

WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 27th March 2025

Present: Councillor C Hayes (Deputy Chairman in the Chair);
Councillor E Dinsdale; Councillor G Dinsdale; Councillor R Gill; Councillor B
O’Kane; Councillor A Pearson; Councillor A Spedding; Councillor R White

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

V. Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Josh MacAlister MP

Katy Haigh

Members of the Public

The Press

Prior to the Meeting starting the Deputy 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

2722/25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received as follows:-

Councillor G Roberts	illness
Councillor J Carr	Work Commitments
Councillor R Taylor	Holiday
Councillor R Redmond	Holiday

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor O’Kane 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

2723/25 Declarations of Interest

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

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

2724/25 Public Participation

WM the representative from Crow Park Allotment Site appeared. He said 12 months ago in February last year he fell on the allotments and snapped a tendon in his shoulder and got a trapped nerve in his back and this was all down to Mr Gill. He said Mr Gill proposed that during winter that the allotments should be inspected and I was inspecting the allotments in February when this happened. If Mr Gill had walked the allotments and seen what he was proposing he would have seen that it wasn't feasible. The paths on Crow Park are grass paths and on days like this are like a banana slide. Since then when I reported it to the Council I asked them to lift the grass paths and replace it with hardcore and nothing had been done. He said he had also asked for a risk assessment to be carried out on the paths on the site and this hadn't been done. He said he had been pressing for over 12 months for an Allotment Advisory Group to visit with him and that hadn't been done and he had found out today that another tenant has now got a broken leg and a snapped tendon on the same area as he was on all because no action had been taken. He asked how could the Council not take action on health and safety issues. He said he had sent a number of emails to the Clerk and asked that they be passed on to all the Councillors and they were never passed on because if they had been surely some action would have been taken by now. He said on Crow Park now they had been in and covered a bit in hardcore but all the rest of the paths were still the same still as dangerous and what was going to happen with them.

Councillor Gill asked to make a response and said the reason why 12 months ago was that he was not qualified to inspect and he arrived at Crow Park Allotment site to have a look and expecting the professionals to come to give guidance and no one turned up so he didn't carry out an inspection as he wasn't qualified to do so. Councillor Gill queried if WM was the representative for the allotment holders as he didn't think he was. Mr Marsden said he had been there 56 years and what Councillor Gill should not have done was to propose inspecting Allotment Sites in winter when it was not safe to do so. He said he had been the representative for at least 20 years and used to attend every meeting that the Council used to have. Councillor Gill said he took exception to WM saying it was his fault. Councillor Spedding said Midgey had a small association with a bank account, a little club so when it came to his Ward Grant he could give his allowance to the allotment holders to improve fences,

walkways, pathways and that that allotment society was thriving. He said if WM could organise setting up as he had requested an allotment group at Crow Park he could split his allocation 50/50 and maybe something could get put down on the paths. So if WM could go away from here and action somebody to represent the allotment holders, he could then help to set a bank account up and get a facebook group going and donate half his allowance to them.

WM said how can the Council ignore the health and safety for 12 months Councillor E Dinsdale proposed that the Allotments Advisory Group and Councillor Spedding go and do an inspection and we then can hold an Allotment Advisory Group Meeting to discuss this in further detail as this was a priority. Councillor Gill said he would support this provided that our Contractor goes as well so that he can advise on how to proceed.

2725/25 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 27th February 2025

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th February 2025 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 meeting held on 27th February 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2726/25 Josh MacAlister MP

The MP had informed the Council that he was delayed in traffic and the Chairman agreed that this item would be heard when he arrived and in the meanwhile the remaining items of the Agenda would be heard

2727/25 Presentation on the Rum Story Re-Imagined Project

Katy Haigh the Project Manager for the Rum Story Re- Imagined was due to arrive at approximately 6.45 to give a presentation on the Rum Story Re-Imagined project and the Chairman agreed that this item would be heard when she arrived

2728/25 Report from Cumberland Council

There was no representative from Cumberland Council present and no report from them and the Council requested an informal meeting with the five Cumberland Councillors for the Whitehaven area and the Clerk said that she would contact the five Councillors to inform them of the Council's request and to find out their availability for an informal meeting with the Town Council.

2729/25 Planning Applications

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

2730/25 Home Group

Following the last Council Meeting in February (Minute 2712/25 refers) where James Varah had attended the Clerk had written to him about all the points that were raised and the agreements made at the Council Meeting namely that Home Group would pass direct telephone numbers of officers or at least the Manager to the Town Council in order to have better communication and relationships and also setting up a Home Group Hub, contact details of how people can get in touch, their various procedures and the schedules for the estate visits so that Councillors could also go out on the estates. The Clerk said that the schedules for the estate visits were not due to be available until April and so it was expected that we would hear next week on all of these things. Councillor O’Kane said he had met with James yesterday and reminded him of that because he had been trying to contact him for over a week.

There was no decision on this as it was for information only

2731/25 Finance Report

The Council considered the Finance report

- i. Appendix 1 – The Council considered a list of invoices at Appendix 1 plus 9 additional invoices as follows:-

Arborscape	£4,800 - beds, baskets, planter Contract
Arborscape	£656.40 – Allotment Maintenance Contract
Arborscape	£656.40 – Allotment Maintenance Contract
Mrs V Gorley	£4.10 – Postage, Allotment Tenancy Agreement
Cumberland Council	£84 – Meeting Room Hire
Cumbria Media	£224 – Website Maintenance

Starboard Systems	£1436.40 – Annual fee Scribe Accounting
Cumberland Council	£1881.50 – 50% contribution War Memorial Refurbishment
Arborscape	£278.40 – Emergency tree removal Midget Allotments

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the invoices shown at Appendix 1 plus the 9 additional invoices detailed above be approved and paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the invoices shown on Appendix 1 plus the 9 additional invoices detailed above be approved and paid.

- ii. Appendices 2 and 3 – It was proposed by Councillor Gill 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.

2732/25 Toilets

Further to Minute 2716/25 the Clerk reported that she had written to Cumberland Council asking why the toilet attached to the Market Hall which was adjacent to the Green Market was not included in the Green Market Development. To date no reply had been received.

This was for information only and no decisions were taken.

2733/25 Crow Park Allotments Communal Path and Boundary Fence

The Council considered a report informing Members of action taken at Crow Park Allotments Site regarding a communal path and asking members to decide whether or not to carry out works to the 3 remaining communal paths and also to the boundary fence. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that

- i. That the information contained in 1.1 of the Report and the action taken in 1.2 of the Report be approved and noted;
 - ii. That works to the 3 remaining communal paths be carried out at a cost of £186.00 plus VAT per path
 - iii. That the broken section of the boundary fence at Crow Park be repaired at a cost of £204 plus VAT
 - iv. That the Allotment Advisory Group meet 4 times a year.
- A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – That the recommendations in i to iv above be approved and

actioned

2734/25 HP Enterprise Support Service

The Council considered a report regarding the renewal of a one year contract for support services for hardware with Support Warehouse who act on behalf of Hewlett Packard Enterprise at a cost of £88.56 plus VAT for a one year support service contract for the hardware. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the contract with Support Warehouse for support services for hardware be renewed for one year at a cost of £88.56 plus VAT. A vote was held and 7 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor voted against.

RESOLVED - That the contract with Support Warehouse for support services for hardware be renewed for one year at a cost of £88.56 plus VAT.

2735/25 Minor Amendment to Model Financial Regulations

The Council considered a report on minor amendment to the Model Financial Regulations (which were adopted by the Council at the Annual Meeting on 29th May 2024) which had been received from CALC. The amendments were to Financial Regulations 5.4, 5.7 and 5.11. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor O’Kane that the amendments be approved and the Council’s Financial Regulations be amended accordingly. A vote was held and it was unanimously

RESOLVED - That the amendments be approved and the Council’s Financial Regulations be amended accordingly.

2736/25 WCSSG

Councillor E Dinsdale said he had attended an Emergency Planning Working Group Meeting at Cleator Moor on Monday 10th March 2025. This Group deals with all aspects of emergency exercises, emergency processes that Sellafield might have or Drigg might have and also anything that is directly related to or could potentially cause an emergency situation.

The Company did feedback that

- Recently they had had problems with power dips on site where some of the sub stations had been failing. This particular issue had been in the national news recently – Heathrow – where we all saw how vital it is to have backup emergency supplies and resilient emergency supplies
- The Company now goes through a programme of work to make the whole energy supply process to the Sellafield site more resilient

- Storm Eowyn – The Company's response to this was very positive. They acknowledged a lot of shortfalls that had gone on on that particular day and they reported back briefly around communication problems that had happened. They also reported back around processes that could have been put in place around emergency situations set up to respond to this. They also reported that they had spent a full day discussing this issue and were going to produce a report on this
- The whole point of this nuclear side of things is to scrutinise the industry and that they were there to really test processes that they were putting in place
- There was a report back around key villages that had been involved in an exercise around Sellafield site and evacuating certain areas like Beckermest and he had said that he had asked the question that if something happened at Sellafield and we did need to evacuate a large area which could involve Cleator Moor, Egremont and Whitehaven what was in place for these areas and the answer was not a lot. So it would get passed up to a national responsibility probably something like COBRA. But on the Sellafield site today as regards to the evacuation for the 3 built up areas there was not really a great deal there at this time. Councillor Gill said that when he was Chairman of the Strategic Nuclear Energy Board and they did some of the planning for this and that some of the planning was now down to the new Council and they should be doing this in conjunction with Sellafield. Councillor Dinsdale said that they were at the meeting and that there was a couple of page document that was on the shelf but that it was nothing that was detailed enough for the likes of Beckermest. Councillor Dinsdale said that when dealing with 24,000 people for Whitehaven and 8,000 for Cleator Moor and Egremont it had to be better than this.

Councillor Dinsdale said there had been a Public Accounts Committee Meeting on Thursday 20th March and made the following points

- This was focussed on the decommissioning of the Sellafield site and this was the main body that the Government has around scrutiny for big projects where they will set up a body looking at more detail around these agencies providing value for money. At the beginning he watched the videos which were just under 3 hours long and which took place in Parliament. At the beginning they focussed on bullying and harassment and the way the Company deals with this, and the cost to that and one case in general created £700,000 of legal fees. This can have an effect on employers as well as employees. There was a video link to this hearing which he said he would pass to anyone who was interested and there was also a 48 page transcript. Councillor O'Kane asked if we can ask the CC sometime in the

next few months to attend as an Agenda item to come and present to the Town Council exactly what the emergency procedures are for our own area and at that point at least we will know and if the press are there they will be able to tell the rest of the area so at least people have some kind of assurance that there are plans in existence.

Councillor Dinsdale said the Company said in response that the chances of something happening there in Whitehaven, Cleator Moor or Egremont that would require a response was highly unlikely but to have something in a bit more detail would definitely make sense

The Chairman thanked Councillor Dinsdale for presenting his report

2737/25

Josh McAlister MP

The Chairman welcomed our MP Josh to the Meeting

Josh apologised for being late due to traffic problems coming back from London

Josh said he had a couple of things that he was interested to speak to the Town Council about

- The regeneration of the Town and
- The Harbour

Regarding the Harbour – the positive news in the last few weeks was that the Mining Mediation Authority (which he would get into later). The issue up until now that continues to be a problem for the water being treated or redirected was that whether it's the Mine Remediation Authority (Coal Authority) Network Rail who were the owners of the land where the water was coming out or the Environment Agency. He said none of them have got responsibility for the problem. And because of that none of them want to take on the liability for fixing it. The previous Government's Environment Minister had come up to look at the situation and not much happened off the back of that and after he had been elected he had asked a number of questions about what had happened in Defra and what questions had been asked.

Josh said they were stuck in a situation where all the agencies were coming along to every meeting to say basically it was not really on them and they were not getting anywhere. That was where they were up to until a couple of months ago when they managed to get a meeting held with the NRA, Network Rail and the Environment Agency and Defra with the Minister for Water where the same thing played out at national level. The Minister pushed to set up a Task Force across the different departments and agencies to find a solution and then immediately after that the NRA stepped up and a potential solution had been put forward for a diversion of the water coming out of the culvert out to sea and it would then disperse with the tide. That would cost in the region of £1,000,000. But no one agency would take the responsibility for this The

solution was to set up a special scheme here which would be co-funded by a number of agencies. 4 Agencies had put in money and he was confident of 3 being confirmed and the 4th one was yet to be confirmed. So they were in a much better off place than they had been before and he was hoping to get the money secured as soon as possible.

Josh said on Whitehaven re-generation of the Town and more generally the approach he was taking to this is

- We had had some good efforts in the past to do things with the Town that had produced lovely buildings, really good community engagement to make parts of the Town more appealing and clean them up, The Edge, the Bus Station and various other schemes. The problem was that there had been no coherent long term plan for the Town, which includes zoning for the Town, a transport strategy to go alongside it and what should go where and crucially the funding which can attract businesses and others to put their own money into the Town
- Some of the powers around compulsory purchase and absentee landlords
- The event held last July which was the public meeting followed by a Whitehaven Town Regeneration Board Meeting. CC had in the last few days put out a major piece of work for a master plan for the Town and this was part of other discussions about Moorside and resetting the relationship between the nuclear industry and the community. We need to attract more people of working age to come to West Cumbria. All this will enable us to have a long term plan for the Town as well as funding certainty behind it
- One of the things that had come through most strongly from the public for improvement and change was public toilets. He said it was a massive problem for the Town and it was one of the most common gripes from the public that we don't have decent easily accessible public toilets which is a basic expectation

Councillor E Dinsdale asked about the timescales for diverting the orange liquor from the Harbour out to sea and what sort of timescales are we looking at around Town Centre Regeneration. Josh said funding for both of them was the driver and definitely for the Harbour water issue being resolved and we needed to manage expectations for both. He said the conversations about funding were at a crucial stage. He said if the funding was secured for a diversion scheme and if that scheme doesn't require fund which there was reason to believe it might not do -in those circumstances the Environment Agency wouldn't need to permit it. So it wouldn't be an unrealistic prospect if the funding was secured tomorrow and it didn't require funding for us to have a diversion in place in 12/ 13 months. Councillor G Dinsdale asked what was the worst case scenario and Josh said the worst case scenario was that we don't get the money.

Councillor Pearson asked where would the diversion be from as we didn't know the source. Josh said it would come from the culvert. The water would continue to enter the track. Councillor Pearson said he had worked for the Railway and he

had watched it progress and get worse and worse from something like 10yds to 100s of yards. He said he appreciated that it was going to be diverted but should we not try to find out where it was coming from in the first place. Josh said there were so many potential sources of the water but it was so extensive. He said in other parts of the country they have treated the water where it comes out. It was possible that work would be done by Network Rail and the track bed was possibly acting as a filter. Councillor Pearson said when the tunnel first started to flood it was clear water. He said it flooded for a long time before it started to produce ochre. Josh said it was oxygen that makes the water orange although it probably had ochre in it and possibly the track bed had been acting as a filter. For Town Regeneration Josh said the masterplan should be in place in the next couple of months and they would be holding another meeting and a public meeting.

Councillor O’Kane that about 7 months ago he had met someone on the Harbour who had fitted all the culverts and said that if you divert a culvert there is significant gaps where you can put in a whole new pipeline in under the dock structure and take it out to sea and the cost would not be too high. Josh said he had already asked the Environment Agency to look into that and the NRA would need to get some money.

Councillor O’Kane said we had been in a public toilet debate for ages and the Council put money in several years ago to try and join with CBC and we put money in and met with a brick wall. Josh asked where we were talking about building them and the Clerk said outside La Chic where there had been a self cleaning superloo some years ago. At the time (about 4/5 years ago) this was discussed with CBC because it was assumed that the infrastructure would still be there under the pavement and a CBC officer was tasked with investigating this. The Town Council offered CBC £50,000 towards this and it never got done. Josh felt that more than 1 toilet was required and as we had a Town with lots of space and that the Town Council had the resources to do this as the accounts were good and healthy that he would be happy to help with Cumberland toward this but it needed to be on the basis that it was a serious plan for toilets. Josh said his view on one public toilet wouldn’t wash. He said the Council had got resources and our resources were good and healthy.

Councillor Gill said that any public toilets had to be manned. He said CBC did put one toilet inside the Market Hall. There was also one in the multi storey car park and maybe the Harbour Commissioners could help with that. He said it was a nice clean toilet block in there and it was manned and if the facilities were still there in the multi storey car park maybe we could make some progress in that direction by talking with the Harbour Commissioners.

Councillor Gill said he thought the most important thing for toilets was location. Councillor O’Kane said that the site of the old Brackenthwaite might be a good place for public toilets.

Councillor E Dinsdale said thought it would be a good idea to have a lot of little ones spread around the town to see if the public liked this as it was quite a large town for everyone to have to go to one place for toilets

Councillor O’Kane asked Josh to what degree are you looking at the last Copeland Plan that was submitted initially to Government and then withdrawn 3 days before Christmas as it did not meet the criteria. Josh said he had looked at that plan and it had the essence of a good solution. Like the cycle network for people to cycle from here to St Bees. He said Arup have done work on the regeneration of the Town and BEC went back and looked through all the plans that had been done before they did an assessment of them. Tourism was a big thing, together with sorting out King Street, retaining architectural heritage and telling the history of the Town. The question is - is the plan comprehensive and where is the money coming from.

Josh said if you look at what’s happening in Barrow £200,000,000 is going there because of the challenges they’ve got and we have got not dissimilar recruitment challenges here and we need something of a proportionate scale for Whitehaven Councillor E Dinsdale said we have 141 tonnes of plutonium within the constituency, we have 85% of the country’s nuclear waste and we are here and the Town has been politically abandoned. He said there were no other words that you could use to describe the position we have at this moment in time in Whitehaven. He said there had been real hard nosed discussions in the past as to maybe it was time to move it

Josh said the issue was that this was a challenge you get with any large state employer which is common in an area where everything in the area starts to get orientated around the economic needs of that employer and there wasn’t a bit of joint working and self-enlightenment from that employer and you end up with communities being hollowed out. He said you see it all across the country – it wasn’t just an issue here and it wasn’t in anyone’s interests to be stuck in this cycle of an undiversified company. He said what happens at Sellafield should be a springboard for all sorts of other economic activities that should be finding its way into a prosperous and vibrant Town.

Councillor E Dinsdale said when you’re talking about housing you’re talking about the most toxic substance known to man. If you turn round to any Newcastle, Glasgow, Manchester or Liverpool and you offer them 8, 9, 10,000 jobs they would jump all over it. If the caveat was you’ve got to take 141 tonnes of plutonium with that they would chain themselves to the roads to stop that from coming in. Councillor Dinsdale said ultimately his point was when are we going to get our worth. As a Town when are we going to get our worth. The Government today wouldn’t even have a seat on the G7 GEG9 if it wasn’t for the fruits of the workforce that comes from this Town. And we can’t even get a toilet. He said that was the political position.

Josh said well we can get a toilet we can do that and a good point to conclude on was that not enough money has been spent and the the money that has been spent in the last 10 years has not been spent well.

Councillor E Dinsdale said he had great deal of stakeholder engagement in the past with national politicians of all colours in the past around Sellafield when he was down there as a trade union rep. He said no-one in the country has got a BEC and that it was brought in because at Government level they didn’t trust

local politicians. He said that wasn't a dig at any colour that was just a fact of life. They had to introduce BEC because they had no trust at all in giving money round here to local politicians which as Josh had pointed out would waste it Josh said that was one way of looking at it and went on to say the most Senior Civil Servant Simon Case now Chairs Team Barrow to unblock funding unblock problems on behalf of the Town of Barrow and that it was starting to work with some really good stuff. He said you could look at that and say the Government don't trust the Town of Barrow or you could look at it and say that it's a genuine attempt to get behind the Town and its communities and solve these problems and we need something like that here and it was what he was trying to do Councillor G Dinsdale raised the problems of small businesses being scared about the future because of increased costs and that we should be helping people to prosper because some of them may not be here in 12 months and asked Josh what his position was on this. Josh said his position was that the Government had found an additional £300,000,000 to make up for the revenue shortfall for Sellafield and that was important for us. They had put over £20 billion extra into the NHS so that we can have 5 consecutive months of waiting lists falling. He said they had made some changes on Employment rights which businesses were not happy about and on the minimum wage but you can't get something for nothing and if people don't support changes made at national level we have to have politicians including yourselves to say where we can get that money from because the NHS is on its knees, local services costing us more and delivering less. We have huge challenges around defence where we need to spend billions more each year. We have had 2 decades of very low growth and we're trying to get that going and there was some tough choices in there. Councillor Dinsdale said Barrow was being supported because they need somebody but without the ingredients to that package that comes from this community you might as well just float out a fishing boat as we are the ones that's keeping it all afloat. But look around use your eyes we are going under we are going over the cliff. Councillor Gill said he didn't accept that and said one of his main interests was young people – when we built up the West Lakes Science Park - I think if people are educated there they stay there. And we need to ensure that we get our children educated here

The Chairman Thanked Josh McAlister MP for attending

2738/25 Presentation on the Rum Story Re-Imagined

The Chairman welcomed Katy Haigh to the Meeting

Katy Haig is the Project Manager for the Rum Story Re-Imagined. She outlined what the current Rum Story covers in the exhibition namely

- The story of the Jeffersons, local rum merchants

- Family business closed in 1998 and Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners bought the premises and turned it into the Rum Story
- It covers something about slavery and sugar plantations in Antigua
- Talks about rum and the Royal Navy and has a bonded warehouse
- Section on pirates, smugglers and prohibition

This project is not coming in to throw everything away it is to grow on a story that's already there

The connection to slavery was quite important and was that Henry and Robert Jefferson - Robert was Captain of a ship that was involved in the trading and trafficking of enslaved African people and Henry was the Captain of the Gale which was also involved in trading and trafficking of slaves.

The Rum Story Re-Imagined Project is

- A 5 year project made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Only got funding for Phase 1 at the moment
- One of the aims is to work with local people to preserve and share Whitehaven's heritage
- To tell a more complete history including less well known narratives
- To get lots of people from all walks of life visiting and coming back
- To get people whether local or from further afield interested in the heritage and curious about how this past links to the present
- To make the attraction much more accessible, thought provoking and innovative
- Generating wider social and economic benefits for Whitehaven
- Upskilling the Rum Story Team on best practice in anti-racism and telling the history of enslavement
- Phase 1 is 2025 up to February next year and it is a consultation and engagement phase
- At the end of this year there will be a small re-interpretation of the Rum Story attractions with a budget of just under £50,000 to make some tangible changes to the Rum Story
- Phase 2 will be 4 years after that to enable the plan to be put into place

The project is being delivered by Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners in partnership with a local Charity called Anti-Racist Cumbria.

The project approach

- Phase 1 – the consultation and engagement with people to find out how we achieve the aims of the project.
- Katy was producing a plan and actioning it already working with existing groups to try and reach out to people
- Setting up a range of different methods to get feedback – meetings, visits, presentations etc

- Hope to create 2 advisory groups – 1 for adults and 1 for young people to give some accountability and governance to the project
- Also get some critical friends
- Try to use arts to do this in an engaging way
- 100 days into the project and already there were a lot of ideas and themes coming through which were really constructive

The key things and ideas that are starting to shape the project are

- Manage expectations
- Set out the limitations
- History
- Getting more people visiting
- Get more people interested in the heritage
- Linked walking tour
- Accessibility
- To get people to visit Whitehaven for the first time

Katy said this had been a whistle stop tour to give the Council an overview of what the project was all about.

Councillor Spedding suggested having tasting sessions and Katy said there was real potential there

Councillor G Dinsdale asked about the tunnels that lead to the Harbour and knew there was a few round Corkickle way. Katy asked if they had ever been opened up for tours and Councillor Dinsdale said she knew there was a few houses that had them and Councillor Hayes said one of them had collapsed. Katy said that she would welcome suggestions if there were any people that she really should speak to that she might not have thought of.

Councillor O'Kane said that in a project like this one of the key things was to look at how it fits in the widest perspective and he thought that the Rum Story had been neglecting the local perspective and it was almost crucial to reinvent it for the locality. Councillor White this was similar to the Beacon Museum – people recommend it but how many go in.

The Chairman thanked Katy for attending and giving the presentation

Councillor A Spedding left the Meeting

2739/25 Neighbourhood Policing Meetings

The Clerk reported that the Chairman had agreed to an extra item on the Agenda which was information received from CALC on the Cumbria Constabulary Neighbourhood Policing Pledge and they were looking to set up Meetings and were holding the first Cumberland Constabulary Neighbourhood Policing Pledge Meeting and were missing a representatives from a number of Councils. They

were looking for 2 representatives from every Council (although it could be more) and asked for 2 names.

Councillor O’Kane and Councillor Hayes volunteered to be the Council’s representatives

2740/25 Councillor Ward Matters

- i. Councillor Gill referred to the bus shelter on Richmond Road. He said there was no glass in it at all and he would rather they removed it than leave it as it is unless they were going to repair it
- ii. Councillor Hayes said in Kells there had been a meeting with Emma Williamson and Cumberland Council Highways Dept. regarding yellow lines and people had complained about getting parking tickets. He said it was a good meeting and 27 people had attended
- iii. Councillor Pearson said
 - A Mrs MB lives at Brakeside Gardens and was stuck between druggies and alcoholics and was looking to move and was getting nowhere with anybody. She had contacted Councillors, Home Group and Cumbria Direct and he had told the lady that he would speak with the Clerk to see if he could get telephone numbers for Home Group.
 - There were going to erect 2 telegraph poles on the front of Greenbank and all the cables had been rerouted and now BT want to erect 2 10m telegraph poles outside people’s houses with lights on the top of them and so he had written to BT to complain about this
 - The street lighting still had not been repaired and he had received a message to say that it was an underground problem and it will be dealt with in the 25/26 budget
 - Grass cutting had started again but they were not cutting any of the stuff that he had complained about last year. No mans land is the strip and once it starts to grow it cuts down the visibility on the road and we’re just waiting for somebody to be killed. But Emma Williamson was originally going to organise a meeting in October and he hadn’t heard anything else since

2741/25 Date and Time of next Meeting

The next Town Council Meeting would be on Thursday 24th April 2025 at the Beacon Portal, Whitehaven at 6.00pm

2742/25 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 White 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.

2743/25 Update on Office Accommodation

The Clerk gave a report received from the Contractor on progress since the report to the Council Meeting in February as follows:

Para 1.1 Page 1 – monthly update on Progress

- Numerous rooms on first floor now boarded and skimmed
- Stud walls around the lift entrance on first floor now in site
- Additional repointing work in the ginnel now complete
- New automated entrance doors booked in for install 03/04/25
- Plumbers and electricians continue with their install
- Repair work to the exterior cracked masonry is now complete
- Wooden lintel to doorway on Ground Floor changed to concrete lintels

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

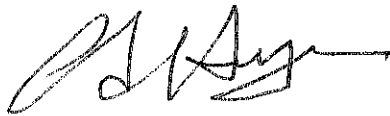
- As at February 2025 individual percentages of work in contract that have been complete

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that the report be approved and noted. A vote was held and 5 Councillors voted for the proposal and 2 Councillors abstained

RESOLVED - That the report be approved and noted.

The Meeting Closed at 7.50pm

Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Hayes', written in a cursive style.