

WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 25th May 2023

Present: Councillor C Hayes (Chairman); Councillor J Carr; Councillor E Dinsdale; Councillor G Dinsdale; 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

V. Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Members of the Public

2274/23 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2275/23 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hayes declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Tidy Town Committee.

2276/23 Public Participation

There was no public participation

2277/23 Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 18th May 2023

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 18th May 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and 10 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor abstained.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 18th May 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2278/23 Planning Applications

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

- i. Although not on Appendix 1 Planning Application No. 4/18/2287/001 relating to 370 Houses at Harras Moor was discussed. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that as soon as the Clerk hears of the

process to be followed that a special Meeting of the Council be called so that it can be decided how to respond. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That as soon as the Clerk hears of the process to be followed that a special Meeting of the Council be called so that it can be decided how to respond.

Councillor White entered the Meeting

- ii. Councillor Gill proposed and Councillor Roberts 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. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That following consideration of the planning applications on Appendix 1 that Cumberland Council be informed that the Council had no further representations to make.

2279/23 Finance Report

The Council considered a Finance Report.

- i. Appendix 1 – The Assistant Clerk reported that there were 5 extra invoices to consider on Appendix 1 namely:-

- Carlisle City Fire Protection £120 plus VAT for inspection and new extinguisher
- Cumbria Loos £418 plus VAT for Leyland 51 Event
- Cllr E Dinsdale £108.63 mileage claim
- Charles Maudling £110 for award to Gerard Richardson
- Cumbria Media £314 uploading onto website

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts 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 5 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 Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that these be approved and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

2280/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

The Council considered a report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23 and the recommendations made in paragraph 4.1 (i) to (v) of the Report. In making the following proposals Councillor Gill thanked the staff for keeping excellent financial records shown by the Council getting a clean bill of health every year from the External Auditors and he also thanked the Council's

Internal Auditor who does a fantastic job on our behalf.

- 4.1(i) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that Section 1 – The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 be approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk and the Minute Number inserted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That Section 1 – The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 be approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk and the Minute Number inserted.

- 4.1(ii) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that Section 2 – the Accounting Statements 2022/23 be approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and the Responsible Financial Officer and the Minute Number inserted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That Section 2 – the Accounting Statements 2022/23 be approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and the Responsible Financial Officer and the Minute Number inserted.

- 4.1(iii) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Annual Internal Audit Report be approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the Annual Internal Audit Report be approved.

- 4.1(iv) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Annual Return be advertised for Public Inspection to comply with the timescales and requirements in paragraph 2.2(iv) of the Report and Councillors be sent a copy of this Notice. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the Annual Return be advertised for Public Inspection to comply with the timescales and requirements in paragraph 2.2(iv) of the Report and Councillors be sent a copy of this Notice.

- 4.1(v) It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return be submitted to Moore as soon as possible following the Council Meeting. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return be submitted to Moore as soon as possible following the Council Meeting.

2281/23 **Scribe Accounts System**

The Council considered a report on a proposal to purchase the Scribe Accountancy for the Council's accounts following advice received from CALC's Financial Adviser. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Taylor that the Scribe Accounts system be purchased at a cost of £1,197.00 per annum plus a one off onboarding cost of £797.00. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the Scribe Accounts system be purchased at a cost of £1,197.00 per annum plus a one off onboarding cost of £797.00.

2282/23 **Continental Market on the Harbour – Litter Collection**

The Council considered a report recommending a contribution to be made to the Harbour Commissioners towards the cost of litter collection on the Harbour during the Whitehaven Summer Fair. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Council makes a 50% contribution or a maximum of £800.00 whichever shall be the lesser towards the cost of litter collection and removal from the Harbour during the Whitehaven Summer Fair. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the Council makes a 50% contribution or a maximum of £800.00 whichever shall be the lesser towards the cost of litter collection and removal from the Harbour during the Whitehaven Summer Fair.

2283/23 **Provision of Flooring in Marquee**

The Council considered a report on the provision of flooring in a 12x9 marquee for the Science Fair in St Nicholas Gardens on 29th June 2023. One of the exhibitors proposed to bring a planetarium to go inside the marquee and this required flooring. It was reported to the Council that the cost of flooring was £432. It was proposed by Councillor Carr and seconded by Councillor O'Kane that flooring be provided in the 12x9 marquee at a cost of £432.00. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That flooring be provided in the 12x9 marquee at a cost of £432.00.

2284/23 **WCSSG**

Councillor Dinsdale had produced a report which was attached to the Agenda for the Meeting and made the following points

- He had attended the Meeting in August 2022 and due to Local Government Re-organisation they were going to rejig their constitution and who would be members
- They decided to invite the main town Councils including Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom from Copeland and Maryport and Workington from Allerdale
- It had taken until May 2023 for that to be finalised and we are now voting members on the WCSSG. What this can bring us isn't just direct input as a key stakeholder into what's going on at Albion Square, what's going on in the nuclear industry. The key part of this is socio economic which as a Council that represents 23,000 people we would like to play a part in.
- During part of the last Meeting which was summarised in the attached report Jamie Reid did open up a consultation that is going to take place now around refreshing the whole process.
- So roughly we are looking at somewhere in the region of 12-13 million pounds between Sellafield Ltd
- As the Council are direct Members he imagined that the invites will come thick and fast to conferences etc but this is how you get things done and your ideas across
- He said we are the community representatives and we create a vision for the Town and the community and ultimately if that vision can be delivered their job is to do it. He said it was important that there was not a hierarchy with people thinking that we're there to work for them because that wasn't the case and Jamie had made this clear
- This isn't just around socio economic this is enshrined in law so the Energy Act he thought went back to 2004 where as a result of the stuff we have and do within our community, the workers we've got it is now the law that this money has got to be put back into the community
- From what he could see our neighbours at Workington are getting very organised. He said the key one was LEP whereby the fund was pushed out around communities based on business plans that are submitted
- He said he thought that we were at a point as a Town Council that we should be leading
- Previously the key stakeholders had been saying "where are your ideas" and obviously what we have to do from a Town point of view is to hold their feet to the fire. We have to provide our ideas as if we are not prepared to do this we will lose out to other areas

Councillor G Dinsdale said that she had seen the hard work that Councillor E Dinsdale had put into this and it really was a golden opportunity and one that they didn't want WTC to have – they didn't want WTC to have a place on the Group and she just wanted to say a big thanks to Councillor E Dinsdale for all the work he had put in without asking for any thanks and felt he deserved to be recognised for this and that we needed to keep kicking and fighting as it would make such a difference to the Town Council. |

Councillor Taylor felt that the Council should link in with other Parish Councils

like St Bees to share ideas and Councillor E Dinsdale made an observation and said he felt that the Council should just do its own thing.

Following a discussion on this it was proposed by Councillor O’Kane and seconded by Councillor Taylor that in the near future we ask the relevant representatives of major organisations that affect our Town to attend a Meeting to outline future proposals that they may have which directly apply to the area of Whitehaven. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - that in the near future we ask the relevant representatives of major organisations that affect our Town to attend a Meeting to outline future proposals that they may have which directly apply to the area of Whitehaven.

Although not part of the proposal Councillors did discuss who the major organisations should be and identified BEC, NDA, CC, Sellafield Ltd, Harbour Commissioners and the MP

2285/23 Office Accommodation Update

Further to Minute 2241/23 the Council considered a report on the present position with regard to the renovation of the Council’s Office and that invitations to tender had now been placed on the Government’s Contract Finder with a closing date of 30th June 2023. Following a discussion it was

- i. Proposed by Councillor E Dinsdale and seconded by Councillor G Dinsdale that there be 6 weeks public consultation on the proposals for the Council Offices. A vote was held and 2 Councillors voted for the proposal, 7 Councillors voted against the proposal and 3 Councillors abstained.

RESOLVED – That public consultation on the proposals be not carried out

Councillor G Dinsdale left the Meeting

- ii. Proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the report be approved and noted. A vote was held and 10 Councillors voted in favour of the proposal and 1 Councillor abstained

RESOLVED – That the report be approved and noted

2286/23 Request for Support for Funding for Harbour Project

Councillor O’Kane gave a report on a request from the Harbour Youth Project for a letter of support from the Council when they submitted their applications for funding award from Cumberland Council. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Taylor that a letter of support from the Council be sent to the Harbour Youth Project. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That a letter of support be sent to the Harbour Youth Project

2287/23 **Councillor Ward Matters**

- i. Councillor White raised the following points
 - A tenant of a Home Group property had experienced problems with rats which were coming in through holes in the property for over 2 years and someone had finally come to bait the property. Doors were being chewed. He said Home Group were unwilling to come back to sort it out. There were issues at the property with loft insulation and vents were blocked causing damp. There were issues with the shed, the guttering on the shed and the steps in the garden. The rendering was crumbling and the guttering was falling off in places
 - Home Group never came to properties when they said they would
 - That Home Group had told the tenant that fixing his property will result in an increase in his rent
 - Home Group didn't seem to take the tenant seriously and Councillor White said he wanted to register his complaints to see what we can do as a Council

The Assistant Clerk said that the tenant had been to the Council Offices about this and emails had been sent to Home Group, Environmental Health and Councillor Hawkins

Councillor G Dinsdale returned to the Meeting

- ii. Councillor G Dinsdale said it was Councillor Hawkin's job to sort this out and that if they didn't then we should go to the Whitehaven News and said that she had done this in the past as a last resort and had got things done on some occasions
- iii. Councillor Taylor said he knew of similar properties on Cumberland and Devon Roads where there were several rat problems
- iv. Councillor E Dinsdale said that he knew of one tenant on a PAYG phone spent £15 trying to get through to Home Group
- v. Councillor O'Kane said that for the future there were 2 aspects in respect of Home Group
 - Invite Caroline Mc Donald to the Council Meeting to discuss matters
 - Force Home Group to open up the office in Duke Street
- vi. Councillor White referred to a property on Esk Avenue which had formerly been a shop and was now a private dwelling. He said there were pines growing all around it making the walls crack. He said the roof was leaking and the owner of the property was absent.

- vii. Councillor White said there was a bit of land fenced off between Calder , Irt and Pow and that there was a patch behind this which was getting overgrown with brambles and there was a few trees that need cut back and again this was Home Group. Councillor G Dinsdale said there had been a lot of problems with this in the past.
- viii. Councillor Taylor said most of the problems in his ward were to do with litter and potholes and asked how he could get the litter bin put backs at the top of Highfields. He said the rubbish just keeps getting kicked around and accumulating at the top of Highfields and a bin was removed a couple of years ago from the path that runs to Jericho School and that he understood that this was on a collection route and that there needed to be a new bin installed at the bottom of Highfields.
- ix. Councillor Taylor said that he was hoping to organise a litter pick that weekend involving local children
- x. Councillor Taylor said there was flooding on 5 Standings Rise to his neighbour's garage and it had been reported for over 4 years. There had been floods down to where his own house was. United Utilities had been out 3 times. The Highways had been out last year and dug a path down one side of Standings Rise but said they weren't doing the other side. He said he had written to Highways but had had no response. Councillor E Dinsdale said he should go on the CC website to report these problems
- xi. Councillor O'Kane referred to potholes on Aikbank Road which were steadily getting worse.
- xii. Councillor O'Kane said Highways England had dumped all their signs on the Pelican Badge Bed which is obviously a necessity in connection with road works and asked if it would be refurbished when they were finished and asked if we could asked them to guarantee to do this bearing in mind the amount we have spent on that area and that it would be Cumbria in Bloom in July
- xiii. Councillor O'Kane said the hedge at Victoria Road still hadn't been cut and asked that CC be reminded of this again
- xiv. Councillor O'Kane referred to the continual campaign for the area of Red Lonning and Caldbeck and the other areas connecting with Whitehaven Academy. He said there had been lots of meetings about traffic in Whitehaven and said TROs were due every 4 years and he had been told that Whitehaven would be done this Christmas and said this was appropriate since one of our concerns was access to the schools and the areas around them.

Councillor Taylor left the Meeting

An update had been requested on traffic management around the Whitehaven School Campus that includes the Red Lonning area and the traffic management lady gave an update on the work that had taken place around Whitehaven Campus and St Benedicts. A solution to reduce traffic congestion in the area had been considered lightly with the focus

being given to road safety particularly for pedestrians and vulnerable car users.

Councillor Taylor returned to the Meeting

He said that this now appeared to be an abandoned topic but he hoped that we can go back to CC and say there is a lot of concern especially as there is going to be 370 houses built about half a mile away. Councillor O’Kane said in contrast to this the local Member for Kells had raised issues within her area (missing illuminated bollards) which will be addressed. Also the concept for realigning a specific junction in Kells will be drawn up and circulated and that Officers and the local member had agreed to a site visit. He said things were being done in Kells but the roads feeding the 2 main schools are being ignored

- xv. Councillor Roberts said that the previous day there had been 2 technicians out from Lillyhall Depot who had inspected the road and he had asked for the timescale for the new surface dressing at the bottom of the road and they said it was imminent.
- xvi. Councillor Roberts said he had had some complaints about the closure of the A595 at Moresby and he had advised that people should use public transport where they could but acknowledge that this could be difficult.
- xvii. Councillor Carr said that he had had a drive around the 09 side and had talked with the guy who won the contract for the new fencing down Latrigg Road. He said that nobody round here works for Home Housing as it’s under Mears MPS banner and that’s why people couldn’t get hold of anybody. He said the fencing guy had pulled out of the contract with Mears and gone direct with Home Group in Newcastle and that more smaller contractors were going to be doing the contracts
- xviii. Councillor Hayes said there had been a residents meeting and Home Group had attended the meeting and she answered everybody’s questions.
- xix. Councillor Hayes said that outside there was going to be a survey on safety about children going to the schools and using the play area and there would be another meeting next week to discuss what they were going to do.

Councillor Roberts left the Meeting

- xx. Councillor Gill said there was a bad junction at the bottom of Rutland Avenue where there had ben lots of accidents and people had been killed. He had been lobbying CC to install traffic lights at the junction and remove the crossing and the lights which are a little further on from the junction. He said he was working closely with Councillor Hawkins on this there

Councillor Roberts returned to the Meeting

- xxi. Councillor Pearson said he was surrounded by an unkempt jungle that was supposed to be a cut area. He said the main problem was grass cutting on the road that goes from St Bees to Whitehaven where there was a fence separating the estate grass (which was cut) but leaving the highway verges uncut which was causing visibility problems for drivers. He said a lot of accidents had happened here and his own brother had been killed on there
- xxii. Councillor Pearson referred to the Thicket which was a well-used footpath coming out of Mirehouse and a car could be on top of you in 2-3 seconds making it very dangerous
- xxiii. Councillor G Dinsdale asked if it would be possible for Councillors to be given a basic information pack similar to what she had been given by Copeland when she first became a Councillor.
- xxiv. Councillor E Dinsdale said he had been invited to visit the Sea Cadets and had presented safety certificates and heard about the Bee Bomb Campaign. He said he was on the invitation list for the Harbour Users Group and had attended a BEC day in the Whitehaven Reformed Church which he found very useful and worthwhile from a stakeholder point of view
- xxv. Councillor E Dinsdale referred to 2 issues concerning Corcickle about the lines on the road and the potholes on a speed hump which had all been resolved

Councillor Gill left the Meeting and did not return

2288/23 Date and Time of next Council Meeting

It was reported that the next Council Meeting was schedule to be on 29th June 2023. In view of the fact that the Council had organised 2 large events in St Nicholas Gardens on 29th and 30th June 2023 the Clerk asked if the Council would consider holding the Meeting a week later on 6th July 2023. It was proposed by Councillor Carr and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the next Council Meeting be held on 6th July 2023 at 6.00pm at the Beacon Portal. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the next Council Meeting be held on 6th July 2023 at 6.00pm at the Beacon Portal

IN PRIVATE

2289/23 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 Roberts proposed this and Councillor Hayes seconded it. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

2290/23 Complaint re Allotment Site

The Council considered a report on a complaint received about an allotment site. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Spedding and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Council carry on as before. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the Council carry on as before.

2291/23 St Nicholas Gardens

The Clerk gave a report on St Nicholas Gardens and various problems that had arisen and referred to the problems that had occurred the previous year when the grass hadn't been cut and the weeds were a foot high. She said the grass had been cut yesterday but bits of it had been left particularly down both sides of the entrance and looked really scruffy. CC had supplied a maintenance schedule for this year but already some of the actions had not been carried out.

Following a discussion on the poor state of St Nicholas Gardens the Clerk said that as far as she was aware CC would be starting to plant St Nicholas Gardens the following week.

There was no decision taken on this item as it was for information only.

2292/23 Purchase of Extra Hanging Baskets

The Assistant Clerk reported that the Council required 186 hanging baskets but that we only have 175 leaving a deficit of 11 which were previously loaned to us by Cumberland Council. However it appeared Cumberland Council had loaned these hanging baskets to the Harbour Commissioners, Cleator Moor Town Council and Egremont Town Council. The Council was asked to consider purchasing an extra 11 hanging baskets at a cost of £418.78. It was proposed by Councillor G Dinsdale and seconded by Councillor R Taylor that 11 Hanging Baskets be purchased at a cost of £418.78. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That 11 hanging baskets be purchased at a cost of £418.78.

The Meeting closed at 8.20



Chairman