

# WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Present:** Councillor C Hayes (Chairman); Councillor R Gill;  
Councillor E Dinsdale; Councillor B O’Kane; Councillor G Roberts;  
Councillor R Redmond; Councillor A Spedding; Councillor R Taylor; Councillor  
R White

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

V Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Members of the Public

Prior to the Meeting starting the Chairman and the Councillors introduced themselves to the public and the Chairman referred to fire alarms/escape and toilets

### **2452/24** **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor G Dinsdale	Maternity Leave
Councillor A Pearson	Holiday
Councillor J Carr	Work Commitments

It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Gill 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.

Councillor Taylor entered the Meeting

### **2453/24** **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Hayes declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Tidy Town Committee and the Harbour Users Group.

Councillor Taylor declared that he was a member of the Red Lonning

**2454/24 Public Participation**

Peter Tyson attended the meeting and made the following points:

- He said a stranger had come to Whitehaven and asked him where the Whitehaven Town Council Headquarters were and he asked what was happening to the building as it still had Whitehaven News on it. He said he was sure it was time that the Council had its name on it. The Chairman said the old name would be taken down and asked the Clerk to answer the question. The Clerk said the name change was in the proposals for the refurbishments of the building and would be done at some point.
- He said he had been at a meeting at the Golf Club on behalf of Councillor Alan Pearson and it was about sports facilities in Copeland and the 3 recognised areas. He said it was quite a good meeting, very constructive and very encouraging and to watch this space.

**2455/24 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and 7 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor abstained

**RESOLVED** - That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**2456/24 Planning Applications**

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1.

Councillor Roberts made representations in respect of Planning Applications 4/24/2305/0B1 and 4/24/2306/0B1 said he objected to these for the following reasons:-

- The proposals to change certain aspects of the layout will lead to problematic parking problems for property owners leading to an overcrowded development
- The proposals in relation to the right of way have caused tilted planning balance with adverse impacts
- That this proposal will cause moderate landscape harm and cause significant harm to neighbouring residents and to road users and nearby footpaths
- That the applications are deeply flawed and should not be granted



It was proposed by Councillor Roberts and seconded by Councillor Gill that Cumberland Council be informed of the above objections. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That Cumberland Council be informed of the above objections.

There were no other representations on the Planning Applications on Appendix 1

Councillor White entered the Meeting

## 2457/24 **Report from Cumberland Council**

Councillor Mike Hawkins attended and gave a report on behalf of Cumberland Council.

Councillor Hawkins congratulated the Town Council on their recent Firewalk Event. He said it was a really good initiative by the Council. It was an excellent event, very well run with professional organisers. He said it had brought a lot of people into the town on a Tuesday night and it has benefitted a lot of charities. Councillor Hawkins made the following points:-

- The TROs had been delayed again until the end of March because 2 new proposals had been added – 2 at Bransty and 1 at Egremont Road. The consultation had been extended until the 24th of March
- Play parks had been highlighted as areas of common concern by the Whitehaven Coastal and Community Panel and there was an ongoing review of play areas in Whitehaven
- On 13<sup>th</sup> February there was an informal invited meeting looking at other priorities around the table. It was a useful meeting away from the formal panels
- The future of family services for Cumberland – there was another ongoing review now that we were one unitary authority. There was a drop- in held at Whitehaven Library on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and Councillor Ghayouba and Councillor Williamson were there. There was a plan for a one stop hub in town. He had heard that day that it would be the old Barclays Bank. But that there were other services out there like the one on Kells. He said the idea was that you could go somewhere for a one stop with everybody in 1 building
- There was going to be a Planting for Pollinators at the Beacon on 16<sup>th</sup> March for anyone to join in who wanted to join in. He said he would have preferred it to be on Greenbank hill.
- The Cenotaph – Councillor Hawkins apologised and said he had not really done anything about this. He said the Cenotaph Review Group were going to look at this and he was waiting to hear available meetings dates from Councillor J Forster so that he could inform the Town Council.
- Councillor Hawkins said Peter Tyson had referred to a meeting that afternoon which was about a tranche of funding coming from Sport

England who had identified 10 areas across the country that needed investment and we had 3 of these areas, Mirehouse, Kells and Woodhouse. He said they wanted it to be bottom led up not top down. He mentioned the cycle way from Mirehouse to St Bees which he thought would be a game changer

- The next meeting of the Whitehaven Coastal Panel would be on 14<sup>th</sup> March at the Community Centre on Mirehouse at 6.00pm

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hawkins for his report

## 2458/24 Finance Report

The Council considered a Finance report

- i. Appendix 1 - The Assistant Clerk reported that there were 3 additional invoices to consider on Appendix 1 namely:-

Eden Springs	£9.84	Water
Cumbria Media	£172	Website updates
Viking	£22.13	Photocopier paper

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the invoices shown on Appendix 1 plus the 3 extra invoices be approved and paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That the invoices shown on Appendix 1 plus the 3 extra invoices be approved and paid.

- ii. Appendices 2 and 3 – It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts 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.

## 2459/24 Hewlett Packard Enterprises Support Services for Hardware

The Council considered a report on the renewal of a 1 year contract with Hewlett Packard Enterprises in respect of Hardware. The quote for the renewal was £93.51 plus VAT. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Taylor that the support services contract be renewed for a year at a cost of £93.51 plus VAT. A vote was held and 8 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor abstained

**RESOLVED** – That the support services contract be renewed for a year at a cost of £93.51 plus VAT.



**2460/24**     **Contract for Collecting, Setting Up, Removal and Return of Council Equipment used during Council Events**

The Council considered a report on a contract for the collection, setting up, dismantling and return of Council equipment used during Council events. At present only one person had expressed an interest and a quote is awaited and the matter will be reported back to Council for decision. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Roberts that the report be noted and Approved. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted and approved.

**2461/24**     **Press Statements**

Following Minute no 2438/24 Councillor Gill referred to the last meeting when he said he had been surprised to see a report in the Whitehaven News verbatim of the Council meeting. He said there was nothing wrong with that but thought that the Council should have a rule that when it is concerned with Council business that all press releases should go through the Chair or the Clerk and moved that this be adopted as a rule which was seconded by Councillor Hayes.

Councillor E Dinsdale said he reserved the right to put in the public domain anything that he deemed to be in the public interest and he wished this to be noted in the Minutes.

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that reports of full Council Meetings to the media should be made via the Clerk or the Chairman and that any Councillor wishing to make a report to the media direct should have the Courtesy to report it to the Chair or Clerk .

Councillor O’Kane said it was the purpose for which somebody records a Meeting and what it was used for. He said it was everybody’s right in the room to record the Meeting and that was not open to debate but what was open to debate was someone could select little bits to substantiate their argument and that was where it fell down. He said what the Council should be doing was having a proposal and a vote and that’s it. The recording has the potential to cause more and more problems

A vote was held and 7 Councillors voted for the proposal, 1 Councillor voted against and 1 Councillor abstained

Councillor E Dinsdale said the media had been sent a full recording and it had not been pieced up.

**RESOLVED** - That reports of full Council Meetings to the media should be made via the Clerk or the Chairman and that any Councillor wishing to make a report to the media have the courtesy to report it to the Chair or Clerk

**2462/24**     **Castle Park**

The Clerk read out an email received from Councillor Emma Williamson in respect of Castle Park in which she asked that in future any problems should be reported to her so that she could address them promptly. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Roberts that this be noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That this be noted.

**2463/24**     **Cumberland Council Grounds Maintenance Contracts 2024**

The Clerk reported that a letter had been received from Cumberland Council earlier that week to say that the Cumberland Council Parks and Open Spaces Team would not be undertaking any additional external grounds maintenance contract work for the 2024 season in order to allow them to concentrate on maintaining and improving standards across their own existing sites but were still able to offer support with organising/delivering annual and routine play inspections and repairs if required. They thanked the Council for our custom and the opportunity to deliver grounds maintenance to us up until now. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Roberts that this be noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That this be noted

**2464/24**     **Report on Firewalk**

The Chairman reported that 31 people took part in the Firewalk and hundreds were outside watching. It had been a great event. He said about £8,500 had been raised for charity and that it had been a brilliant initiative and thanked everyone who took part. He said the videos were superb and the organiser of the event had taken 181 photographs. He said the buzz round the town had been amazing. Councillor E Dinsdale congratulated everyone who took part

**2465/24**     **WCSSG**

Councillor E Dinsdale said he had been requested by Councillor Hayes to attend the Nuclear Stakeholders meeting at Cleator Moor on 6<sup>th</sup> February as Councillor Gill had been unable to attend. He said there were two main parts of the Agenda:

1. Martin Walkinshaw giving an update of the GDF Process
2. Bob Jones giving an update on the consultation on social impact spend

1. GDF – Martin went through the current or what was at that particular time the areas that had been detailed to potentially be a host for the GDF.



Allerdale had currently dropped out and there was South Holderness which is in the East Riding of Yorkshire. So that would mean that we had two potential hosts on that east coast push out.

There was Lincolnshire and two in Copeland – mid Copeland and South Copeland. But since Martin's briefing there has been an email come out from a nuclear stakeholders point of view to confirm that they (South Holderness) have now dropped out.

Martin gave timescales around consultations but in particular around how the timescales had slipped from a GDF construction point of view and said they had gone right out there to the 2050s.

Councillor E Dinsdale said he had played a part in the initial consultations which was the management of the safety process. Back in 2013 CCC had voted not to carry the process on, Copeland voted in favour of it, and Allerdale voted in favour.

Councillor E Dinsdale said he had asked Martin what the estimated costs were now for the completed project in 2050 and he said £50 billion.

Councillor E Dinsdale said the initial cost of the initial project in 2013 was £14 billion but it was not £14 billion it was £12 billion. This slid out to a point at £38 billion. He said this affected every single tax payer and every single energy customer in the UK. Councillor E Dinsdale said in 2013 he spoke in favour of carrying the process on at probably the biggest local meeting that we have ever had in Cumbria. He said that nobody was voting at that particular time for a GDF everyone was voting to carry the process on to try and give it as much of an opportunity we could. He said all of this had cost us all from a community point of view £38 billion and it was a national nuclear scandal.

2. Socio-economic response by Bob Jones on behalf of the stakeholders

Councillor E Dinsdale said this was more of a process thing around how we deal with socio-economic issues. He said he had asked a question of all stakeholders "do you think as a community that we are rewarded enough for the nuclear service that we provide?"

He said as a community we store 85% of the country's nuclear waste and 140 tonnes of plutonium. Councillor D Moore responded to the question and said it was a debate they had had for many years and probably nearly everyone would say no. Councillor Sam Pollen responded and said he believed that this should be an Agenda item for future stakeholder meetings.

Councillor E Dinsdale said that at the moment we are going through a cost of living crisis, rent rocketing, our local infrastructure including roads and rail are creaking to breaking point and hospital services are being transferred to other areas. Our town is looking unloved and we use terms like working in collaboration and partnership with the nuclear industry but in his opinion there shouldn't be any romance without any finance. He asked what the rent would be to store 85% of the country's nuclear waste and 140 tonnes of plutonium. He said what we needed was a process

which looked at the interim measures until we get a GDF and this process should look at what a fair rent would be for services that we provide. Councillor E Dinsdale quoted “there’s nothing going on but the rent and as West Cumbrians we’ve got to have a job if you want to be with me”. We as Whitehaven and West Cumbria need security for our future.

The Chairman thanked Councillor E Dinsdale for his report

There was no decision made on the report as it was for information only

#### **2466/24 Road Traffic Regulation Order for Whitehaven**

- (i) The Council considered the 7 additional proposals that had been made to the Road Traffic Regulation Order for Whitehaven by Cumberland Council. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the following Town Council representations be forwarded to Cumberland Council in response to the consultation on the 7 additional proposals
- Proposal 25 – Victoria Place/Lady pit – That this be approved
  - Proposal 26 – Bedford Road – That this be approved
  - Proposal 27 – Sneckyeat Grove – That this be approved
  - Proposal 28 – Foxhouses Road - Councillor White objected to this and said he would be sending a separate response to CC
  - Proposal 29 – Station Approach (Tesco) – That this be approved
  - Proposal 30 – Mariners Way and Church Hill – That this be approved
  - Proposal 31 – Bransty Primary School Mona Road – That this be approved

A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** – That above Town Council representations be forwarded to Cumberland Council in response to the consultation on the 7 additional Proposals

- (ii) Councillor O’Kane raised the Lowther Street Bus stop and concerns about the bus stop being in the centre of town in reply to Cumberland Council’s statement that they had decided against moving because of elderly users with limited mobility and that moving the bus stop further away may discourage the use of public transport and that the alternative route would have major implications for the timetable. Councillor O’Kane said during the pandemic the bus stop had been re-routed by the County Council and the Council had been led to believe that this was a potential change. He said the Council had asked for it to be moved and we hadn’t been involved in the discussions on this and wanted to know how the Council could be included to potentially move the bus stop. He said Stagecoach don’t run our town and should not be allowed to decide this. It was proposed by



Councillor O’Kane and seconded by Councillor Gill that the Town Council requests a meeting with Cumberland Council to discuss the possibility of modifying the Lowther Street bus stop to meet the suggestions made by the Town Council. A vote was held and it was unanimously

- (iii) **RESOLVED** - That the Town Council requests a meeting with Cumberland Council to discuss the possibility of modifying the Lowther Street bus stop to meet the suggestions made by the Town Council.

**2467/24**     **D-Day Flags**

The Clerk informed the Council that information had been received from CALC about official D-Day Flags. It was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Hayes that four 6ft x 4ft flags be purchased at a cost of £34.50 plus delivery plus VAT per flag. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That four 6ft x 4ft flags be purchased at a cost of £34.50 plus delivery plus VAT per flag.

**2468/24**     **Amendments to Copeland Local Plan**

The Clerk reported that an email had been received from Cumberland Council regarding consultation on the amendments to the Copeland Local Plan and giving a link for access to the amendments. Comments were to be received by 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The documents containing the amendments were 226 pages Long. Following a discussion it was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that Cumberland Council be asked to provide details of the amendments that are relevant to Whitehaven. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That Cumberland Council be asked to provide details of the amendments that are relevant to Whitehaven.

**2469/24**     **Councillor Ward Matters**

- i. Councillor Carr – Although Councillor Carr could not be present he had asked the Clerk to read out some comments. He said he had been contacted by a tenant asking for help with a water issue in their garden that they had had for months. The garden had been flooding from the field behind and the tenant had rung United Utilities who said it wasn’t them so they rang the council and someone (PT) came to look at it and said they would sort it out. Then they came back and said it was Home Group it belonged to. The tenant rang them and was told it wasn't them but a few weeks later PT came back with someone from Home Group who he said he would deal with it now and that they would dig holes behind fence to see what was going on and gave the Tenant their number

but that was weeks ago. The Tenant had tried to ring them on more than 1 occasion but there was no answer and also left messages again with no response. The Tenant said every time it rains it gets worse and the garden was flooded, the mortar was now coming out of inside the garden wall and it was either going to come down or worse. The Tenant did not know what this was causing to the structure of the house. The Tenant showed the person from Home Group the videos they had and they Home Group agreed it was bad and they would sort it.

- ii. Councillor Gill said the Council had had Home Group here and they promised us they were going to resurrect the walk around the Wards and this has never happened and that they come here and do nothing. He said he had just seen on social media today that Home Group were holding drop in sessions for people on Cleator Moor and said what about here. Councillor Gill thought we should write to Home Group and ask them when they are going to honour the promise they made to this Council.
- iii. Councillor Redmond said there had been youths kicking their doors and he thanked the Police for their response.
- iv. Councillor Taylor said Cumberland Council were changing all the LED light heads in his Ward and had done an excellent job, very tidy
- v. Councillor Taylor said he had raised a formal complaint with Viberoptix because on Ruskin Drive they had left it in an absolute disgrace. They had dug all the road up to put a terminal box in and left clay all over the road so he had put in a formal complaint and asked them if they could send a road sweeper round
- vi. Councillor Taylor referred to litter bins and said he still had not had a response from Cumberland Council and had raised it on the portal but couldn't get a bin where the residents want it. He said where the residents wanted a bin was on the collection round.
- vii. Councillor O'Kane noted on Facebook that there was a play area group on Bransty set up to initiate a play area on Bransty
- viii. Councillor O'Kane referred to the state of the roads and in particular the junction of Aikbank Road which was reported 4/5 months ago and has now become really dangerous.
- ix. Councillor O'Kane said there were lights out on New Road. Going towards Whitehaven on the left hand side the lights had been out for several months
- x. Councillor O'Kane said residents lights had been out since October and there had been no response to complaints.

Councillor Gill left the Meeting and did not return

- xi. Councillor Roberts said a few residents had been going on about the brown water in the Harbour and that he had recently met Deanne Shallcross and would be having a meeting with her to see what could be



- done. He said he believed they had identified the problem. The Chairman said he could give a report on this
- xii. Councillor Hayes said he had attended a meeting in the Marina Office and Professor Muir said they had found where the source was from and had finally got BR to admit their part in it and that the British Coal Board were not doing anything at the minute. He said the plan was to re-route it temporarily and then find a total solution. He said in a few weeks' time the tunnel would be closed for over a week and there would be a press release from the Sellafield scientists about this at the end of March
  - xiii. Councillor Hayes said he had met ladies from In Stitches who were aged from 20 to 92. They were all making chicks for Easter to sell to local people.
  - xiv. Councillor Hayes said he had attended a prize giving event at the Harbour Youth Group and that there had been some amazing things being achieved – Duke of Edinburgh, sailing awards, Archery etc. He said it was a great club with sports facilities, snooker and it was absolutely brilliant
  - xv. Councillor Spedding said he was going to go through Castle Park at the weekend with a camera to see if there were any outstanding issues
  - xvi. Councillor White said Home Group would be arranging a meeting with himself and Councillor Mike Hawkins
  - xvii. Councillor White said that in relation to 52 Esk Avenue an enforcement officer would be looking at the high trees.
  - xviii. Councillor E Dinsdale said on the previous Monday he had got a call from the Whitehaven News about anti- social behaviour at Morrisons and McDonalds and he said that personally he had not actually seen anything but that didn't mean it hadn't happened as he had seen stuff on social media. He said the Police were issuing Dispersal Orders
  - xix. Councillor Pearson was not at the Meeting but had asked Peter Tyson to mention something on his behalf. This was Story Builders and flooding on the Greenbank estate. This was just to be noted as it may be a serious problem later on

**2470/24     Date and Time of next Meeting**

The next Council Meeting would be on Thursday 28th March at 6.00pm in the Beacon Portal

**2471/24     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 Roberts proposed this and Councillor Gill seconded this. A vote was held and it was unanimously

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

Councillor E Dinsdale left the Meeting and did not return

**2472/24**    **Office Accommodation**

Further to Minute 2451/24 the Clerk reported that the Council were still waiting to hear from NALC on the VAT position and that until this was sorted the matter could not proceed.

There was no decision made on this as it was for information only

**2473/24**    **St Nicholas Gardens**

Further to Minute 2441/24 ii the Clerk reported that a breakdown of the costs had not been received from CC but that they had informed the Council that this would be supplied.

There was no decision made on this as it was for information only

The Meeting closed at 8.05

  
Chairman