

WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 31st July 2025

Present: Councillor R Gill (Chairman); Councillor C Hayes;
Councillor A Pearson; Councillor R Redmond; Councillor A Spedding;
Councillor R Taylor; Councillor R White

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Councillor Mike Hawkins, Cumberland Council

Members of the Public

Press

Prior to the Meeting starting the Mayor asked all Town Councillors present to introduce themselves.

He informed all those present that there was no scheduled testing of the fire alarms and gave evacuation details should the fire alarm ring and the location of toilets.

He explained about public participation and gave information about conduct at Meetings

2818/25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received as follows:-

Councillor G Roberts	illness
Councillor E Dinsdale	Medical Issue
Councillor G Dinsdale	Holiday
Councillor J Carr	Holiday
Councillor B O’Kane	Prior engagement

It was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes 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

2819/25 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gill declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Heritage Action Group

2820/25 Public Participation

WM attended and made the following points:-

In relation to the Clerk's letter he said she had sent a number of photographs of myself Crow Park to Councillors two months previously and asked if anyone thought it was acceptable for allotments to be in that state. He said the Clerk had said that the Council's emails had been checked and could not find any record of photographs being sent to the office email address and that that was correct. He asked if there had been any sent for about the last four months. He said it had been sent to the office but for the attention of Councillors but was never passed on. He said for the past 18 months the Council had totally ignored his requests 18 months ago I asked to look into the accident in Crow Park in

February 2024. He said he never even got a reply. He said he then asked – he sent emails in asking for an Allotment Advisory Group meeting to be set up to come and look at the site. Never got a reply. He then asked for somebody to come and do some risk assessments, safety inspections. No answer. The only answer there was when a chap at 19 fell and broke his leg. Then you suddenly got interested but up until then nothing. He said he had inspected the sites for the last 5 or 6 years and this year he never even had an invitation so he wanted Councillors to look into what's happening with the Clerks at Whitehaven Town Council. He said he had raised an objection and he'd had no reply and that if he got no answer within the next fortnight he would move it – he said he had been told that there was a lady in the Council Offices what was the Council Offices on Catherine Street and he would be putting a formal complaint through her. The Chairman said to WM that he thought he had been very patient with him particularly as he didn't accept him as a representative of the site, you have no committee and you have no responsibility to inspect the allotments. The Chairman said he would ask the Clerk to respond to him after the Meeting.

No.2. He said he had sent a number of emails to the Clerk to be forwarded to Councillors none of them have been responded to. He said the Council needs to check with the Clerks why none of these have been answered.

Plot12. You said it was terminated on 30/04 and it had been let on 10/6. He said NS would have had that plot let within a week. Has anybody contacted the tenant of Plot 12 to check if they still want the Plot if they are still interested why has an improvement notice not been issued. Seven weeks have gone by and this plot is a complete mess.

No 4 nothing has been done to plot 8 regarding mares tail no one has been near it

The entrance to the site is a disgrace.

The Chairman stopped WM and said his 3 minutes were up and thanked WM for attending

GS made the following points:-

He was an occasional visitor to Whitehaven but he still had a keen interest in it and he walked around it and he followed the attempts that people make, yourselves and others to improve the buildings and the condition and appearance of the Town. But as he walked around he thought that's not very good and that's not very good. He said he had a bee in his bonnet about the name plate signage particularly the historic ones and he was sure that the Council would know what he meant when he said the traditional historic ones which always used to be black with white or silver writing on and he was thinking well that building must have been improved or done – where's the name plate gone. He said there were so many buildings now particularly on corners that have been refurbished and the street name plates have just disappeared. And then there were other ones where they were not the traditional sort of appearance or size or shape they were more like longer and narrow and you think well that's not the historic significance of name plates in the Town. And then he said he was sorry to have to say it but there was one a very recent refurbished building on the corner of Queen Street and Roper Street at the moment and it looks alright but it's painted in white and blue which of course were the colours that building had been painted in but it sticks out like a sore thumb I'm sorry but it does and the sign says Roper Street and it has a white background and blue letters. He said he thought it looked ridiculous. He asked if there was anybody who was accountable/responsible who cares about these things. The Chairman said the Town Council did not own any signage and the building he had referred to was going to be the Council Offices and GS said he had noticed this. The Chairman said this was the first complaint he had had – he had only had compliments. GS said the point he was trying to make was perhaps that particularly given as you say it's your building he would have thought that at least the Council would recognise and appreciate the historical significance of traditional street name plates. The Chairman said the Town Council didn't own any and it was Cumberland Council and GS asked how come you've painted that one on your building and the Chairman replied that it was the Council's building and GS said well you could paint it the colours you wanted then and could you not have specified that it could be traditional colours which are traditionally black with white or silver. The Chairman said he would ask the Clerk to respond to this. GS said the other thing was the general appearance of the Town. He said it has improved but of course everybody has complained over the years about weeds, overgrown gutters, weeds at the back of pavements and dog mess. He said it was a lot better than it ever used to be but it could still be better and asked who would be responsible and that he knew it wasn't the Town Council's responsibility but a lot of money had been spent making things look nice with the nice seating at both ends of King Street. He said if somebody had to pay him the equivalent amount of money for the next 10 years that it had cost for

that seating you could make a site better improvement and appearance of the Town than just putting seating at either end of King Street

The Chairman thanked GS and closed the public participation

2821/25 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 26th June 2025

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Taylor that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and 5 Councillors voted for and 3 Councillors abstained

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record

2822/25 Report from Cumberland Council

Councillor M Hawkins attended and made the following points:

- That the seating at either end of King Street had been put in by Cumberland Council and the money had to be spent on them and nothing else and that if it hadn't been spent on those 2 areas the money would have been lost
- On next Tuesday 05/08/25 there was a meeting on the Whitehaven Master Plan from 2.00-7.00pm in the United Reformed Church and it was an opportunity for the public to feed in information a bit like what GS had spoken about
- The Whitehaven Coastal and Community Panel had a walkabout in the past month and Rob came from the Town Council and our findings from that will be fed in as well and he said that he had an issue with redundant signs in Whitehaven
- On Wednesday 06/08/25 at 3.00pm was the monthly walk from Mirehouse on the cycle track into Whitehaven or whatever and these would be held on the first Wednesday in every month
- On 08/08/25 there was the Health and Wellbeing day on the Rugby Ground and it was an opportunity to see what's available locally
- On 13/08/25 at Walkmill Forest the Rivers Trust was holding a Family Day 1-3 and all activities were free for kids
- On 15/08/25 at Mirehouse Pond there would be a family afternoon at the same times
- On 16/08/25 Glen from Colours Café was organising the Pride on the Harbour which was always a good free event for people
- He wanted to thank the Town Council for their input in bringing the Galleon into the Town. It was excellent and the Town was buzzing.

Councillor Taylor referred to advertising for all the events for kids in the

holidays he said he hadn't seen much in the way of publicity for them and Councillor Hawkins said they were on the Cumberland Council's facebook page and Councillors had shared them

2823/25 Planning Applications

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Taylor that following consideration of the Planning Applications on Appendix 1 that Cumberland Council be informed that the Council had no representations/comments to make. 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 representations/comments to make

2824/25 Finance Report

The Council considered the Finance report

- i. Appendix 1 – The Council considered a list of invoices at Appendix 1

It was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the invoices shown at Appendix 1 be approved and paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the invoices shown on Appendix 1 approved and paid

- ii. Appendices 2 and 3 – It was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes that Appendices 2 and 3 be approved and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

2825/25 Call for Sites for Cumberland Local Plan

The Council considered a report on the Call for Sites for the Cumberland Local Plan. This had only recently been received from Cumberland Council. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes that there was not enough time to consider this and that Councillors should go away to consider it and if there were any comments to submit them to the Clerk and the matter be put on the Agenda for the next Council Meeting. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That there was not enough time to consider this and that Councillors should go away to consider it and if there were any

comments to submit them to the Clerk and the matter be put on the Agenda for the next Council Meeting

2826/25 Allotment Update Report

The Council considered an Allotment Update Report giving details of the position with regards to the Council's Allotment sites. The Clerk informed the Council that

- There were no vacancies on Cartgate Allotment Site
- There were 3 vacancies on Crow Park Allotment Site
- There were no vacancies on Midgey Allotment Site except for the plot specifically adapted for people with disabilities
- There were no vacancies on Sneckyeat Allotment Site
- There were no outstanding reported repairs from the Site Representatives
- 15 Notices to Improve and 3 Notices to Quit had been served.

The Clerk also informed the Council that on Wednesday or Thursday the following week a zoom meeting would be set up for 5.30 between the Allotments Advisory Group and the Allotment Site Representatives.

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Taylor that the Report be noted and the zoom meeting be arranged for the following week. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the Report be noted and the zoom meeting be arranged for the following week.

2827/25 WCSSG

There was no report on this as the Council's representative on WCSSG Councillor E Dinsdale had submitted his apologies for absence.

2828/25 Councillor Ward Matters

- i. Councillor Carr although not present had asked that it be noted that there was a woman on Whinlatter Road who was having issues getting works done by Home Group
- ii. Councillor Taylor raised 3 issues
 - A couple of people in his ward were concerned about the work that was going on in Bransty Tunnel at the moment as it was going to be closed to the end of September and a lot of people from Hillcrest use Corkickle Train Station and there's no train to get to Workington and it's a bus replacement and there have been concerns over the frequency so he thought it was one to be noted

- There had been loads of feedback from people who had commented on how good the Galleon was and the continental market that was going on at the same time. People said it was great to see Whitehaven busy. One thing that took the shine off it was that 2 people had said to him that they thought it was quite expensive for families so they said if we are getting something for the future can consideration be made for the price for families
 - Thanks from the Community Centre for the ward grant he had made last month. They had bought some blinds
- iii. Councillor Hayes said as everybody had read in the papers the bus has been reinstated on Kells and Bransty and he was really pleased to see that that people had eventually seen common sense
 - iv. Councillor Spedding said he wanted to say how fantastic the flowers look in St Nicholas Gardens and he had never seen them looking so good
 - v. Councillor Pearson said he wanted to raise again as he had done last time about the walk out he had on 6th June with Craig McCarron from Highways, Emma Williamson, Julie Smith and Home Group. We went through the walk out and during this he had pinpointed places that are seriously endangering somebody's life and in his opinion they were waiting for somebody to be killed. He showed them the grass verges from the top of Mirehouse Hill right down to the cemetery that were overgrown and needing cut. He showed them the lack of speed signs and there was nothing to tell anybody that they were in a 30mph. They said the people should know because the street lights were in a 30mph. He showed them the right of ways where people are coming out – overgrown vegetation and they can't see cars which are travelling far faster than they should be. He showed them a drop off hole down at the bottom of the hill towards Mirehouse Hill where a child could step through and fall 20ft onto concrete. On the B5435 he showed them at least four or five places where people have actually been killed. He showed them at least 6 places now where people could possibly be killed and he thought somebody would be killed if something wasn't done but nobody was doing anything. They came back and were quoting things like the overhanging trees would be cut but they had to comply with bird nesting. He said were they putting a birds nest before somebody's life. The verges they were arguing about between Home Housing and Cumberland Council about who was going to cut a bit of grass about as wide as this gap that was causing a hazard where if a motorbike was overtaking and somebody pulls out to see where they're going he's off he's in front of them. He said he couldn't believe they keep ignoring it and somebody somewhere is going to be killed and when somebody does get killed which he hoped the didn't he would not be sitting back and saying it was just unfortunate. He said he just didn't know how to get them to action things because when you point out that somebody could be killed he couldn't think of anything more important than somebody being killed. He said he went passed one of these places in his car and 2 kids were sitting on the wall by the Thicket. He said he didn't see them until they were

there. Some cars travelling that road are doing 60mph. somebody is going to be killed and it could be a child, an old person. He said there was a light that hadn't worked for 3 years. The Chairman said he would ask the Clerk to write to Cumberland Council about this.

- vi. Councillor Gill said he wanted to comment on the Galleon and said that letters of thanks should be sent by the Council to all those that had been involved and thanking them and looking forward to future participation in future events

2829/25 Date and Time of next Meeting

The next Town Council Meeting would be on Thursday 28th August 2025 at the Beacon Portal, Whitehaven at 6.00pm

The Chairman said there were 3 further matters that had been raised by the Clerk to consider

2830/25 National Joint Council Notification of Rates of Pay

The Clerk informed the Council that had received notification from CALC that the National Joint Council for Local Government had reached an Agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1st April 2025 and were encouraging all employers to implement this pay award as soon as possible. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Taylor that this be noted and approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the National Joint Council for Local Government's Agreement for rates of pay applicable from 1st April 2025 be noted and approved.

2831/25 Tombola Prizes for Flower and Vegetable Show

The Clerk reported that there would be a Tombola at the Council's Flower and Vegetable Show in St Nicholas Gardens on 6th September 2025 and she was looking for donations and asked that if any Councillors had any items that would be suitable as Tombola Prizes could they please hand them into the Clerk or Assistant Clerk

2832/25 Robotic Exhibition in Council Offices – 20/10/25 to 31/10/25

The Clerk reported that the Council had organised a Robotic Exhibition to take place in the Council Offices from 20th October to 31st October 2025 and asked for volunteers to man the exhibition during this time. She said she would send out a list of slots so that Councillors could indicate when they would be available. Councillor Taylor said that he would like to volunteer.

2833/25 IN PRIVATE

That prior to the following items 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 Hayes proposed this and Councillor Taylor seconded this. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

2834/25 Update on Office Accommodation

Further to Minute 2816/25 the Clerk gave a report on progress since that time with the up to date position regarding the renovation work to the Council Offices together with details of budget expenditure and projection of total expenditure

Para 1.1 Page 1 – monthly update on Progress

Para 1.2 Page 2

- Deposit Account Starting Balance, Contract Price minus payment made to William King

Para 1.2 Page 3

- Deposit Account Income since 1st April 2024

Para 1.2 Page 4

- Invoices received from William King

Para 1.2 Page 5

- Projected expenditure other than from William King

Para 1.2 Page 6

- Expenditure since 1st April 2024

Para 1.2 Page 7

- As at February 2025 individual percentages of work in contract that have been complete

Para 1.3

- The Architect had recommended two additional expenditures namely
 - (i) Installation of 50mm Marmox fire boards to ginnel steelwork, including labour £1,451.17 plus VAT

- (ii) Block up window to rear courtyard (admin office) £384.77 plus VAT

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor O'Kane that the information contained in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 be approved and noted and the extra works recommended in paragraph 1.3 be approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the information contained in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of the report be approved and noted and the extra works recommended by the Architect in paragraph 1.3 be approved

2835/25 Applications for Grant – RYT&SH

The Council considered an application for a grant of £1,000 from RYT&SH. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that a grant of £500.00 be awarded to RYT&SH. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That a grant of £500.00 be awarded to RYT&SH.

The Meeting Closed at 6.40pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Gill', followed by a horizontal line.

Chairman