

**MINUTES of the Council Meeting held on Thursday
20th January 2022, at 7.30 pm – in the The Lower Hall,
Bentham Town Hall.**

Present: Cllrs Swales (Chair), Bridgeman, Faraday, Marshall, and Taylor. The Clerk Christine Downey. Eleven members of the public.

- 293 Apologies from members unable to attend: -
- 293.1 To Note Apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting.
Cllrs Adams, Burton, Hill, Stannard and Wills.
- 293.2 To consider acceptance of reasons for absence.
None.
- 294 Declaration of interests: -
- 294.1 To Note Declarations of Interest not already declared under members Code of Conduct or members register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
None.
- 294.2 To approve dispensation requests.
None.
- 295 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 consideration.
(NB: for non-agenda items Members of the Council are not permitted to respond, except to ask questions for the purposes of clarification).

SIMON WARD of Atkinson Vos spoke in relation to the planning application to be discussed at item 298.1.1. Simon expressed the hope that the council will support the planning application as it will help secure the future of a local business that has been on site for thirty years now. He explained that there is a need to improve the site to reflect what today's customer expects. The company employs twenty people, five of whom live in the town. They are also looking to recruit three more staff. They have trained five apprentices over the past five years. They try and spend locally and are spending £70K pa. It is thought that another £50K pa is spent in the town by their work force, and even more by their customers.

The company supports local charities; both directors love living and working in Bentham and hope to carry on contributing to the town.

A member of the public spoke regarding the pedestrian access route to Banks Way, to be discussed at item 301. The issue is that the plans say that the footpath should be reinstated but it looks as though this will not be done. The project manager at Skipton has been made aware of the problems, which include: the drains now block when it rains; the drains have been covered over with soil and buried in two places (one on Lakeber Ave); the path is barely 27-33 inches wide; there is no longer wheelchair access at the back, despite having had wheelchair access at the back for over twenty years before these two new properties were built.

Another member of the public spoke on the planning application to be discussed at item 298.1.1 and pointed out that local residents who were consulted on the application did not receive notification until 17th January, despite the fact that the letters were dated 7th January. The closing date for comments is 28th January (being 21 days from 7th January) but several neighbours require a slightly longer period to consider it, due to the late receipt of the notification. Craven District

Council has been asked to extend the deadline, and has agreed to do so. However, CDC has not confirmed the date to which the submission deadline has been extended. When asked to do so the officer said it is the “designated date”, but it is not clear what that means.

- 296 To Confirm the Minutes of the full council meeting of 4th January 2022. (Paper 2022/04)
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 4th January 2022 are agreed and be signed.
- 297 To confirm the Minutes of the Precept meeting of 10th January 2022. (Paper 2022/05)
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Precept meeting of 10th January 2022 are agreed and be signed.
- 298 Planning: -
- 298.1 To consider and comment upon New Planning Applications: -
- 298.1.1 2021/23443/FUL. Replacement of existing buildings with construction of storage building, and use of land for display / sales and storage. Warehouse, Wenning Mill, Wenning Avenue, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7LW.
RESOLVED: That the Council supports this planning application, and also supports the request for an extension to the deadline for the submission of comments by those listed on the neighbour notification list, due to the late delivery of the notifications. It is understood that the notifications were delivered 10 days late on 17th January 2022.
- 298.1.2 2021/23562/FUL. Change of use from commercial to residential to convert and extend the Bakehouse into a single 3 bedroom detached dwelling. 38 Main Street, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7HN.
RESOLVED: That the council has no comments on this application.
- 298.1.3 2021/23597/FUL. Change of use of vacant retail/work space (previously Pennine Outdoor Limited) and conversion to form 2-bedroom apartment, including new gable window. Ground Floor, Central Buildings, Main Street, High Bentham, Lancaster, LA2 7HE.
RESOLVED: That the council has no comments on this application.
- 298.2 To consider and agree a response to the following consultation documents from Craven District Council: -
- 298.2.1 Flood Risk & Water Management Supplementary Planning Document. Deadline 01/02/2022. (Paper 2022/06)
RESOLVED: To respond requesting a summary of the new proposals and/or changes, in order to be able to respond fully to the consultation document.
- 298.2.2 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. Deadline 01/02/2022. (Paper 2022/07)
RESOLVED: To respond requesting a summary of the new proposals and/or changes, in order to be able to respond fully to the consultation document.
- 298.2.3 Good Design Supplementary Planning Document – second draft for consultation. Deadline 01/02/2022. (Paper 2022/08)
RESOLVED: To respond requesting a summary of the new proposals and/or changes, in order to be able to respond fully to the consultation document.
- 298.2.4 Rural Workers Dwellings in Craven Supplementary Planning Document. Revised draft for consultation. Deadline 01/02/2022. (Paper 2022/09)
RESOLVED: To respond requesting a summary of the new proposals and/or changes, in order to be able to respond fully to the consultation document.
RESOLVED: Cllr Marshall to email clerk with suggestions on how/why the planning process needs to address accommodation problems in order to support local workers and therefore local businesses.

299 To consider instructing Thomas Brown to power wash the equipment and surfaces at Philip Harvey Playing Field, and to spray surfaces at PHPF to remove moss (especially MUGA), in the current financial year.

RESOLVED: To proceed, work to be done in the first or second week of March.

300 To consider and agree actions to be taken in respect of the **Special Project for School Hill** (multifunctional hole with electric supply, and/or plant a Christmas tree) and to provide the infrastructure for Christmas lights on lampposts. (Budgeted for next year 2022/2023).

It was reported that Lynn Whitaker (Economic Development Assistant) has confirmed that funds are available from CDC for special projects that can be completed by Bentham Town Council before 31st March 2022, which support the economic development of the Town, and which do not exceed a cost of £2,499 per project. (Any projects costing over £2,499 would need three quotes).

CDC will supply the funds, but the work must be organised by Bentham Town Council. Documents from CDC would need to be signed by the council in order to proceed.

RESOLVED: That the council will proceed with, and complete, the following special projects in the current year, if funding is received from CDC under the economic development scheme: -

1) Bus shelter repairs.

2) Replace the three benches on School Hill.

3) Renewal of Bygone Bentham signs and production of a map of their locations.

4) Christmas tree for School Hill – 10 ft.

RESOLVED: Cllr Marshall to contact Lynn Whitaker and get the process under way.

It was reported that there was a trifold map of the Bygone Bentham locations, and that it will be necessary to find the original. It was suggested that Paul Metcalfe of PICA print might have it.

301 To consider correspondence received regarding **pedestrian access route to Banks Way** and to agree a way forward and/or a response. (Papers 2022/10 and 2022/11).

It was reported that the contractors are the same as for the Duke Street development, and are Eastwood & Partners. And that the project manager for CDC is Emily Shepherd.

All members of the public/neighbours who were present to hear the discussion on this matter gave permission for any information that they forwarded to the council to be circulated as necessary to facilitate swift action.

Cllr Marshall suggested that the residents should consider taking legal representation. He also suggested that the residents take photographs and keep a log of events.

RESOLVED: Clerk to ask DCllr Brockbank to speak to the developer urgently and find out what is going on.

RESOLVED: Clerk to send the video footage of the flooding garden to DCllr Brockbank because flooding is the main issue.

RESOLVED: Clerk to write to CDC setting out the councils concerns and requesting an urgent response.

RESOLVED: To request an urgent site meeting, within a fortnight, preferably on a Friday afternoon.

RESOLVED: To request attendance at a site meeting by Emily Shepherd the CDC project manager; Somebody from the construction Company Eastwood & Partners; District Councillors Linda Brockbank and Stuart Handley; representatives from Bentham Town Council.

RESOLVED: Clerk to pass on details of any site meeting arranged to Martyn Johnson in due course.

- 302 Items for next meeting and minor items for information only.
- 302.1 **AGENDA ITEMS**
- 302.1.1 Damaged bench / insurance claim.
- 302.1.2 Highways – Gill Head.
- 302.1.3 Update re hot water boiler upstairs.
- 302.1.4 Decision regarding the future of the Community Youth Building.
- 302.2 **MINOR ITEMS**
- 302.2.1 Bentham Master plan: There is likely to be a meeting with potential consultants at CDC on Monday 31/01/21. It is proposed that Cllr Swales (as Chair) and the clerk (as note taker) attend. Other councillors who are available may attend. Time still to be advised.
- 302.2.2 Community Youth Building: A member of the public has expressed an interest in looking around the building with a view to possibly renting or buying the premises. It is proposed that the clerk will show them around asap.
- 302.2.3 Site Meeting re planning application for Land Off Springfield: The case officer is on long-term sick leave and the case will be reallocated asap. The request for a site meeting will then be dealt with.
- 302.2.4 Clerk is on holiday most of next week. But will work one day in order to do Payroll, submit planning application responses by deadlines, and request site visit at Banks Way asap.
- 302.2.5 Proposed full council meeting on Thursday 24th February clashed with pantomime and may need to be moved to Monday 20th February. Councillor Faraday to check the availability of the Victoria Institute for the meeting on Thursday 24th February first.
- 302.2.6 The Youth Café had to cancel their youth club this week because of covid cases in classes at the school. But they were only told by the school at the last minute, and were only able to let the council know after the event, i.e., the next day. Unfortunately, under the term and conditions of the booking the charge still applies because the room was not available for anybody else to book. It was confirmed that is not possible to alter the terms and conditions of bookings for a single user.
- 302.2.7 The four new street lights at Lairgill have been installed, but are not yet connected. Hopefully they will be connected next week.
- 302.2.8 Cllr Swales commented on how successful the Bentham Moving Forward event at the Town Hall on Saturday 15th January was, and thanked all concerned for their hard work in making it a success.
- 302.2.9 Cllr Marshall enjoyed a good zoom meeting recently regarding tourism. The aim is to integrate services and attractions in order to keep tourists coming, such as accommodation and bus service. Lots to offer in Bentham. The Three Peaks etc. Need to promote the train service as way of getting here.
- 303 Date of next meeting: 7th February 2022.
- There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.32.