

**WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**A MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL WAS HELD ON**

**WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT** – Cllrs Scott, Hodson, Lynch, Armstrong, Jackson, Hamblin, McCarthy, Clark, Huntington, Crouch, Robson, Lynch, Robbins, Ferriby

Clerk: Emma Ireton

**FC/70/2022 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Speksnyder

Cllr Stapley

**FC/71/2022 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS, MEMBERS AND OFFICERS TO GIVE NOTICE OF INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

6.1 Payments.

The following minutes were agreed as accurate:

Barton Laws Steering Group – 07/09/2022 AGREED

FC – 07/09/2022 AGREED

Festival – 21/09/2022 AGREED

PDSA – 22/09/2022 AGREED

PDSA – 28/09/2022 AGREED

POA – 26/09/2022 AGREED

EOM 28/09/2022 AGREED

Cllr Robson requested that future minutes detailed the clerk taking minutes.

**FC/72/2022 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

None

**FC/73/2022 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mary Bradley provided the council with a current update of the Nuclear Waste Project. She described that 75% of the UK's nuclear waste is currently stored at Sellafield so there needs to be a plan moving forward. Suitable ground, ideally under the sea is being tested from Millom up to Maryport as it needs to be buried up to 1000ft underground. The community will have the final say whether the waste will be stored in Cumbria. The only other suitable place is Mablethorpe on the East coast but the issue with this is transporting it across the country. The next meeting will be in Workington in January.

**FC/74/2022** To receive any representations from members of the public – Members of the public are invited to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes each. The maximum total time for public participation will be 10 minutes. At the close of this item, members of the public will no longer be permitted to address the Council Members unless invited to do so by the Chairman.

## **5.1 Public Participation**

None

## **5.2 Borough and County Council Reports**

Alan Pitcher – reported there is a sum of money left in a hardship fund from Covid. The plan is to use this money for people in the local community who are in need, initially people struggling to pay for their rent. Criteria for applying is currently unknown but more details are to follow. The fund will need to be spent before the end of this financial year.

On the subject of the new Cumberland Council, it was reiterated that the authority would be split into three areas with an office being in Carlisle, one in Copeland and Workington, Wigton would fall under the Workington office. This is an environmental decision as visitors can visit their closest office. There will also be further Border changes under the new unitary authority with Workington now possibly stretching up to Cardewlees. There is a meeting planned for the 28<sup>th</sup> October to discuss Allerdale and parliamentary boundaries, it has been suggested that Wigton falls under Workington instead of Penrith and the Borders.

Barton Laws will be used Monday, Wednesday and Friday during half term for another School Uniform Bank. Clothing items required at the present are children's and teen winter coats. There was also a request for clothing rails and hangers to hang uniform and coats on.

Cllr Lynch – had just returned from leave but attended an Allerdale standards meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October to assess progress. In relation to the Cumberland Council there have been catch up meetings with Dan Barclay the Assistant Director of Education to check on progress made and how the split will happen. It was noted that a head of children's services on each side will be required as well as a director of education, these actions are currently the most important. Currently policies are not being looked at as the most important action is to ensure that a proper council is in place to take over the four current council and it needs to be safe and legal. Legally, a process needs to be followed that creates a local authority, therefore a chief executive is required as well as legal officers. From this, the rest of the staffing will be looked at. By February there needs to be a budget and a capital programme that will detail what money will be spent on. All minutes of meetings are present on the Cumberland Council's website.

Cllr Crouch – Attended the Allerdale Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> September, the only item that related Wigton was that the Wigton Baths could be in financial trouble, possibly threatening closure. Cllr Crouch had not heard this himself, but it was noted that there was a pot of money to support if required. Alan Pitcher also had not heard of any financial troubles concerning the Wigton Baths but did mention this could happen in the future. It was also pointed out that Wigton Baths is one of the only public pools that is making a small profit.

## **FC/75/2022 Finance Matters**

None

### **6.1 To receive and authorise Payments and Bank Reconciliation for September 2022**

Cllr Lynch asked what Active hire LTD was on events of £4875. The Town Clerk confirmed it was for the Ice Rink for the Christmas Event. The Town Clerk then explained the reason for the variance between what the accounting software Scribe figures and the actual figures. It was explained that as cheques were being used to make payments, the main bank account did not match with Scribe as it looked that the account had more money than the bank account. It was also explained that the pension contributions and HMRC payments had not yet been made but had been input on Scribe. These payments would be made once the Clerk had access to online banking. Cllr Ferriby as Chair of Finance made councilors aware that he had been working closely with the Town Council office and acting as the go between, between them and the bank, accessing bank statements several times a week. The Town Clerk went through several of payments to staff, describing what the payments were.

Cllr Hodson raised Barton Laws running costs as they were high and likely to continue to rise. It was **AGREED** that this would be an agenda item at the finance meeting and the building would be checked to see if lights can be knocked off sooner or manually.

### **6.2 Cumberland Building Society – To request a debit card for the office and order a new cheque book**

It was noted that staff were paying for goods with their own debit and credit cards and claiming expenses back, this was highlighted as poor practice so a request to the Cumberland Building Society had been made to access a debit card for the main account which is currently being processed.

Cllr Pitcher – From Allerdale's point of view, the transition to the new authority has begun, with the shutting down of unrequired services. Software is being updated to make it as up to date as possible with it being pushed that the new Cumberland Council uses the software used in Allerdale as they are the most advanced out of the three councils. Allerdale officers are applying for lots of jobs but there are also a lot of staff leaving. The Allerdale Focus Hub have won a national award for their Community Alcohol Partnership, this has supported youngsters suffering from alcohol issues and has also been driven by the young people involved.

Cllr Robson asked if the Town Clerk had now been added as a signatory to the bank accounts. The Clerk explained that the forms had been filled in and returned so waiting for them to be processed.

### **6.3 To establish who are the signatories for the WJBC.**

Cllr Ferriby explained the difficulties the office had faced in trying to establish who the signatories were. One councilor needed to be removed and it was agreed that the Town Clerk would be added as a signatory, Cllr Robbins is also a signatory.

### **FC/76/2022 Cumberland Committee**

The first meeting took place where a list of areas that the Town Council would like to be responsible for was developed. The list included areas such as parking and green spaces. No decisions were made at the meeting, it was solely just to start thinking about the areas to be responsible for once the new Cumberland Council comes into effect.

### **FC/77/2022 Fundraising Opportunities**

Cllr Scott reminded councillors that he asked them to consider fundraising ideas. Cllr Armstrong suggested having the putting green at the lights switch on outside the Market Hall reception as they would catch people walking through and asked for volunteers to help. Cllr Robson asked for clarification whether this was just for Christmas or general fundraising. Cllr Scott asked councillors to consider fundraising options moving forward. Cllr Crouch mentioned the possibility of doing something with the dinners and asking Paul Radcliffe as St Cuthberts did dinners prior to Covid. Cllr McCarthy offered a few suggestions including raffles or competitions on Facebook. **ACTION** – Check if a lottery licence is required.

Cllr Robson asked if the festival committee had a festival plan, so it is clear what has been spent and what budget is left.

Cllr Lynch reminded everyone of the importance of having more than councillors on the festivals committee. **ACTION** – Clerk to approach local business' to ask if they would like to be involved.

### **FC/78/2022 Staffing and Communication**

Cllr Robson mentioned that the council was going through a period of change, with the previous clerk leaving, a lot of knowledge has been lost. Cllr Robson wanted to encourage the clerk to ask for help where required and for councillors to respond when they can, directly to the clerk.

### **FC/79/2022 Parking and Traffic Issues**

Cllr Ferriby highlighted that there are still issues with speeding and illegal parking in Wigton and that residents are concerned. **ACTION** – contact CCC regarding the parking next to the Fountain and suggest placing bollards to prevent cars from parking. Cllr Clark also pointed out that large amounts of soil were being moved through Wigton in wagons and could they be asked to avoid the town centre.

**ACTION** – Contact CCC. It was also noted that on street parking is still an issue.

**ACTION** – Contact Allerdale and ask for more visits from traffic wardens. **ACTION** – Contact Cumbria Highways, Cllr Lynch to provide the name after the meeting.

### **FC/80/2022 Town Clerk Pay**

Cllr Scott explained that the policy and staffing committee decided to start her on an appraisal plan at 1 month, 6 month and 12 months with the salary scale of SCP £37658. Cllr Lynch explained this would need to go to finance to approve and give finance the authority to approve. **ACTION** – add as an agenda item. **UNANIMOUS** agreement for finance to authorise.

### **FC/81/2022 Grounds Maintenance Report**

Attached.

### **FC/82/2022 Town Mayor's Announcement**

Attached

### **FC/83/2022 Town Clerk's Report**

The Town clerk discussed the need to improve the email system and need to gain two gov.uk email accounts for the office, the gov.uk emails are around £100 per year. GDPR was also discussed, sensitive information needs to be sent securely therefore the clerk would like to set up email accounts for all councillors to avoid using personal email accounts.

The clerk reminded all councillors to send apologies to meetings with a reason.

The next point was around the lack of Police presence in Wigton, Cllr Hamblin asked the clerk to send a letter to Cumbria Constabulary asking for a meeting, this letter was sent but there has yet to be a reply.

### **FC/84/2022 Member Reports**

Cllr Armstrong – attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> September Chrysalis used the putting green, 18<sup>th</sup> September the Queen's church service, 24<sup>th</sup> September Barton Laws opening, 27<sup>th</sup> September at Cumbria Wildlife Trust event, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura.

Cllr Hodson - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 11<sup>th</sup> September King's proclamation, 14<sup>th</sup> September Chrysalis used the putting green, 24<sup>th</sup> September Barton Laws opening, 27<sup>th</sup> September at Cumbria Wildlife Trust event, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura

Cllr Robson – nothing to report

Cllr McCarthy – was approached by a gentleman about having no water. Cllr Hamblin responded that it won't be connected until all the work is complete as the tank won't be secure.

Cllr Ferriby - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 24<sup>th</sup> September Barton Laws opening, sponsorship visit to Futamura, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura.

Cllr Hamblin - 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura

Cllr Jackson - 18<sup>th</sup> September the Queen's church service, 11<sup>th</sup> September King's proclamation, 24<sup>th</sup> September Barton Laws opening, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura. Also approached by residents around youths on bikes and speeding, the Police were contacted by the response was apathetic.

Cllr Clark - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 11<sup>th</sup> September King's proclamation, 18<sup>th</sup> September the Queen's church service, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura, 24<sup>th</sup> September Barton Laws opening

Cllr Lynch - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 11<sup>th</sup> September King's proclamation

Cllr Huntington - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 18<sup>th</sup> September the Queen's church service, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura

Cllr Robbins - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 11<sup>th</sup> September King's proclamation, 29<sup>th</sup> September visit to Futamura

Cllr Crouch - attended wreath laying on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, 11<sup>th</sup> September King's proclamation.

Meeting Closed – 8:55pm

Date of Next meeting  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022