

## MISSING AN OPPORTUNITY

Conservative Councillors have criticised the Council's handling of the Buxton Future High Street Bid.

Since the Council changed control in May 2019, Conservative Councillors have had difficulty obtaining information:

There was no consultation when the emphasis of the bid changed to the Springs shopping centre.

The tender constraints for consultants were very tight. The company appointed by the Council was a company that had acted as letting agent for the Springs.

For the first time in the Council's history, in order to obtain information, Conservatives Councillors invoked the Council constitution to call a special meeting which took place on 10th March.

The Council made this a part 2 meeting under the Local Government Act i.e. **secret!** At the meeting Councillors decided that much of the information should be made public, yet nearly 3 months later it still isn't available on the Council website.

At the 10th March meeting, it was resolved that the Executive and Directors meet as soon as possible with BCA, Vision Buxton and the Town Team to discuss the bid. - But no contact was made for 2 months, by which time the submission deadline was so close that it was impossible to make significant changes to the bid.

This bid has been headed by 4 Councillors and Directors, all men who don't live in the town but whom seem to think they know best what's best for Buxton!

At this very late juncture we urge the Council to hold meaningful discussions with BCA, Vision Buxton and the Town Team in order to address the many issues outlined in the BCA letter of 16<sup>th</sup> May including, but not exclusively:

- The minimal focus on improvements to Spring Gardens
- Lack of public facilities within Spring Gardens
- Lack of proper accessibility.
- Local concern re concentration on an underground car park
- Lack of environmental adaptations to meet the Council's Climate Emergency declaration
- Potential impact of the proposed new large buildings
- Lack of Buxton people and civic bodies on the Project Development Board.

If the Council changes tack and consults more, the more likely that Buxton residents will get behind the project and accept any upheaval whilst the works are carried out.