

Minutes of a Meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Cockermouth on Wednesday 18 September 2019 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor A Smith (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor G Bennion
Councillor I Burns
Councillor D Malloy
Councillor S Nicholson
Councillor C Smith
Councillor A Semple
Councillor A Tyson
Councillor R Watson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Laidlow, S Barnes & A Kennon

Also Present: 4 member of the public, two representatives from Allerdale Borough Council & a member of the Press

66 Minutes

Resolved – That the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 August 2019.

67 Minutes

Resolved – That the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the last special planning meeting held on 5 September 2019.

68 Declaration of Interest

Councillor A Smith declared a personal interest in all planning applications due to being a member of the Development Panel.

Councillor A Tyson declared a personal interest in planning application VAR/2019/0025 due to being a member of the Development Panel.

69 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor was not present at the meeting.

70 Police Report

The police report was circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Town Clerk to contact Police regarding the lack of further information provided

when you click on the link contained within the Police report.

71 Public Participation

There was none.

72 Planning Matters

72a Planning Applications

VAR/2019/0025

Non compliance with condition 2 on planning approval 2/2018/0155 for amended house types, drainage and boundary treatments

Land off Strawberry How Road

Recommended – Refusal. Three storey houses and location of compound un-neighbourly.

FUL/2019/0209

Replacement wooden framed windows and replace with white UPVC double glaze windows (retrospective)

Flat 3, 44 Market Place

Recommended – Approval

FUL/2019/0114

Extension to existing hotel to provide additional bedrooms together with alterations to the car park.

Premier Inn, Waterloo Lane

Recommended – Approval

72b TPO No 6 of 2019

Agreed – That the contents of TPO No. 6 of 2019, Radura, 3 Holmewood Gardens be noted.

72c Application for Tree Works

Recommended – That the pollarding of an overgrown oak tree, 65, Gote Road be approved.

72d Application for Tree Works

Recommended – That the various tree works, 20 Parklands Drive be approved.

72e Application for Tree Works

Recommended – That the various tree works in work schedule, South Lodge, Simonscales Lane be approved.

73 Schedule of Payments

Resolved – That the schedule of payments in the sum of £19,019.46 be formally approved for payment.

74 Correspondence

74a Walk of Pride

Agreed – That the letter of congratulations in respect of our attractive and well cared for hanging baskets which make a positive contribution to the ambiance of the whole town be noted.

74b Calc Newsletter

Agreed – That the contents of the September 2019 circular be noted.

75 Clerks Report

Agreed - That the content of the report be noted.

76 Tree Planting

The Director of Cumbria Woodlands gave a detailed presentation regarding United Utilities funding currently available to maintain/plant new/young trees and/or to provide technical assistance to develop costings for particular schemes.

He offered to do an audit of Town Council owned land.

Resolved – That an audit of Town Council owned land be undertaken.

77 Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Planning and Building Control Manager gave a detailed presentation regarding the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

He explained that Allerdale Borough Council had a duty to support the Neighbourhood Planning process and that Rebecca Wilson would be supporting parishes wanting to produce a plan.

Neighbourhood Plans had to be consistent with National Policy Framework and Local Plans. Part 1 of our Local Plan was adopted and it was anticipated that Part 2 would be adopted early Spring 2020. Modifications were expected this week.

He explained that even adopted plans can lose weight and that was the position Allerdale were currently in. He made reference to the Little Broughton appeal decision. The Government refresh of the National Policy Framework early in the year also affect the weight of adopted plans.

He stressed that a Neighbourhood Plan could not stop development or go against the Local Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan could play a role if a plan were coming to the end of its life (our local plan ends in 2029).

He anticipated that a Neighbourhood Plan could take two years to complete and that they must be based on robust information and analysis of the local area, the evidence base and that community engagement was a legal requirement. The Neighbourhood Plan would be the subject of an independent examination and referendum. Once made a Neighbourhood Plan had the same status as a Local Plan. If a Neighbourhood Plan postdated the adoption of a Local Plan it was classed as the most up to date. Conversely if Allerdale reviewed their Local Plan it was then classed as the most up to date.

He advised us not to underestimate the financial resources, people resources and hard work required. Limited grant funding was available.

He asked what was it that the Town Council hoped to achieve?

Did the Town Council wish to shape development or flesh out what the Local Plan was weak on? If that was the case we could be consulted upon and involved in Article 4, Development Briefs, conservation areas, tree preservation orders etc.

The situation was fluid at the moment and had been for some time, Developers were exploiting weaknesses in the Local Plan. Allerdale as a whole, has a hierarchy percentage of dwellings, however, if there is a housing shortfall in Allerdale as a whole, Cockermouth comes into the equation.

Developers want to build in Cockermouth for the best return. Developers are arguing that as supply has not come forward from elsewhere and because Part 2 has not been adopted they can build in Cockermouth.

This will change next year when Part 2 is adopted. Part 2 contains a zero allocation for housing in Cockermouth. Trajectories assume that allocations will come forward, this however is in the hands of developers. The Governments revised measure of need depended upon an early review of Part 1 and subsequently part 2 as part 2 is the delivery mechanism for Part 1.

He concluded by saying that if the Town Council had issues with the Local Plan Allerdale would support us to develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan. However, if we felt that the Local Plan was good/tight on all issues then a Neighbourhood Development Plan was not required.

The advantages of having a Neighbourhood Development Plan were that that plan was local, specific and offered some greater protection against green field land grabs. The disadvantages of having a Neighbourhood Development Plan were their development was resource/time hungry and you run the risk of the National Policy Framework and/or the Local Plan moving on.

You must be very clear why you need one – it is not a drawbridge.

The Planning and Building Control Manager promised to send information on the process to the Town Clerk.

Agreed – That the presentation be noted.

78 Bus Service

The Planning and Building Control Manager confirmed that 96 houses on Phase 1, Strawberry How were now occupied and that the S106 triggered Storey Homes to instigate a bus service. He promised to provide the Town Clerk with a copy of the proposed route.

Councillor Smith stated that he was keen to work with Stagecoach regarding the extension of that service to other areas of town e.g. Windmill Lane.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm