



Bishop Auckland Town Team

17th May 2018

Notes and Actions

Present: Nigel Bryson (Chairman) and Alan Anderson, Joy Allen, Clive Auld, Alistair Black, Lee Brownson, John Campbell, John Crick, Peter Daniels, Glen Dixon, Steve Dobson, Phillip Elliott, Fiona Ewing, Gary Ewing, Liz Fisher, Tom Gibbons, Claire Gibbons, Susan Graydon, Jill Leach, John Lethbridge, Chris Percival, Josh Railton, Jude Richardson, Bernedette Rush, Jacqui Rutherford, Ian S Simpson, Alicia Teesdale, Charlie Walton, Chris Walkinshaw, Kathryn Watson, Ann Williams-Maughan, Dave Wilson and David Anderson

Apologies Jamie Blackburn, Gillian Campbell, Steffa McManners and Dr Bob McManners

1. Appointment to the Core Team

The following appointments were made to the Core Team: -

Business Sector Gillian Campbell, Claire Gibbons and Dave Wilson.

Community Sector Alan Anderson, Clive Auld and Nigel Bryson

Key Regeneration Partners Liz Fisher (Operations Director, Auckland Castle Trust) and Chris Myers (Regeneration Projects Manager, Durham County Council) (vacancy)

Durham University was to be approached regarding the vacancy for this sector when the Professor and Director of the Zurbarán Centre for Spanish and Latin American Art had been appointed.

Local Councillors Councillors Jamie Blackburn (BATC), L Brownson (BATC) and Tanya Tucker (DCC)

2. Chair of the Town Team/Core Team

Nigel Bryson was appointed Chair of the Town Team.

It was noted that the Chairman of the Town Team would also chair the Core Team

3. Vice Chair of the Town Team/Core Team

Lee Brownson was appointed Vice-Chair of the Town Team.

It was noted that the Vice Chairman of the Town Team would also be Vice Chair the Core Team

4. Chair of Events Team

Clive Auld was appointed chair of the Events Team

5. Appointment of Treasurer

Alan Anderson was appointed Treasurer.

6. Appointment of Communication Lead

Lee Brownson was appointed communications lead

7. Financial Year End Report

A Financial Summary as at 17th May 2018 summarising income and expenditure over the previous year was circulated for information.

A copy of the accounts was available for inspection.

Agreed: That the information be noted

8. Notes of meeting held on 22nd February 2018

Notes of the meeting were agreed

Presentations

9. The Auckland Projects

Liz Fisher, Engagement Director TAP, gave a presentation regarding The Auckland Projects activities including

- *Auckland Castle*

The Castle had been closed since September 2016 for full restoration and to facilitate the building of a new wing to create the Faith Museum.

During works to restore the Castle numerous archaeological findings had been made, which had helped to confirm much of its known history, but had also provided evidence to support rumours about the Castle. There were also new findings which helped tell the story of the building and its people.

The opening of the castle had been revised on a number of occasions to enable the archaeological findings to be fully recorded and preserved for future generations.

The curatorial team were working on the visitor attraction, which would tell the story of the Prince Bishops and in later years the connection to mining which would provide a link to the *Mining Art Gallery*.

- *Faith Museum* - Telling 2000 years of religious history of Britain, the Faith Museum was being constructed would be open in 2019.

- *Spanish Gallery* - was planned to open in 2019. The gallery would draw on works from The Auckland Project's extensive collection and develop a series of activities and exhibitions in partnership with institutes and galleries from around the world, including Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid and the Meadows Museum, SMU, Dallas.

The Spanish Gallery would be complemented by a separate research centre in partnership with Durham University, which will link new academic study to the gallery's exhibition programme.

- *Walled Garden and Restaurant* - was planned to open in 2020. Catering staff and apprentices were gearing up and testing menus.
- *Postchase and Queen's Head Hotels* - a number of options were being investigated into the operation of the hotels. This would be the last of the projects to be completed, opening in 2021.

10. Kynren

Jacqui Rutherford, Operations Director, gave an overview of the latest activities, including:-

- *New Marketing Team* had been established. The team was currently building a new creative campaign for cinema, tv and radio for the forthcoming season.

Banners had been installed around Newgate Street and would also be appearing along the gateways to Bishop Auckland.

It was announced that a young adult ticket had been introduced. There would also be more promotions available this season.

The team was also looking to develop strategic partnerships with, e.g, Saga and Superbreak.

A blacksmiths workshop was to be available for the forthcoming season as a pre experience.

- *New for 2018*
Local catering suppliers would be available on site.
An animal croft had been created behind the tribune to explain how the animals were trained.
A shop was to open selling Kynren themed merchandise.
- *Operations*
The site and car parks were cleared on average within 1 hour of the end of performance in 2017. This was to be reduced to 40 mins on average for 2018.

Questions

- **It was queried whether schools were to be invited to the site for educational visit?**
It had been an aspiration to work with schools to offer behind the scenes tours. The marketing team was working on this.
- **It was understood that attempts were being made to attract coach companies to include breaks to Kynren. Would it be possible to include a drop off in the town centre as part for the visit?**
The marketing team would look into this.
- **Was it correct that the Beatles would feature in this year's performances?**
This was confirmed

11. Durham County Council, Regeneration

Kathryn Watson gave an update on progress on projects led by Durham County Council

- *WiFi and Footfall Monitor* - Project was out to tender. Returned documentation, together with demonstrations of systems, would be evaluated in July. The contract start date was 1st September, with the system being up and running in December 2018.
- *Interpretation Boards* had been installed at North Bondgate
- *Heritage Action Zone* - A project manager had been appointed to oversee the numerous projects that came within the HAZ

Newgate Street Public Realm - Arrangements had been made for the benches, bins and bollards to be replaced in Newgate Street. It was noted that the street furniture had been in place for around 20 years and was in need of repair or replacement. It would therefore be replaced to ensure uniformity throughout the town centre. The old furniture would be offered to local community groups and organisations for reuse. A section of

block construction road surface adjacent to the former Beales store which had become sunken would be resurfaced.

Questions

- **A query was raised with regard to the condition and future use of land at Kingsway which had been used as a site compound. In addition, the condition of the walkway from the land through to Newgate Street was also queried.**

It was noted that the condition of the building either side of the walkway were subject to enforcement action by Durham County Council. Only one of the owners had complied with enforcement notices. Legal action was being considered against the owner of the property that hadn't complied with the enforcement notice.

The land in question did not belong to Durham County Council and it was understood that it was in multiple ownership. Further investigations were to be undertaken.

12. Bishop Auckland and Coundon in Bloom

Councillor Joy Allen gave an overview of Bishop Auckland and Coundon in Bloom (BACB)

It was noted that the roundabout at Coundon Gate was the first project which aimed to improve the prominent entrance to Bishop Auckland and Coundon.

A logo had been designed by Curious 12 which drew inspiration from the local flora and partnership between Bishop Auckland and Coundon.

Initially Councillors Joy Allen and Charlie Kay had allocated funds from their Neighbourhood Budgets to get the project started, but many more people got involved to make it a success, eg the Town Council had provided hanging baskets in Newgate Street, Councillor Sam Zair had provided flower tubs in the Market Place. There had also been many community based initiatives.

Fundraising events have also been held in the Durham Ox, Coundon. The next event was to be held on 15th June.

One of the first community led projects was the renovation of the Parsons Trott horse trough at The Dell. Local residents had helped clear the area which was full of debris and overgrown. A walkthrough was created by Durham County Council. The next phase would be to install signage around the trough, which would be linked to a Heritage Action Zone project.

A number of litter picking and planting projects had been undertaken in several areas, particularly in Coundon.

Councillor Allen urged people to get involved. Further information could be found on <http://www.bloomtalk.org.uk/BishopAucklandCoundon/>

13. Town Centre Ambassadors

John Crick, Chair of Town Ambassadors gave a presentation on the background and purpose of the Town Centre Ambassadors (TCA).

TCA set up as a pilot by Cllr Joy Allen in 2017. Initially the focus had been to support the Thursday markets. The Group had looked at other groups for best practice, in particular Durham Pointers.

TCA became a formal organisation in April 2018 and were made up of team of ten volunteers, identifiable by their distinctive blue uniforms.

The purpose of TCA was to promote Bishop Auckland, residents and businesses and to support and increase awareness of small independent businesses. They covered the town centre and Cockton Hill. Their remit did not include organising events.

It was noted that small businesses and the high street in general was struggling, like other towns and cities, but something was being created in Bishop Auckland that was unique.

By 11th January 2018 the team had visited and promoted on Facebook over 100 businesses. Had a good response from businesses and have created good relationships. To date there had been over 400 volunteer hours.

The team was regularly reviewing their operations. It was thought that the team would increase their membership to 14-15 within the next year.

An annual report would be produced later in the year.

14. Events Team

Clive Auld gave an update on the activities of the Events Team.

It was noted that new jackets and polo shirts had been purchased so that the group could be easily identified while hosting events.

New style banners depicting Kynren had been installed in Newgate Street. The concept behind the designs was to welcome Kynren visitors to the town to encourage them to support town centre retailers.

It was noted that Kynren had contributed to the funding of the banners and had also provided artwork for their design.

An event booklet had been produced detailing events to take place during the year. The booklet had been self-funded from advertising.

It was noted that the Town Council had funded a 1940's event to take place in the Market Place on 9th June and 4 events to take place on Saturdays during July/August aimed at attracting Kynren visitors to dwell in the town centre. These events were of course not exclusively for visitors. Local people were also welcome to enjoy the entertainment and use the town centre.

It was noted that Fifteas Tearoom would be joining in the 1940's event. The Fifteas do the Forties!

15 Social Media

Lee Brownson, social media lead, gave a presentation on the success of the Town Teams social media campaigns, which had a lot of interaction during the previous 6 months, with a couple of the posts reached a total of 51,000 people.

Some of the videos had also been very popular. For example the advent windows had around 3.8K views, the New Car Show 2017 had almost 4,200 views and the Jack Drum Arts performance at Bishop Auckland Celebrates together had almost 3,000 views

There were 4,621 likes Facebook and 1,407 followers on Twitter.

The user profile on Facebook was 71% women / 28% men. The highest age range was 25-44 year old with almost 90% being from the UK. There were people following from overseas, the largest groups being 22 from Australia, 20 from Egypt and 19 from the USA.

16. Next Meeting

Thursday, 17th May 2018 at 6.00 p.m. (AGM)