

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Cockermouth on Thursday 19 May 2016 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor J Laidlow (Mayor)
Councillor I Burns
Councillor L Davies
Councillor C M Jackson
Councillor A Kennon
Councillor D Malloy
Councillor S Nicholson
Councillor E Nicholson
Councillor K Scales
Councillor A Smith
Councillor S Standage
Councillor A Tyson

Also Present: - 9 members of the public & 1 member of the Press

Prior to the start of the meeting the Mayor, Councillor J Laidlow made the following announcement:-

She had attended a number of official engagements since the last meeting. These included:-

- A civic reception for the Freemasons in the Town Hall
- Maryport Rugby League Flower Festival
- Civic Trust Luncheon at the Hundith Hill
- Cheque presentation in the Town Hall to her charities
- The re-opening of the Theatre Royal in Workington
- The unveiling of the John Dalton Way Plaque in Kings Arms Lane
- The Speakers Club Luncheon at Hundith Hill
- The Annual Parish Meeting in the Town Hall
- Allerdale Borough Council's Mayor Making at Hundith Hill

She announced that her Mayoral year had been one of the best and busiest days of her life. She thanked Lorna Martin, The Town Clerk, Kirstie Goodger, her fellow councillors and the many volunteers in Cockermouth for their hard work and support during her year in office. She announced that £2045.31 had been raised for her charities during her year of office.

1 Election of Town Mayor/Chairman

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Town Mayor/Chairman for 2016/17. Only one nomination was received and seconded and on being put to the vote it was unanimously

Resolved – That Councillor S Standage be elected Town Mayor/Chairman in 2016/17.

Councillor J Laidlow then handed over the Chain of Office to Councillor S Standage.

The new Mayor then read out and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took over the Chair. The Mayor thanked Councillor Laidlow and her consort Lorna for all their hard work during the past year and presented Councillor Laidlow with her past Mayors badge.

Councillor Standage announced that his wife Hilary had agreed to be his Mayoress. The outgoing consort, Lorna Martin then duly handed over her chain.

2 Election of Deputy Town Mayor/Vice Chairman

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor/Vice Chairman.

Councillor Nicholson proposed Councillor Tyson, this was seconded by Councillor Jackson.

Councillor Smith proposed Councillor Davies, this was seconded by Councillor Burns.

A vote was taken.

Resolved – That Councillor A Tyson be elected as the Deputy Town Mayor/Vice Chairman of the Council for 2016/17.

The Town Mayor then presented the Deputy Mayor's badge to Councillor Tyson. Councillor Tyson read out and signed his declaration of acceptance of office. He thanked his fellow councillors for his nomination and pledged to carry out the role to the best of his ability.

3 Declaration of Interest

Councillor A Smith declared a personal interest in any item on the agenda relating to Allerdale Borough Council due to being the Leader of Allerdale Borough Council.

Councillor L Davies declared an other registrable interest in all planning applications due to being a substitute member of the Development Panel.

Councillor Malloy declared a prejudicial interest in planning application 2/2016/0045 due to being an employee of United Utilities.

Councillor E Nicholson declared a personal interest in planning application 2/16/9002 as he was a governor of All Saints C of E Primary School.

4 Minutes

Resolved – That the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Cockermouth on 20 April 2016.

5 Police Report

The was no Police representative present at the meeting, a copy of their report was circulated to members prior to the meeting.

6 Public Participation

A question was received from Mr N Skillen, 24 Harrot Hill, Cockermouth

At a recent Development Panel, it was questioned by a local Allerdale councillor (who was not from Cockermouth) why there was no representation in person from Cockermouth Town Council to support their recommendation to refuse planning permission for a specific item on the agenda.

Given some of the ongoing issues with planning decisions in the Town, would it not be useful for the Town Council to (on request by any individual from Cockermouth) provide a spokesperson/ representative to the selected development panel to support the Town Councils Opinion accordingly?

The Mayor gave the following answer -

Cockermouth Town Council does not feel that this is necessary as our recommendations are incorporated within the planning officer report submitted for consideration to the Development Panel.

7 Planning Matters

7a Planning Applications

The following planning applications were circulated for comment prior to the meeting due to time constraints:-

2/2016/0106 (as amended)

Two storey rear and side extension to provide additional bedroom and extended living space

9 Parkside Avenue

Recommended – refusal, overdevelopment

2/2016/0183

Replace existing garage door with window and door. Replace windows, replaced gutters and hopper etc

1-3 St Helen's Street

Recommended – no objections

2/2016/0229

Rear Extension

4 Deer Orchard Close

Recommended – no objections

2/2016/0221

Proposed first floor bedroom extension over existing garage

27, Woodville Park

Recommended – no objections

2/2016/0236

Proposed erection of replacement gate

Mill Cottage, Simonscales Lane

Recommended – No objections

The following applications were discussed at our meeting:-

2/2015/0705

Demolition of Fairfield Garage, Travis Perkins & WCF. Erection of replacement pet and equestrian store alongside a discount food store and associated works

Station Road, Cockermouth

Members were pleased to note that the additional pedestrian crossing point across Station Road to the east of the mini-roundabout had been removed from the application.

Recommended – That the application be approved subject to the provision of a central safety island at the entrance to the site. The Town Council welcomed any other mitigating traffic measures that would improve traffic flow in this area.

2/2016/0045

Development of new water supply pipeline connection from Thirlmere to West Cumbria including a water treatment works with associated vehicular access, landscaping and temporary working areas off A595 near Blindcrake. A service reservoir, valve house with vehicular access and landscaping at Moota Hill. A pumping station with vehicular access, fencing and landscaping at Harrot Hill, Cockermouth. Underground mains supply from the proposed WTW to Quarry Hill, Broughton Cross and into Copeland's boundary. Slip-lining of existing pipelines from Broughton Cross to Stainburn SR and from Cockermouth to Southwaite Farm incorporating the development of valve chambers, excavation and landscaping, temporary access, compounds, hard standings and other associated works

Recommended – Approval

2/2016/0226

Advertisement consent for 12 illuminated fascia's including 1 rounded sign

Oakhurst Service Station

Recommended – Refusal due to the overwhelming number of signs, the adverse effect that light pollution would cause to nearby residents, out of character.

2/2016/0258

Extension to provide a wet room and retrospective conservatory

35, Marvejols Park

Recommended – Approval

2/2016/0263

Resubmission of application 2/2015/0760 for the erection of a shed/storage building (retrospective)

18 Harrot Hill

Recommended – Refusal due to overdevelopment of the site and un-neighbourliness of the development.

2/2016/0265

Proposed ground and first floor alterations/extensions to bungalow

43 Beech Lane

Recommended – Refusal overdevelopment of corner plot, out of character with surrounding properties due to massing.

2/16/9002

All Saints School C of E Primary School, Slatefell Drive

Extension to classroom and staff room with single storey link to existing detached building, new car park access and creation of additional car parking spaces

Recommended - Approval

7b Tree Works, 101 The Parklands

Recommended – That the tree works application to reduce the height of a sycamore be approved.

7c Tree Preservation Order 3 2016

Agreed – That the revocation of Tree Preservation Order No. 5 2015 be noted and that the content of Tree Preservation Order No. 3 2016 be noted.

8 Financial Matters

8a Payments

Resolved – That the schedule of payments in the sum of £29,334.05 as set out in the expenditure transactions approval list be formally approved for payment.

8b Insurance

Resolved – (a) That the insurance cover for 2016/17 be endorsed.

8c Internal Audit Report

Agreed – That the content of the year end report by our Internal Auditor be noted.

8d Accounts for the Year ending March 2016

Resolved – That the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 be agreed and accepted subject to audit.

8e Audit Commission Return for the Year ended 2016

Resolved – (a) That Section 1 of the annual return relating to the Annual Governance Statement be formally certified and the accounts approved and duly signed by the Clerk/RFO and the Chairman.

(b) That section 2 of the Annual Return relating to the Accounting Statements be also formally approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

(c) That it be noted that Section 4 of the Annual Return has been duly completed by our internal auditor.

(d) That it be noted that the required notice concerning the appointment of date for the exercise of electors rights has been displayed.

(e) That it be noted that the Clerk will send the documentation required by the external auditor as soon as practicable.

9 Schedule of correspondence, notices and publications

9a Memorial Gardens

Resolved – That the £50 donation towards the restoration of the Memorial Gardens from the residents of Wordsworth Court be gratefully received.

9b CALC Circular

Agreed – That the contents of the May 2016 CALC circular be noted.

9c Tarn Close Sports Ground

Agreed – That the current activities of Cockermouth Junior Football Club be noted.

9d Hedge, Towers Lane Play Area

Resolved – That consideration of Mr Coley’s letter dated 3 May be deferred pending legal advice.

9e Cockermouth Flag

Further to minute number 106b (2012/2013), those present re-considered whether or not to support the creation of a Cockermouth flag.

A discussion ensued regarding what benefits a Cockermouth flag would bring to the town.

The majority of those present wanted the flag design to be that of the Town Crest, however the Chief Vexillologist of the Flag Institute had advised that the Town Crest in itself was not appropriate as a flag design.

Resolved – That Cockermouth and District Civic Trust be informed that Cockermouth Town Council does not support the creation of a Cockermouth flag.

9f Street Naming

Recommended –That the new development at Holmewood be named Holmewood Gardens.

9g Planning Application 2/2016/0186

Agreed – That the letter of support from the occupier of 48 Low Road following the Town Councils recommendation to refuse planning application 2/2016/0186 on flooding grounds be noted.

10 Clerks Report

Members considered the content of the Clerk’s report.

Resolved – (a) That the contents of the Clerk’s report be noted.

(b) That Nici Hewitson be offered the lease to Victoria Hall subject to the usual terms i.e. the hall being made available free of charge for switch on day and the Mayor’s coffee morning.

(c) That a two year restoration plan for the Memorial Gardens be agreed.

(d) That Ian Creighton from the West Cumbria Rivers Trust be appointed to assist with the Restoration.

(e) That a special town council meeting to discuss the two year restoration plan in more detail be held after 6 June 2016.

11 Bus Shelters

A discussion ensued regarding the most suitable method of cleaning the Main Street bus Shelters.

Resolved – (a) That the specification be amended to show that the Main Street bus shelters be cleaned using traffic film remover.

(b) That in view of the amendment a revised specification go back out to tender.

12 Planning Applications

Allerdale Borough Council requires town councils to reply to planning applications within 21 days. As Cockermouth Town Council meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month, it has to have an agreed system to respond to planning applications requiring a reply prior to meetings. The current agreed system is to circulate those planning applications via email.

Some councillors questioned whether this was the best or most appropriate method.

An alternative method involving calling a special meeting of the town council to discuss planning applications (if required) was trialed for 6 months in 2015, however this was not adopted as attendance was poor.

Members discussed at length which approach to adopt.

Resolved – That a special meeting of the Town Council be arranged (if required) each month to discuss any planning applications which require a response prior to the usual scheduled Town Council meeting.

Resolved –

‘That under the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be removed for the following item of business due to staffing issues being discussed’

13 Auto-Enrolment

The Pensions Act 2008 & 2011 are aimed at enabling and encouraging more people to build up a private pension to supplement their state pension.

This is the first time that employers have been required by law to contribute to their

workers pension. Minimum contributions are being phased in gradually over the next few years.

Resolved – That Cockermouth Town Council sets up a contributory pension scheme with NEST for non-eligible and entitled workers.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm