

Cockermouth Town Council

13 May 2020

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to a meeting of Cockermouth Town Council to be held virtually using Microsoft teams on **Thursday 21 May 2020 at 7.00 pm** for the purpose of the under-mentioned business.

Please let me know if you are unable to attend.

All welcome.

Yours sincerely



Sheila Brown

1. Apologies for absence

2. To authorise the Mayor to sign as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 15 April 2020 (pages 1-5)

3. To authorise the Mayor to sign as a correct record the minutes of the last special planning held on 7 May 2020 (pages 6-7)

4. Declaration of Interest – Members to give notice of any disclosable pecuniary interest, other registrable interest or any other interest and the nature of that interest in relation to any item on the agenda in accordance with the code of conduct.

5. Mayors Announcements – The Mayor will announce the events she has attended since the last meeting.

6. Police Report – To receive a report from Cumbria Constabulary

7. Public Participation

- a) To answer any questions from members of the public in accordance with the Summary of Public Rights
- b) To receive a petition from a member of the public in accordance with the Summary of Public Rights

8. Planning Matters

- a) To make recommendations upon various planning applications – There are none

9. Financial Matters



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Town Clerk
Sheila Brown



Joint Winners
Council of Europe Year 2000
Europe Prize

Previous Awards
Plaque of Honour, Flag of Honour
European Diploma



Twin Town
Marvejols, France



A Fairtrade Town

- a) To agree the attached schedule of payments **(page 8)**
- b) To approve the Audit Return for the year ended 31 March 2020 **(pages 9-14)**
- c) To note/comment upon the year-end report by our internal auditor **(pages 15-17)**

10. Correspondence

- a) To note the content of the April/May edition of CALC Newsletter **(pages 18-22)**
- b) To note the reply from the PCC regarding the lack of information regarding policing in our parish **(pages 23)**

11. Clerks Report (pages 24-25)

12. Memorial Seat – To consider a request from Councillor Burns to dedicate a memorial seat in memory of Kevin Twigg **(page 26)**

13. Temporary widening of pavement from the Co-op to just past Firns on Station Street to improve options for social distancing – To discuss

14. Temporary pavement in South Street – To discuss

15. Sewage running into Strawberry Beck – To discuss

The Mayor will move that:-

Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be removed for the following item of business due to contractual issues being discussed.

- 16. To consider a request from a tenant regarding a rent free period due to the effects of coronavirus on their business (pages 27-29)**

Press and Public Welcome

Minutes of a Meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held virtually on Wednesday 15 April 2020 at 7.00pm

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

Also Present: A member of the press & Councillor R Hanson

The Mayor welcomed everyone to our first virtual meeting of Cockermouth Town Council due to coronavirus.

180 Minutes

Resolved – That the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 February 2020.

181 Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the Climate Change Task Group be noted.

182 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 all planning applications due to being a member of the Development Panel.

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

183 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor had attended no functions since the last meeting. All functions had been cancelled due to corona virus.

She thanked Councillor Nicholson for erecting the blue tree lights on Main Street.

184 Police Report

There was no Police representative present at the meeting.

Resolved – That the Town Clerk write to the PCC to enquire why the Police were not willing to tell us about crime in our own town.

185 Public Participation

There was no public participation

186 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were circulated round all 12 councillors following social distancing in respect of corona virus:

FUL/2020/0038 (amended plans)

Resubmission of application FUL/2019/0104 for the change of use to holiday let with associated works including reinstatement of loft space above main staircase

All Saints Church Rooms, Kirkgate

Recommended – Refusal same reasons as previous

HOU/2020/0043 (change of description)

Proposed ground floor sunroom/utility room to rear elevation

Garthwhins, Mayo Street

Recommended – Approval

FUL/2020/0063 & LBC/2020/0012

Formation of new gated opening in eastern party boundary wall

Wordsworth Hotel, 43 Main Street

Recommended – Approval

HOU/2020/0043 (as amended) (change of description)

Proposed ground floor sunroom/utility room with decking and glass balustrade to rear elevation

Garthwhins, Mayo Street

Recommended – Approval

FUL/2020/0064

Demolition of retail unit and change of use as a pay and display car park

Country Pine and Oak, Lorton Street

Recommended – Approval

VAR/2020/0005

Variation condition 3, opening hours on application 2/2001/0900

Harris Park Bowling Club, Fern Bank

Recommended – Approval

WTPO/2020/0010

Crown thin up to 25% t4 & T5

Recommended – Approval

HOU/2020/0029

Replacement windows and doors

17, Cocker Lane

Recommended – Approval

The following planning application was discussed at the meeting:-

HOU/2020/0057

Proposed single storey extension to rear

25, Parkside Avenue

Recommended – Approval

187 Schedule of Payments

Resolved – That the schedule of payments in the sum of £6,384.45 be formally approved for payment.

188 Financial Budget Comparison

Resolved – That the financial budget comparison between 1 April 2019 & 31 April 2020 be noted.

189 Accounts for the year ended 2019/20

Resolved – That the accounts for the year ended 2019/20 be agreed & approved.

190 Clerk's Report

Agreed – That the content of the report be noted.

191 High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy (HCID)

This model policy set out the general principles and approach that a Town Council would follow in respect of a HCID outbreak in the United Kingdom with an imminent threat of infection in Cockermouth.

However, the introduction of new emergency regulations on 4 April 2020 had largely superceded the need for the policy.

Agreed – That the High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy be received.

192 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (coronavirus) (flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel meetings)(England & Wales) Regulations 2020

Agreed – That the content of the new emergency regulations and there implications be noted.

Resolved – That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960, the public be removed for the following items of business due to contractual issues being discussed.

193 Rent Free Period

Resolved – (a) That the Centre for Leadership & Richwebmedia be given a 3 month rent free period due to hardship caused by the coronavirus.

(b) That a further review be taken after the end of June 2020.

The meeting closed at 7.42pm

Minutes of a special planning meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held virtually on Thursday 7 May at 7.00pm

Members

J Laidlow (Mayor)

S Barnes
I Burns
J Laidlow
S Nicholson
C Smith
A Tyson

G Bennion
A Kennon
D Malloy
A Semple
A Smith

194 Declaration of Interest

Councillor A Smith declared a personal interest in all planning applications due to being a member of the Development Panel he also declared a prejudicial interest in planning application FUL/2020/0084 due to being the applicant.

Councillor C Smith declared a prejudicial interest in planning application FUL/2020/0084 due to being the applicant.

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

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

195 Public Participation

There was none.

196 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were considered at the meeting:-

FUL/2020/0077

Erection of fence around school grounds

St Joseph's RC School

Recommended - approval

HOU/2020/0062

Double garage

1 High View, Holmewood Gardens

Recommended – approval

HOU/2020/0065

Demolition of existing rear extensions and rebuild new two storey rear extension (re-submission)

76, Brigham Road

Recommended – Approval

FUL/2020/0084

Storage area to existing laundry with new pitched roof and flat roof

Fellcroft, Windmill Lane

Recommended – Approval

HOU/2020/0049

Removal of conservatory, internal alterations and extension to relocate kitchen/dining room

13 Albermarle Street

Recommended – Approval

197 Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No. 13, Land at Gote Road

On 16 October 2019, Allerdale Borough Council made TPO No. 13 2019.

Allerdale Borough Council have confirmed the order due to the tree being considered to be of high amenity value contributing to the character of the area. It is considered that the results of a pollard would affect the visual amenity provided and may cause detriment to its future health given the size and age of the tree.

Agreed – That the confirmation of the order be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm

Cockermouth Town Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/20

Tn no	Cheque	Gross	Vat	Net	Invoice date	Details	Cheque Total
38	112534	£17.96	£0.00	£17.96	01/04/20	Viking - a4 paper less credit note	£17.96
35	112531	£10,492.95	£0.00	£10,492.95	01/05/20	Allerdale Borough Council - Rates April to Sept 20	£10,492.95
1		£562.75	£0.00	£562.75		toile Public Toilets- Bitterbec	
2		£512.95	£0.00	£512.95		toile Public Toilets - Main Str	
3		£3,182.25	£0.00	£3,182.25		TIC Library	
4		£6,235.00	£0.00	£6,235.00		TH Town Hall	
36	112532	£848.62	£0.00	£848.62	01/05/20	CALC - Subscription	£848.62
37	112533	£945.41	£126.26	£819.15	01/05/20	Npower Ltd - electric charges	£945.41
1		£160.06	£10.30	£149.76		toile Main street toilets -	
2		£122.41	£8.51	£113.90		toile Bitter beck toilets	
3		£9.61	£0.46	£9.15		MG wakefield road toilets	
4		£261.48	£43.58	£217.90		TIC library	
5		£375.89	£62.65	£313.24		TIC library	
6		£15.96	£0.76	£15.20		toile Harris Park toilets	
39	112535	£552.00	£92.00	£460.00	01/05/20	Cumbria Coal Ltd - Clean Mayo/ Cenotaph	£552.00
40	112536	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	01/05/20	J Airey - Internal Audit	£100.00
41	112537	£420.41	£70.07	£350.34	01/05/20	Tech 4 Office Equipment Ltd -	£420.41
1		£112.78	£18.80	£93.98		EST staples- photo copier	
2		£307.63	£51.27	£256.36		TIC copier - the library	
42	112538	£12.00	£2.00	£10.00	01/05/20	Tech 4 Office Equipment Ltd - Hire of printer - KG - WFM	£12.00
43	112539	£2,199.42	£366.57	£1,832.85	04/05/20	Tivoli Services Ltd - Ground Maintenance	£2,199.42
1		£1,839.42	£306.57	£1,532.85		MG mem gardens	
2		£360.00	£60.00	£300.00		OP 4 play areas	
44	112540	£108.00	£18.00	£90.00	04/05/20	Cumbria Coal Ltd - Clean Main Street/ Bitterbeck Toilet	£108.00
45	112541	£36.10	£6.02	£30.08	04/05/20	Lakes Electrial Supplies Ltd - xmas lights	£36.10
46	112542	£206.04	£34.34	£171.70	12/05/20	e Slip Ltd - payroll services	£206.04
Total		£15,938.91	£715.26	£15,223.65			

Signature

Signature

Date

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2020**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2020**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2020.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2019) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2020).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2020**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	N/A	

* *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

Cougborough Town Council

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation **during** the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.			
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.			
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.			
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.			
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.			
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.			
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")			
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

COURSEMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

www.courmouth.org

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY
COLEERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	195,388	262,417	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	198,012	198,570	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	230,186	103,516	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	108,553	117,920	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	247,615	249,472	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	262,417	197,111	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	248,423	187,730	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1,696,300	1,496,300	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Steve Brown

Date

31/4/20

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

John Laidlaw

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of

COUGEMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2019/20

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

YEAR END REPORT BY THE INTERNAL AUDITOR TO COCKERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

I confirm I have, on the 28th April 2020 undertaken an internal audit for the period 1st October 2019- 31st March 2020 in accordance with the Account and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 as outlined in the Audit Plan approved by Council and incorporating any new requirements as outlined in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils" A Practitioners' Guide (England) March 2018

This report supplements the information reported in the first half -year audit.

To comply with Government guidance and social distancing regulations during the Covid 19 pandemic the Audit was conducted by examining documents sent by e-mail by the Clerk, information displayed on the Council website. – cockermouth.org., and the Clerk providing additional information for clarification in response to queries.

A review in all of the areas listed below was completed.

1. Proper Bookkeeping

A clear audit trail existed from all primary accounts in the Edge Accounting Package. The manual checks supplement computer data. All are balanced monthly and are accurate. Robust backup procedures exist to safeguard computer records.

2. Standing Orders/Financial Regulations/Transparency Legislation

The Council currently has both documents.

The council website is compliant with Transparency Legislation having fulfilled the statutory requirement to display the requisite information publicly.

3. Invoice procedure

A comprehensive check was made of invoices paid in the period, which exceeded £1000.00 all were authorised, supported by invoices and recorded in the schedule.

Items over £2500 were competitively sourced, adhered to financial regulations and the principle of best value.

4. Vat

Vat has been recorded and all sums reclaimed are accurate for the financial year 2019-2020

5. Sct 137 Payments

This power is now not applied as Cockermouth Town Council has the General Power of Competence, which will be confirmed at the Annual Council Meeting immediately following elections as required by legislation (Localism Act 2011. Sct 1.8) ,

6. Risk Management

The risk assessment documents were reviewed and adopted at the meeting held on 19th February 2020. Minute No. 159

7. Internal Financial Controls

There is clear evidence by checks, dates and signatures on relevant documents e.g. invoices, financial statements, schedule of payments, bank reconciliations, and bank statements that the Council is in control of the use of public monies.

The Council annually reviews the effectiveness of internal controls and internal audit functions. The Internal Auditor was appointed at the meeting held on 19th February 2020 Minute No. 158

8. Register of Interest

Copies of all documentation are retained on file and members fulfil their obligation to advise and declare as appropriate and update their personal register.

9. Budgetary Control

A correct budget process is in place and the budget regularly monitored.

The accounting method enables immediate identification of monthly and cumulative spends to each budget heading. The financial reports presented by the RFO enable the council to readily address any budget under/overspends and if necessary make the relevant.

The 2020/21 budget was received and approved at the meeting held on 15th January 2020 and the Council formally approved the precept to be advised to the Borough Council. Minute No. 142.

10. Cash Balances at the Bank

The balances at the bank as at the 31st March 2020 are considered adequate to enable the Council to fulfil budgeted expenditure, deliver planned projects and retain an adequate cash flow.

The increase in cash reserves has accrued from the sale of a capital asset of £150,000. These funds can only be used to acquire another capital asset and is therefore not available as a revenue spend in the 2020/2021 Budget.

11. Income Controls

All income is promptly banked upon receipt. Allotment rents are demanded in a timely manner and meticulous records ensure monitored payments and overdue amounts. TIC income is checked and promptly banked.

12. Clerk's Expenses/Credit/Debit Card.

All expenses are reported to the relevant meeting.

Sums drawn are allocated to the appropriate budget head and VAT is identified and claimed.

The Credit Card is paid in full to meet payment deadlines.

13. Payroll Controls

PAYE/NIC records are undertaken externally and are properly operated and up to date. All statutory payments to HMRC and Pension provider have been made. The accuracy of the deductions and payments is confirmed. Annual appraisals are undertaken

14. Asset Control

The Asset Register is updated annually to include any acquisitions and disposals if appropriate. Assets of £1,696,300. 37 are correctly identified in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

All assets are adequately covered by insurance.

15. Bank Reconciliation

The core cash accounts are reconciled to the bank statements monthly and accurately state the financial position of the council.

16. Year End Accounts

Cockermouth Town Council produces accounts on an Income and Expenditure basis as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

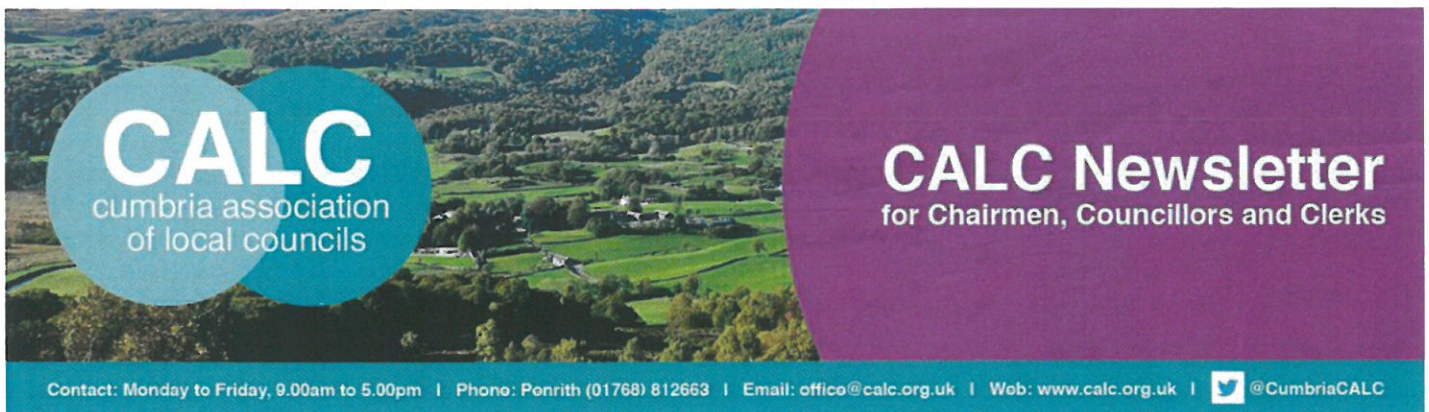
I confirm Cockermouth Town Council is fully compliant with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and all other statutory undertakings.

I conclude and report that the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and the Assistant has maintained a high standard of recordkeeping, which has simplified the audit process. The Council's control systems are efficient and effective and give the appropriate level of confidence. The financial statements and reports reflect a true and accurate account of the Council's finance and governance records.

I wish to extend my best wishes to all Council members, the Clerk and staff who continue, in these difficult circumstances, to serve and represent the community and undertake their respective roles.



Georgina D. Airey – Internal Auditor. 28th April 2020



April/May 2020

April is normally a time to breathe a sigh of relief that year end is passed, spring is in the air and the daffodils are out. This spring is different in ways none of us could have imagined even a month ago. The Coronavirus pandemic has swept through the country demanding changes that previously would have been unthinkable. However, Cumbria has been swift to set up its support networks through the Local Resilience Hubs, with all tiers of local government, and partners, working together. Communities have rallied in an extraordinary manner to provide support to those who need it within their areas and in so doing giving much needed assistance to allow the NHS to support the most seriously ill. Thank you for all your great contributions and make sure you continue to keep safe and well.

Council Meetings during the Lockdown

NALC published Legal Briefing L01-20 covering the new regulations on remote meetings very promptly on Monday 6th April. CALC has circulated them to all member councils along with detailed guidance on how to manage holding council meetings on line. These documents, plus a great deal of further information that will be useful to councils over the coming weeks is available on the NALC website. Some of the key information is summarised below:

Financial year-end and AGAR

Following NALC's engagement with government around local council audit timeframes, final regulations were published on 7 April and will come into force on 30 April. These extend the statutory audit deadlines for 2019/20.

- The publication date for final, audited, accounts for local councils will move from 30 September to 30 November 2020
- To give local councils more flexibility, the requirement for the public inspection period to include the first 10 working days of July has been removed. Instead, local councils must commence the public inspection period on or before the first working day of September 2020

This means that draft accounts must be approved by 31 August 2020 at the latest or maybe approved earlier where possible.

Authorities must publish the dates of their public inspection period this year, and the government recommends that they provide public notice on their websites (where available) when the public inspection period would usually commence, explaining why they are departing from normal practise for 2020. NALC will provide updates for members once these regulations have been made. The Joint Panel for Accountability and Governance (JPAG) will also provide an addendum to the Practitioners Guide to layout fully for councils the new time frames that the government puts in place.

PKF Littlejohn has asked for any councils to contact them **immediately** to update the contact details for your council if there have been changes to the main contact person since they last communicated with you.

Managing Risks to Your Council

In these challenging times, NALC recommends that member councils consider different scenarios and what actions might help mitigate any risks to the council. This will vary for individual councils and it may be that no specific actions or changes are required. As examples:

- It may be helpful to review your scheme of delegation to ensure it is fit for purpose and would ensure minimal disruption to the work of the council if councillors are not able to attend meetings and committees. For example, you may wish to consider if certain decisions could be delegated to the clerk, in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman.
- You may wish to review critical functions or services and consider how these would continue in the case of staff absence
- You may have local residents with queries about coronavirus, in which case we would advise you signpost them to government information and advice

Elections

The Coronavirus Act, which the government introduced on 19 March, postpones any elections that were due to be held in May 2020 until 6 May 2021. Any other electoral events, such as the council or parliamentary by-elections, will also be postponed until May 2021.

Regulations concerning the postponement of elections, including in relation to casual vacancies, were laid on 6 April and came in to force on 7 April. NALC will be issuing a briefing in the next few days, which CALC will circulate to all members.

Cumbria Community Resilience Group

The Cumbria Community Resilience Group is meeting weekly to get feedback from across the county on problems that need resolving. Parish and Town councils have been receiving updates from CALC

on the support being put in place. You play a valuable part in sign-posting members of your community to the help that is available across the county.

For information on the support for communities in place across the county, please click on the link to Cumbria County Council's website at:

<https://cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/communities.asp>

Crosby Ravensworth Tree Group



Here is a reminder of some of the good work being carried out by our parishes and communities before the lockdown came into force and stopped all communal activities. The Crosby Ravensworth Parish Tree Group was set up in 2019 to tackle the tree problem across the parish. Over the last few months, volunteers have surveyed 4,788 trees 75% of which were over 100 years old. With help from partners and in conjunction with local landowners, they had planted over 1700 trees and 900 hedge plants by mid February 2020.

This is the first year of the project and they are now planning for 2020/21. If you would like to find out more about the project, contact Andrew Woodward at agwoodward@aol.com

The Transport Planning Society

NALC recently met with the Transport Planning Society who asked us to forward you some hopefully useful web-links which may be of interest on local transport issues relevant to member councils in your areas:

- TPS Transport Planning Day [awards info](#)
- Transport Planning Day [Transport for New Homes \(TfNH\) Awards](#)
- Transport for New Homes new developments [checklist](#)
- CIHT Better [Planning advice note](#)
- Royal College of Art [Mobility for Future Rural Communities](#)
- Community Transport Association [website](#) .

Calls to CALC re Coronavirus

Q: Can local councils furlough their employees?

A: It appears not. NALC explains that the government's Job Retention Scheme is available to public sector organisations and the guidance states that "the government expects that the scheme will not be used by many public sector organisations, as the majority of public sector employees are continuing to provide essential public services or contribute to the response to the coronavirus outbreak".

However, where local councils have staff who are unable to work in their current roles, where that **role is funded from income other than precept**, and they are unable to be redeployed to another role to support the response to Coronavirus, the council may wish to consider furloughing those staff with the hope of being able to reclaim a portion of their salaries. But at this stage, NALC could not be certain that the council would be successful in claiming back that salary.

Q: Can meetings be held via email?

A: No, the new legislation on meetings says that if councils choose to meet, all meetings of council should include members being able to discuss matters together either via a teleconference or video conference.

However, if the technical challenges are too great, then councils can call an extraordinary general meeting to agree to suspend meetings and approve a scheme of delegated powers to allow the clerk the powers to make key decisions after consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and other councillors depending on the circumstances. If you need further advice on delegation of powers, please contact the CALC office.

Q: Do councillors cease to be councillors if the council does not meet for 6 months?

A: The new meetings Regulations do not deal with the six month rule. MHCLG have confirmed that remote attendance by members counts for the purpose of the six-month rule on attendance. Where there is absence for illness the Council can continue to deal as now and pass the necessary resolution to approve the reason for the absence. If meetings are not held, as long as councillors have been actively engaging in council work, including 'advising the clerk', the view is that it is unlikely that any councillor will fall foul of this rule if it is not their intention to stand down.

Q: Do councils have to hold an Annual Meeting of the Parish?

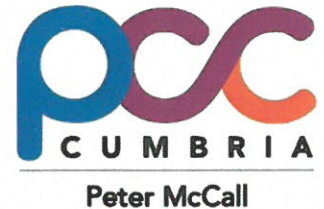
A: No, the new legislation regarding parish council meetings suspends the requirement for councils to hold any meetings until 7th May 2021 including the Annual Meeting of the Parish.

Member Development

And finally, as you will be aware, all CALC training sessions have been postponed until the guidance from Government allows us resume. We will be advertising courses as soon as we received permission to do so.

ends

Peter McCall
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria
Carleton Hall
Penrith CA10 2AU



Sheila Brown
The Town Clerk
Cockermouth Town Council
The Town Hall
Market Street
CA13 9NP

In case of enquiry please
contact: L Hodgson
Tel: 01768 217734
Email: lisa.hodgson@cumbria.police.uk
www.cumbria-pcc.gov.uk

Email:- clerk@cockermouth.org

23 April 2020

Our Ref: QSPI – 146/20

Dear Ms Brown

Thank you for your email which was received in the office 17 April 2020.

The Constabulary have advised that Inspector Rachel Gale, who is the Allerdale Neighbourhood Policing Inspector has emailed you directly on 21st April 2020 with regards to the issue you raised. In summary, the Constabulary now publishes monthly Newsletters which detail issues within your communities and also advises of officer engagement in your local area. The newsletter is released on or around the 15th of every month and communications were sent to each council to advise them of this change in January 2020.

The Constabulary have advised that Inspector Gale has requested that if you wish for an officer to attend to contact her or PCSO Clare Parker directly.

I hope that this information is of assistance to you, thank you for taking the time to make contact.

Yours sincerely,

Peter McCall
Police and Crime Commissioner

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CLERK'S REPORT

Tourism and Publicity

Visitor numbers for April – TIC closed.

The library/tic closed on 18 March 2020. Awaiting Government advice on re-opening.

Library

Cockermouth Heritage Group will be staging an exhibition in the library throughout May 2020 to commemorate WW2 – This may be cancelled.

Victoria Hall

The new door has been installed.

Public Toilets

These were closed on 24 March 2020. Awaiting further Government Advice.

Main Street and Bitterbeck toilets were deep cleaned last week.

Play Areas

These were closed on 24 March 2020. Awaiting further Government Advice.

We are experiencing dog fouling issues on Towers Lane. David kindly erected a sign for me.

Cows have badly damaged Isel Road Play area, I am looking into what can be done to rectify the issue.

The climbing frame on Memorial Gardens Play area will be re-painted.

Twinning

A small group of barrel organists will come over to Cockermouth in July to play at Cockermouth Live. Cockermouth Live will pay the performers some money towards their expenses. This has been cancelled.

Arrangements are well underway for the 37th Anniversary Visit. The Marvejolais are discussing whether or not they will come over. The trip may be delayed until 2021.

The EPSF has been cancelled for this year due to corona virus.

Allotments

Rents are coming in, mainly via bacs. We will chase any non payments at the end of the month.

Cancellations due to the Corona Virus

All weddings until end of May have been re-scheduled. Not taking any new bookings for now.

Awaiting Government guidance as to when weddings will go ahead.

The planning inquiry Strawberry How has been cancelled. No alternative date as yet.

Our VE Day commemorations were cancelled. The Mayor laid a wreath at the cenotaph.

CPRT has been cancelled.

War Memorial

The statue has been cleaned.

Mayo Statue

The statue has been cleaned.