

MINUTES of the Council Meeting held on Monday **2nd May, at 7.30pm – in the Lower Hall, Bentham Town Hall**

Present: Cllrs Adams, Burton, Gerrie, Hill, Jones, Marshall, Paige & Stannard. Temporary Clerk Mrs Burton, CClr Ireton and 11 members of the public

1. To Appoint the Mayor for the period 2023/2024
RESOLVED:That Cllr Adams be re-appointed as Mayor for the period 2023/24
2. Signature of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by Mayor. (Paper 2023/90) - signed
3. To Appoint the Deputy Mayor for 2023/2024.
RESOLVED:That Cllr Hill be re-appointed as Deputy Mayor for the period 2023/24
4. Apologies from members unable to attend: -
 - 4.1 To Note Apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting.
None
It was noted that Cllr Pearce had resigned from the Council and was therefore not present
 - 4.2 To consider acceptance of reasons for absence
None
5. Declaration of Interest: -
 - 5.1 To Note Declarations of Interest not already declared under members Code of Conduct or members register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
None
 - 5.2 To Approve Dispensation Requests – if dispensation request received.
None
6. To receive Comment & Concerns: Public participation – to hear matters raised by members of the public or Cllrs with an interest (that are allowed to speak) either on agenda items or for future consultation.
A member of the public raised the possibility of a Council Community Forum to discuss the future of the Community Youth Building. Council have already done surveys etc prior to putting the building on the market, but suggested that the proposals were put in writing for discussion at a future Council meeting. Another member asked regarding timescales for the sale of the building and was told that it was dependant on the outcome of consideration of the latest offer at item 32 of the agenda.
7. To Confirm the Minutes of the previous meeting on 3rd April 2023 (Paper 2023/91)
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting on 3 April 2023 are agreed and signed
8. To Note the draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting on 24 April 2023. (Paper 2023/92)
Noted
9. To Note the draft minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 26 April 2023. (Paper 2023/93)
Noted
10. To consider written applications for the office of councillor and to fill vacant seats by co-option, if any.
None received
11. To consider appointing Members to Committees for 2023/2024 and to agree a way forward: -
 - 11.1 Buildings
RESOLVED: That Cllrs Adams, Burton, Jones & Paige be appointed to the Buildings Committee
 - 11.2 Finance
RESOLVED: That Cllrs Adams, Burton, Gerrie, Hill, Jones, & Marshall be appointed to the Finance Committee

11.3 Marketing

RESOLVED: Not to appoint a Marketing Committee

11.4 Open Spaces.

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Burton, Paige, Marshall & Stannard be appointed to the Open Spaces Committee

12. To consider appointing Members as Council Representatives for 2023/2024 and to agree a way forward: -

RESOLVED: That representation on outside organisations is agreed as listed below:

12.1 Aid in Sickness	Cllr Adams
12.2 Bentham & District Dementia Friendly Community (BDDFC)	Cllr Hill
12.3 Bentham Area Refugee Support Group (BARSG)	Cllr Jones
12.4 Bentham Christmas Lights Committee	Cllr Burton
12.5 Bentham Common Land Charity	Cllr Stannard
12.6 Bentham Environmentally Sustainable Town (BEST)	Cllr Paige
12.7 Bentham Playing Field Association	Cllr Jones
12.8 Bentham Save a Life	Cllr Hill
12.9 Bentham Youth Café	Cllr Gerrie
12.10 Collingwood & Longstaffe	Cllr Marshall
12.11 Goodenber Play Area Association	Cllr Adams
12.12 LASRUG	Cllr Adams
12.13 Longstaffe Educational Foundation	Cllr Burton
12.14 Looking Well/Bentham Community Library	Cllr Gerrie
12.15 Patient Representative Group	Cllr Stannard
12.16 Victoria Institute	Cllr Stannard
12.17 YLCA Craven branch (2 representatives).	Cllr Marshall

13. To review the Banking Arrangements: -

13.1 To consider arrangements regarding the Responsible Financial Officer until a clerk is appointed

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Adams & Jones continue with running the banking and accounts until a new clerk is appointed

13.2 To review the bank account arrangements and mandates and agree a way forward.

13.2.1 Unity Trust Bank

13.2.2 Public Sector Deposit Fund

RESOLVED: That the account arrangements and mandates be reviewed again once the new clerk is appointed, but that Cllr Jones be added to the Unity Trust bank mandate as soon as possible

14. To Agree a Provisional Timetable of Meetings for the new Council Year. (Paper 2023/94)

RESOLVED: That paper 2023/94 be accepted but that potential committee meeting dates for Buildings and Open Spaces be added for consideration at the next meeting

15. To receive the Police Report & allow members to ask questions for information - If any.

An email report was received

16. To receive a report from the Public Safety Officer & allow members to ask questions for information – if any.

None

17. To receive the Clerks Report (for information only). (Paper 2023/95)

Received

18. To receive a Report from CCllr (for information only) - If any

CCllr Ireton congratulated Cllrs Adams and Hill on their reappointment. He said that 1 April had seen the successful start of North Yorkshire Council and there had been a smooth transition to this new organisation. A new link bus service from Bentham to Hornby will come into operation on 7 June. Operating on Wednesdays and Thursdays, the service will leave High Bentham at 9.15am to connect with the 9.38am service from Hornby to Lancaster. Return will leave Lancaster at 13.35pm to connect at Hornby at 14.20pm, giving

passengers 3 hours in town. This limited service will be trialled for 6 months and can be built on if there is sufficient interest. It will run in addition to the Kirkby Lonsdale service

19. To consider and comment upon New Planning Applications.

19.1 ZA23/24928/OUT. Outline application for residential development with access, layout and scale for consideration. Green Head Farm Cross Lane Low Bentham Lancaster LA2 7ES

RESOLVED: no comments

19.2 ZA23/24947/FUL Retrospective change of use of domestic pool house to a single residence, The Wenning Station Road High Bentham Lancaster LA2 7LS

RESOLVED: no comments

19.3 To receive Planning Decisions – see Clerks Report

20. Highway Matters

20.1 To receive notification of local road closures

20.1.1 Greenfoot Lane on 17 & 18 May 2023 (Paper 2023/96)

20.1.2 Burton Road on 1 & 2 June 2023 (Paper 2023/97)

Received

20.2 To consider making a request to NYC Highways for the re-painting of road markings in Bentham, if any
It was agreed that numerous Give Way, Stop, white & yellow lines around the town were in urgent need of re-marking. Cllr Gerrie provided a comprehensive list for notification to NYC Highways

RESOLVED: That a list of road marking that require re-painting be forwarded to NYC Highways, and copied to NY Police and Cllr Ireton

20.3 To consider making a request to NYC / LCC Highways for the re-instatement of road surfaces around Bentham, if any

It was noted that Lancashire Highways is more proactive in fixing road surfaces than NYC Highways. Particular areas of concern were the road surfaces on the B6480 in the narrows at Lairgill, and at the county border but it was acknowledged that there were numerous potholes around both High & Low Bentham.

RESOLVED: That Lancashire Highways be asked to address the road surface on the county border and NYC Highways be asked to look at the road surface between Lairgill and Butts Lane

20.4 To Consider and Note Highway Matters for Information

The recent Auction sale that had caused gridlock in Bentham was discussed at length

RESOLVED: That a letter be sent to the Directors of Bentham Auction Mart requesting a solution for future sales that keeps the highway clear and traffic in Bentham moving, and that it be copied to NYC Highways and NY Police

Debris and fencing left by contractors on Springfield and Goodenber Crescent was raised

RESOLVED: That letters be sent to United Utilities and Yorkshire Housing requesting that the objects be removed as soon as possible

21. To Review the Council's Required Documents

21.1 Standing Orders. (Paper 2023/98)

RESOLVED: That Standing Orders 2022 be reviewed and approved

21.2 Financial Regulations. (Paper 2023/99)

RESOLVED: That Financial Regulations 2022 be reviewed and approved

21.3 Terms of Reference for Committees. (Papers 2023/100)

RESOLVED: That Committee Terms of Reference 2022 be reviewed and approved

21.4 Complaints Procedure. (Paper 2023/101)

RESOLVED: That Complaints Procedure 2022 be reviewed and approved

21.5 Asset Register. (Paper 2023/102)

RESOLVED: That Asset Register 2022 needs to be amended to include PHPF signage, the refurbished Mewith signpost, the Christmas light sockets and box on School Hill

21.6 Risk Assessment. (Paper 2023/103)

RESOLVED: That Risk Assessment 2022 be reviewed and approved

22. To consider adopting NYC's Code of Conduct (Paper 2023/104)

RESOLVED: That NYC's Code of Conduct be adopted

23. To agree the Accounts for Payment.

To	For	Amount
Public Sector Deposit Fund	Addition to Council Reserves	10,000.00
Age Concern / Friday Lunch	Precept Grant	250.00
Bentham Theatre Group	Precept Grant	100.00
Bentham News	Precept Grant	250.00
Collingwood & Longstaffe	Precept Grant	250.00
LASRUG	Precept Grant	75.00
Stepping Stones	Precept Grant	200.00
Victoria Institute	Precept Grant	500.00
High Bentham WI	Precept Grant	50.00
Goodenber Play Area	Precept Grant (Half)	720.00
Bentham Playing Fields	Precept Grant (Half)	2000.00
Victoria Institute	Coronation grant	400.00
Bentham Playing Fields	Coronation grant	600.00
BT	TIP phone	59.66
Ionos 1&1	Internet	18.00
YLCA	Annual subscription	778.00
Clearglass Cleaning	Town Hall windows	120.00
Kingsdale Projects	Grass cutting (April)	3340.00
Jo Burton	Temporary administration	1110.00
Salaries	April payments	1085.30
TOTAL		21905.96

RESOLVED: That the accounts be approved for payment

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Marshall & Gerrie authorise payments

23.1 To Receive the Council's insurance renewal and consider if any amendments are required (if received)
None received

23.2 To receive a quote for 'night silencing' of the Town Hall clock (Paper 2023/106)

A proposal to accept the Cumbria Clock Company quote of £1670 ex VAT was agreed with only one vote against. A further vote on the 'hours of silence' being between midnight and 6am was unanimous. It was noted that the 13A sockets are still to be fitted.

RESOLVED: To accept the quote of £1670 ex VAT to provide a mechanism to silence the clock between the hours of midnight and 6am

23.3 To consider sponsorship for Tidy Up Bentham

Without a proposal from the Masterplan Team regarding this project Council was unsure how to proceed. It was agreed that it could not spend public money improving the appearance of shops and private properties on the Main Street. It was also noted that the Council's budget was already set for 2023/24, and so funding new ideas may be a problem

RESOLVED: That a price for a general clean-up of pavements (weeding & pressure washing) of Main Street between The Auction Mart and The Farrier, and Station Road / Robin Lane from the Station to Bowland View be obtained

24. To consider the applications for King's Coronation funding, and agree a way forward, if any (Paper 2023/105)

Costed applications had been received from both Bentham Playing Fields and The Victoria Institute and it was agreed to split the funding. Several proposals were considered and voted on.

RESOLVED: That a £400 Coronation grant be awarded to the Victoria Institute

RESOLVED: That a £600 Coronation grant be awarded to the Bentham Playing Fields Association

25. To receive an update on progress with the Town Hall Windows project

Delivery of the new windows had finally been confirmed with fitters coming in week beginning 22 May. Contractors to remove the radiators and boxing etc will start week beginning 15 May, and the project is expected to take 2.5 weeks if there are no problems

26. To consider the following Correspondence and to agree a way forward and/or a response: -
- 26.1 To consider the Clapham cum Newby Parish Neighbourhood Plan, and agree a response, if any (paper 2023/82)
RESOLVED: That the plan was an excellent document that did not require a Council response
- 26.2 To consider the NALC request for comments for their response to the DLUHC Consultation on a new community infrastructure levy (Paper 2023/107)
RESOLVED: That the complexity of the consultation required considerable thought, and that Cllr Marshall should put together a response for the Council to agree
27. To Receive Reports from Councillors who represent the Council on other bodies (for information only) - If any.
Cllr Gerrie reported that the Masterplan Development Groups are up and running. The final report should be submitted at the end of July
Cllr Marshall reminded everyone of the current Alms House vacancy
28. Items for next meeting and minor items for information only.
None
29. Date of next meeting.
15 May if any planning
5 June

The public part of the meeting closed at 8.54pm

30. To resolve that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, that the public and press be excluded further from the meeting, whilst item 31 to 33 are considered: -
RESOLVED: That the press and public are excluded from the meeting
31. To consider items of correspondence received regarding the Community Youth Building (if any) and agree a way forward.
A further offer of £50,000 had been received for the building and was discussed. A proposal to reject the offer was agreed 7:1.
RESOLVED: That the new offer of £50,000 be rejected
RESOLVED: That the Council will accept an offer of £60,000 and payment of its reasonable costs, and that this should be put to the potential buyer
32. To receive a letter from Bentham News and agree a response (Paper 2023/108)
RESOLVED: That correct procedure had been followed by the Council and the Chair, and that a letter be written to this effect (to be circulated to Councillors before being sent)
33. To receive an update on the Clerk's Vacancy, if any
Cllr Adams has received two applications for part-time working from local people.
RESOLVED: That both applicants should be invited to interview and a job share be considered
RESOLVED: That advertising further a field should not occur until the current applicants have been seen
RESOLVED: That interviews be carried out on 15 May if convenient to the applicants
RESOLVED: That the interview panel consist of Cllrs Adams, Jones & Marshall

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm