

WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL NOTICE OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Notice is hereby given that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on**

**Thursday 12th May 2022 at 6:00pm in the Salway Hall at Whitehaven Civic Hall, Lowther Street, Whitehaven**

AGENDA

1. Introduction and welcome from Councillor Chris Hayes of Whitehaven Town Council.
2. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2021.
3. Annual Report presented by Councillor Chris Hayes - to follow.
4. Report from Mike Starkie, the Elected Mayor of Copeland.
5. Report from Sergeant Lindsay Stuart, Cumbria Constabulary.
6. Report from Councillor Chris Whiteside from Cumbria County Council.
7. Report from Chris Shaw, CALC Liaison Officer, Copeland.
8. To invite the Deputy Mayor of the Town Council to address the meeting.
9. To invite the public to raise any matters of interest and ask any questions of the representatives of the three local authorities responsible for Whitehaven. The Police may also be available to answer any questions on community policing.
10. Close of meeting and vote of thanks.

The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity for parishioners on the Electoral Roll for the Parish of Whitehaven to raise any matters of concern to them that relates to their local community. It would be helpful to have written notice of any matters to be raised but it is not essential. Matters can be raised at the meeting without prior notice. For any queries please contact the Clerk, Marlene Jewell on 01946 67366.

Chris Hayes

Chairman, Whitehaven Town Council

# WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2021**

**Present:**

# APM/28

**APM/29**

Councillors B O'Kane (Chairman); R Gill; C Hayes; C Maudling; J Rayson; G Roberts

Mayor Starkie, Copeland Borough Council

Councillor Christopher Whiteside, Cumbria County Council Sergeant K Pennington, Cumbria Constabulary

Chris Shaw, CALC M Jewell, Clerk

V Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Councillor O'Kane opened the meeting and thanked everybody for attending.

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2019**

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Rayson that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2019 be signed and approved by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and 4 Councillors voted for the proposal and 2 abstained

**RESOLVED** - That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2019 be signed and approved by the Chairman as a correct record.

**Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman, Councillor Brian O'Kane read his Annual Report which had been previously circulat ed.

He made the following key points relating to the Council's activities during the past two year:-

* Covid 19 - several Councillors pooled their unspent ward grants to spend on PPE to help with the covid crisis and this

was distributed to CHOC, care homes, Fire and Rescue Service and front-line workers when they were all struggling to resource equipment;

* + Events - The Council hosted its first photo exhibition which was well received. The popular children's science show Gastronauts was stages and was free to all schools - 9 schools and 280 children attended. The continental market drew crowds once again. The Town Council's Traders Markets in St Nicholas were very popular. Due to the pandemic most of the planned events for 2020 could not take place and had been re-scheduled;
	+ Whitehaven In Bloom - The Town Council received a Silver Gilt medal in 2019. In 2020 we carried on as best we could with planting and hanging baskets throughout the town;
	+ Street Furniture - 4 new bus shelters were installed; 7 defibrillators were installed at various locations; additional bins were installed;

# APM/30

* Both CBC and WTC are forging a new and exciting partnership with Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners;
* The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk who go beyond the expected in their work for the Council. He also thanked Gerard Richardson for his invaluable support and advice relating to Council event s.

Councillor O'Kane said it had been a privilege and honour to serve as Mayor of Whitehaven Town Council albeit for a year longer than anticipated and wished whoever followed as Mayor a happy and productive year serving a very special community.

**Report from Mike Starkie, Elected Mayor of Copeland Borough Council**

Mayor Starkie referred to the fact that we are now back to face to face in person meetings.

Mayor Starkie expressed regret that Councillor Gill was not continuing as a Councillor but was pleased to see him back where he belonged.

Mayor Starkie said these were exciting times for Whitehaven and a video would be released later the following week when the Bus Station opens. He said The Peddler and The Eagle Lab were real assets to Whitehaven. He made the following points:-

* + There would be podcasts on other developments such as the Data Campus, the Mark House site and the Training Hotel;
	+ BEC purchase of Whittles last week with work to commence immediately;
	+ CBC purchased Barclays Bank and there would be a new lease and a new business opening and that CBC had also purchased various properties on King Street;
	+ There were various challenges and the impact of Covid had affected everyone. He gave a tribute to everyone behind the scenes and said the Housing Team had eradicated homelessness in Copeland with temporary/permanent accommodation;
	+ Revenues and Benefits had had good communication with people and businesses and £22.5 million had gone into the economy through grants. 700 grants had been given to 700 businesses before any other Council had processed any and he thanked the Council Teams involved in this;
	+ The Social Prescribing Team had been involved with Sellafield in distributing food parcels to the vulnerable;
	+ CBC Building Control had 90% of the market share;
	+ PFI was costing CBC £1.7 million per year so looking to get out of the contract;
	+ Planning Applications - 99% of applications dealt with within the timescales and 85% of appeals had been successfully defended;
	+ There had been 68 virtual meetings lasting 172 hours with 86%-member attendance and 700 members of the public attending;
	+ The partnerships with BEC and the Harbour Commissioners were going from strength to strength;
	+ Local Government Re-organisation had moved on at a pace with the consultation period now closed and everyone being close to finding out what the new structure will be;
	+ The Beacon had had significant funding and a makeover and the cafe had re-opened;
	+ The night time economy of the Town was increasing;
	+ 5G in Town will have a significant impact;
	+ The biggest tribute is to the staff of CBC for how they rose to the challenges faced due to Covid;
	+ Unemployment levels in Copeland have stabilised;
	+ Looking at where WTC were in 2015 and the well documented difficulties in the early days things have now improved and the positives were now feeding through.

**APM/31 Report from Sergeant Kelly Pennington of Cumbria Constabulary**

Sgt Kelly Pennington commenced her report by informing those present of crime figures for the year 2020/2021 and giving information as follows:-

**2021 Crime figures compared to 2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Overall | Down | 16.8% | 2147 crimes |
| Burglary | Down | 3.1% | 95 crimes |
| Theft | Down | 25.9% | 235 crimes |
| Violence | Down | 20.5% | 945 crimes |
| Arson &Damage | Down | 19.2% | 295 crimes |
| Drug Offences | Up | 6.2% | 69 crimes |
| Weapons |  |  |  |

Offences Down 20% 12 crimes

ASB Down overall 7.5% over 3-year average . Figures show overall significant decrease - this is good and reflects the good multi-agency work we do to address the issues (ASB Environmental Crime increased due to Covid -ASB camping, fly tipping, etc).

* + Vehicle Crime - Woodhouse crime serious - 2 arrested, charged and bailed with curfew - resolved the issue;
	+ Robbery- very slight rise - low numbers still;
	+ Hate Incidents - Better recording through hate crime/policy

- some linked to Brexit issue - no overall patterns/trends as per HCRO role to monitor;

* + Significant drop in violence, theft, public order, arson &

criminal damage linked to Covid;

* + These figures are comparable with other geographical areas;
	+ Still low in comparison with more historical figures;
	+ Why rise? Much improved crime recording- more victim led- recent HMIC inspection rated the force as OUTSTANDING with regard to the recording of crime;
	+ Knife crime - present, but not seeing an increase. Surveys have shown that the fear of knife crime is disproportionate to the numbers. Work ongoing with Hub and colleagues in Allerdale and the force to reduce this fear.

**Structure**

1. x NPT Inspector
2. x Problem Solving Sgts (Kelly Pennington & Dave MacDonald)

2 x Problem Solving PCs (Work in conjunction with the HUB Sarah Hindle and Thomas Huck)

Team of Proactive PCs (Some of PCs extra officers) Team of PCSOs - Mark Fishpool (Town Centre)

Jackie Rafferty (Whitehaven South) Simon Kane (Whitehaven North) Paul Booth (Copeland Support)

Work closely with HUB - Multi-agency problem solving response wherever possible;

Set priority areas - Whitehaven Town Centre - Drugs/ASS/Shoplifting- remains;

Pre-planned ops: 1- Burglary Op/Speed Camera/Targeted

Patrol/assist response officers/night time economy/ASB

* Still working closely with housing associations; and issuing Injunctions;
* PSPO - Assist Copeland Borough Council - Mirrors DPPO for drinking. PCSO Rafferty has been actively tackling several individuals in town centre taking positive action;
* County line influence - no known county lines.

**Engagement**

Limited due to Covid restrictions, however had on-line meetings with key youth groups, schools and key partnerships.

We have re-written our Engagement Plan on 3 area: Information, Consultation and Part icipat ion . We have identified our hard-to­ reach groups in the districts and currently working through plans to make and maintain effective contact with each ot her. Joint working has been closely undertaking during the Covid period with partners from County and Borough Council, National Trust, Forestry Commission and Lake District National Parks alongside PH England to ensure our community remains a safe one and that appropriate effective action was taken against anyone identified as breaching Covid regulat ions . As restrictions ease, we aim to fully open our involvement with schools combined with our new CCPT and develop our contact in hard-to-reach areas. The projects postponed during the pandemic will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

**APM/32 Report from Councillor Chris Whiteside of Cumbria County Council**

Councillor Whiteside made the following points:

* The main issue has dominated the work of CCC and all authorities over the past year is Covid and the pandemic and Colin Cox CCC's Director of Public Health has been at the centre of this fight in health protection, testing and vaccination;
* Epidemiology- The situation in Cumbria remains very good, with rates well below average . We have not seen any confirmed cases of variant 1.617.2 ("India") in Cumbria;
* Vaccination - To date we have 310,000 people in Cumbria having received their first dose (almost 75% of the 16+ population), with 175,000 of them now having received both. Over 90% of our population aged 70+ have now received both doses, which is a fantastic achievement and significantly protects our most vulnerable residents;
* I can't possible list all the council employees who have been working so hard to help people through the pandemic but I can say that while the big decisions by Councillors and senior officers often hit the headlines and are controversial, sometimes for very good reasons, the backbone of the council is the ordinary employees working for it and many of them have worked very hard and done an excellent job;
* Highways have been a huge issue. I listened to what has been said about parking and will report it back. Our highways officers have worked extremely hard in the most difficult circumstances to keep the roads open and deliver schemes from large ones like the new layout at North Shore funded by £2 million from the government, to the small;
* Ticket being prepared to install visi rail on Highfields (lower footway entrance to Jericho School);
* Carriageway patching works planned for Cliff Road, High Road, Monkwray Cottages at Kells, Westmorland Road at Hensingham, Upper Catherine Street, Tower Hill, Valley Park Estate at Whitehaven;
* A5094 Back Corkickle planned re-surfacing scheme (September to avoid any impact on the re-opening of businesses and tourist trade following Covid lockdown restrictions);
* Footway repairs planned for Criffel Road, Parton and Moresby Parks Road. There are also a number of sites based on HIMS defects reports to be assessed for repairs;
* Meeting to be re-scheduled with CBC Heritage Officer to look at various issued around the town centre and how best these can be repaired within allocated budgets whilst complying with conservation area regulations;
* Planning has often been very contentious as people will know. This borough does need many more houses if we want to keep our local services viable, but they must be sustainable, with appropriate roads and infrastructure. I would like to see the county and district work far better together. Local Government Re-organisation as described by Mike Starkie may be a path to that. The County has brought in new arrangements which we are promised will make the county's input reflect better the views and concerns of local councillors and residents.
* I cannot finish without referring to a huge disappointment within the last few days, which infuriates your local county councillors as much if not more that it infuriates almost all the other residents of Whit ehaven. That was the decision of an unelected officer, with no consultation with the vast majority of elected councillors or members of the planning committee, to ignore the decision made three times by elected councillors through a hugely detailed due process and declare the council neutral in the appeal about West Cumbria M ining .

It is a complete abdication of responsibility for the relevant planning authority to ignore the views of councillors and residents on one of the biggest issues facing West Cum bria . I am not going to attempt to give full details on this but I can tell you that the members of the County Council for Whitehaven are strongly opposed to this and are actively exploring every possible legal means to try and have this outrageous decision reversed before the public inquiry.

# APM/33

**Report from Chris Shaw from the Cumbria Association of Local Councils**

Chris Shaw made the following points:-

* Our problems are minor compared to Cheshire and Jackie Weaver;
* There are five officers working for CALC each covering 2.5 days;
* Covid - some parishes had been quick and adept at using virtual meetings. However, the Government had made a decision that these could not continue but that this was still being consulted on and most councils would prefer a hybrid arrangement and said that perhaps WTC could contribute to this;
* Local Government Reorganisation - there are no great changes to our sector except that maybe larger Town Councils would be required to take on more responsibilities;
* Perhaps some parishes would be merged in Copeland;
* A595 - Whitehaven Relief Road - more traffic was being seen;
* 3 Tier Meeting on Thursday - There would be a County Council presentation on The Highways Information Management System;
* The Coastal Communities Group would like to have seen some more progression;
* CALC has been involved with the Working Group of Geographical Disposal Facility with CBC as a neutral body. There will be an exhibition at the Whitehaven Golf Club before a decision is taken and community partnership

formed.

**APM/34 Report from Julie Rayson, Deputy Mayor**

Councillor Rayson made the following points:-

* She thanked the Mayor Councillor Brian O'Kane, the Clerks and fellow Councillors for all their support given to her in her role as Deputy;
* Councillor Rayson welcomed the appointment of John Baker as Chief Executive of the Harbour Commissioners and

said his vision for the harbour was what was needed to bring the area back to life;

* Councillor Rayson referred to the imminent opening of the Bus Station with office facilities and the Peddler bar and restaurant and said it would bring a vibrant feel to that part of town, focusing on families and young entrepreneurs and would be a city-style experience;
* Councillor Rayson said that WTC and Mayor Starkie should be thanked for the support they had given to the parent campaign which had resulted in the construction of the new build at Whitehaven Academy and said that for future generations at the school would have a modern high tech educational establishment which could only enhance their learning outcomes;
* Councillor Rayson said that we have a responsibility to work collaboratively as a Town Council and together with Borough and County Councillors and other stakeholders to give constituents a town where they want to spend their time and money;
* Councillor Rayson said the upcoming independent inquiry and decision into the West Cumbria Mining planning application would have a huge bearing on the local economy and should this project not go ahead then we need to sit down and act on what can be done to bring investment to Whitehaven to ensure the young people who now have the choice of quality secondary schools to stay local and that there are plenty of employment opportunities for them here;
* Councillor Rayson said she was excited about the regeneration possibilities but there was still a lot of work to be done to bring the town and surrounding area to its full potential and that successful bid for the Government's Levelling Up Fund was vital.

**APM/35 Questions/Comments from Councillors and Members of the Public to Invited Speakers**

Councillor Gill proposed a moments silence for those who lost their lives during the Covid pandemic .

**APM/36 Close of Meeting and Vote of Thanks**

The Chairman thanked Mayor Starkie, Councillor Whiteside, the Police and Chris Shaw for their presentations and proposed a vote of thanks to all which was seconded by Councillors Hayes.

The meeting closed at 7:30pm.