

A MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL WAS HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 13th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT –

Councillor Chris Scott (Mayor and Chair)
Councillor Sandra Hodson (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor John Hamblin
Councillor Mary Clark
Councillor Mary Huntington
Councillor Chris Stapley
Councillor John Crouch
Councillor Heather Robbins
Councillor Anne Jackson
Councillor David Ferriby
Councillor Mark Newton
Councillor Shane McCarthy
Councillor Patricia Newton

Clerk: Emma Ireton

FC/72/2023 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Speksnyder
Councillor Meszaros

FC/73/2023 MINUTES FROM JULY AND AUGUST 2023

The following minutes were agreed as accurate and signed by the Chairman:

Full Council held on 14th June 2023 - **AGREED**

Extraordinary meeting held on 29th June 2023 – **Councillor Clark requested two amendments, to remove the word confidential from the top and to move her previous comments to section four.**

Events Meeting held on 10th July 2023 – **AGREED**

Full Council held on 12th July 2023 – **AGREED**

Barton Laws meeting held on 18th July 2023 – **AGREED**

Events meeting held 25th July 2023 – **AGREED**

Finance meeting held on 31st July 2023 – **AGREED**

Events meeting held on 1st August 2023 – **AGREED**

Events meeting held on 15th August 2023 – **AGREED**

Events meeting held on 29th August 2023 - **AGREED**

FC/74/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS, MEMBERS AND OFFICERS TO GIVE NOTICE OF INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Councillor Hamblin declared £50 cash received from a member of the public for plants and flowers.

FC/75/2023 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

NONE

FC/76/2023 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Two members of the public were present to receive their prize for best allotment.

A councillor of Waverton Parish Council attended as a member of the public to question agenda item number eight. The agenda item was to discuss and vote on whether Wigton Town Council agreed to the WBJC's terms of reference. It was highlighted that this was inaccurate as the Town Council were unable to refuse the WBJC's terms of reference as they are an existing legal document that were drafted with Allerdale. The WBJC members wanted the Town Council members to acknowledge that the terms of reference exist, understand its content along with its legal and financial implications on the three joint parish councils, specifically Wigton Town Council as the leading council.

5.2 Cumberland Authority Report

Councillor Lynch provided an update regarding Highways. A speed indication device at Southend was considered but as there is no current speed data it will not be possible. It was mentioned that this device could possibly be bought through the community panel. Issues continue at the Fountain, one option is to look at removable bollards. Signage at Lowmoor Road has been completed. Highway issues relating to King Street will take longer to resolve as a Zebra crossing is not possible but other options are being looked into.

Bin strikes are now over with collections now taking place apart from paper and card but these will start again shortly.

The Solway and the Fells Community panel allows for each member to spend £5000 each on a local project, NADT received Councillor Lynch's share for youth services. The community youth panel is also hoping to provide the swimming baths with support so they can recruit more swimming teachers.

Councillor Lynch wanted to thank Dennis Graham for the work he put into the Historic Wigton event as it was such a success. Councillors were also thanked for the September event.

Councillor Lynch invited members to ask questions:

Councillor P Newton asked for an update regarding the extra disabled spaces in Water Streer car park, unfortunately there are no plans to update the car park.

Councillor M Newton highlighted issues with how the Friday Market was set out and described how if it was moved there would be scope for more stalls.

FC/77/2023 Agenda item 7

The agenda item was moved before finance matters as there were members of the public who were in attendance to receive their allotment prize.

Lisa Mattinson won the 'Best Kept Allotment' Prize and was presented with a cash prize of £80.

The 'Most Improved' allotment prize winner and 'Chairman's' Choice also won a cash prize but were not in attendance.

FC/78/2023 Finance Matters

6.1 To receive and authorise Payments and Bank Reconciliation for August 2023

Councillor Hamblin had questions related to the 'Love Holidays' payment on the bank statement, this was answered in agenda item 11. There was a second question regarding Capsticks invoices as there were 7 items on the payment list but Councillor Hamblin had only reviewed 4 items as the chair of the POA. It was explained that the 4 invoices had been split into 7 different cost codes as some invoices had several items across different cost codes.

Agenda item 11 was moved to discuss in this section.

It was explained that in August when the RFO logged into the bank account, there were 4 unauthorised payments to Love Holidays and Curry's Business to the sum of over £20000. Once this was reported to the Cumberland Building Society, they also could see a further two payments that were leaving the bank account on the same day. The Cumberland Building Society moved quickly and managed to stop and reverse some of the payments and then refunded the main account with the other amounts as they would claim them back from the companies themselves. Online scammers had gained access to the long card number and used the card to make purchases over the phone as an OTP code would not be required. The RFO reassured members that the bank card was kept safe at all times and only used when online payments were not possible on sites that were reputable. It was noted that when in the bank making the report, there was another person also reporting the same issue. This has been the second time the bank card has been compromised and new cards needed issued.

All payments agreed and authorised.

FC/79/2023 WBJC Terms of Reference

Members discussed the terms of reference document and asked several questions including:

- When was it written?
- Who did the officer refer to?
- Why did it still refer to Allerdale?

- If changes were required was it the full three councils that could make changes or just the members of the joint committee?

The consensus was that not all newer members were aware of the document and its purpose. Several members requested that the document was updated to reflect the new clerk's position along with amending some of the outdated sections.

The WBJC members wanted an answer to the question 'Do you accept that the terms of reference are a legally binding document'?

A **vote** was taken with **10** out of **13** members voting yes to accepting that the terms of reference are a legally binding document.

3 out of the **13** members abstained from voting as they believed they did not have enough information to be able to vote.

It was proposed that members from the three parishes could be invited to meet before the next full council meeting to further discuss the terms of reference.

FC/80/2023 Grounds Maintenance

Members read the report sent by Stephen Farish.

There was a request to repair the Iseki mower as it was broken, the cost of repair was £1400 but a new machine would be over £5000.

A **vote** was taken to repair with a **UNANIMOUS** decision to repair.

There was a request to replace the Honda Mulcher Mower as it was broken, the cost of the repair was £1000 but £1030 for a new mower.

A **vote** was taken to replace the mower with a **UNANIMOUS** decision to purchase a new machine.

FC/81/2023 Cemetery Update – Councillor Robbins

Members were reminded that the chapel was available for hire. As the weather gets colder there needs to be a way of heating the chapel. **ACTION** – clerk to research hiring heaters.

The graves that had been reported for sinking have all been resolved now as they have been relevelled.

It was noted that the end of year accounts still had some work to do to complete as they required the joint accounts.

FC/82/2023 Bowling Club

Councillor Ferriby started the update by reiterating that it was not legal to ask the bowling club to hand their accounts over to the town council so the contract needed to be reviewed. Members were reminded that the Bowling Club rent the premises from the Town Council and pay rent. In return the council have an obligation to make repairs and an immediate repair are the toilets as they are rotten.

It was suggested that a ready made cabin was bought and placed in the bottom car park as it would be cheaper than replacing and repairing the current toilet block. It was **AGREED** the office would research options and report back with costs.

Members requested the hedge cut back as it was too high and also asked for better signage to promote both the park and the bowling club.

FC/83/2023 Mayor's Report

Reported that Wigton Colt's have had Wigton Town Council printed on their training tops as they received a donation from the council.

FC/84/2023 Clerk's report

Reported that Cumbria Constabulary declared NFA in relation to the fire at Barton Laws due to insufficient evidence.

The clerk will start her CiLCA qualification in October which will qualify her as a clerk.

FC/85/2023 Member's Reports

Councillor Jackson – Reported residents concerns over the shabbiness of the town.
Councillor P Newton – Party in the Park. Asked whether councillors could attend schools to discuss ASB.

Councillor M Newton – Had a discussion with youths with cars at Barton Laws and asked them to respect the facilities.

Councillor Hodson – Attended the inauguration of Richard Corrie, Heritage weekend, Party in the Park, and Mayor Scott's Civic Service.

Councillor Hodson addressed the chairman reading a statement which was a reply to the statement read in the July meeting. It was stated that she felt the July statement was slanderous and did not follow procedure. It was made clear that the allegations felt personal and left her with no opportunity until this meeting to be able to reply. While she did not insist on a resignation, she requested an apology.

Councillor Ferriby – Civic Service, Party in the Park, Richard Corrie's inauguration

Councillor Stapley – Party in the Park and the heritage weekend. Asked if the plastic flowers around the fountain could be removed?

Councillor Hamblin – Invited to an RHS presentation in October relating to Wigton in Bloom.

Councillor McCarthy – Party in the Park and the Civic Service

Councillor Clark – Mentioned the lack of signage around Wigton and asked if more signage could be erected in the car park to show the map of the town.

Councillor Robbins – Heritage weekend and Party in the Park

Councillor Crouch – Party in the Park, asked about whether students still learnt about citizenship in schools? Also mentioned about new residents receiving a welcome pack.

Councillor Huntington – Richard Corrie's service

Meeting closed 21:04

Date of next meeting: Thursday 12th October 2023