

# WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Present:** Councillor C Hayes (Deputy Chairman in the Chair); Councillor J Carr; Councillor E Dinsdale; Councillor R Gill; Councillor B O’Kane; Councillor A Pearson; Councillor R Redmond; Councillor A Spedding; Councillor R Taylor; Councillor R White

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Of

Councillor M Hawkins – Cumberland Council

Ingrid Morris – Open Spaces Officer, Cumberland Council

Members of the Public

Lucy Jenkinson – Press

Before the Meeting formally started the Clerk said she had a statement to read out on behalf of Councillor Graham Roberts as follows

“ I will be stepping back for a short while from my role as Chairman and Mayor of the Council due to health problems.”

The Clerk then asked the Deputy Chairman to take the Chair and The Deputy Chairman Councillor C Hayes took the Chair and said they all hoped that Councillor Roberts had a speedy recovery

### **2615/24 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor G Roberts	illness
Councillor G Dinsdale	Holiday

It was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Carr that the apologies for absence be accepted and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the apologies for absence be accepted and noted.

### **2616/24 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Hayes declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Tidy Town

Group and the Harbour Users Group.

Councillor Gill declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Heritage Action Group

**2617/24 Public Participation**

There was no public participation

**2618/24 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Councillor White entered the Meeting

**2619/24 Planning Applications**

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1  
It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that having considered the Planning Applications on Appendix 1 that Cumberland Council be informed that the Council had no representations/comments to make

**RESOLVED** - That after consideration of the Planning Applications on Appendix 1 that Cumberland Council be informed that the Council had no representations/comments to make

**2620/24 Report from Cumberland Council**

Councillor Mike Hawkins attended together with Ingrid Morris, Open Spaces Officer for Cumberland Council.

Ingrid Morris said a contractor had been appointed to carry out steam cleaning, repointing and repairs to the nose and they were waiting for a start and finish date. She said the total costs were £3,673.50 and WTC had kindly agreed to pay half.

The Clerk said at the last Meeting where the Council had agreed to pay 50% Councillor O'Kane had raised an issue that he wanted an Officer from CC to come because he wanted to know what other things CC might be wanting to do at the Cenotaph and read out what the previous Minute had said.

Councillor Hawkins said that there had been a meeting at the start with officers about extending the area but he didn't think anything had happened. Ingrid

Morris said there was talk about extending the hard standing area around it but that wasn't in the brief due to funding and restrictions but also there was quite a large area for people to stand on and if the weather was going to be bad maybe they could get some hard standing boards. Councillor O'Kane said they were talking about extending the area but that was not in the current brief. Councillor O'Kane said more people were attending every year. He said his assumption when we started this was

- We wanted to make the Cenotaph to take cognisance of the fact that over the last few years this has become more popular and in the last 2 years where rainfall has been significant around that period and the standing areas round there are poor
- The Cenotaph itself even after restoration doesn't look like many other Cenotaphs around the country which are cared for with little chains and flowers around them. It doesn't look like there's a real pride in the Town on the Cenotaph. Originally we had looked at the idea of not just tidying it up but making it look more cared for
- Safety aspect – when people go in there are 4 sides to it but what happens is there is some matting put down but the area of matting is insufficient for the numbers of people and asked if the focus of where people were coming in could be changed to the other side on the left hand side and CC had said some slabs could be laid round it which could reduce the numbers standing outside on the road

Councillor Hawkins agreed with this but said we should count this as Phase 1 Where we had the funding and then come back when the work had been done. Councillor O'Kane said we had had this conversation time and time again and we've now got to start on Phase 2 to make this a feature of our town.

Ingrid Morris left the Meeting

Councillor Gill thanked the Officer for coming

Councillor Hawkins referred to the Community Panel held on 04/09/24 at St Bees Community Hall. He said the Minutes had been published and all the grants given out. The next network meeting would be on 8<sup>th</sup> October at the United Reformed Church.

Councillor Hawkins said he had been contacted by taxi drivers about the standardisation of Licensing and they were going through consultation and would be going to a meeting in February. He said if taxi drivers phoned and said they were not being told anything they were as they were having regular meetings with Officers.

Councillor Hawkins asked if anyone had attended the Home Group Meeting and Councillor O'Kane confirmed that he had met with and had been very impressed with James. Councillor Hawkins said himself and Councillor White had been meeting with HG every 3 months and said Town Councillors could either bring any problems to him or contact James direct. Councillor White said James had said he would be interested in attending and said he could be emailed at any time. Councillor Hawkins suggested that HG could be asked to come every month and give an update on things. Councillor Gill suggested that all

emails be channelled through Councillor Hawkins or Councillor White

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hawkins for his report

**2621/24**    **Finance Report**

The Council considered the Finance report

- i. Appendix 1 - The Clerk reported that there was 1 additional invoice to consider on Appendix 1 namely:-<sup>^</sup>

Richard Sewell Ltd	£167.20 plus VAT repairs to roller door
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It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the invoices shown on Appendix 1 plus the 1 extra invoice be approved and paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the invoices shown on Appendix 1 plus the 1 extra invoice be approved and paid.

- ii. Appendices 2 and 3 – It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that Appendices 2 and 3 be approved and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That Appendices 2 and 3 be approved and noted.

**2622/24**    **Quote for Security Provision for 2025/26**<sup>^</sup>

The Council considered a report on a quote received of £22.00 plus VAT per security guard per hour plus VAT from the Council's preferred supplier for Council events in 2025/26. In order to accept the quote from the Council's preferred Contractor the Council had to consider suspending Financial Regulation 5 to permit this. In order to suspend Financial Regulation 5, Financial Regulation 19.2 states that "The Council may by resolution of the Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members". It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor White that (i) that the Council suspends Financial Regulation 5 to allow the Quote of £22.00 plus VAT per security guard per hour and (ii) having made that resolution that the reasons for the suspension as stated in the report be recorded and also that the assessment of the risks in the report be accepted and approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously<sup>^</sup>

**RESOLVED** – That (i) that the Council suspends Financial Regulation 5 to allow the Quote of £22.00 plus VAT per security guard per hour and (ii) having made that resolution that the reasons for the suspension as stated in the report be

recorded and also that the assessment of the risks in the report be accepted and approved.

**2623/24 Contract for Setting Up and Return of Council Equipment used at Council Events in 2025/26**

The Report was not considered as the quote for this work had not been received. The Clerk said it would be included on the Agenda for the next Council Meeting.

**2624/24 Quote for Science Show 2025**

The Council considered a report on a quote of £2,750.00 plus VAT for the provision of a Science Show on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 by Stefan Gates (same cost as this year) together with a quote of £1,631.28 inc VAT for technical support for the show from Fluid productions (slight increase on this year). It was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the costings for the Science Show to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 be approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the costings for the Science Show to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025 be approved.

**2625/24 Allotments – Skip Hire Quotes**

The Council considered a report on quotes that had been received for the hire of skips twice a year for each of the allotment sites as follows:-

Contractor A    £300.00 plus VAT per skip  
Contractor B    £410.00 plus VAT per skip

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the quote from Contractor A at £300.00 plus VAT per skip be accepted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the quote from Contractor A at £300.00 plus VAT per skip be accepted.

**2626/24 Consultation on Statement of Community Involvement**

The Council considered the consultation document - The Statement of Community Involvement – received from Cumberland Council which was out for consultation between 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that any Councillor wishing to comment should do so on an individual basis to Cumberland Council before 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024. A vote was

held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That any Councillor wishing to comment should do so on an individual basis to Cumberland Council before 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**2627/24**     **WCSSG**

Councillor E Dinsdale reported that there had not been a meeting of the WCSSG since the last Council Meeting so there was nothing to report

**2628/24**     **Councillor Ward Matters**

- i. Councillor White said he still intended to write to the press in terms of Highway lack of action, lack of upkeep
- ii. Councillor Taylor referred to two issues:-
  - Update from St Bees Parish Council re the cycleway - Mott Macdonald have agreed to carry out a GIS survey of the proposed route, assuming the coal mine railway sidings are no longer an issue. The main purpose of this is to update the previous work that was done by Sustrans nearly 10 years ago. In addition, MM will identify the current land ownership throughout the proposed route.

We are also in touch with Sustrans who have been involved with this project since it was first conceived. They are keen to see this route develop so that it links in to the national cycle network. We are also in contact with the CC infrastructure department. I should have more information on this in the forthcoming weeks. This of course is key to the project moving forward and with this in mind I'm hoping to meet the new MP this week end in an attempt to get his support and understand what help he can give.
  - A couple of people had spoken to him. In his ward he had Hillcrest Primary School, St Benedicts and Whitehaven School. And it was difficult for anyone trying to navigate their way round there around 8.00am to school times at 3-3.30. What happened a couple of weeks ago was there was a lot of gas mains work done there and the road was dug up and closed off for a number of weeks. They have been closing Midgey for this. They have closed off Standings Rise over the last week. All of this is causing absolute chaos and people were asking who from the Council is co-ordinating it all because they're creating utter chaos and making a bad situation a million times worse. Getting out of town at school times is a nightmare. He asked if anyone else has experienced any feedback because he was getting it weekly now and something has to be done about it.

- iii. Councillor O’Kane referred to New Road, Bransty, High Street and Harras Moor and said it was ridiculous. He thought the Council should be writing to CC to accuse them of this shambolic behaviour. He said it seems totally unplanned and totally unco-ordinated and asked if the Council could submit a complaint regarding the lack of communication and the lack of co-ordination in terms of the traffic situation in our town and asked that the Clerk writes to CC about this
- iv. Councillor Taylor referred to the beach where the harbour is – Whitey Rock. He said Maryport Demolition had been dismantling a boat on the beach and they left a load of gear like tools, saws and bits of the boat that dogs and people could have had a serious accident on. So he had reported it to the Harbour Commissioners and within 3 days it was all tidied up. So he wanted to say thank you to the Harbour Commissioners for doing it and if there’s any more work like that going on somebody needs to check it afterwards because there could have been a serious accident there
- v. Councillor O’Kane said he wanted to congratulate Cumberland Council – he said the area Bay Vista to Victoria Road lights that had been out for 3 months had now been put back up and everything was working.
- vi. Councillor O’Kane asked how St James Junior School actually get the (former Copeland) area solicitor to respond to letters from 3 to 4 months ago. Can we as a Town Council ask politely for a response. The Clerk said it could only be done on an informal basis as it was not a Town Council matter. He said there were contractors waiting to do work and they couldn’t start until the legal issues had been sorted out
- vii. Councillor Carr said
  - he had been in touch with tenants of a property on Mirehouse Road and it was all sorted now so that was some good to come from Home Housing
  - Just over that side of Mirehouse the lighting between Meadow Road and St Bees Road – still nothing had been done. He said he had been back up the Fairy Path again that day. All the wires were still protruding. Each and every one of the lights were still smashed to bits. Winter is coming again and he had brought this up several times. He said they had always got answers back from Cumberland saying they were aware of it and had been aware of it for 5 years. It was an underground issue but still nothing was getting done. Does something have to happen to someone before anything is done?
  - Maple Grove – on 29/9/23 an application was put in to get trees took back. We had a meeting with Chloe but she has now moved on. The pavement which is under CC is a lot worse now and someone is going to hurt themselves. The trees are overgrown and now going all over the path itself. We would like to know who has taken over from Chloe and we would like to know what we can do about this

- The cycle path – he said he had cycled home the previous week from Workington and all the way through it was really good. But his concern at the moment was that towards NISA and going underneath the rail bridge the cycle team had done a great job but the concern was the road that runs off towards NISA is going to be flooded again within the next couple of weeks because nothing has been done because it's under Cumberland. The culverts still haven't been cleaned out. So all that work has been put in on the cycle paths and when it comes to the kids going to school in the next couple of weeks all the paths that have been there for the last 6 to 7 years nothing has been done to the drainage and it's going to be a total washout again
- viii. Councillor E Dinsdale responded to this and said he did report back on this at the last Council Meeting when he had had a conversation with the site foreman to thank him for the work that the Team had done in part of the cycle path from St Gregory's running down to the Cattle Arch and the other part in Councillor Carr's Ward going up to Mirehouse. With regards to the Cattle Arch he said the Site Foreman said they had plans to renovate all of that area but were waiting for permission from Network Rail but it was definitely going to be done
  - ix. Councillor Carr said the bit he was concerned about was from NISA towards the cemetery
  - x. Councillor Spedding said the only issues he had related to traffic lights and roads on his Ward. He said it was good to see 4 new businesses opening in Whitehaven
  - xi. Councillor Pearson said that he had reported dangerous crossings since May and had gone through the proper channels and told them that someone is going to have a serious accident or somebody potentially is going to get killed. Since May he said he had received a reply in August to say they would look at it after the bird nesting season. He said the bird nesting season would be over before now and there hadn't been a twig or a blade of grass been cut. He said he used these footpaths himself and he came up the other day and looking down towards the cemetery you cannot see anything. The one further down which is called The Thicket – he had watched people coming out of it and they had to stand and listen to see if anything is coming. He said if somebody does get seriously injured or even a fatality all this was in emails and he wouldn't be standing back and saying he ignored it because he thought it was so serious and as he saw it not a person had looked at it and nobody had been in contact with him so that he could show them exactly what he was on about. He said somebody would be killed. And when something did happen it would be too late.
  - xii. Councillor E Dinsdale referred to land ownership at Low Road and Meadow View and said he had submitted photographs requesting for it to be dealt with through the CC website. He said he had 2 issues in his Ward where it would have been handy to know who owns certain parts



of land. He said he had looked into it and you could go onto the Land Registry and it costs £3 to find out certain information like the owner, deed information and rights of way and things like that. He said he had consulted with the Clerk on this. The Clerk said it was the next item on the Agenda and she would be giving a report on it. He proposed that this be done through the Council for situations like this. He said that if we created a database in the Council for the sake of £3 it would be there for ever and we could go back and check it. Councillor Gill said that not all land was registered.

#### **2629/24 Land Registry**

Following a request from Councillor E Dinsdale the Clerk gave a report on carrying out Land Registry Searches to ascertain ownership of land, restrictive covenants and easements and made the following points:

1. Not all land was registered
2. As a Council we can have a business e- account and this would require the Council to enter into a variable direct debit
3. Regarding a search of the Title Register itself – this gives details of the property owner and the price paid for it. As part of the register there is a section which will say easements (documents giving right of way etc) and for every document needed there is a fee of £3. If there is something detailing restrictive covenants again there is a fee of £3 for each document required
4. Current search fees
  - Title Register £3
  - Filed Plan £3
  - Other documents £3 per document
5. These fees are likely to increase to £7 with effect from 9/12/24

The Clerk informed the Council that the use of the Land Registry was not for personal use. It is for business use only.

The Clerk said it may well be worthwhile trying to register a business e-account It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes the Clerk be authorised to try to open a business e-account with the land Registry. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the Clerk be authorised to try to open a business e-account with the Land Registry.

#### **2630/24 Date and Time of next Meeting**

The next Town Council Meeting would be on Thursday 31st October 2024 at the Beacon Portal, Whitehaven at 6.00pm

**2631/24 IN PRIVATE**

That prior to the following items of business the Chairman moved the following resolution:

That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the public and or press be instructed to withdraw. Councillor White proposed this and Councillor O’Kane seconded this. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the public and or press be instructed to withdraw.

**2632/24 County of Cumbria 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Council considered a letter received from The Lieutenancy of Cumbria regarding the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the County of Cumbria which asked the Council to identify a person in our community who has gone above and beyond and made significant contributions to the community. This person and his guest would be invited to a Service of Celebration in Carlisle Cathedral. Two people were nominated JM and DM and following a vote JM was nominated with the request that JM asks DM to be his guest at the event

**RESOLVED** – That JM be nominated with the request that JM asks DM to be his guest at the event

**2633/24 Whitehaven Shopwatch Scheme**

The Clerk gave a report on a request from a shopkeeper for support for certain problems with the Shopwatch Scheme in Whitehaven. This was set up several years and shopkeepers in Whitehaven were invited to join the scheme. Shops joining were given a radio so that they could keep in contact with other shops and there was a monthly fee payable for the radio. Shopwatch stickers were also given to shops participating in the scheme. There does not appear to be a website for the Whitehaven Shopwatch Scheme although there is one for Workington. Also very few shops in Whitehaven are displaying a Shopwatch poster. A recent court case for shoplifting where the person was found guilty and given 4 months imprisonment together with a Criminal Behaviour order which said inter alia that the person must not enter any retail premises or property who were members of the Whitehaven Shopwatch Scheme and not to enter any retail premises displaying the Whitehaven Shopwatch posters at the point of entry.

In previous years in similar situations people had been banned from all the shops in Whitehaven but recently the Police had been asking the Court that people only be banned from shops in the Whitehaven Shopwatch Scheme and displaying the posters. The shopkeeper wanted all the shops in Whitehaven to be included in any ban as a result of a conviction and asked that the Council gives its support to this and sends a letter of support to the Police. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Carr that a letter of support be

sent to the Police. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That a letter of support be sent to the Police.

**2634/24** **Update on Office Accommodation**

The Clerk gave an update on the Office Accommodation as follows

- The roofers are well under way re slating
- First fix wiring has now been completed
- Downstairs offices have been demolished
- The office wall has been taken down and the first floor is now propped
- Steel is going into manufacture this week
- Two walls in the talking newspaper office have been taken out
- Openings on first floor are now complete
- Toilets have been stripped back/removed
- Created pockets in the main wall on the ground floor ready for the steel to be placed

The Clerk informed the Council of 2 further issues:-

- Woodworm had been discovered in the top floor roof timbers and all the top floor roof timbers required to be treated with a fungicide/insecticide to stop any growth and eradicate any woodworm. This was extra work but needed to be done and the cost was £6,875.00 plus VAT.
- Also one of the chimneys was crumbling and therefore dangerous and the Planning Department gave the Architect permission to have it demolished at a cost of £601.84 plus VAT

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that the report be approved and noted and the above expenditure be approved. A vote was held and 9 Councillors voted for and 1 Councillor abstained

**RESOLVED** – That the report be approved and noted and the above expenditure be approved

**2635/24** **Grant Application** – LLCIC

The Council considered a grant application from LLCIC. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that a grant of £1,000.00 be awarded to LLCIC. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That a grant of £1,000.00 be awarded to LLCIC.



The Meeting Closed at 7.40pm  
Chairman