details of the funding secured for the project which included grants from Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP (£2,000) and Section 106 funding (£8,213) together with funding previously agreed by the Town Council (£7,500). An amount of £250 has been included in the Council's MTFP which should cover the cost of electricity and ongoing maintenance.

Groundwork Trust would manage the project and undertake tendering requirements. The Town Council would be responsible for the payment of invoices, drawing down grant funding as necessary.

A license agreement has been obtained from Durham County Council to allow the Town Council to install the lights on its property.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council confirm its commitment to the skatepark lighting project and instruct Groundwork Trust to proceed with the necessary work.

**TC.164/15 RISK MANAGEMENT**

Members noted that the Council was required to assess its risks and put in place controls to mitigate any significant risk. Failure to manage risk effectively could be expensive in terms of litigation, reputation and the ability to achieve desired targets.

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**

Consideration was given to a general Risk Assessment. Potential risks had been reviewed against a risk matrix to measure the level of risk taking into account the likelihood of an event and its consequences. Controls had been identified to reduce the likelihood or consequence of the event.

**RESOLVED:** That the Risk Assessment be approved.

**TC.165/15 AUDIT PLANNING DIARY 2016/17**

Consideration was given to an audit planning diary and plan for the 2016/17 financial year.

**RESOLVED:** That the Audit Planning Diary 2015/16 be approved

**TC.166/15 THE REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

Detailed consideration was given to a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit.

**RESOLVED:** That the Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit be noted and approved.

**TC.167/15 TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION**

The following would be invited to attend an appropriately timed meeting to update the Town Council on their activities:

- John Wiseman, Woodhouse Church

**TC.168/15 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 excluded the press and public for the remaining items on the agenda by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

**REPORT OF TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)**

**TC.169/15 LIGHTFOOT CENTRE**

Members noted that PlanArch Design had been appointed to undertake work associated with the feasibility of the purchase and renovation of the Lightfoot Centre.

It was suggested that the Accommodation Working Group continue to meet periodically to oversee the project. Consideration was given to extending its membership.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the information be noted.
2. That Councillors Golightly and L. Zair be appointed to the Accommodation Working Group.

**TC.170/15 CODE OF CONDUCT - MONITORING OFFICER'S DECISION NOTICES**

Members noted decision notices received from the County Council's Monitoring Officer. (For copy see file of Minutes).

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

**Signed:** .....  
**Town Mayor**