

Minutes of a meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the council chamber, Town Hall, Cockermouth on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillor Stephen Barnes  
Councillor Catherine Bell  
Councillor Chris Bridgman  
Councillor Julie Laidlow  
Councillor Jim Samson  
Councillor Gillian Telford

Councillor Howard Beanland  
Councillor Marion Bowman  
Councillor Isabel Burns  
Councillor David Malloy  
Councillor Alan Smith  
Councillor Richard Watson (Mayor)

Cumberland Councillor Helen Tucker  
Mrs Jane Ollerenshaw – Clerk  
Members of the public: One

19:00 Meeting opened.

**252/24 Apologies** Cumberland Councillor Andrew Semple had sent apologies.

**253/24 Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Resolved** to agree to an amendment to minute 224/24, the addition of the sentence “Cllr Telford said that like her, some councillors have family commitments out of town on Christmas eve or would otherwise have attended.” And to approve the minutes as amended as a correct record.

**254/24 Declarations of interest** None

**255/24 Mayors Announcements.** The Mayor had attended the Rotary Club Charter on 21<sup>st</sup> January and heard a very interesting talk from the Beep doctors. Cllr Telford had attended as Deputy Mayor the CALC health and wellbeing conference and had been invited to speak. She had spoken about the Council’s events, and how they impacted residents and how they were managed.

**256/24 Reports from Cumberland Councillors**

- Cllrs Semple and Tucker had submitted a joint report.
- Cllr Smith raised a number of points that had not been covered in the report. Cllr Tucker asked him to email her with those points.
- A number of councillors raised concerns about the pavement by the old HSBC building and the works being carried out.
- Cllr Laidlow queried the costs related to the Old Court House.
- Cllr Burns asked about Market Place and Highfield community centre. The roof had come off in the last storm.
- Cllr Malloy queried the dates for the planned roadworks.

- Cllr Bell said that the wrong information about the closure was being given over the radio.

#### **257/24 Public participation.**

- A member of the public also mentioned the work being done outside the old HSBC bank.

#### **258/24 Planning**

- **HOU/2024/0185 Resolved** to recommend approval
- **HOU/2025/0020 Resolved** to recommend approval
- **CAT/2025/0005 Resolved** to recommend approval with the condition that only those identified as dead or poor condition are felled, and those identified as fair or good condition are pruned.
- **HOU/2025/0030 Resolved** to recommend approval
- **HOU/2025/0031 Resolved** to recommend approval
- **HOU/2025/0025 Resolved** to recommend approval
- **HOU/2025/0026 Resolved** to recommend approval
- **LBC/2025/0003 Resolved** to recommend approval

**259/24 Planning Decisions Under Delegated Authority. Resolved** to note the schedule as received.

**260/24 Climate Emergency Group.** No report expected or received.

**261/24 Community Led Plan.** Cllr Bridgman said that he had managed to make some progress. Both the Civic Trust and Chamber of Trade had said that they were interested in being involved. ACT had said that they would help and support and that grant funding would be available. There would be an initial meeting early in March.

**262/24 Security of public toilets on Main Street. Resolved** that Cllr Beanland would work with the Clerk to bring a report back to the April meeting.

**263/24 Grant Policy and Application form. Resolved** The Clerk to redraft the existing policy and incorporate the application form and bring back to a future meeting.

**264/24 Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission. Resolved** To submit the Council's comments to propose that Cockermouth North and the urban part of Cockermouth South are combined to form one ward with two councillors, divesting the rural parishes of Cockermouth South.

**265/24 Updated employee handbook. Recommendation from the Staffing Committee. Resolved** to approve the updated handbook.

**266/24 Policies A to R – Appendices to the handbook. Recommendation from the Staffing Committee. Resolved** Cllr Beanland to submit his proposed amendments to the Clerk and the policies to be brought back to the March meeting.

**267/24 Health and Safety Policy. Resolved** to adopt the Health and Safety policy.

**268/24 Closure of Yewdale Ward, West Cumberland Hospital, Whitehaven. Resolved.** To write to the foundation trust and protest against the closure.

**269/24 Members to attend virtual police meetings. Resolved** that Cllrs Smith and Telford be appointed as representatives.

**270/24 Management plan for Isel Road park area.** Deferred to the next meeting for ideas to be presented.

**271/24 Members to attend a meeting with Cumberland Council regarding the Bus Service. Resolved** that Cllrs Barnes, Burns, Samson and Smith would attend together with the Clerk.

**272/24 Twinning Committee Terms of Reference.** Deferred to a future meeting

**273/24 Payments for approval. Resolved** to approve the payments

**274/24 Pre-approved payments. Resolved** to note the schedule of payments.

**275/24 Clerk's Report.** The Clerk's report had been circulated.

- **Resolved** that website hosting be moved to 123Reg
- Cllr Smith raised queries about the library transfer and would submit a form for the next meeting.
- **Resolved** That attempts at deterrent would be tried first. The Clerk would get moth balls and Cllr Malloy would put them in the tunnels.

**276/24 Councillor Matters.**

- Cllr Telford suggested that a planter might be placed on Station Street where the missing tree had been.

**277/24 Date of next meeting.** Confirmed as Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**278/24 Exclusion of Press and Public. Resolved** to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act (1960) due to the following items containing personal information related to [private individuals and staffing matters.

### **279/24 Clerk's Confidential Updates.**

- The Clerk updated further on the library transfer progress.
- The renewal quotes from the current supplier for the groundworks and hanging baskets had been received and others had been invited to quote. The quotes would be brought to the March meeting for a Council decision.
- Bus usage data would be shared with councillors, but this was to be treated as commercially sensitive.
- Allotments. **Resolved** that the Clerk should chase tenant "A" in the confidential report to ensure that the allotment fences are reinstated and the plot is cultivated. **Resolved** that the Clerk write to tenant "B" to say that Cllr Barnes would assist him to create a wildflower garden.

**280/24 Recommendation from the Staffing Committee in relation to the Clerk's additional employment.** After some discussion, and given the lateness of the hour, it was agreed to adjourn the meeting until legal advice could be obtained.

22.01 Meeting closed.