

# WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 6th July 2023

**Present:** Councillor C Hayes (Chairman); Councillor J Carr; Councillor R Gill; Councillor B O’Kane; Councillor A Pearson; Councillor R Redmond; Councillor G Roberts; Councillor A Spedding; Councillor R Taylor; Councillor R White

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Members of the Public

Press

### **2293/23 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor E Dinsdale	ill
Councillor G Dinsdale	Dental appointment

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Carr that the apologies for absence be accepted and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the apologies for absence be accepted and noted.

### **2294/23 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Hayes declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Tidy Town Committee and the Harbour Users Group.

### **2295/23 Public Participation**

There was no public participation

### **2296/23 Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Gill that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 25th May 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**2297/23** The Chairman asked to change the order of the Agenda so that Agenda item 17 in the Private part be dealt with now so that the representatives from Home Group did not have to sit through the whole Meeting. It was proposed by Councillor Carr and seconded by Councillor Taylor that the item 17 be heard next and in private and that the public and press be instructed to withdraw from the Meeting. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - that item 17 be heard next and in private and that the public and press be instructed to withdraw from the Meeting.

**IN PRIVATE**

**2298/23** **Meeting With Home Group**

Further to Minute 2287/23 when Councillors asked that Home Group be invited to attend a Council Meeting to discuss Councillors/Tenants concerns, the Operations Manager and the Housing Manager for Whitehaven from Home Group attended.

Various topics and individual cases were discussed and Home Group answered the questions. As a result of this Home Group suggested the following actions in order to work together and build a relationship which were agreed by the Council.

- To reinstate Community Drop-In Sessions so that the relevant Ward Councillor and tenants can attend
- To provide a list of Housing Managers for areas with the suggestion that the Council contacts Home Group by email and copies in the actual Housing Manager
- When Estate walk abouts/inspections are done that the Ward Councillor be invited to attend
- That the Multi Agency Hub can do focussed Town Centre Meetings
- That the contact was [contactus@homegroup.org.uk](mailto:contactus@homegroup.org.uk)

**IN PUBLIC**

Following the above item the public and press returned to the Meeting

## 2299/23 Planning Applications

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1.

- i. Councillor O’Kane referred to Planning Application 4/23/2164/PIP - 3 dwellings on land to the rear of 108 Victoria Road, Whitehaven and proposed that objections to this be made to Cumberland Council on the following grounds:-
  - There are problems with the access onto Victoria Road
  - There are problems with the sizes of the houses to be constructed (4 bedrooms) and the fact that they invade the privacy of adjacent houses
  - There are severe drainage issues in that area.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Roberts. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That objections to application 4/23/2164/PIP be made to Cumberland Council on the following grounds:-

- There are problems with the access onto Victoria Road
  - There are problems with the sizes of the houses to be constructed (4 bedrooms) and the fact that they would invade the privacy of adjacent houses
  - There are severe drainage issues in that area.
- ii. **RESOLVED** - Councillor Gill proposed and Councillor Taylor seconded that having considered the Planning Applications on Schedule 1 that the Council had no further representations to make and that Cumberland Council be informed accordingly.

## 2300/23 Hearing for Planning Appeal in respect of 370 houses at Harras Moor

The Clerk reported that she had sent out emails earlier in the week to all Councillors regarding the matter and that the Hearing would take place on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 10.00am in the Bainbridge Room of the Copeland Centre with a site visit on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023. Councillor Roberts had already registered to speak at the Hearing and the Clerk advised any other Councillors wishing to speak should contact Nick Hayhurst and or the Inspector prior to the Hearing.

There was no decision made on this as it was for information only  
Following a discussion on planning matters generally Councillor Gill asked the Chairman to put an item on the next Council Agenda to discuss in full detail how the Council could organise itself to form a positive meaningful relationship with the new Council to set up mechanisms so that we can have interaction on a regular basis and the Chairman agreed.

## 2301/23 Finance Report

The Council considered a Finance Report.

- i. Appendix 1 – The Clerk reported that there were 6 extra invoices to consider on Appendix 1 namely:-

- Cllr Carr £13.77 mileage to Cockermouth and back
- Cllr Hayes £51.91 mileage to Kendal and back -Mayoral
- AJ Security £936.00 Security for events 29/30 June
- Deborah McKenna Ltd £1500.00 Stefan Gates Science Show
- PHP Architects £1,588.50 Fees for Tender Preparation
- V Gorley £5.49 toilet rolls

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that the invoices on Appendix 1 plus the 6 additional invoices listed above be approved and paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the invoices shown at Appendix 1 plus the 6 additional invoices listed above be approved and paid.

- ii. Appendices 2 and 3 – the Council considered Appendices 2 and 3 and it was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that these be approved and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

## 2302/23 Erection, Repair, Maintenance and Dismantling of Christmas Lights 2023

The Council considered a report giving a quote of £24,400.00 plus VAT from the Council's preferred contractor CC for the Erection, Repair, Maintenance and Dismantling of the Christmas Lights for 2023 and considered whether to suspend Financial Regulations in order to accept the quote and also the reasons for suspension and the risks. The quote had been the same for the past five years.

- (i) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Council makes a Resolution to suspend Financial Regulation 11 to allow CC to erect, repair, maintain and dismantle the Christmas Lights for 2023 at the quote of £24,400.00 plus VAT. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the Council makes a Resolution to suspend Financial Regulation 11 to allow the preferred supplier CC to erect, repair, maintain and dismantle the Christmas lights for 2023 at the quote of £24,400.00 plus VAT

- (ii) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts

that having made the Resolution in (i) above that in accordance with Regulation 18 that the reasons for the suspension and also the assessment of the risks stated in the Report be accepted and approved and that quote of £24,400.00 plus VAT from CC be accepted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That having made the Resolution in (i) above that in accordance with Regulation 18 that the reasons for the suspension and also the assessment of the risks stated in the Report be accepted and approved and that quote of £24,400.00 plus VAT from CC be accepted.

### **2303/23 Quote for Winter Bedding**

The Council considered a report on a quote of £2,472.15 plus VAT received from the Council's preferred supplier for winter bedding plants for 2023 and considered whether to suspend Financial Regulations in order to accept the quote and also the reasons for suspension and the assessment of the risks.

- (i) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Council makes a Resolution to suspend Financial Regulation 11 to allow the winter bedding plants to be purchased from the preferred supplier at a cost of £2,472.15 plus VAT. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That Council makes a Resolution to suspend Financial Regulation 11 and the winter bedding plants be purchased from the preferred supplier at a cost of £2,472.15 plus VAT

- (ii) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that having made the Resolution in (i) above that in accordance with Financial Regulation 18 the reasons for the suspension and also the assessment of the risks contained in the Report be accepted and approved and that the quote of £2,472.15 plus VAT from the preferred supplier be accepted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That having made the Resolution in (i) above that in accordance with Financial Regulation 18 the reasons for the suspension and also the assessment of the risks contained in the Report be accepted and approved and that the quote of £2,472.15 plus VAT from the preferred supplier be accepted.

### **2304/23 Membership of the Rural Market Towns Group**

The Council considered a report on becoming a member of the Rural Market Towns Group at a cost of £121.82 plus VAT for the remainder of 2023/24. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Council takes out membership of the Rural Market Towns Group at a cost of £121.82 plus VAT for the remainder of financial year 2023/24 and that this be reviewed at the end of this period to see what the benefits have been. A vote was

held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the Council takes out membership of the Rural Market Towns Group at a cost of £121.82 plus VAT for the remainder of financial year 2023/24 and that this be reviewed at the end of this period to see what the benefits have been.

### **2305/23 Storage Facilities**

The Clerk reported that the Council had a lot of equipment that was being stored in the office and elsewhere and asked Councillors to consider renting a secure storage facility and if so that the Clerk obtains prices for the lease of a storage unit and report the prices back to the Council for decision. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Council leases a storage unit for its equipment and that quotes be sought and reported back to the Council for decision. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the Council leases a secure storage unit for its equipment and that quotes be sought and reported back to the Council for decision.

### **2306/23 Quotes received for the purchase of Event Tables**

The Council considered a report on purchasing 10 folding event tables for use at Council events because the Council had been reliant on the support of Cumberland Council for the loan of additional tables for events and those tables were showing signs of substantial wear and tear. Quotes had been taken. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the lowest quote be accepted and that 10 folding event tables be purchased at a cost of £378.71 plus VAT. A vote was taken and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the lowest quote be accepted and that 10 folding event tables be purchased at a cost of £378.71 plus VAT.

### **2307/23 Request for Polytunnel**

The Council considered a report on a request from an allotment tenant to install a polytunnel on their allotment. The Allotments Advisory Group had recommended approval to this request. It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the request to install a polytunnel be approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the request to install a polytunnel be approved.

**2308/23**     **Councillor Ward Matters**

- i     Councillor Redmond referred to Horsfield Close and said that all the electricity boxes on the outside of the properties were broken and the owner was Romar
- ii    Councillor White said he had been in contact with a family at Esk Avenue regarding the overgrown pines in the neighbours unoccupied house next door and he had been liaising with Councillor Hawkins to get the problems addressed and ensure that the trees are kept down
- iii   Councillor Spedding said everything was ok on his Ward
- iv    Councillor Pearson referred to the front of Greenbank and said it was a busy road and it was a nightmare. He said the grass was feet high on the grass verges and couldn't understand why the grass verges were not cut. He said they had cut the grass where it comes up to by the top of Mirehouse Hill but when you come down that road the grass has grown out.
- v     Councillor Pearson said they have stopped maintaining the woodland and don't cut it anymore. There used to be a footpath running up the front of it and they had stopped cutting that. He said there is a path that runs down to Mirehouse between it but that is unsafe.
- vi    Councillor Pearson said the football field grass is high and has now turned into a dog cleaning pit. He said that the Greenbank Community Centre normally got it cut by a local farmer and asked who owned the football field and who should maintain it. Councillor Gill said the Council didn't own any land but we do cut grass on Cumberland Council land and said the Council should look at putting this on the grass cutting contract.
- vii   Councillor Hayes said everything on Kells was ok
- viii   Councillor Gill referred to the junction at the bottom of Rutland Avenue. He said there had been many accidents there. He said 100 yards from the road junction there was a pedestrian crossing and he said that should be removed and replaced with traffic lights and that he would be pursuing this at every opportunity
- ix    Councillor O'Kane referred to Victoria Road and Bleach Green and said the hedge was overhanging and asked if Mr Flecken could be asked again to do something about this.
- x     Councillor O' Kane referred to the Pelican garage, the entry to Whitehaven which at the moment was full of all bits and pieces linked to the highway improvement which would finish in a few weeks and asked what the entry into Whitehaven was going to look like when they have gone. Councillor Hayes said they have assured people that it will be repaired/reinstated
- xi    Councillor Carr referred to the bus service around Mirehouse and said his mother waited 50 minutes for a bus and a bus driver going in the other direction said the bus had been cancelled. He said there seemed to be a theme of no buses.

xii Councillor Carr said he had an issue with motorcycles on the cycle track which were being used by individuals flying around. He said he had been round and started at Esk Avenue by the tunnel and there was an original piece to it but they had taken out another part for access for prams etc but that there were different barriers that could be bought that would fit Mobile scooters etc but the shape of them would stop anyone on a motorbike. He said up by St Gregory's and over the bridge there are 3 places that need looking at

- The footbridge that takes you through from Burnmoor
- The end of Croasdale that leads onto the football pitch
- One by the main bridge that takes you towards Nisa

He said that he would be contacting Sustrans about this

xiii Councillor Taylor made the following points

- There was a grass cutting issue in his Ward and he would like to invite Mr Flecken here to speak to everyone because some areas were an absolute disgrace
- Potholes – progress had been made and the Highways were doing a good job
- There was no road sign at Windsor Court
- A new bin was needed at Highfields
- The number of cars parked at Red Lonning towards the back side of A Plant and he was going to try and get the Police there as it felt like it was just a dumping ground for range rovers and trailers etc and a whole raft of cars and the people who were doing the maintenance on the verges were struggling to get it done

xiv Councillor O'Kane referred to the closure of the Bransty Railway Station Ticket Office. Councillor Gill asked for this to be put on next months Agenda and the Chairman agreed. Councillor Roberts said that Councillor E Dinsdale had sent all Councillors a link to a petition which he had signed and said he would be joining any picket line.

### **2309/23 Date and Time of next Council Meeting**

The next Council Meeting be held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 6.00pm at the Beacon Portal

### **IN PRIVATE**

**2310/23** That prior to the following item of business the Chairman moved the following resolution:

That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the public and or press be instructed to withdraw. Councillor Taylor proposed this and Councillor Carr seconded it. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the public and or press be instructed to withdraw from the



Meeting

**2311/23 Application for a Grant – GCA**

The Council considered an application for a grant of £1,000 from GCA. Following consideration of the application it was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor White that a grant of £1,000 be awarded to GCA. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That a grant of £1,000 be awarded to GCA.

**2312/23 St Nicholas Gardens**

Further to Minute 2291/23 the Clerk reported that there had been a Teams Meeting with Cumberland Council Senior Officers and Members of the St Nicholas Gardens Advisory Group which was followed by a site Meeting and walkaround at St Nicholas Gardens where the Council's concerns about the poor state of the Gardens were raised. Cumberland Council noted the concerns and said that they would come back with more detailed information on maintenance standards and some proposals around governance arrangements. No decisions were made as the item was for information only

**2313/23 Office Accommodation**

Further to Minute 2285/23 the Clerk gave an update on office accommodation following information received from the Council's Architect. Councillor Gill asked for a meeting of the Office Accommodation Steering Group to fully discuss this followed by a meeting between the Steering Group and the Architect and then reported back to the Council and this was agreed.

The Meeting closed at 8.15



Chairman