

# WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 27th July 2023

**Present:** Councillor C Hayes (Chairman); 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;

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

V Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Members of the Public

### **2314/23 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor J Carr

Work Commitments

Councillor E Dinsdale

ill

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Taylor 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.

### **2315/23 Declarations of Interest**

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

Councillor Taylor declared that he was on the Board of Trustees for Red Lonning Community Centre

### **2316/23 Public Participation**

There was no public participation

### **2317/23 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 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 Council Meeting held on 6th July 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**2318/23 Planning Applications**

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Taylor that having considered the Planning Applications on Appendix 1 that the Council had no representations to make and that Cumberland Council be informed accordingly. A vote was held and 8 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor voted against.

**RESOLVED** - That having considered the Planning Applications on Appendix 1 that the Council had no representations to make and that Cumberland Council be informed accordingly.

**2319/23 Hearing for Planning Appeal in respect of 370 houses at Harras Moor**

Councillor Roberts gave a verbal report on the Hearing for the Planning Appeal in respect of 370 houses at Harras Moor which had taken place on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and which he had attended and made representations as a Town Councillor. He made the following points

- The Inspector opened the Inquiry and referred to the unique situation following the changeover from Copeland Borough Council to Cumberland Council following which Cumberland Council decided not to defend the previous Council's decision
- Public Representations were also made by Mr Todhunter; Cllr Joseph Ghayouba; Mr M Gracey; Mrs Lowery; Ms Willis relating to the size of the development, traffic and road safety, drainage and sewage problems, the infrastructure not being up to standard, sustainable travel and wildlife. Councillor Roberts said it was not possible to gauge what the decision might be and that in his opinion it could go either way.

There was no decision made on this as the item was for information only

**2320/23 Planning Matters Generally**

Further to Minute 2300/23 when it was agreed that an item be put on the Agenda to discuss how the Council could organise itself to form a positive meaningful relationship with Cumberland Council and have interaction in relation to planning applications. The Clerk reported that she had written to the Planning Department asking for certain information but this had not yet been received. Councillor Gill felt that the tail was wagging the dog with officers making the decisions and Councillor O'Kane said that we were almost disenfranchised in

our area with regard to the planning process and that people in the locality need to have a higher input. He said the structure was designed by CC and the members themselves and they are being put on or told by the party as to who is there and it appears that now it is a geographical situation with one from this area, four or five from other areas and the remainder from Carlisle He said all we are looking for is local representation and this has nothing to do with politics.

Councillor Taylor said he had had a conversation with Councillor Hawkins and he said from the discussion he'd had CC were willing to engage with us.

Councillor Gill said he had spoken to Councillor Mike Hawkins and that CC were setting up a Whitehaven Group and that Councillor Hawkins said that he would work with the Council to appoint someone to attend their meetings and they would appoint someone to attend ours.

### **2321/23 Finance Report**

The Council considered a Finance Report.

- i. Appendix 1 – The Assistant Clerk reported that there were 4 extra invoices to consider on Appendix 1 namely:-

- Eden Springs £9.24
- Cllr E Dinsdale £3.87 mileage
- Fairly Famous Family Street Entertainment £1,500.00
- V Gorley £21.14 Adobe Acrobat Export Subs

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Gill that the invoices on Appendix 1 plus the 4 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 4 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 Roberts 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.

### **2322/23 Proposed Closure of Whitehaven Railway Station Ticket Office**

The Council considered a report on the proposed closure of Railway Station Ticket Office across the country. Since the report was written it had been announced that consultation period had been extended to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023. The Chairman said that we needed to keep our foot on the pedal on this one as we didn't want to lose the ticket office as it was vital for the Town. There was no decision made on this as it was for information.

## 2323/23 Councillor Ward Matters

- i. Councillor Spedding said the grass on Greenbank had been trimmed and it was better than it was and you could see out of the junction better. He said they still hadn't done anything with the footpath across the road.
- ii. Councillor Pearson said there were no issues on Midgey. He said he had been in Castle Park and had taken 30 photographs of the poor state of the Park and said it was a disgrace. The Clerk was asked to send them to Mr Flecken
- iii. Councillor O'Kane asked that the 30 photographs also be sent to Cllr Emma Williamson, Michael Barry and Luke Leathers
- iv. Councillor Taylor referred to the road sign for Windsor Court and the Bin and the Clerk said that both of these were being dealt with.
- v. Councillor Hayes said on Kells the old library was being turned into a nursery but there had been a mixed response to this as some people had expressed reservations and people dropping children off. He said there would be 14-16 children attending at first between the ages of 2-4 years of age.
- vi. Councillor Gill referred to the death trap at the bottom of Rutland Avenue for people crossing the road there. He said there was a crossing 50 yards off the junction and he wanted this to be replaced with traffic lights and that he would be mentioning this to keep CC under pressure to do something about it.
- vii. Councillor O'Kane said he had 2 things
  - To thank the Clerk for reporting large cavern on the road outside St James Junior School which was fixed by that afternoon
  - This was the sixth request for the hedge on Victoria Road to be cut and it still hadn't been done and asked the Clerk to send another email to Mr Flecken asking him to get it cut.
- viii. Councillor Redmond referred to the access to St Nicholas Gardens when there was a market on and referred to wheelchair users having difficulty with the kerbs and going over the grass. The Chairman said if the grass was cut there would be no problems and that the marquees were placed as close as possible to the path so that people had very little grass to walk over to get into the marquees.
- ix. Councillor G Dinsdale referred to an issue with the West Lakes Science Park and said that although this was on the border of her Ward a Whitehaven resident had brought the issue up. She said that they have changed the access so anyone using it had to have a permit to park there. There were also small businesses there and the Whitehaven Beekeepers Association meet there regularly on the car park. She said a camera system had been installed and that unless a person has a permit they will get a £60 fine. Councillor Dinsdale said this area used to be a community space for the Beekeepers and people walking their dogs and she felt that had been completely taken away. She asked if Councillor Gill could bring it up at the next WCSSG. Councillor Dinsdale said that people who work there have been told to use the overspill car parks but

this was £3 per day which would result in Mirehouse being flooded out with cars more than it is. Councillor Gill said this was in Egremont Town Council's area but that he would bring it to the attention of the WCSSG and also Egremont Town Council. Councillor O'Kane asked if they needed planning permission for change of use to charge on the car park. The Clerk said this was private property and no doubt the parking areas were included on the original plans but it would need to be formally checked as to whether or not it was a change of use.

**2324/23 Date and Time of next Council Meeting**

The next Council Meeting be held on 31st August 2023 at 6.00pm at the Beacon Portal

**IN PRIVATE**

**2325/23** 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 Gill proposed this and Councillor Taylor seconded it. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

**2326/23 St Nicholas Gardens**

Further to Minute 2291/23 the Clerk reported that the Gardens had eventually been tidied up and that CC operatives had been working in the gardens during part of the week before the Cumbria in Bloom Judges came on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Clerk also reported that a new Maintenance Plan had been received from Mr Flecken for St Nicholas Gardens and which had previously been circulated to Councillors. It was expected that CC would be working in the Gardens the following week as the Britain in Bloom Judges would be inspecting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor O'Kane and seconded by Councillor G Dinsdale that a letter be sent to Mark Fryer the Leader of Cumberland Council to outline the Council's concerns about these issues. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That a letter be sent to Mark Fryer the Leader of Cumberland Council to outline the Council's concerns about issues relating to St Nicholas Gardens

Councillor G Dinsdale left the Meeting for an appointment and did not return.

**2327/23 Office Accommodation**

Further to Minute 2313/23 the Clerk gave an update on office accommodation. The Steering Group had met and asked that the renovation be split into 4 Packages. This was sent to the Architects who replied to say that this was possible but was not something they would be able to do as they had produced a detailed tender package for the full extent of the works with a main contractor. Following on from this the Clerk received details of a local Building Contractor who might be interested. They were contacted and had visited the offices the day before and had been given some documentation together with a link to the tender documents.

A further report on this will be given to the next Council Meeting.  
There was no decision on this as it was for information only.

**2328/23 Request for Sponsorship**

The Council considered a request for sponsorship from a Private Limited Company. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that no sponsorship be given. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That no sponsorship be given

The Meeting closed at 8.15

Signed by the Chairman as amended by Minute 2332/23

Chairman

