

# WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Virtual Council Meeting held on the Zoom Platform on 29th October 2020

**Present:** Councillor B O’Kane (Chairman); Councillor C Arrighi; Councillor E Dinsdale; Councillor G Dinsdale; Councillor C Hayes; Councillor J Rayson; Councillor R Redmond; Councillor G Roberts; Councillor C Walmsley

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

V. Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Members of the Public

### **1623/20 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Gill, Councillor C Maudling and Councillor L Walmsley

### **1624/20 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Rayson declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda Items 10 and 14 on the Agenda as she was the tenant of a Council Allotment

Councillor Roberts declared that he was a member of Cumbria County Council in relation to Agenda Item 12 on Footway Lighting

Councillor O’Kane declared that he was a member of CBC’s Planning Panel

### **1625/20 Public Participation**

There was no public participation

### **1626/20 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24th September 2020**

Councillor E Dinsdale said that there were 2 key points that were missed out of the Minutes – when the Chairman had told Councillor Arrighi to shut up and when he had cut across Councillor Arrighi

The Chairman said that Minutes do not record conversations they record the actual decisions made which is the whole point of Minutes

Councillor C Walmsley said his name and that of Councillor L Walmsley had

been missed off those attending and the Chairman said this would be rectified. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and 5 Councillors voted for this and 3 Councillors voted against.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**1627/20**    **Planning Applications**

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications received from CBC and shown at Appendix 1. Members had no comments/ representations/objections to make on the Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1 and it was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Walmsley that having considered the applications there were no representations and that CBC be informed accordingly.

**RESOLVED** - That CBC Planning Department be informed that having considered the Planning Applications at Appendix 1 the Council had no representations to make on them.

**1628/20**    **Internal Auditors Report**

The Council considered the Internal Auditors Interim Report following an Audit carried out on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 which contained 5 recommendations. The Chairman read out paragraph 2 of the Report which said the Town Council once again was very well administered and in particular in the following areas:-

- Cash book properly maintained and up to date
- VAT claimed on a monthly basis
- Payroll and payments of Tax and NI
- 2020/21 budget prepared in advance of setting parish precept
- Insurance policy with Zurich Municipal
- Transparent transfers and payments from Council's bank accounts
- Income properly accounted for

The Chair expressed his gratitude to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk in this, It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Internal Auditor's Report be accepted in full. A vote was taken and 5 Councillors voted in favour of this and 3 Councillors abstained.

**RESOLVED** – That the Internal Auditors Report be accepted in full

**1629/20**    **Finance Report**

The Council considered a Finance Report.

(i) Appendix 1. It was reported that there was 1 addition to Appendix 1 for invoices to be authorised for payment namely:

- V Gorley £11.48 for postage for copy Agendas

Councillor Redmond entered the meeting at this point

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Rayson that the Invoices at Appendix 1 including the 1 additional payment be approved and paid. A vote was held and 5 Councillors voted for and 4 Councillors abstained.

**RESOLVED** – That the Invoices shown at Appendix 1 including the 1 additional payment be approved and paid

(ii) The Council considered Appendices 2 and 3 and it was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor C Walmsley that these be approved and noted. A vote was held and 5 Councillors voted for and 4 Councillors abstained.

**RESOLVED** – That Appendices 2 and 3 be approved and noted.

#### **1630/20 Contracts for Ranger and Assistant Ranger**

The Council considered a report on the partnership arrangement with CBC for the provision of a Ranger and Assistant Ranger for 2021/22 and 2022/23. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Rayson and seconded by Councillor Hayes that a 2 year service contract be entered into with CBC for 2021/22 and 2022/23 for the services of a Ranger and Assistant Ranger subject to the proviso that the % salary increases for the second year be clarified and reported back to the Council. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That a 2 year service contract be entered into with CBC for 2021/22 and 2022/23 for the services of a Ranger and Assistant Ranger subject to the proviso that the % salary increases for the second year be clarified and reported back to the Council.

#### **1631/20 Grass Cutting**

The Council considered a report on grass cutting of areas shown on Appendix 1 to the report. The Council had a contract with CBC to cut those areas on 12 occasions between April 2020 to September 2020. Councillor G Dinsdale asked if the Contract included access onto the land and the Clerk said it did not. Councillor G Dinsdale wished it to be recorded that there would be no problems with trespass if we entered onto land to cut it.

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor E Dinsdale that quotes be sought for the grass cutting contract for the land shown on Appendix 1 from April 2021 to September 2021 and that should any

Councillors wish any extra areas of land to be included they should inform the Clerk by Monday 2nd November 2020. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That quotes be sought for the grass cutting contract for the land shown on Appendix 1 for 12 cuts from April 2021 to September 2021 and that should any Councillors wish any extra areas of land to be included they should inform the Clerk by Monday 2nd November 2020.

**1632/20** **Allotments and Pigeon Loft Sites**

The Council considered a report on the maintenance contract for Allotment and pigeon Loft sites which runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor C Walmsley that quotations be sought from local contractors for the maintenance of Allotment and Pigeon Loft Sites for 2021/22.

**RESOLVED** – That quotations be sought from local contractors for the maintenance of Allotment and Pigeon Loft Sites for 2021/22.

**1633/20** **Recommendations by Policy and Resources and Finance Committee**

The Council considered a report on recommendations from the Policy and Resources and Finance Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The recommendations were contained in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of the report. As part of the approval of paragraph 1.1 Councillor O’Kane proposed that £50,000 be taken out of the Council’s underspend to start a partnership with CBC to provide public toilets in Whitehaven and this was seconded by Councillor E Dinsdale. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That paragraph 1.1 of the report be approved and that £50,000 be taken from the Council’s underspend to provide public toilets in Whitehaven in partnership with CBC.

**1634/20** **Update on Footway Lighting**

Further to Minute 1576/20 the Council considered a report giving an update on the position with footway lighting. The Clerk reported that although some details had been provided by CBC there was still insufficient information to determine how much this would cost the Council. Following a discussion on this it was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor E Dinsdale that the report be parked and that no further action be taken on it. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the report be parked and no further action be taken on it

## 1635/20 Advertising in the Cumbria Guide

The Council considered a report on advertising in the Cumbria Guide for taking out either full or half page adverts in the West Cumbria Guide for 2021/22. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Roberts that 6 half page adverts be placed in the West Cumbria Guide for 2021/22 ie April-May, June-July, Aug-Sept, Oct-Nov, Dec-Jan, Feb-March at a cost of £2,970.00 plus £196.00 for artwork. A vote was taken and 4 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor voted against and 3 Councillors abstained

**RESOLVED** - That 6 half page adverts be placed in the West Cumbria Guide for 2021/22 ie April-May, June-July, Aug-Sept, Oct-Nov, Dec-Jan, Feb-March at a cost of £2,970.00 plus £196.00 for artwork.

## 1636/20 Allotments

The Council considered a report on the Allotment Sites giving information on their current status.(paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5 of the report). A request for a rent free period had been received from an allotment tenant who had had his crops damaged by deer gaining access through a broken boundary fence (paragraph 2.6 of the report). Another Allotment tenant had had to build raised beds on his allotment because the ground was waterlogged due to surface water running off the car park and requested the Council to provide topsoil for the raised beds at an approximate cost of £120.00 (paragraph 2.7 of the report). Finally an Allotment tenant had asked to plant some small easily removed fruit trees on the allotment which had been approved by Councillors on the Allotment Advisory Group (paragraph 2.7 of the report).

It was proposed by Councillor C Walmsley and seconded by Councillor G Dinsdale that the information contained paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5 of the report be noted; that the recommendations in paragraphs 2.6 and 2,7 of the report be approved. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That that the information contained paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5 of the report be noted; and that the recommendations in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 of the report be approved.

## 1637/20 Remembrance Sunday

The Council considered a report on the arrangements made for Remembrance Sunday on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and the Chairman said that on behalf of the Council he had agreed to donate £150.00 from his Mayor's allowance to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and

seconded by Councillor C Walmsley that the report be noted. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**1638/20**    **Update from Zoom Meeting with Jenny Brumby**

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the Zoom Meeting held with Jenny Brumby.

He said that various things were being done:

- That Jenny had been round every shop in Whitehaven and had received a positive response from everyone
- She was trying to bring everyone together to find solutions for the future
- Toilets as well as car parking were high on the agenda
- One of the key things was trying to develop a shop local campaign and to stop the degradation in towns to stop losing more and more shops
- CBC are considering bringing back the bus stop onto Lowther Street as a result of talking to traders who have voiced concern about the lack of footfall in that area.
- The biggest point was the provision of public toilets

The Chairman said that the Council needs to continue to have a dialogue with Jenny Brumby.

Councillor Rayson said meeting Jenny was encouraging and that the Council needed to work together with her as it was going to be a long process

Councillor G Dinsdale said it was a great thing that Jenny was doing

No decisions were taken as the item was for information only

**1639/20**    **Christmas Closing**

The Council considered a report on Christmas closing of the Council Offices for this year. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor C Walmsley that the Offices be closed from noon on Thursday 24th December 2020 until Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the Council Offices be closed from noon on Thursday 24th December until Monday 4th January 2021.

**1640/20**    **Grass Cutting in Cemeteries**

The Council considered a report on grass cutting in cemeteries. At full Council on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019 the Council resolved to continue funding an extra 4 grass cuts at Whitehaven and Hensingham Cemeteries in 2020/21. A request had been received from CBC's Parks and Open Spaces Contract Manager for this

arrangement to continue and had submitted cost figures for 2021/22 (£15,913.50 plus VAT) and 2022/2023 (£16,390.91 plus VAT). Councillor G Dinsdale asked if this included the old abandoned cemetery in Hensingham which was overgrown and wondered if the arrangement could be extended to include the maintenance of the trees there. The Chairman said that the Council should contact CBC with respect to the area mentioned by Councillor G Dinsdale to request further advice if action is required and reported back to Council. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor C Walmsley that the arrangement continue and that the cost 2 figures be accepted for 2021/22 and 2022/23 subject to CBC being contacted to determine the status of the churchyard referred to by Councillor G Dinsdale and the result reported back to Council. It was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the arrangement continue and that the 2 cost figures be accepted for 2021/22 and 2022/23 subject to CBC being contacted to determine the status of the churchyard referred to by Councillor G Dinsdale and the result reported back to Council.

**1641/20**     **Councillor Ward Matters**

- i. Councillor C Walmsley said he had nothing to report but that he and Councillor L Walmsely were immensely proud of the residents and local businesses and how they had stepped up this week and he was convinced that nobody on the Ward went hungry this week and that was a credit to every single one of them.
- ii. Councillor Hayes said that he was delighted at what had gone on at Kells, with making sure everybody had got fed on Kells, Greenbank and Woodhouse and that local people had really pulled together
- iii. Councillor Arrighi said she was determined to do Christmas hampers for people but was having difficulty accessing the money. The Clerk had said it had to be paid to a charity but that she had given Greenbank Community Centre £1,000 last year which they still hadn't spent so if she put up £1,000 herself and got reimbursed for everything that she bought she would then give the Clerk the names and address of everybody that we sent hampers to. Councillor Arrighi said time was running out and for £1,000 she was going to do a £20 hampers which would be 50 hampers and that she had well over 50 people interested so she was asking advice on how she could go about it. The Clerk said that she had sent an email to Councillor Arrighi explaining what to do and said it would be in order for Councillor Arrighi to join in a project with another Councillor whose Ward adjoined hers and informed Councillor Arrighi which Wards they were
- iv. Councillor Redmond thanked Councillor G Dinsdale for bringing up the churchyard
- v. Councillor E Dinsdale gave an update on recycling issues taking place on the Ward where there have been disappointed residents around dates not

being kept, Eventually recycling has been collected but it has given a number of residents a great deal of distress

- vi. Councillor E Dinsdale asked the Chairman if he was going to apologise to Councillor Arrighi for telling her to shut up at the last Council meeting.
- vii. Councillor G Dinsdale referred to the bus stop at Tower Hill and that she had been speaking to CBC who said we had the authority to cut the grass on the part where we want to put the bus stop and WTC has the authority to access. She said she was waiting for a reply from Clinton Boyce to get something in writing to bring back to the Council but she just wanted to confirm that if she could get that and if we can get planning permission and that it is unclaimed land that we can look to do the bus stop there. She asked for support from the Council and the Clerks to move forward with this. She said people really want the bus stop. They've got their kids who go to Keswick school who are getting pelted with the rain in the mornings and she felt that the Council was letting them down. The Clerk said that the problem was that somebody owned the land and we didn't know who and that there was no such thing as unclaimed land. Councillor Dinsdale said she had spoken to Clinton Boyce and said she was looking for confirmation from him that that the Council could buy the land at Tower Hill for £1. The Chairman said that perhaps Clinton Boyce should be contacted to see how he would action this on behalf of Copeland
- viii. Councillor Rayson referred to our responsibilities with CBC and CCC and the issues with highways and recycling. She said with regard to recycling a lot of the late collections are down to genuine covid related issues and the Commercial Services Manager for the Waste Team was going to be asked to attend the meeting but a better way would be to set up a separate zoom meeting to address the issues. She said CBC are updating their website on when everything is going to be collected
- ix. Councillor Rayson said that Ruskin Drive had been relaid a few weeks ago and then had to be redone because it had not been done properly. There had been quite a lot of flooding and one side of the road was already cracking and there were no road markings on the junction and little junctions coming off onto Ruskin Drive. She said she had emailed Craig McCarron about this.
- x. Councillor Rayson referred to the sign at Crow Park Allotments and said it was not the same as at Midgey and looked shabby and requested that someone have a look at it and get it cleaned or redone.
- xi. Councillor Rayson said there was a social media issue and suggested that people come off social media if people were bothering them and said that she had come off social media and deal with things vis email or text.
- xii. Councillor O'Kane said he agreed with the comments made regarding recycling and that CBC have had genuine problems and Steve Morgan from CBC is very aware of this and is trying to improve communications as this is what often causes the problems.



- xiii. Councillor O’Kane asked if a bus shelter at the top of Bransty Road could be organised and that he had contacted Craig McCarron about this but had not yet received a reply.
- xiv. Councillor O’Kane said he wondered that rather than do a knee jerk reaction to Christmas we could decide to throw ideas together to see as a Town Council to see how we can help people who may be in a problematic situation over the Christmas period whether children or the elder and whether people wanted a meeting to throw around ideas.
- xv. Councillor Rayson said they didn’t have a community centre/hall that they could use but there are people on Hillcrest helping out with initiatives on food eg cooking meals for people in their own homes. This had been a really positive way of pulling together and that she was really proud of the people who had helped
- xvi. Councillor O’Kane asked if Councillors wanted a special meeting for ideas to be put forward around Christmas
- xvii. Councillor G Dinsdale referred to a post on the internet relating to charitable donations and said that she thought it was important that we don’t zone in on charities to provide what the government should be doing.

**1642/20     Date of next Meeting**

The date of the next Council Meeting be on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 6.00pm

Before the meeting Closed the Chairman referred the fact that both Councillor Gill and his wife were ill and on behalf of the Council he wanted to send best wishes for a speedy recovery to Councillor Gill and his wife.

The Meeting closed at 7.45pm

The Minutes were approved as a correct record at the Council Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 subject the following amendments:

- i. Minute 1631/20. That the narrative be amended to remove the words “Councillor G Dinsdale asked if the Contract included access onto the land and the Clerk said it did not. Councillor G Dinsdale wished it to be recorded that there would be no problems with access if we entered onto the land to cut it” and be replaced with “ Councillor G Dinsdale asked if we had access to the land and the Clerk said we did”.
- ii. Minute 1634/20. That the narrative be amended to read “Councillor G Dinsdale said that she did not feel the lights were sufficient from a safety perspective”.

Chairman

