

Minutes of a meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the council chamber, Town Hall, Cockermouth on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillor Stephen Barnes  
Councillor Howard Beanland  
Councillor Cath Bell  
Councillor Marion Bowman  
Councillor Chris Bridgman  
Councillor Isabel Burns  
Councillor Julie Laidlow (Mayor)  
Councillor David Malloy  
Councillor Jim Samson  
Councillor Gillian Telford  
Councillor Helen Tucker  
Councillor Richard Watson  
Mrs Jane Ollerenshaw (Clerk)

19:00 Meeting opened.

**294 Apologies** None.

**295 Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Resolved** to approve the minutes.

**296 Declarations of interest** Cllr Bridgman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 as a member of the committee and a pecuniary interest in item 10 as an allotment tenant. Cllr Tucker declared a pecuniary interest in item 10 as an allotment tenant and a non-pecuniary interest in item 7 as a substitute member of the planning committee of Cumberland Council. Cllr Burns declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12 as a member of the committee. Cllr Laidlow declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12 as a member of the committee.

**297 Mayor's announcements** The Mayor had held their open golf competition at Higham. She gave thanks to Cllr Burns for making the hampers and to Cllr Malloy for turning up and selling tickets on the day. The weather had been horrendous, but they had still managed to raise money for the charities.

**298 Reports from Cumberland Councillors** Cllr Tucker (Cockermouth North) had little to report as she had been unwell and was only now starting to resume work. She had attended meetings that morning of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Climate and Nature Advisory Group. She had also met with Jane Meek regarding the Old Court House, and although not much appeared to be happening from the outside, a lot of background work was ongoing. An agreement

had been reached with Sellafield Ltd who would provide a project manager who would oversee the project. There were still legal matters involved and the Environment Agency and Historic England were in discussions with Cumberland Council.

Cllr Semple (Cockermouth South) had sent notice that he would not attend this meeting but would present his report to the Annual Town Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Tucker would also submit a fuller report to that meeting.

Cllr Burns asked about Lorton Street and the sinkage in Market Place. Cllr Tucker would ask about those.

Cllr Malloy asked if any significant investment had been identified for Cockermouth, particularly for the Sports Centre. Cllr Tucker said that Cockermouth was regarded as too affluent for many funding sources. Cllrs Malloy and Burns said that there were many people in Town that were not affluent. Cllr Tucker said that it was not Cumberland Council's criteria, it was a national government one.

Cllr Tucker said that the Lakes to Sea panel needed input from Town & Parish Councils to direct where money should be spent. This would be placed on a future agenda.

**299 Public participation** Clive Barnard from Cockermouth Live! explained that the annual event would not be possible on a commercial basis and relied on grants and donations. This gave people the opportunity to perform where they might otherwise not have one. The grant requested from the Council would be used towards publicity and a talent forum for local young musicians.

### **300 Planning**

- **HOU/2024/0046**      **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **HOU/2024/0041**      **Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **HOU/2024/0057**      **Resolved** to recommend approval.

**301 Delegated Decisions.** **Resolved** to note receipt of the schedule of decisions.

- LBC/2024/0009      Recommended for approval (subject to like for like replacement)
- HOU/2024/0039      Recommended for approval
- CAT/2024/0010      Recommended for approval
- CAT/2024/0009      Recommended for approval
- CAT/2024/0007      Recommended that crown reduction be approved (subject to the work being carried out at the end of the nesting season)
- WTPO/2024/0008      Recommended for approval

**302 Grant Request.** **Resolved** to approve a grant of £500 to Cockermouth Live! Cllr Bridgman abstained.

**303 Allotment Tenancy Agreement.** Cllr Malloy suggested a 364 day agreement so a break in tenancy would be established. The Clerk would investigate this and membership of the Allotment Association and bring a report to the June meeting. **Resolved** to accept the amendments but review the full agreement again later in the year. Cllrs Bridgman and Tucker abstained.

**304 Renewal of Membership of Derwent Owners' Association. Resolved To** renew membership and nominate Cllr Malloy to be the point of contact with the Association.

**305 Europe Prize Scholarship Fund.** Cllr Watson took the Chair for this item. Cllr Bowman asked Cllr Burns questions about how the fund is administered. There had been 35 applications to the fund this year, but only 6 had been awarded. The Clerk confirmed that a provision for a grant of £500 to the fund had been made in this year's budget. Cllr Telford suggested the Mary Graves Trust might be able to assist. She would forward details to the Clerk. **Resolved To** approve the grant of £500.

The Mayor took the Chair.

**306 Response to the Markets Specialist.** Cllr Laidlow said that markets had changed, they no longer sold traditional goods and produce. Cllrs agreed that it had been tried but didn't work. Cllr Bridgman said that Keswick had greater tourist numbers so had better success. Cllr Malloy said that perhaps just a summer market would work. Cllr Bell said that a monthly farmers' market might be better attended. Cllr Malloy asked if stallholders were asking for a market. Cllr Bowman asked if the Council could receive a copy of the report. The Clerk recapped the discussion. **Resolved** the clerk to respond as recapped.

**307 Membership of CALC. Resolved** to continue with membership.

**308 Investment Accounts. Resolved** to accept the recommendations in the report and to authorise the Clerk to open and manage the new accounts.

**309 Wilko Car Park. Resolved** that the Clerk would write to the property owners and Horizon as the signs are outdated and the parking charges need to be revoked.

**310 Mayor's Allowance Policy. Resolved** to adopt the policy.

**311 Payments for Approval.** The Clerk would set up the business rates as a direct debit payment. The last item on the schedule was removed as a credit needed to be offset against the invoice. The Clerk would submit a schedule of regular payments to the May meeting. **Resolved** to agree the amended schedule of payments.

**312 Clerk's Report.** The Clerk's report had been circulated. The following had arisen since circulation.

- Library meeting. A meeting was being arranged with Cumberland Council Officers and councillors were welcome to attend. The date would be circulated.
- Water bill for Memorial gardens was still under dispute.
- The play area report summary had been completed.
- A list of outstanding and completed jobs had been created which could be shared.
- The payroll software was trialled unsuccessfully, but Cumbria Payroll Services offered a discount to CALC members which made them cheaper than the existing provider, and they are experienced in the pension schemes used, so they are now providing payroll services to the Council.

Cllr Malloy raised the issue of ongoing vandalism in the public toilets and said that they should be covered by CCTV. The clerk would see if the cameras in the library could be redirected or added to, in order to cover the toilets. **Resolved** to approve the report.

**313 Exclusion of Press and Public.** None present.

**314 To Receive a Report and Recommendation from the Staffing Committee.** **Resolved** To accept the recommendation to confirm the appointment of Mrs Jane Ollerenshaw as Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer at the end of the probationary period, which is at the end of April 2024.

**315 Date of next meeting.** Confirmed as Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

20:36 Meeting closed.