

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the council chamber, Town Hall, Cockermouth on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillor Stephen Barnes
Councillor Cath Bell
Councillor Chris Bridgman
Councillor Julie Laidlow
Councillor Gillian Telford
Councillor Richard Watson

Councillor Howard Beanland
Councillor Marion Bowman
Councillor Isabel Burns
Councillor David Malloy
Councillor Helen Tucker

Mrs Jane Ollerenshaw (Clerk)
Cumberland Councillor Andy Semple
Members of the public – approx. 12

19:00

The Mayor, Cllr Laidlow thanked everyone for attending.
Prior to starting the meeting, she wished to make some presentations.

The Alan Smith Unsung Hero Award. Mr Smith was invited to explain the history of the award, then the Mayor presented it to Helen Todhunter for her efforts to raise funds for a sensory area at Fairfield Primary School.

The Mayor presented cheques to her nominated charities for the year. The Europe Prize Scholarship Fund and Cumbria Cerebral Palsy both received £1080.85.

19:08 Meeting opened.

001/24 To Elect the Mayor. Cllr Richard Watson was elected as the Town Mayor.

- I. Cllr Watson received the chain of office from Cllr Laidlow.
- II. Cllr Watson made his declaration of acceptance of office.
- III. The Mayor gave thanks to Cllr Laidlow for her hard work
- IV. The Mayor gave an outline of his plans for the coming year.
- V. The Mayor's nominated charities were the West Lakes Squirrel Initiative and Cockermouth Junior Football Club.

002/24 To Elect the Deputy Mayor. Cllr Gillian Telford was elected as the Deputy Town Mayor.

- I. Cllr Telford received the Deputy Mayor's badge from the Mayor.
- II. Cllr Telford gave thanks for her nomination.
- III. Cllr Telford made her declaration of acceptance of office.

003/24 Apologies for absence. Apologies had been received from Cllr Samson.

004/24 Minutes of Meeting 17th April 2024. Resolved to approve the minutes.

005/24 Declarations of interest Cllr Tucker said that she was a substitute member of Cumberland Council's Planning Committee; Cllrs Bowman and Telford both said that they were both members of the Friends of Kirkgate group, so both had a personal interest in item 8g.

006/24 Reports from Cumberland Councillors

Cllr Tucker (Cockermouth North) had circulated a report to councillors.

- I. Cllr Malloy asked who the Tourism manager was and what they were doing for Cockermouth. Cllr Tucker would find out who it was and ask them to provide a brief report.
- II. Cllr Burns asked if the businesses that had been affected by the Old Court House would receive any rebate. Cllr Tucker said that they needed evidence of loss – a year on year comparison. Very few businesses had contacted her.
- III. Cllr Telford asked if there was any movement on improved signage. Cllr Tucker would chase this.
- IV. Cllr Tucker asked that people contact her as soon as they are aware of issues, rather than waiting until the meetings.

Cllr Semple (Cockermouth South) congratulated the Mayor on his appointment.

- I. Cllr Semple had been elected as Chair of Cumberland Council.
- II. Cllr Semple was keen to work with the Town Council.
- III. Darren Crossley would be a good person to speak to about Town Centre issues. He would arrange a meeting.
- IV. Cllr Semple was the Chair of The Lakes to Sea Panel and they had co-opted members on to the panel.
- V. Cockermouth was very attractive but needed continued investment. A Town Centre Manager would be important to drive this.
- VI. Cllr Watson suggested writing to Darren Crossley asking about the financial impact experienced by businesses as mentioned by Cllr Burns and Cllr Semple said that was a good idea.

007/24 Public participation No questions or petitions had been received

008/24 Planning

- **WTPO/2024/0017** **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **HOU/2024/0066** **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **ADV/2024/0008** **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **FUL/2024/0084** **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **LBC/2024/0015** **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **ADV/2024/0009** **Resolved** to recommend approval.

- **DEMC/2024/0002** **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **HOU/2024/0080** **Resolved** to recommend approval.

009/24 Delegated Decisions. Resolved to note receipt of the schedule of decisions.

- CAT/2024/0011 Recommended for approval
- CAT/2024/0012 Recommended for approval

010/24 Consideration of Matters under Standing Order 5J

- V. **Delegated Arrangements. Resolved** to accept current arrangements.
- VI. **Review of Terms of Reference. Resolved** to accept the current terms of reference for the staffing committee.
- VII. **Membership of Staffing Committee. Resolved** to keep the current membership of the staffing committee.
- VIII. **New Committees. Resolved** Cllr Barnes would bring a proposal to a future meeting to re-establish the Climate Emergency Committee.
- IX. **Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Resolved** the Clerk would circulate the draft of both of these as soon as possible and they would be reviewed at the next meeting.
- X. **Review of Arrangements with other Local Authorities, bodies & businesses.** The library agreement was currently under review and would come back to the Council in due course. Cllr Bowman asked what agreements there may be between other organisations. The Clerk had been unable to locate a few documents. Cllr Burns would see if she could find any historic information.
- XI. **Representation on or work with external bodies. Resolved** to leave current membership unchanged.
- XII. **N/A**
- XIII. **Asset Register.** This was produced as part of the accounts system. The current valuation policy was unclear. Cllr Burns would see if she could find a policy. Cllr Malloy asked if the public toilets had been transferred to the ownership of the Council and Cllr Burns confirmed that they had. The Clerk said that the asset register would need to be updated. This would be done in time for the final annual accounts.
- XIV. **Confirmation of arrangements for Insurance Cover. Resolved** Clerk to look for alternative quotes when renewal is due and bring to September meeting.
- XV. **Council & Staff Subscriptions. Resolved** to continue current subscriptions.
- XVI. **Complaints Procedure. Resolved** the Clerk to circulate a model procedure.
- XVII. **FOI & GDPR Policies & Procedures. Resolved** Clerk to circulate model policies/procedures.
- XVIII. **Press & Media Policy. Resolved** Cllr Bowman would send a draft policy to the Clerk.

XIX. **Review of Employment Policies & Procedures. Resolved** that the Staffing Committee would review and bring forward policies.

XX. **Review of Expenditure under S137. Resolved** to agree the expenditure.

XXI. **Time and Place of the Ordinary Meetings for the year. Resolved that the dates will be:**

19th June 2024

17th July 2024

21st August 2024

18th September 2024

16th October 2024

20th November 2024

18th December 2024

15th January 2025

19th February 2025

19th March 2025

16th April 2025

21st May 2025

(Annual Town Meeting 23rd April 2025)

011/24 Lone Working & Building Occupancy. Resolved the Clerk to purchase the SOS alarms for lone working. For the controls on building occupancy, the full cost of the door control system, and the position in respect of fire regulations would be reported to a future meeting.

012/24 Input to Lakes to Sea. Not progressed.

013/24 Schedule of Payments. Cllr Bowman asked if contracts were reviewed for value. The Clerk said that they would be as they became due for renewal. Cllr Laidlow asked if we subsidised the buses as there had been problems with being able to pay on the bus. The Clerk said that no funding had been requested.

Resolved to approve the schedule of regular payments.

014/24 Complaints Regarding Unauthorised Installation. Cllr Burns had received 3 complaints about the lockers outside of Sainsbury's. Clerk to write to Planning Enforcement. Cllr Bell said that the lockers belonged to Menzies. Cllr Barnes said that it was also serious that a vehicle was parking in a dangerous position to service the lockers. Cllr Semple said that he would contact planning and copy in the Clerk.

015/24 To Approve the Schedule of Payments. Resolved to approve the payments.

016/24 Clerk's Report. Cllr Telford asked if the letter to the car park owners had been sent. The Clerk said that it hadn't. This would now be progressed. Cllr Bowman said that the action report was helpful. Cllr Malloy said that the library numbers were very good.

017/24 Date of Next Meeting. Confirmed as 19th June 2024.

20:28 Meeting closed.