

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

A MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL WAS HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 13TH JULY 2022 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT – Cllrs Lynch, Ferriby, Hodson, Speksnyder, McCarthy, Hamblin, Crouch, Huntington, Jackson, Stapley, Robbins, Clark and Scott

FC/33/2022 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. Armstrong

Cllr Pitcher - ABC

FC/34/2022 APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

Finance meeting held 7th June 2022 – **Approved** and signed as a true record.

Full Council meeting held on 8th June 2022 – An amendment was requested by Cllr. Clark.

This was duly amended and Chair and **Approved** and signed as a true record.

Policy, development and staffing committee held 20th June – **Approved** and signed as a true record.

FC/35/2022 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS, MEMBERS AND OFFICERS TO GIVE NOTICE OF INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None

FC/36/2022 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

None

FC/37/2022 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

FC/37/2022/1 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.

This section was filmed by the resident who addressed the Council.

A resident of Wigton asked the Council to explain why the gates to Barton Laws car park have been closed. He said that the gates had never been closed previously, and there is no public access for wheelchair users as there is a high curb on both sides. He went on to ask why we are denying the people of Wigton access to Barton Laws.

The Chair responded by saying that the gate was closed to protect the football pitches.

Wheelchair access has been retained at both sides. We have a lot of issues with dog faeces on the pitches.

Cllr. Stapley concurred with Cllr Scott that there is a real problem with dog faeces – especially with people parking in the car park, letting their dogs out to run on the pitch and then driving away without clearing it up.

The Chair suggested that this could be put onto the agenda for the meeting in September.

Cllr.Crouch asked when the decision was made to keep the gates locked.

Cllr. Clark says that she has been bombarded with questions about it.

Cllr Hamblin asked why this issue wasn't raised at a previous meeting.

Cllr. Ferriby suggested we call an extraordinary meeting to discuss the matter in the next few weeks before summer.

Cllr.Crouch wanted to know if we could just open it up during summer until a decision is made.

Cllr. Stapley mentioned the incidences of anti-social behaviour such as cars driving on the football pitch causing damage. This item was mentioned in previous meetings but no decision was taken.

Cllr Hodson asks if curbs are too high, we could approach highways – need to check if dropped curbs close to entrance first. There have been incidents of damage to the car park already – at Jubilee event and Carnival weekend (moped). Mentioned that her recollection is that car park was shut to allow it to 'bed in' following advice of contractor.

Definitely less problems with dog poo since gates have been closed. It's Council's responsibility to keep it in a good condition for users of Barton Laws.

Cllr Lynch reminded Council that we must follow the rules and call another meeting to discuss this issue. **AGREED**

Cllrs Lynch and Ferriby suggested a visit by the council to look at access.

Member of public left meeting.

Meeting of Full Council arranged for Tuesday 19th July 6pm at Barton Laws. **AGREED**

FC/37/2022/2 To receive reports from Borough and County Councillors in attendance –

Cllr Lynch reported she had attended various planning meetings concerning new authority and things were moving very quickly. Council tax harmonisation and new logos for authority have been discussed.

In Cllr Lynch's specialist area of Education and Skills, the education bill and a SEND green paper have been discussed. Reported that she spoke at the Secondary Heads' Conference, seeing this change as an opportunity for transformation and reset. Most concerned about SEND. More requirement for mental health support, social services and recruiting teaching assistants. The Council Plan is being worked on, and once ready will go out for consultation. Overall impression is that there is still a lot to do. We will possibly have a financial deficit, so efficiencies will need to be made. C-level appointments will have been made by October and will keep Council informed. Certain areas such as possible split of Police and Fire not yet fully decided.

Cllr Crouch reported that he was at licensing committee. It has been agreed that cabs can increase fares due to cost of petrol increasing. Cleaning charge can also rise from £50 to £100.

FC/38/2022 FINANCE MATTERS

38/2022/1 To receive and authorise payments and financial statement for June 2022

The statement was received. Payments **AUTHORISED**

Clerk apologised for absence of bank reconciliation – and that there's an issue with Scribe – will send bank reconciliation once completed. **AGREED**

FC/39/2022 CARNIVAL

Chair said that Carnival had been very successful.

Report by Assistant Clerk of incident on 25 June 2022 - Security of Barton Laws Community building - I attended the Carnival parade with my family, then went to Barton Laws so that our children could enjoy the fair. As I arrived I noticed that the shutter key had been left in the control box at the entrance to the building. Both key safes had been left wide open, showing the key code, and the door key/alarm fob was missing. I entered Barton Laws to find it empty. Carnival radios and fruit boxes had been placed there, as agreed, but no one was at the building. Doors to the changing rooms and plant room were also wide open. I spotted Stephen Farish and he had his keys on him. Stephen accompanied me to check the building. After checking no one was in the building I locked the main door and waited at the entrance.

After 15 minutes, carnival committee members arrived and I asked if they had keys to secure the building. They didn't, but radioed Mr Graham to see where the key had been taken. I politely asked them to keep the door locked when no one was around – I mentioned we'd had graffiti at the park and needed to keep the facility safe for the community. Upon receiving assurances and apologies that the building would not be left unlocked again, I returned the keys to my colleague Stephen Farish. I have no knowledge as to whether the alarm was set correctly that evening.

Cllr Lynch suggested that a user agreement is created to protect both parties. Cllr. Stapley mentioned that some buildings have rules that users must provide their own security or pay for security firm when using the premises.

FC/40/2022 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REPORT

Grass cutting: We are in the height of the season cutting every fortnight and managing to keep on top of things.

Weed spraying: All sites are being sprayed with Round-up Pro Vantage, apart from the allotments on Longthwaite Road where we are trying a new chemical which is more environmentally friendly.

Pre-season work on football pitches: Work has been carried out on the park pitches by ourselves this year in an effort to save money but we still require Tivoli to vertidrain the pitches at Barton Laws to assist drainage.

Summer bedding: All the flower beds and tubs in town and down at Wigton Park have now been planted up. We just need a bit of warm weather now to bring them on.

Carnival/fair: Damage was a minimal down at Barton Laws this year but I've come up with an idea for next year to keep the big rides off the pitches. If the metal football barrier is taken down and altered so we can take it down out of season, the rides can go another 15 metres back off the pitches, relieving compaction created by the large vehicles. This will hopefully mean less damage to the pitch. Barrier will be put back before season starts.

Staff sickness and holidays: It has been very difficult throughout June and July with staff shortages so I have had to prioritise jobs but when summer holidays (August) and

honeymoon (July) come around I'm hoping that our staff numbers will be back up to full strength but if it isn't we need a solution.

FC/41/2022 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attended: Wigton Choral Society performance of The Armed Man - would like to send official thank you. Armed Forced Day with Cllr Alan Pitcher. Wigton Carnival.

Cockermouth Mayor's Civic Service

Wigton ParkPlay – excellent initiative here in Wigton – two hours of free outdoor fun every Saturday morning. Had over 30 attendees at first event.

Charity football match at Barton Laws – we need to plan an opening evening so that community can visit the building and invite funders etc. Would like to ask Julia Webster to open as she had so much to do with the planning of the building. **AGREED**

I received Town Clerk's resignation letter; last working day 30 September.

Mr Paul Radcliffe contacted the Mayor as he was distressed that Police had not attended the Carnival – there had been some anti-social motorbike riding, nearly crashing into the crowd. Council has written to the Police Commissioner about the lack of Police presence asking them to attend a council meeting but they have refused. Response was that he's refused and passed it down to a local inspector.

In response, Cllr Lynch commented that as Chair, Council had previously contacted Police and PCSO to attend and still nothing has happened. Police will not come to engage with the local community. Suggest a TEAMS meeting if they cannot make it, with smaller group of Councillors? Cllr Hamblin commented that Lord Roger Liddle has even approached Chief Constable level with no luck. Relationship between Police and locals now at rock bottom as Police not visible. Community should be able to engage with Police.

FC/42/2022 CLERK'S REPORT

The report below was noted by members:

Vacancy for Clerk has gone live on Indeed, NALC, Cumbria Association of Local Councils. We've had a clerk ring up for more information but as yet no formal applications.

Accounts have been sent to external auditor.

Public Toilets have seen increasing blockages this past month. We had a complaint from a local shop holder about the state of the pathway adjacent to the toilets as it regularly floods from nearby drains. Environmental Health are looking at the matter.

Pitches at both Barton Laws and Wigton Park are being rested until the season starts again – so no football. £500 worth of verti drainage is required due to compacting from Carnival fairground rides.

Street names suggested by councillors was passed back to the developer on Lowmoor Road. Dog fouling - Pavement stencilling team have said they will come to Wigton when they have time.

Suggestion that we send official thank you letters to those businesses and people who supported the Jubilee event last month. **AGREED.**

Incident of vandalism in one of the allotments. Parks Open Spaces and Allotments committee (POA) has been informed and Cllr Hamblin visited today.

Four six-seater picnic benches have been purchased with money donated by Sarah Donnelly. I am working with Cllr Armstrong, Scott and Robson to get these in place ASAP. Bench for

Cuddy Lonning should be in place soon. Bin and bench due to be added to East End Park soon.

I started my appraisal with Councillor Scott.

GDF representatives have asked to attend the October meeting.

Tender to dress and install small Christmas trees in High Street and King Street is being prepared.

Park signage wording and design ideas will be sent to POA committee before their meeting.

Burnfoot allotments – work to put a water trough in has finally begun.

Council received a thank you letter from the Carnival committee.

Two new fully operational defibrillators have been put in place in cabinets located at Barton Laws and Wigton Park.

More cases of graffiti at Wigton Park – in play area and the shelter. Anti-social behaviour at East End park with footballs damaging local cars also. All incidents are being reported to the police.

FC/43/2022 MEMBERS REPORT

To receive reports from Councillors who have attended meetings or represented the Town Council. It's also an opportunity to bring matters of interest to the council for information or future discussion.

SH – Scouts and Sea Scouts on putting green - successful and enjoyable. Met with residents at Kirkland about anti-social behaviour from some users at park. Note of meeting to be sent to POA committee at Cllr JH request. Carlisle Civic Service. Handed out prizes at St Cuthbert's Sports Day. Chrysalis AGM (14th).

SMC – Received text asking about terrible parking by visitor to town – illegal parking on double yellow lines at Spar, Monument, Greggs, Sizzers. In reply: Cllr Hodson says these are issues we've raised constantly with Police. Cllr Crouch saw Royal Mail van parked at Monument – can we remind them it is not a parking place.

DF- Carnival. Chrysalis AGM (14th), Mayor's Civic Service (17th) Bowling Club meeting (22nd). Asks traffic issues be revisited in Autumn.

NR – GDF Group attached to Community Partnership run by Nuclear Waste Services. Can we approach again regarding funding local projects?

HR – Update on Cemetery: wildflower beds looking amazing – thanks to Cllr Hamblin for all of hard work. Reminder that balloons are not permitted at cemetery – if any, will be removed and can be retrieved from shed if owners wish to claim them back.

FC/44/2022 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 14th September 2022 - Meeting closed at 8.16pm