

Cockermouth Town Council



14 April 2021

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to a Parish Meeting of Cockermouth Town Council to be held virtually using Microsoft teams on **Wednesday 5 May 2021 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

Julie Laidlow, Mayor of Cockermouth

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **To authorise the Mayor to sign as a correct record the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 March 2019 (pages 1-14)**
3. **To receive the Annual Report of Cockermouth Town Council for 2020/21 (pages 15-22)**
4. **To receive observations of the County Councillors for the Town (Mrs Hanson & Mr Kennon) and Borough Councillors for the Town (Mr A Smith, Mr A Semple, Mr A Tyson & Mr R Munby)(pages 23-34)**
5. **To receive a report from the Cockermouth & Papcastle Trust (pages 35-37)**
6. **To deal with any other business of which at least 48 hours notice has been given to the Chairman by emailing clerk@cockermouth.org prior to the commencement of the meeting.**

NOTE: By virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, all members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting as observers, but only electors of Cockermouth are entitled to speak or vote.

The meeting will be held via Teams. If you wish to attend, please provide the Clerk with your email address and she will send you an invitation by email.

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Sheila Brown, *Town Clerk*
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Joint Winners

Council of Europe Year 2000

Europe Prize

Previous Awards

Plaque of Honour, Flag of Honour

European Diploma

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, COCKERMOUTH ON
MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019 AT 7PM

Present: Councillor D Malloy (Mayor)
Councillor I Burns
Councillor L Davies
Councillor R Hanson
Councillor A Kennon
Councillor J Laidlow
Councillor E Nicholson
Councillor S Nicholson
Councillor A Smith
Councillor A Tyson

Apologies: Councillor K Scales

Also Present: J Ellis, Borough Councillor, C Smith, Borough Councillor, a press representative and approximately 11 members of the public.

Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8 May 2018 were signed as a correct record.

Annual Report of the Town Council

The Mayor, David Malloy introduced his Annual Report of the Town Council. He commented upon the sad loss recently of Councillor Sam Standage.

2018/19 has once again been a very busy year for Cockermouth Town Council. Town Council meetings can now be recorded and filmed and as a result the Town Council has adopted a Protocol which is displayed at the entrance to our meeting room.

The Town Council is consulted by the Borough Council on all planning applications within the town of Cockermouth and in all cases, comments have been forwarded to the Borough Council setting out the Town Council's views. The final decision on planning applications does not always agree with the views of the Town Council however the majority of decisions do agree.

Special Planning meetings are now held on the first Thursday of every month if required.

I am pleased to inform you that every square inch of available space in the Town Hall is now leased. The Citizens Advice Bureau continue to hold their outreach sessions each Wednesday in a ground floor office. Allerdale Borough Council enforces usage of our car park on our behalf. Victoria Hall is currently leased by Mrs Bealt. The Vicky Business Centre opened on 21 February 2018 providing vibrant, flexible and affordable office space for home workers, start-up businesses etc. Flood resilience works were completed and paid for with a flood resilience grant and should help protect the premises from future flooding.

The Tourist Information Centre moved to the library on Main Street on 3 April 2017, along with Allerdale Local Links. The building transferred to Cockermouth Town Council in October 2018 and staffed by the Town Council in partnership with Cumbria County Council and Allerdale Borough Council. This arrangement has worked well so far. We believe we have added value by picking up

the cost of newspapers and providing story sacks. Since 5 December 2018 we have been trialling late opening until 5 pm each Wednesday. This will be reviewed in June 2019.

Our website contains lots of useful information including councillor details, dates of town council meetings, minutes of meetings, events etc. Check out www.cockermouth.org

Our twinning links continue to flourish despite tough economic times. Exchanges to date include: -

Rotarian exchange

35th Anniversary Visit to Cockermouth

We are currently planning the 36th Anniversary Visit to Marvejols

In June 2017 we became a 'sister city to Hebron, New Hampshire. Originally Hebron was part of a larger colonial town named after Lord Cockermouth. Cockermouth was founded in 1766. By 1792, it had grown into two geographically distinct villages. As a result, Cockermouth was split. The western portion became Groton and the eastern portion became Hebron.

A representative from Hebron will visit Cockermouth in September 2019.

As a result of the town being awarded the Europe Prize in the year 2000 a Europe Prize Scholarship Fund was set up and has now become established and a great help to Cockermouth 6th form youngsters pursuing their studies in Europe. The Committee continues to raise money to keep the fund going for the foreseeable future.

The Council provides allotments on two sites St. Helen's Street and the Gote.

The Gote Road allotments were transferred to the Town Council from Cumbria County Council under a community asset transfer. There are currently approximately 30 people on the waiting list for an allotment. A successful presentation evening was held in the Council Chamber on 24 September 2018 for winners of the Garden and Allotment Competition. The Town Clerk continues to meet members of the Allotments Association on a regular basis.

The Town Council sponsored various events held in Cockermouth during 2018/19 including Cockermouth Carnival, Cockermouth Live, Taste Cumbria & Taste Christmas and Christmas Panto. We were honoured to host Stage 5 of the Tour of Britain 2018. This uphill time trial started in Cockermouth and ended at Whinlatter Pass.

The fireworks display held in the Memorial Gardens was a resounding success and will be repeated again this year. The usual Christmas activities organised by the Town Council took place and were well attended. The Christmas Lights were fantastic again this year. We continue to be grateful for the donations made by businesses, local organisations and individuals towards the cost of the lights despite tough economic times.

Civic events organised included our Civic Service & Remembrance Sunday.

The Council's Internal Auditor, Jean Airey, a former Town Clerk of Keswick, regularly audits the Town Council's accounts and reports back to the Council. This year's annual accounts have been prepared and the Clerk will shortly be sending off the required Annual Return to the External District Auditor. The repeal of Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 now allows enables the Town Council to finally embrace modern banking methods.

The Council continues to employ Tivoli as their Maintenance Contractor.

A 30-year lease was signed with Cockermouth Junior Football Club for their future use of Tarn Close Sports Ground. Their vision involves the creation of a football centre at Tarn Close for use by all teams in the town, junior, senior and veteran serving in the region of 500 members initially. Their long-term vision involves the erection of a synthetic indoor pitch to serve Cockermouth and the surrounding villages.

Play areas and land at Greyrigg Avenue, Harris Park Extension, Isel Road, Towers Lane and Memorial Gardens continue to be maintained by Cockermouth Town Council.

The Localism Bill published on the 13 December 2010 aims to shift power from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and Councils by lifting the burden of bureaucracy, empowering communities and strengthening accountability to local people. A range of new powers and reforms will be introduced as a result of the Bill.

One of those new powers is the General Power of Competence (GPC). I am pleased to announce that on the 21 May 2015, the Town Council re-confirmed that it meets both criteria for eligibility for use of the General Power of Competence as set out in a statutory instrument known as the Parish Council's (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 which came into force in April 2012.

The new General Power of Competence will fundamentally change the way Local Government behaves, giving them the same capacity to act as an individual generally which will enable us to do anything apart from that which is specifically prohibited. This will result in greater innovation and a new more confident entrepreneurial approach which should in turn lead to greater efficiencies, improved partnership working and the ability to help our community in ways previously outside our remit.

The Town Council adopted a revised Code of Conduct on 17 July 2012. Copies of the Code can be obtained from our website. The long-awaited report of the Independent Committee on Standards in Public Life (previously the Nolan Committee) on Ethical Standards in Local Government was published on 4 February 2019. It contains a special chapter on town and parish councils and many of the 26 recommendations intend to promote and maintain the standards expected by the public, relate directly to them.

The Town Council continues to maintain three bus shelters two on Main Street and one on Castlegate Drive.

The Town Council has worked closely with a number of voluntary organisations regarding a series of events planned to mark the 100th anniversary of the Great War. The Town Council has adopted a flower bed adjacent to Gote Bridge on the Crown Street side. This is currently being leased to the Rotary to commemorate those lost during WW1.

Our speed indication device continues to be placed at 'speeding' hotspots around Town. The Town Council has worked closely with Allerdale Borough Council, The Brewery, The Civic Trust and Lovell's regarding landscaping works on The Point, Brewery Head. Phase one of the scheme is now complete. Riversmeet are leading phase 2 of the project as they have secured funding for the artwork from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Planning consent for the artwork (a series of small, carved boulders of different rock types) has been obtained. Subject to the possible need for a licence from

the Environment Agency, the intention is to install the artwork during Spring/Summer 2019.

A community defibrillator has been installed in Kings Arms Lane. The Town Council continues to monitor and pay for the maintenance costs of this machine.

The Town Council were instrumental in the installation of cycle stands on the Main Street and are now responsible for their maintenance.

Usage of our banner poles on the Main Street has declined.

The Town Council has appointed specialists to undertake careful conservation and repair of the war memorial's iconic bronze statue of 'Victory' which is in need of urgent repair as a result of the findings of a condition report prepared by architects Lloyd Evans Prichard. The statue will be temporarily removed from site for repair and cleaning at the studio of a specialist bronze conservator and the stone column beneath will be rebuilt. The cost of the works is approximately £98,000. A grant of up to £17,128 has been received from the War Memorial Trust. Work is expected to be completed at the end of March 2019. A fundraising Event entitled 'Christmas at the Fitz' was held on 29 December 2018. Thank you to all those who assisted with the organisation of the event and all those who attended.

All four public toilets transferred to Cockermouth Town Council on 31 July 2017. The toilets on Main Street have been fully refurbished. We welcome news of a commitment to exempt public toilets from paying non non-domestic rates as this will result in a saving of over £2k per annum. The saving will apply next year.

The Council Chamber became an alternative venue for Cumbria County Council's Ceremony Room based in Fairfield. Our first wedding was held on 14 October 2016. I am pleased to announce that our licence has been extended for a further two years. We have 50 confirmed bookings for 2019 to date.

An artist Nem Sarton has been appointed to design and implement wall painted signs for two locations on the approach to Cocker Bridge to assist and encourage pedestrians/visitors to continue their journey along Main Street and explore what Market Place has to offer. The artist will use traditional techniques and materials. Funding has been secured from Allerdale Borough Council. Cockermouth Town Council will adopt the work. Consultation was undertaken in November 2017. Planning consent was granted for one sign on the gable of 46 Market Place. It will be painted early Spring 2019 as soon as the artist is available, and the weather is warm/dry enough.

I have held three ward surgeries in the Library to date as requested at the last APM, however attendance has been very low.

Allerdale Borough Council plan to provide free public open space wi-fi in key town centre locations within Allerdale. We have agreed use of the library as a backhaul site.

We will continue to oppose any plans to resurrect on street parking charges.

We have become increasingly concerned about the increase in theft and anti-social behaviour. We have written and spoken to our Police Commissioner to request extra resource. Inspector Gale has increased patrols in our area and is putting together some shoplifting operations with her pro-active team officers. Criminal Behaviour Orders will be obtained for repeat or prolific offenders. We are currently exploring costs/implications of CCTV.

Allerdale Borough Council have identified a number of sites within Cockermouth which they hope to transfer to the Town Council under a Community Asset Transfer. These include Harris Park, land alongside the river Cocker between Cocker Lane and Victoria Bridge and land to the east of the Kirkgate Centre. We are still awaiting information from Allerdale Borough Council regarding these sites.

Our work force increased on 1st September 2018 with the employment of an administrative assistant.

Our local elections will take place on 2 May 2019. Becoming a councillor allows you to make a real difference in your community. There are only a few rules to stand for election. You must be a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth, or the European Union, 18 years of age or older and live in an area that is served by the local council. To find out more visit www.nalc.gov.uk/elections

Finally, I would also like to thank all my fellow Councillors, Sheila Brown, the Town Clerk and her staff for their support and hard work.

Observations from County Councillor R Hanson

Market Place

The Market Place Roadworks were completed in June 2018 to a high standard.

The key mosaic from outside Banks was carefully removed and the mosaic will be reinstated at the confluence of the river. It is currently being stored at Jennings Brewery.

At the time of writing the uplighter covers for Market Place are due to be finished in the next two weeks, after which I look forward to the launch of the Civic Trust's book about Market Place.

Mobility Access

I have successfully made the case and won funding for five pairs of dropped kerbs (two on St. Helen's Street and three on Windmill Lane) to improve access for residents with mobility issues. These have been installed.

I can only win funding for schemes where there is a clearly identified benefit to specific individuals. Residents who can see how modifications to highways and pavements would improve their mobility are warmly invited to contact me.

Slippery Pavements on Main Street

Issues were dealt with promptly this year. Anyone experiencing any issues with slippery pavements on Main Street should always contact me immediately so that I can ensure action is taken.

Long vehicles using Kirkgate

Following an increase in damage to buildings caused by long vehicles using Kirkgate, I worked with officers to develop and fund a scheme to fully sign the length restriction so that violations would be legally enforceable. No issues have been reported since this scheme was installed.

Traffic Regulation Order Reviews

Several minor modifications to road markings in Cockermouth have now progressed to the final stage of consultation. These include installing the much-needed double yellow lines at Derwent Mills and some changes to loading bays to ensure their provision matches current needs.

Addressing congestion

When Main Street is closed, I am particularly concerned that traffic on Lorton Road can back up beyond the top of Kirkgate and that traffic coming off Slatefell can be stuck if one car chooses not to turn down Kirkgate. I have requested that a study be carried out to find out if the installation of another traffic detection strip further from the lights on Lorton Street could sort this out.

Queuing traffic coming into Cockermouth caused by the double zebra crossing continues to be a concern. I am still investigating minor adjustments that may help this situation so that it does not become necessary to install traffic lights.

Flooding on Gote Road

In October 2018 very heavy rain, a blockage in a culvert on Gote Brow and building waste dumped in a drain on Gote Road combined to cause flash flooding on Gote Road. The flooding of properties was only prevented by the prompt actions of residents and the attendance of the fire service.

County Highways officers have been able to use powers activated by this incident to access and rebuild the Gote Brow culvert and associated drainage. They are also investing in very detailed work to ensure all the drains associated with Gote Road are in excellent order. This work is still ongoing. Consideration is being given as to whether the drains on Gote Road can be proactively surveyed on a regular basis. I will continue to press for this to happen and other very vulnerable areas (such as the bottom of South Street) to be included in any such survey work.

All residents must be vigilant about the dumping of any building waste into road drains. This is strictly illegal (but is very difficult to enforce), and this incident exemplifies why it must never happen and any dumping of waste observed must be reported immediately.

Communications

I now regularly distribute around 6000 newsletters that enable all residents to know when our town events are and what the answers to the key questions people are asking me are. Feedback has been very positive and attendance at town events has been excellent. My thanks go to the many volunteers who help me.

I continue to blog regularly, to write monthly reports and to invite comment on my blog (councillorrebeccahanson.wordpress.com) and my councillorrebeccahanson Facebook page to provide maximum transparency and invite comments about my actions.

I continue to respond to all enquiries, meeting with residents whenever appropriate. I have dealt with over one hundred issues raised with me this year.

I am working hard to encourage Cockermouth Town Council to use social media so that we can better promote events and initiatives that will strengthen our community.

I remain concerned about the moderation of popular local Facebook discussion groups which nurture hate comments about Cockermouthians who take on high-profile roles. Moderators should allow criticism of opinions, actions and policies but should prevent abusive comments about individuals and groups of people. These attacks do substantial damage to society. Directing

participants to comment on issues and actions rather than people does not interfere with free speech – it promotes free speech in which everyone feels able to comment.

Poverty

Universal Credit and in-work poverty continue to cause very serious levels of hardship for residents. I continue to meet with individuals who are experiencing problems due to universal credit in order to help them find a way forward. I am pleased that the Allerdale Local Committee of Cumbria County Council are working with Allerdale Borough Council to fund and support the Food Pantry which is providing important support to residents who need it. I would like to thank the volunteers at the Highfield Community Centre for their work on the Food Pantry.

Cycle routes

I am working with residents who want to improve the connectivity of our cycle routes and am focusing, in particular, on creating the case for a connection to be made on Low Road between The Laurates and the start of the cycle network just after the United Utilities site.

Tour of Britain

The last-minute decision to stage the first ever Tour of Britain time trial in Cockermouth brought huge positive publicity for the town, was an international showcase for our stunning Main Street and was a big treat for the many Cockermouthians who had free front-row tickets to this premium sporting event. I would like to publicly thank the County Highways team who worked way above and beyond the call of duty to make this event the success it was. Tremendous efforts have been made to learn from the inconveniences that were caused to residents and the aspects of the administration that could be improved.

Improved dementia care

I have had the privilege of working with CCC to support Cockermouth Soroptimists in their work to improve the services available to Cockermouth residents and carers who are living with dementia.

Other funding

I have also successfully supported CCC funding applications to help to fund the youth activities at The Hub, the lantern parade and holiday workshops for children.

Wider County Issues

County Administration

While other counties suffer extreme difficulties in delivering core services, the Lib/Lab Cumbria County Council administration continues to function well and to make wise financial decisions despite now having had to cut around one third of its annual budget (amounting to cuts of approximately one quarter of a billion pounds a year) since 2011. This year the opposition again failed to propose any amendments to the budget.

Health Scrutiny

In my role on Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee I am still keeping a very close eye on all the developments associated with the provision of maternity and other core services in Whitehaven. Maternity services are still on a 'year's trial' to try to stabilise staffing. The much-anticipated independent report on the risk associated with distance from consultant-led maternity care has not yet been published. Meanwhile much has been done to try to improve engagement, transparency

and the way decisions are made. A great deal still needs to be done. I have written a book ("Healthcare Co-production – A Personal Account" – available on Amazon and iBook's or in hard copy from me) which details what's been done and maps out some of the key next steps.

I am currently paying particular attention to adolescent mental health in West Cumbria. This is an area of grave concern due to failing services and an explosion in demand.

Athletics

Athletics underpins many other sports and provides opportunities for children with a wide range of physiques to thrive. It has long been a 'Cinderella' sport in West Cumbria. Over the last year I have worked extensively with Gwenda Ward from the Tony Ward Foundation Trust to identify and address the barriers to progress. I am delighted that we now have a fully funded program for a nationally leading program for athletics in West Cumbria. This will enable our volunteer coaches to receive national training for the first time and will enable all children in years 5 and 6 to receive excellent athletics lessons.

Brexit

As your elected representative I have the privilege of meeting people in authority and have heard their comments regarding the impact of Brexit on the collapse of the proposals to build the Moorside nuclear reactors. I have also heard very serious concerns regarding the likely impact of a no-deal Brexit on business and employment recruitment in Cumbria. It would be remiss of me not to pass these concerns. I should also warn readers to be deeply suspicious of anyone who tries to create the impression that my comments here or any of these concerns are part of a 'project fear conspiracy to mislead'.

Final Thanks

My final thanks go to the staff of Cockermouth Town Council for their very hard work and to David Malloy – our very hard working and dedicated Mayor.

Mr Hully commented that cars were still fishbone parking on Market Place.

Councillor Hanson stated that TRO changes due to be approved in the next few months would facilitate clear marking which would then be enforceable.

Observations from County Councillor A Kennon

The two new residential care homes in Whitehaven and Carlisle are now near completion. The 6 million homes will provide state of the art facilities for vulnerable elderly people, including those suffering from dementia.

The transport hubs at both Workington and Maryport train stations are now in operation.

Plans have now been released for a new roundabout at the Brigham/Broughton junctions on the A66, which will be managed by Highways England.

My District, Cockermouth South, includes the parishes of Dean, Greysouthen, Brigham with Broughton Cross and Little Clifton. I attend on a regular basis County and Parish Councils. I also attend various County Council committee group meetings these include the following: -

Local Committee for Allerdale

Allerdale Highways & Transport Group
Various Task and Finish Groups

My allocated funds and other funding streams are listed below: -

Divisional Community Fund

£1,000 to Little Clifton Parish Council for a de-fib cabinet (application form only came in last week has yet to be paid)

Divisional 0-19 Fund

£1,000 to Cockermouth Mechanics Band towards instruments for youth section.

Larger pots (Community, 0-19, Universal Youth)

Fareshare - £3,000 committed across Allerdale for partnership working on food projects. £600 of this is committed to fund 6 food pantries in Cockermouth.

Kings Church - £4,000 committed towards piloting for an outreach worker, working with schools and the Police to encourage young people to get involved in existing, structured groups within the area.

Cumbria Youth Alliance - £20,000 towards funding the 11 Friday Night Youth Projects in Allerdale, one of which is the King's Church Amplify Youth Club

Allerdale Dementia Action Alliance - £1,000 for the slipper swap initiative which is taken to community events across Allerdale. these have been available at 2 community events in Cockermouth so far. Falls Prevention event in September and during the Health MOT event in November.

Mr Hully asked if the connectivity of the cycle route on Low Road between the Laureates and the start of the cycle network could be improved.

Councillor Kennon replied that funding was being sought.

Observations from Borough Councillor L Davies

Introduction

It is a privilege to be of service to the electorate of All Saints and the Borough of Allerdale.

Examples of incidents I attended to during the previous 12 months in All Saint Ward and Allerdale Borough Council were as follows: -

Ward Work

Housing

Maintenance & Repair

Rehousing for a disabled individual to appropriate accommodation.

General

Vandalism to drainage covers on the Greenway Bridge

Fly tipping's – Greenway & River Cocker

Fallen tree – Greenway

Attending the Cockermouth & Papcastle Recreation Trust

Allerdale Borough Council

Served on the Licensing Panel & Licencing Committee

Conclusion

I will continue to give you my very best efforts to make our Community a healthy, safe and enjoyable place to live in and be proud of. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you should consider that I can be of assistance to you and your family.

Mr Hully commented that Allerdale Borough Council were looking at housing and empty properties.

Councillor Davies replied that Allerdale were attempting to address empty properties and that it was a crying shame that some of the properties had been empty for years whilst people were homeless.

Councillor Smith stated that funding would be provided to allow the Council to buy empty properties, improve them to a decent home standard and offer them to those who have nowhere to live. He hoped that this initiative would get off the ground within the next 12 months.

Observations from Borough Councillor J Ellis

Introduction

I am pleased to represent the residents and businesses of Christchurch Ward on Allerdale Borough Council. As an Executive member, I hold the Portfolio for Governance and People Resources. This role includes chairing the West Cumbria Community Safety Partnership, a statutory body, where I work with a number of agencies and the Police. As Allerdale's representative, I sit on the Cumbria Community Foundation West Cumbria Grants Panel. I enjoy working with the local community and residents in Cockermouth in close liaison with Cllr Christine Smith and Leader of Allerdale, Cllr Alan Smith. As Executive member, I do not sit on any Allerdale Committees.

Local issues

Many retailers and residents of Christchurch expressed concern about the potential detrimental impact on the town centre by the proposed Opus Planning application for a retail development, purported to be B&M Stores, on Low Road. This was rejected for the 3rd time the Development Panel. Along with others, including the Town Council, Chamber of Trade and Civic Trust, I spoke against the application for this out of town site. I objected to Storey Homes' application to amend the right of way through the Strawberry Grange estate. Our natural environment in Cockermouth is very precious and we must protect it. I attend meetings of Cockermouth Vision and support its call for a Neighbourhood Plan for a greater say by the community on local issues. The Kirkgate Centre continues to provide quality entertainment for the whole community. Allerdale gives financial support to this valuable facility and has met with the trustees for discussions. Once again, Allerdale gave a grant towards the cost of the Christmas Shop Local leaflet. This was delivered to every household in the town in November and was organised by the Chamber of Trade with support from Allerdale's Town Centre Manager. Cockermouth features in the new Allerdale leaflet and on the visitor website, which was

launched at the Allerdale Day in Manchester last August www.visitallerdale.co.uk and Allerdale continues to support events in the town such as Taste weekends, Northbound and others. Working with the Home Group and Castles and Coast, we have ensured that residents receive the best possible service from the housing associations. Sports and leisure facilities are in demand in the town and I have supported Allerdale's Cockermouth Sports Strategy to ensure improvements and additions to our sporting and play facilities. I support the Friends of Cockermouth Library and I'm pleased to see the increased opening hours at the Library.

Business Development

The Vicky Business Centre is growing from strength to strength and provides a much-needed facility for small businesses and self-employed workers. We continue to work with manufacturers and business in the town to maintain and grow jobs in the town and attract new business into the area to provide jobs for local people and returning youngsters.

Street Scene

In addition to daily inspections, every 6 weeks along with Allerdale's Head of Community Services and Cockermouth Champion, I inspect various streets and areas of Christchurch ward including the town centre, the Moor, the Gote, Wakefield Road, Derwentside Gardens and other residential areas, identifying and reporting issues such as redundant buildings, buildings in disrepair, poor signage, dog fouling, road markings, litter etc. A recent request included dropped kerbs and improved crossings for older residents and wheelchair users, which has been reported to CCC. There has been a spate of burglaries recently and I arranged for the police inspector to visit shopkeepers and attended the Shop Watch meeting with the police to discuss CCTV and other possible solutions.

Informal meetings

I have met with a number of individual residents as their Allerdale member to discuss issues of concern and attempted to find solutions. These include anti-social behaviour, street noise, planning issues, post flooding issues, road repairs and traffic lights, crossings, dog fouling, parking and many other issues.

Flood protection and Resilience

The Leader and I have met with the Environment Agency to push for flood prevention measures and will continue to do so. Flood prevention projects undertaken by the Environment Agency are very limited and we continue to campaign for increased funding for Cockermouth, in addition to a whole catchment approach to flood prevention.

Observations from Borough Councillors A Smith & C Smith

Again, it is an honour and privilege to represent Cockermouth All Saints and Cockermouth in general. Please see below a number of activities and events we have supported to bring visitors and give locals some things to cheer on.

- Honoured Malcolm Wilson, Freeman of the Borough
- Involved in setting up a temporary post office whilst the permanent one was refurbished
- Market Place refurbished with County Council Contracting
- Northbound Festival
- Taste Cumbria x 2 (brought in £4.5m into the local economy)
- Tour of Britain

- Maintain Harris Park and Cemetery
- Refurbished toilets and then gave ownership to Town Council
- Two hours free parking offered when roadworks on Main Street
- Promotion of town and area under Visit Allerdale Brand
- Sorted out state of graffiti in Town Centre
- Ongoing support for the Leisure Centre in the Town – 10p swims in summer

Councillor Alan Smith, as the Council Leader have been extremely busy over the past year, but have always put Cockermouth first, expressing my concerns and also praise at Town Council meetings.

Councillor Christine Smith I have been an active member of Licensing Panel. I have also initiated and supported the Food Pantry which is held at the Highfield Community Association once a month, which has now received County Council funding, which is gratefully received by the people who turn up for food whilst giving a small donation.

We have both been busy in trying to sort out housing problems with social landlords, it seems to never go away.

We are also concerned at the number of housing developments that are hitting our town, especially over the past 6 months and will monitor the situation and continue to express the concerns of constituent's who believe enough is enough.

Mr Watson asked if the housing situation would have been easier if the Town had a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor A Smith replied that he was an advocate of Neighbourhood Planning and that a Neighbourhood Plan would have helped the Town.

Cockermouth & Papcastle Recreational Trust

The report outlined the activities of the Trust over the last 12 months.

Over £2,935 had been handed out to ten local organisations over the last 12 months.

Councillor A Smith stated that this charity was one of the highlights of this Council and that it had helped lots of small organisations over the years.

Questions of which 48 hours written notice had been given

The following question was received from Jim Hully:-

'In light that developers looking to Cockermouth being a honey pot and the number of planning applications being submitted do the town councillors now regret not providing a Neighbourhood Plan?'

The Mayor replied that personally he did not.

Councillor Davies replied that he did regret not providing a Neighbourhood Plan and that although a Neighbourhood Plan cannot stop development it could impact upon it. He hoped the issue would be addressed again. He suggested that the Town Council survey existing plans and pick one that was best practice.

Councillor Tyson stated that Neighbourhood Plan Policies must only relate to the use and development of land, particularly in addressing a shortage of homes. Cockermouth has a surplus of homes until 2029. He supported developing the Cockermouth Vision and not producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillors E Nicholson, S Nicholson & A Kennon stated that they did not support the production of a Neighbourhood Plan and that the reasons for that were well documented.

Councillor Tyson stated that only 6% of those who commenced writing a Neighbourhood Plan got to the final stage by 2016.

Councillor A Smith stated that a Neighbourhood Plan would give a voice to locals. The only voice currently was the Development Panel and nine out of ten developers win.

Mr Cornwall cited various extracts from Gov. Uk, he argued that a Neighbourhood Plan provided a powerful set of tools and that Councillor Tyson was misleading those present.

Councillor Tyson stated that he was not misleading anyone and that although the theory was sound a Neighbourhood Plan was not a practical solution to housing need.

Councillor E Nicholson stated that it was too late. A neighbourhood Plan would not have prevented housing now, it would take at least 2 years to complete a Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council would have blown 50k completing a plan and it would have been a waste of money. He further stated that the time to do a Neighbourhood Plan was after the adoption of Part 2 and before 2029 when the plan ended. He reminded those present that a Neighbourhood Plan was a massive commitment, it had to be reviewed every 2 years and that its policies must sit underneath the Local Plan.

Councillor Hanson stated that she had researched Neighbourhood Planning. She had found that neighbourhood plans had worked in some specific places e.g. providing more low-cost housing for local workers in a tourist area. She had been unable to ascertain what Cockermouth could achieve by having a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Smith stated that Cockermouth would have a population of over 10,000 in 10 years' time and that one development locally had been mothballed yet still more plans were coming in.

Councillor E Nicholson replied that Government Policy was driving increased housing.

Mr Hully stated that Allerdale Borough Council had taken 3 years for land allocation and that a vision was required for the town and surrounding villages.

Councillor Tyson stated that many areas pursuing Neighbourhood Plans were doing so because their own Local Plans had not been reviewed since 2004.

Councillor E Nicholson stated that Allerdale had taken a long time but that the Government kept changing the goal posts. It should have been a 3-year process. If we had started a Neighbourhood Plan, it would now be obsolete and would not influence our local plan. A Neighbourhood Plan would not fill empty shops and banks.

Mr Dent stated that Local Plan legislation and Neighbourhood Planning Legislation were issued at the same time. A Neighbourhood Plan could not be introduced in front of a Local Plan. He agreed Allerdale's Local Plan had been delayed so long that it was too late for a Neighbourhood Plan to effect Allerdale's Local Plan. He further stated that if a Neighbourhood Plan had been implemented, we would have been in a position to jump on it now.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL 2020/21

1. As 2020/21 draws to a close we will all look back over the year with different experiences, memories and emotions. I am sure though we would all agree it has been a challenging and unusual year to say the least.
2. Town Council meetings can now be recorded and filmed and as a result the Town Council has adopted a Protocol which is displayed at the entrance to our meeting room.
3. The Town Council is consulted by the Borough Council on all planning applications within the town of Cockermouth and in all cases, comments have been forwarded to the Borough Council setting out the Town Council's views. The final decision on planning applications does not always agree with the views of the Town Council however the majority of decisions do agree.
4. Special Planning meetings are now held on the first Thursday of every month if required.
5. Councillor Malloy represented the Town Council at the inquiry held on 8 December 2020 into the stopping up of public footpath 223003, land off Strawberry How Road, Cockermouth. Whilst the Inspector found merit in the arguments submitted, the Order was confirmed.
6. I am pleased to inform you that every square inch of available space in the Town Hall is now leased. The Citizens Advice Bureau continue to hold their outreach sessions each Wednesday in a ground floor office. Allerdale Borough Council enforces usage of our car park on our behalf.
7. Victoria Hall is currently leased by Mrs Bealt. The Vicky Business Centre opened on 21 February 2018 providing vibrant, flexible and affordable office space for home workers, start-up businesses etc. Flood resilience works were completed and paid for with a flood resilience grant and should help protect the premises from future flooding.
8. The Tourist Information Centre moved to the library on Main Street on 3 April 2017, along with Allerdale Local Links. The building transferred to Cockermouth Town Council in October 2018. We work in partnership with Cumbria County Council to deliver a library service.
9. Our website contains lots of useful information including councillor details, dates of town council meetings, minutes of meetings, events etc. Check out www.cockermouth.org. Agendas were published as of May 2019. We have also added a 'green section' to our website.
10. We launched our cockermouth town council face book page in July 2020, it has been instrumental in sending out information to a wider audience.
11. Our twinning links continue to flourish despite tough economic times and a global

pandemic

- Sadly our 37th Anniversary Visit to Cockermouth was cancelled.
- Hopefully our 38th Anniversary Visit to Cockermouth will take place in October 2021.

In June 2017 we became a 'sister city to Hebron, New Hampshire. Originally Hebron was part of a larger colonial town named after Lord Cockermouth. Cockermouth was founded in 1766. By 1792, it had grown into two geographically distinct villages. As a result, Cockermouth was split. The western portion became Groton and the eastern portion became Hebron.

A representative from Hebron visited Cockermouth in September 2019.

12. As a result of the town being awarded the Europe Prize in the year 2000 a Europe Prize Scholarship Fund was set up and has now become established and a great help to Cockermouth 6th form youngsters pursuing their studies in Europe. The Committee continues to raise money to keep the fund going for the foreseeable future. I have chosen the Europe Prize Scholarship Fund as my charity for 2019/20 & 2020/21.
13. The Council provides allotments on two sites St. Helen's Street and the Gote. The Gote Road allotments were transferred to the Town Council from Cumbria County Council under a community asset transfer. There are currently approximately 52 people on the waiting list for an allotment. The Town Clerk continues to meet members of the Allotments Association on a regular basis and provide information for their annual report.
14. Unfortunately, many 2020/21 events we sponsor including Cockermouth Carnival, Cockermouth Live, Taste Cumbria & Taste Christmas and Christmas Panto were cancelled due to the pandemic.
15. The fireworks display held in the Memorial Gardens was also a casualty of the pandemic.
16. Switch on Day was also cancelled. We did carry on with the Window Spotting Competition and Grand Window. The Christmas Lights were fantastic again this year. We continue to be grateful for the donations made by businesses, local organisations and individuals towards the cost of the lights despite tough economic times.
17. Our Remembrance Sunday commemoration took place but had to be pared back. The poppy cascade knitted by the Women's Institute looked stunning.
18. The Council's Internal Auditor, Jean Airey, a former Town Clerk of Keswick, regularly audits the Town Council's accounts and reports back to the Council. This year's annual accounts have been prepared and the Clerk will shortly be sending off the required Annual Return to the External District Auditor. The repeal of Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 now allows enables the Town

Council to finally embrace modern banking methods.

19. The Council continues to employ Tivoli as their Maintenance Contractor.
20. A 30-year lease was signed with Cockermouth Junior Football Club for their future use of Tarn Close Sports Ground. Their vision involves the creation of a football centre at Tarn Close for use by all teams in the town, junior, senior and veteran serving in the region of 500 members initially. Their long-term vision involves the erection of a synthetic indoor pitch to serve Cockermouth and the surrounding villages. A planning application will be submitted shortly.
21. Play areas and land at Greyrigg Avenue, Harris Park Extension, Isel Road, Towers Lane and Memorial Gardens continue to be maintained by Cockermouth Town Council. The Memorial Gardens play area was fully refurbished in 2019. The path crossing the Greyrigg Avenue site is to be restored.
22. The Localism Bill published on the 13 December 2010 aims to shift power from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and Councils by lifting the burden of bureaucracy, empowering communities and strengthening accountability to local people. A range of new powers and reforms will be introduced as a result of the Bill.

One of those new powers is the General Power of Competence (GPC). I am pleased to announce that on the 15 May 2019, the Town Council re-confirmed that it meets both criteria for eligibility for use of the General Power of Competence as set out in a statutory instrument known as the Parish Council's (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 which came into force in April 2012.

23. The new General Power of Competence will fundamentally change the way Local Government behaves, giving them the same capacity to act as an individual generally which will enable us to do anything apart from that which is specifically prohibited. This will result in greater innovation and a new more confident entrepreneurial approach which should in turn lead to greater efficiencies, improved partnership working and the ability to help our community in ways previously outside our remit.
24. The Town Council adopted a revised Code of Conduct on 17 July 2012. Copies of the Code can be obtained from our website. The long-awaited report of the Independent Committee on Standards in Public Life (previously the Nolan Committee) on Ethical Standards in Local Government was published on 4 February 2019. It contains a special chapter on town and parish councils and many of the 26 recommendations intend to promote and maintain the standards expected by the public, relate directly to them.
25. The Town Council continues to maintain three bus shelters two on Main Street and one on Castlegate Drive.
26. The Town Council has worked closely with a number of voluntary organisations

regarding a series of events planned to mark the 100th anniversary of the Great War. The Town Council has adopted a flower bed adjacent to Gote Bridge on the Crown Street side. This is currently being leased to the Rotary to commemorate those lost during WW1. A re-dedication was held on 28 April 2019 following the refurbishment of the cenotaph.

27. Our speed indication device continues to be placed at 'speeding' hotspots around the Town. There have been issues with speeding down Gote Brow.
28. A community defibrillator has been installed in Kings Arms Lane. The Town Council continues to monitor and pay for the maintenance costs of this machine.
29. The Town Council were instrumental in the installation of cycle stands on the Main Street and are now responsible for their maintenance.
30. Usage of our banner poles on the Main Street has declined.
31. Six pieces of adult fitness equipment were installed in Harris Park Extension on 7 May 2019 following the receipt of a 6k grant from the United Utilities Legacy Fund.
32. All four public toilets transferred to Cockermouth Town Council on 31 July 2017. The toilets on Main Street have been fully refurbished. We welcome news of a commitment to exempt public toilets from paying non-domestic rates as this will result in a saving of over £2k per annum.
33. The Council Chamber became an alternative venue for Cumbria County Council's Ceremony Room based in Fairfield. Our first wedding was held on 14 October 2016. I am pleased to announce that our licence has been extended for a further five years.
34. An artist Nem Sarton has completed the wall painting on Cocker Bridge to assist and encourage pedestrians/visitors to continue their journey along Main Street and explore what Market Place has to offer. The artist has used traditional techniques and materials. The Town Council will maintain the sign going forward.
35. We have become increasingly concerned about the increase in theft and anti-social behaviour. I am pleased to announce that we made a successful application to the Police and Crime Commissioner for £3k towards the cost of the installation and maintenance of a cctv camera on Main Street. The camera was installed on 25 February 2021.
36. Cockermouth Town Council declared a climate change emergency on 19 June 2019. A list of simple, achievable actions were drawn up and a task group formed.

We have been researching best practise.

We successfully obtained a grant from Cumbria Woodlands to plant 1,212 trees on Harris Park extension. Works must be completed by March 2022.

37. Our C1, C2 & C3 town bus service which started on 4 February 2020 has been maintained during lockdown.
38. Metalcraft Cockermouth Community Fund was launched in March 2020. Metalcraft hope this fund will help to ensure a diverse range of organisations can continue to operate and grow. Organisations must be based in Cockermouth parish and be 'not for profit' organisations operating for the benefit of the local community. Over £1500 of funding has been awarded to date.
39. The Coronavirus pandemic and the unprecedented in peacetime Government measures in response to the crisis (e.g. prohibitions on gatherings, social distancing, self-isolation and shielding of those deemed to be the most vulnerable have meant that the requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person with all members present in one place cannot be met. The introduction of new regulations, The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (coronavirus) (flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020 on 4 April 2020 has meant that we have had to work differently. Broadly speaking the Regulations enable us to hold remote meetings including by video and telephone conferencing for a specified period until May 2021. They also removed the requirement to hold an annual meeting. I will therefore continue as Mayor of Cockermouth until May 2021.
40. We have managed to maintain and operate all our services during the pandemic. I would like to thank all our staff for their hard work.
41. A consultation was launched in February 2021 seeking views on the locally-led proposals that the Secretary of State has received following his invitation to councils in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset. This consultation ends on 19 April 2021 and will shape our future structure. The implications for the areas and Councils are as yet unknown.
42. The Town Council contributed £750 towards the Chamber of Trade's plan to recruit an administrative and marketing assistant to assist with covid-19 business recovery.
43. The William Wordsworth Bust and Dorothy Wordsworth Fountain were restored and the general area tidied and daffodils planted to spruce up this area of town.
44. Finally, I would like to thank our NHS Staff and other key workers who are working so hard during this pandemic. I would also like to thank the thousands of volunteers who are helping the most vulnerable within our own communities. Please take a moment to reflect and remember all those we have lost.

Julie Laidlow - Town Mayor

Income and Expenditure Account

Unaudited

31/03/20 £		31/03/21 £
	INCOME	
1,840.57	Allotments	1,915.37
0.00	Balances	0.00
2,329.00	Christmas Lights	989.09
4,883.32	Establishment	1,075.19
866.75	Events	0.00
0.00	Flood Prevention income	0.00
0.00	Income	0.00
2,991.50	Memorial Gardens	1,288.40
14,952.50	Open Spaces	200.00
4,474.96	Other Properties	2,874.96
198,570.00	Precept	210,990.00
0.00	Projects	0.00
4,109.53	Public Toilets	2,103.00
16,911.46	Tourist Information Centre	7,347.74
35,834.74	Town Hall	31,070.20
14,321.88	Twinning	0.00
302,086.21	INCOME TOTAL	259,853.95
	EXPENDITURE	
1,747.36	Allotments	637.57
11,961.44	Balances	4,340.79
35,541.76	Christmas Lights	32,020.48
110,003.63	Establishment	113,290.90
11,559.33	Events	0.00
0.00	Expenditure	0.00
0.00	Flood prevention scheme	0.00
52,402.72	Memorial Gardens	14,226.52
33,454.05	Open Spaces	6,767.47
5,435.10	Other Properties	2,361.82
0.00	Projects	0.00
12,633.09	Public Toilets	17,076.70
0.00	S. 137 Payments	0.00
46,523.71	Tourist Information Centre	36,509.47
30,638.04	Town Hall	32,011.16
15,492.65	Twinning	60.00
367,392.88	EXPENDITURE TOTAL	259,302.88

Income and Expenditure Account

31/03/20		31/03/21
£	EXPENDITURE	£
262,417.59	Balance as at 01/04/20	197,110.92
302,086.21	Add Total Income	259,853.95
564,503.80		456,964.87
367,392.88	Deduct Total Expenditure	259,302.88
0.00	Stock Adjustment	0.00
0.00	Transfer to/ from reserves	0.00
197,110.92	Balance as at 31/03/21	197,661.99

Signed

Chair

Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer

✓

Consolidated Balance Sheet

Unaudited

31/03/20

£

31/03/21

£

Long Term assets		
0.00	Investments	0.00
0.00	Long Term Debts	0.00
	LONG TERM Investment Accounts	0.00
0.00	TOTAL LONG TERM ASSETS	0.00
Current assets		
45,862.05	Investments	45,862.05
0.00	Loans Made	0.00
0.00	Investments	0.00
4,500.00	Stocks	4,500.00
7,584.75	VAT Recoverable	6,337.78
0.00	Debtors	0.00
0.00	Payment in Advance	0.00
141,868.49	Cash in Hand at Bank	141,718.46
199,815.29	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	198,418.29
199,815.29	TOTAL ASSETS	198,418.29
Current liabilities		
0.00	Loans Received	0.00
0.00	Temporary Borrowing	0.00
0.00	VAT Payable	0.00
0.00	Creditors	728.30
2,704.37	Receipts in Advance	28.00
2,704.37	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	756.30
197,110.92	TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	197,661.99
0.00	Long Term Borrowing	0.00
0.00	Deferred Liabilities	0.00
0.00	Deferred Credits	0.00
0.00		0.00
197,110.92	NET ASSETS	197,661.99
Represented by		
197,110.92	General Fund	197,661.99
0.00	Capital receipt following sale Sale of Double Mills	0.00
197,110.92		197,661.99

Signed

Chairman

Date

AUDIT OPINION

Responsible Financial Officer

Observations from County Councillor: Rebecca Hanson.
RebeccaHansonLibDem@gmail.com 01900 826301

Cockermouth Issues:

Covid Response

The Liberal Democrat Group of County Councillors met every week on zoom from the very beginning of first lockdown until a 'new normal' cycle of meetings on teams was established some months later. We worked tirelessly to collate and share information about what was going on in all aspects of life in Cumbria and to help design responses to complex issues.

The Cockermouth response has been led to nationally leading standards by Cockermouth Emergency Response Group (CERG) under the leadership of Jo Crozier with supported by our Cumbria CC team. I monitored everything that was happening carefully and was ready to support when gaps in provision (such as a particular problem with hospital transport) were identified.

I have participated in all the 'lessons learned from Covid19' meetings and have lobbied strongly for the estate changes which will make hybrid (mixed face-to-face and online) meetings possible in the future. This is much more complex than it sounds because virtually every type of meeting needs a different solution and hybrid meetings are so much more difficult to run than online meetings.

Many individuals and families in Cockermouth are suffering very serious hardship and physical and mental health issues as a consequence of Covid19. I have compiled a directory of Covid support in Cockermouth which I have circulated widely in Cockermouth including to all Councillors. Anyone who would like a copy should contact me. Compiling this directory made me aware of the very many inspirational individuals and groups who are run, fund and volunteer for charities and support groups and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all these people.

Cockermouth should also be extremely proud of Carolyn Otley who, in her work with Cumbria CVS, chaired the Cumbria Covid emergency response committee to an extraordinarily high standard which won the admiration and praise of all involved.

Oaktree Crescent

The resurfacing works on Oaktree Crescent were suspended mid-works at the start of first lockdown causing substantial inconvenience to some residents. I would like to thank all the residents of Oaktree Crescent who were incredibly tolerant of the problems they faced. Several particular issues associated with these works made it very difficult to restart works in a covid-safe way, however I worked hard with County Highways to ensure ways were found to restart and get these works completed before second lockdown.

Low Road Path

I have lobbied relentlessly for the completion of the cycle route on Low Road, raising this issue again and again in all sorts of meetings. Work on several potential sources of funding went nowhere, but Cumbria CC finally found a way to complete this path in late 2020 as part of the resurfacing works on Low Road. Cumbria CC expect to be able to make the modifications needed to upgrade this path to become a cycle route soon.

Mobility Access

I have continued to take every opportunity to lobby for mobility access grants. We have gradually continued to increase our network of dropped kerbs on the All Saints side of town estate to extend the distance users of electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters can access comfortably and safely.

Readers should be aware that we have to justify grant applications with evidence that modifications will bring clear benefits to specific residents, so it's essential people who are having problems with kerbs and similar issues contact their county councillor or things won't improve.

South Street

High-quality resurfacing work was completed in late 2020 on Challoner Street and the Cocker end of South Street. This meant that the parking regulations on South Street became enforceable where previously the poor road surface led to road markings deteriorating rapidly. This has, understandably, caused a great deal of stress for residents. I have worked hard to answer queries, dispel incorrect rumours and ensure that all residents were very carefully informed about what was happening to make sure that nobody got a parking ticket by accident. Sadly, it is not possible to provide any more parking in this area because of national standards relating to the width of public roads.

Traffic Regulation Order Reviews

A substantial number of small changes to road markings were made. Some problems with the signage associated with the changes outside Harrisons Butchers on Main Street were identified. These have been rectified.

Communications

I have distributed around 6000 newsletters in the Cockermouth area (including to every house in Cockermouth) at least twice each year. These enable all residents to know when our town events are, what the answers to the key questions people are asking me are and where to get help if they need it. My thanks go to the many volunteers who help me deliver these leaflets.

I have blogged regularly and have invited comments on my blog (councillorrebeccahanson.wordpress.com) and my CouncillorRebeccaHanson Facebook page to provide maximum transparency and engagement regarding my actions.

I have responded to all enquiries received, meeting with residents whenever appropriate. I have dealt with over one hundred issues raised with me since my last report.

The Kirkgate Centre

The Kirkgate Centre has continued to receive funding from Cumbria County Council that I worked very hard to establish.

Cycle route maps

I have been lobbying hard for Cycle maps of the Allerdale area to be created and made easily available online (and ideally in print too). I've not had confirmation that this will be done yet, but it is now clearly very much at the forefront of the minds of key people. I would encourage others to continue to lobby for this to happen.

Other funding

I have also successfully supported CCC funding applications to help to fund youth and community activities at The Hub, the refurbishment the male toilets at Christ Church rooms and holiday workshops for children (currently deferred because of third lockdown).

Children's Services and Family Courts Issues

I supported one mother in Cockermouth who had had custody of her children incorrectly removed, working hard to ensure all reports relating to her case were made accurate after a social worker involved in it was struck off, and attending court twice with her. In doing so I came across other cases in West Cumbria which appeared to follow a similar pattern of failure. I asked our West Cumbrian MPs for their support in working on these issues (which amounted only to signatures on a key letter) and was profoundly shocked when this was refused. I have previously worked seamlessly on complex casework for people in Cumbria with all the MPs I have asked for help, including Sue Hayman, Jamie Reed, Rory Stewart and Tim Farron. Key politicians in West Cumbria from the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats and the Independent Groups and many key figures working at national level have provided me with support on these profoundly complex issues and I would like to thank them all. Key Conservatives who initially made it categorically clear that they wanted to help withdrew their support without explanation – presumably because they were leaned on from above.

Looking after the people who do masses for Cockermouth

Every year Cockermouth used to have a civic dinner which those in elected office and those who make substantial contributions to town life were encouraged to attend. It was where everyone got to know each other and it mattered that this happened. It was one of the things that fell by the wayside after the floods, and it was a big loss to Cockermouth.

As County Councillor I have tried hard to look after the people who do a lot for our town. I was particularly grateful that Lord and Lady Egremont understood how much this mattered and agreed to run a drinks event at the castle. It was wonderful to see so many inspirational people getting to know each other. They have promised to do this again in the future after Covid and I would encourage my successor/our mayor/our town clerk to hold them to that promise.

Wider County Issues

The Environment

In September 2019 I proposed and successfully won a motion at Full Council to make Cumbria (not just Cumbria County Council) carbon neutral. In doing so, I managed to force the conservative group to collectively reject the climate change denial position so many of their key members had publicly endorsed until then. I then helped to develop the Lib Dem County manifesto for this year's election which would have created a public mandate to deliver carbon neutrality in Cumbria and tackle the climate crisis. Sadly, the government cancelled the election, meaning that such a public mandate cannot be achieved. The Lib Dems will continue to try to deliver all that they can without such a mandate.

Health Scrutiny

On 3rd July 2019 we received confirmation that maternity services will be protected in Whitehaven. I had worked very hard on this for three years, initially by campaigning, then by writing the missing risk assessments and meeting with all stakeholders to ensure they properly understood the risk of closure and finally, as County Councillor, by attending many further meetings on this issues, and by ensuring the long-term provision of maternity services in Whitehaven was raised and carefully discussed at every Health Scrutiny Meeting until it was resolved.

I then decided to champion the very serious issues with youth mental health services which Cockermouth residents were raising with me on doorsteps. I initially raised money for, organised and chaired an open access conference on this topic. From this a new co-production network, based in schools, emerged which I administrated and chaired for its first year. As this network was clearly needed for the long term, I persuaded Cumbria County Council to set up a new network which mirrored its functions. I would like, among others, to thank our local Cumbria County Council team for their hard work in supporting me with the initial conference and the first year of the

network and Steve Milledge from Cockermouth School for his dedication to this network from the start. Steve now chairs the replacement network.

County Administration

While other counties suffer extreme difficulties in delivering core services, the Lib/Lab Cumbria County Council administration continues to function well and to make wise financial decisions despite now having had to cut around one third of its annual budget (amounting to cuts of approximately one quarter of a billion pounds a year) since 2011.

At all stages of the pandemic I have been inspired by the stunning leadership skills of senior managers, which several of them have recently unpacked and explained in detail in our 'lessons learned from Covid' sessions.

It is therefore eye-wateringly worrying to see the misinformed attacks which have been launched on County Council by leading Conservatives in West Cumbria.

Local Government Reform

Our conservative government is pushing through vast reforms in our Cumbrian Councils at breakneck speed in the middle of the pandemic. Reform has been suspended in most areas, but it being turbo-charged in Cumbria and its imminent implementation is the reason why most of this year's county elections have been suspended.

This process of reform shows many echoes of Brexit with key advocates in West Cumbria making wild claims about potential benefits of reform that do not stand up to scrutiny and with the need for work to be done on the very obvious and serious potential negative consequences of reform being ignored by advocates of change. Another similarity is that those demanding reform refuse to agree on what reform will look like and, instead, agree only that it will happen. The misinformed attacks on Cumbria County Council which are being made by key Conservatives in West Cumbria (who have consistently failed to demonstrate any understanding of the reality of running Cumbria County Council and the complex statutory services provided by it) are of particular concern.

I have spent many weeks trying to do the detailed analysis of this which nobody else has done (just as I did with the pending closure of maternity services) and I will be publishing my conclusions in the next few weeks.

Final Thanks

It has been my absolute pleasure and privilege to serve as County Councillor for Cockermouth North for the last four years. Many are aware that I'm heartbroken that I can't continue, but I am hugely relieved that in Fiona Jayatilaka I have found a potential replacement who will complete the role to the standards I have set and which I know matter so much for Cockermouth.

I would like to thank the residents of Cockermouth who gave me the honour of trusting me in this role. I would also like to thank my elected colleagues of all parties and none who have been absolutely wonderful to work with over the last five years. Most of the public do not see how we work in a totally non-partisan way with tremendous respect for each other the vast majority of the time in the public interest both in Cockermouth and in County Council. This also used to be the case at MP level until 2019 and it is with the most enormous regret that I feel that it is my duty to point out the very significant change which happened when able and experienced MPs like Rory Stewart were expelled by their own party.

My final thanks go to the staff of Cockermouth Town Council and Cumbria County Council for their very hard work and to Julie Laidlow – our very hard working and dedicated mayor who has completed two years instead of just one.

Annual Parish Report 2019/21

Alan Kennon, County Councillor

My District Cockermouth South includes the Parishes of Dean, Greysouthen, Brigham with Broughton Cross and Little Clifton.

During this time all meetings have been conducted virtually using online platforms such as Zoom or Teams. These have been an excellent method to keep contact with most if not all parishes during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Local Committee for Allerdale
- Allerdale Highways and Transport Working Group
- Scrutiny Advisory Board – Communities and Place

Funding for various schemes from my local area allowance to improve the town and surrounding areas has been reduced to £2000 per member this year and into the future.

Cockermouth specific:

£1,000 Cockermouth League of Friends - for the seating within the shelter at the surgery (your divisional funding)

£4,000 Christ Church rooms – towards new toilets (£1,000 you, £1000 Rebecca, £2000 community grant)

£1,000 Kirkgate – virtual arts and craft sessions (Rebecca's funding)

£1,100 King's Church – food to support those in need (DEFRA & DWP funds)

£1,100 Highfield Community Centre – food to support those in need (DEFRA & DWP funds)

£1,000 offered to football club

Allerdale wide:

£3,600 Fareshare – to support the food groups across Allerdale during April-June 2020

£10,000 CAB – to support those struggling financially in Allerdale (DEFRA fund)

£5,000 Age UK – to support those struggling financially in Allerdale (DEFRA fund)

£5,040 Affinity Credit Union – promoting healthy savings habits scheme (people save a regular amount and one they get to £60, this is topped up to £100) (DEFRA fund)

£10,000 Community Learning & Skills – cooking on a budget courses but with kitchen equipment and food included (DEFRA fund)

£2950 Family Action – for emergency support with essential baby items (DEFRA fund)

£2,325 Baby Basics – to help set up an organisation who will provide start packs for new mums who are struggling financially (0-19 fund)

£4,500 Cumbria Youth Alliance – social action project encouraging young people to volunteer (0-19 fund)

£10,000 Christmas food parcel project – providing families who are struggling financially around £60 worth of food for Christmas day plus spare. We worked with the food groups and primary schools in Cockermouth plus we had referrals from Family Action, Children's Services etc. (DEFRA funding)

£38,000 to various organisations to support adult only households who are struggling financially. This was for food, utilities and any essential items to keep people warm and fed such as cookers, fridges etc)

Alan Kennon – Please do not hesitate to contact me on 07787551073 or email alan.kennon@cumbria.gov.uk

To: The Clerk, Cockermouth Town Council

APM Report Borough Councillor Ron Munby MBE

Observations from Borough Councillor Ron Munby MBE

- a) Attended Parish Council Embleton/Wythop/Isel and Blindcrake
- b) Attended Outside Body Cumbria Foundation
- c) Attended Licensing Committee and Development Panel
- d) Chair of ABC Licensing Committee

Shielded for over twelve months. All meetings attended via Zoom. Now known as 'Two jabs Munby'!

Councillor Ron Munby MBE

Cllr Andrew Semple's Allerdale Report to Cockermouth Parish meeting 2021

We have all had a difficult year and mine was not helped by recovering from a road traffic accident. So, it has not been the year I planned and I hope for better days ahead...

I am a member of the Development Panel and I have thus gained some really good experience which will benefit me and my community. There are big changes ahead in the planning world and I will be ensuring that Cockermouth's voice will be heard in any consultation.

Once the first Lockdown ended last year, I was pleased to work with Andrew Marshall from the Chamber of Commerce in ensuring that Station Street was sorted out, taking the needs of both local people and businesses into account.

I have been involved in an ongoing issue around ground maintenance in Harrot Hill and I have secured the commitment of the Chief Executive, Andrew Seekings, that the issue will be resolved to the benefit of residents.

I supported residents in Evening Hill and Albemarle Street in getting a flooding issue resolved through the County Council.

Looking ahead, I hope to support residents with plans to improve Harris Park and to do all I can to support businesses get back on their feet. Cockermouth really is a gem town and I will also ensure the cultural and leisure offers are maintained and enhanced for all local people and also to support our Tourism industry.

Andy Semple

Allerdale Borough Councillor, Christchurch, Cockermouth

Cllr Alan Smiths Allerdale Report to Cockermouth Parish Meeting 2020/21

The past twelve months have been like living in some alternative universe with the Covid 19 Lockdown, this has had a big impact on Allerdale Borough Council, but through the professionalism of the Officers, the Council has still functioned, and delivered all the statutory roles, a very well done to the Officers and our Contractors, Tivoli and FCC.

The Cockermouth Leisure has remained closed for the lockdown, but will open after April 12th.

I have finally got a resolution to the 'Puddle' on the Greenway outside the Cemetery Gates adjacent to Bellbrig Park, this is soak away drain, and not a piped drain, and will come under pressure from sustained rainfall.

I still get lots of calls regarding social housing, so as I have a good repertoire with the Social Landlords, and can usually find an answer to the questions and problems raised.

Hopefully with lockdown being relaxed I hope the town, shop keepers and the Kirkgate Centre will flourish, and I will see there is any help that Allerdale can give to get the town thriving again, and that the empty shops are filled with what the townspeople want.

Observations from Borough Councillor Alan Tyson

It was a privilege to be elected to Allerdale Borough Council to represent All Saints Ward in May 2019.

Initially I was put on the Development Panel along with three other Cockermouth Councillors, and became Deputy Chair of Audit Committee.

I also represented Allerdale BC at 2 sub-committees of the Nuclear Industry's WCSSG (West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group). Despite cancellation of a new Moorside Reactor, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, and Sellafield Ltd will remain major West Cumbrian employers and investors for the next 20 years. The WCSSG needs a vibrant, viable West Cumbria to continue investing and training local youngsters as tradesmen and engineering graduates. Equally Allerdale, Copeland and other Stakeholders need to fully support the Industry and scrutinise its present progress and future plans. Having worked on Sellafield waste development and disposal for 25 years I am well-suited to this scrutineer role in retirement.

In October 2019 I volunteered for two Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish groups. One involved the setting-up of Allerdale Waste Services to take household bin and recycling collections in house. This came to fruition in April 2020, and the service is now well-established. The other was the Climate Change TFG, a subject which has concerned me since the late 1960s. Hardly a short Task and Finish subject, global warming from the burning of coal, oil and gas which produce carbon dioxide and other gases to form a layer trapping heat, like a greenhouse does, in the lower atmosphere. To allow this to continue unabated would be catastrophic for our planet, for our children and grandchildren. Developed rich countries have ignored global warming for many years. Many, like the UK have set Country targets, without serious plans, to reach "net-zero greenhouse emissions" by 2050. Small islands, coastal cities and many UK cities and boroughs, including Allerdale, know 2030 is a more realistic "net-zero" and urgent action is required now. It will require changes in all our lifestyles, domestic heating, transport, environment and farming practices going forward BUT the changes to renewable energy will provide cleaner air and better, cheaper and healthier society for poorer people worldwide. The Allerdale Climate Action Plan is out for consultation now.

During 2021-22 I have retained my previous roles, but become Chair of the Audit Committee, in which I feel well-supported by members, independent of their political persuasions, and recently a member of the Licensing Panel. Of course, the last 12 months have been over-shadowed by Covid-19. Many Cockermouthians will have lost friends and relatives during the year, and I extend my sympathies to all affected.

Allerdale has moved to meetings by Zoom during the year. I have been self-isolating for most of the year but kept busy by zoom.

I regret that Allerdale have removed their Hub-service from the Library. Cockermouth as many elderly people, not telephone or computer-literate who benefitted from this. I am all for more home-working for staff but feel removal of this service is a backwards step. However, I note that an appointment based system is now in operation in the Town Hall each Wednesday morning.

I am pleased to have encouraged Allerdale in supporting Cockermouth Chamber of Trade in publicising themselves and Town businesses in their recovery. I am now injected against Covid and look forward to getting into Town and All Saints more, which, of now includes the villages of Embleton, Wythop, Isel and Blindcrake.

Alan Tyson

**COCKERMOUTH AND PAPCASTLE
RECREATIONAL CHARITY**

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR

2020-21

Registered Charity Number 1040902

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHARITY 2020-21

A. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL

A.1 The Cockermouth and Papcastle Recreational Charity is governed by a scheme sealed by the Charity Commission on 8th August 1994, with Registration Number 1040902.

A.2 There are seven trustees, currently

Mr Alan Smith (Chair)	nominated by Cockermouth Town Council
Mr Robert Jackson	nominated by Papcastle Parish Council
Mr Brian Merris	nominated by Papcastle Parish Council
Mr A Semple	nominated by Cockermouth Town Council
Mrs Christine Smith	nominated by Cockermouth Town Council
Mr. Alan Kennon	nominated by Cockermouth Town Council
Mr. John Conlon	co-opted
Mrs Ros Earthy	co-opted

Vacancies in the number of trustees are filled by the nominating bodies (Cockermouth Town Council – four, Papcastle Parish Council – two) with two individuals co-opted.

A.3 The administration of the Charity:

Secretary: : Mrs Sheila Brown, Cockermouth Town Hall, Cockermouth

Bank:: Cumberland Building Society, Station Street, Cockermouth

A.4 The Charity does not operate any committees.

A.5 For the purposes of the charity scheme, the area of benefit is the Parishes of Cockermouth and Papcastle.

B. THE PURPOSES AND WORKING OF THE CHARITY

The objectives of the Charity are to facilitate the provision for recreation or other leisure-time occupation for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area of benefit so as to improve the conditions of life for them.

C. THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

C.1 CHAIRMANSHIP

Mr Alan Smith was elected Chair following Mr Apperley's retirement.

C.2 FINANCES

The increase in market's volatility in 2020/21 has continued.

C.3 GRANTS FINANCED

- a) The charity normally meets just twice a year, in May and October. Applications are invited through public notice and/or invitation.
- b) In the year under review, [6th April 2020 to 5th April 2021], the charity made 0 grants ranging from £0 to £0 due to the covid 19 pandemic.

C.3 SUMMARY OF RECENT GRANT PROVISION

Year of activity	No of grants	Value £
2005-6	8	2,150
2006-7	11	4,085
2007-8	10	3,500
2008-9	10	3,045
2009-10	5	1,850
2010-11	7	3,000
2011-12	7	1,300
2012-13	9	2,970
2013-14	4	1,900
2014-15	11	4,050
2015-16	8	3,308
2016-17	15	2,920
2017-18	12	3,033
2018-19	10	2,935
2019-20	9	2,880
2020-21	0	0
Total	136	42,926

Notes

- (1) The accumulated balance at the year-end is available for the award of grants later during the month of April.
- (2) Average value per grant (last five years) £255.82
- (3) Since its inception in 1994, the charity has made 238 grants to the value of £74,905

C.5 ADMINISTRATION

The Secretary is Mrs Sheila Brown.

Considered and approved by the Charity Trustees and signed for them

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Date