

ASPATRIA TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21st May 2024 at 6.00p.m.
at the Methodist Church Hall, Aspatria.**

PRESENT: Councillor A Maxwell (Chair)

Councillors: Cllr S Maxwell, Councillor A Reay, Cllr D McRea, Cllr R Gregory, Cllr K Smith, Cllr M Rose, Cllr A Hankin, Cllr K Thurlow, Cllr J Marsh, Cllr S Edmondson, Cllr C Macdonald.

Also in Attendance: Ms S Hullock (RFO), Mrs K Cooper (Town Clerk), Mr J Baker (Town Caretaker)

Annual Parish Minutes

Item		Action
1. Apologies: To receive and accept apologies and note the reasons for absence.	Cllr L Hunter – Holiday The Clerk informed the meeting Cllr H Barker has resigned from the Council with immediate effect.	Clerk to note.
2. Mayors announcements/updates:	Appraisals for the Town Clerk and the RFO were held on 3 rd May 2024, the Town Caretaker will have his appraisal later in the year once he has been in employment six months.	
3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 31st May 2023:	Approved. The minutes were signed by the Mayor.	
4. Review of the year – Mayor’s Report:	<p>Thanks was given to the Town Clerk alongside the RFO for their efforts in resolving the issue last May whereby no councillors were elected. We have welcomed several new councillors over the last 12 months and also been sorry to see some leave. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor have represented Aspatria at several Civic Services including Cockermouth, Wigton and the Judges service held at Carlisle Cathedral by invitation from the High Sheriff of Cumbria. Aspatria’s Civic Service was held at St Kentigerns Church on 3rd September.</p> <p>In August the Senior Citizens enjoyed a trip to Edinburgh, organised by the Council.</p> <p>During the summer months hanging baskets were erected on the lampposts together with mangers on Castle Terrace, watering of the flowers was carried out by the previous Caretaker on a regular basis resulting in excellent displays.</p> <p>Thanks to the Town Clerk for organising the new signage which is now in place on both Brandraw and Queen Street car parks.</p> <p>During November, together with St Kentigerns Church, we participated in the remembrance parade, laying poppy wreaths at the Memorial gates, followed by a church service.</p> <p>On Sunday 3rd December the towns Christmas lights switch on took place. Thanks go to Councillor Linda Hunter and her Dreamscheme volunteers for providing</p>	

	<p>the Santas grotto and organising the fair rides. Thanks to Beacon Hill School for use of the hall.</p> <p>The Christmas lights window raffle was drawn at our January meeting, with many winning excellent prizes donated by local business.</p> <p>On Tuesday 12th December we held the Senior Citizens treat at the Masonic Hall, thank you to Beacon Hill School for all of their help. This event was attended by over 100 people.</p> <p>Our previous Town Caretaker left the council in January as he had decided to take employment elsewhere. Following interviews for the role, Jack Baker began employment and commenced his duties in March. The council van has been given a facelift so that it is highly noticeable as to who the van belongs to.</p> <p>Our Clerk has updated the council policies each month and arranged for the flagstones at the Brandraw bus stop to be replaced.</p> <p>The CCTV system in the Memorial park was not functioning correctly, however this issue has now been resolved.</p> <p>Efforts have been made by approaching Cumbria Highways for work to be carried out on the main road through Aspatria, no positive response has been forthcoming but this is still ongoing.</p> <p>Cumberland Council have also been approached for additional parking bays on Queen Street car park, again this is ongoing.</p> <p>The changes to the Library to provide a Community Hub are still underway.</p> <p>Recently, due to the efforts of both the Town Caretaker and the Town Clerk, the historic Brae Lamp has been restored. This will now illuminate each evening.</p> <p>Thank you to Councillor Kevin Thurlow for his involvement with the work carried out at Jubilee footpath, excellent job completed.</p> <p>I would like to end by thanking all Councillors and officials for their help, input and assistance during the last twelve months</p>	<p>MB to get quote</p> <p>TC</p>
<p>5. Any Other Business: (where members of the public may speak on any matter concerning the town at the discretion of the Chairman)</p>	<p>Nothing to report</p>	

Annual General Meeting

Item		Action
<p>1. Apologies: To receive and accept apologies and note the reasons for absence.</p>	<p>Cllr L Hunter – Holiday Cllr H Barker - Resigned</p>	
<p>2. Election of Mayor and Chairman: To elect Mayor for the ensuing council year 2024/25</p>	<p>Cllr Alan Maxwell addressed the meeting and proposed he step down as Mayor. Having had the role of Mayor for 4 or 5 years Cllr Maxwell feels now is the time for another Cllr to take the role. Thanks was given to all members of the council. Cllr Maxwell proposed Cllr Stephanie Maxwell as Mayor, this was seconded by Cllr Smith. Cllr Maxwell proposed Cllr Gregory as Deputy Mayor, this was seconded by Cllr Rose.</p>	
<p>3. To receive the Mayor’s & Chairman’s Declaration of Office:</p>	<p>Cllr Stephanie Maxwell and Cllr Ray Gregory accepted the role of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Cllr Stephanie Maxwell signed the acceptance of office form for the Mayor’s role, witness and signed by the Town Clerk as the Proper Officer of the Council.</p>	
<p>4. Vacancies on Council: To co-opt any suitable candidates for the vacancies on the council.</p>	<p>The council currently has two vacancies for Councillors. Aspatria comprises of three wards; East, West and Central. Anyone wishing to apply to become a Councillor must do so in writing to the Clerk.</p>	
<p>5. To Appoint representatives to Parks & Allotments Committee:</p>	<p>It was decided Cllr Alan Reay was to Chair the Parks and Allotments Committee and Cllr Damon McRea would continue as Deputy Chair. The Committee is made up of several Councillors, Cllr Karen Smith, Cllr Marie Rose, Cllr Adam Hankin, Cllr Alan Maxwell and Cllr Damon McRea. The Town Clerk and the Town Caretaker are also in attendance at the meetings. The Chair and the Town Clerk attend these areas frequently however it was agreed the committee would also attend the inspections.</p>	
<p>6. Declarations of Interest: Members are invited to make any declarations of Pecuniary Interest or other Registerable Interest (other than those recorded on their Notification of Pecuniary Interests or other Registerable Interests) relating to any items on the agenda.</p>	<p>None.</p>	
<p>7. Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held Tuesday 16th April 2024: To authorise the Chair to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the last Aspatria Town Council Meeting held</p>	<p>Approved and signed.</p>	

on Tuesday 16 th April 2024.		
8. Clerks report:	<p>Quotes were retrieved for the repair needed on the roller door at the Caretakers compound. The Clerk contacted the contractor to get this work carried out.</p> <p>Restoration works on the Brae Lamp have been completed. The Clerk and the Caretaker have worked together on this project to get the lamp repainted and powered. The lamp will be illuminated each evening following the D Day event.</p> <p>The Clerk has been in contact with the Community Payback supervisor to reinstate the volunteers to attend the railings at St Mungos Park, which are in need of paint work.</p>	
9. Public Participation:	<p>Cllr Alan Maxwell and Matt Richards, Vicar at St Kentigerns Church met to discuss the 'Spyatri Spring Clean' which has been organised by the church. The clean will take place on Sunday 26th May at 3pm from the Rugby Club followed by tea and cake at 4pm. The Clerk is to contact Cumberland Council regarding a road sweeper to clean the town. It was agreed any rubbish from the clean would be collected from the Rugby Club by the Caretaker and taken to the tip.</p> <p>The Clerk is to send a letter to the owners of the farm near Richmond Hill School regarding the hedge which needs attending to which overhangs on to the pavement.</p> <p>Cllr Rose reminded Cllr Thurlow of a sign needed at Crookey stating 'no through road' to reduce traffic turning down and struggling to manoeuvre. Ongoing.</p> <p>Investigations are ongoing regarding the land which the Brae Lamp resides. Cllr Maxwell suggested they visit the archives at Carlisle and also take the Mayors chain to be engraved with previous Mayor's names. Agreed.</p> <p>The Mayor's noticeboard which was situated in the old library is to be erected again in the new community hub. Cllr Reay proposed the council investigate what is to happen with the old fire station building, as the council do not have a council building.</p>	TC

<p>10. Highways:</p>	<p>The Town Clerk received a letter from MP Mark Jenkinsons office in relation to the condition of the road through Aspatria. Cumberland Council are monitoring the road, however at this moment in time do not feel the road needs any resurfacing work. Ongoing. Cllr Thurlow has reported several pot holes throughout the town. Ongoing.</p>	
<p>11. To receive for information, reports on issues relevant to the Town from County, District and Independent Councillors: 1.1 Councillor Kevin Thurlow</p>	<p>Nothing to report.</p>	
<p>12. Confidential Items:</p>	<p>The RFO has been liaising with the Local Government Pension Scheme to close the account following the previous Caretaker leaving employment. It was agreed the new Caretaker remain in his current NEST pension scheme.</p>	
<p>13. Financial Matters:</p>	<p>i) Expenditure and Income Schedule for April 2024:- RESOLVED that the expenditure of £6,657.89 and income of £47,697.50 be approved. Councillor Thurlow questioned the cost of the water rates for the Changing Rooms. The RFO explained that she had mistakenly recorded the electricity cost as water rates on the schedule and stated that she will amend this and re-present it at the June meeting. It was explained that this did not alter the overall total of expenditure as reported.</p> <p>Members also approved the additional invoices for payment:- Aspatria Farmers - £254.95 - Various Tools and Materials Npower - £56.47 Electricity for Brandraw Toilets 1.4.24 - 30.4.24 GroGreen - £508.80 - Lawn seed etc for bowling ground ColourGro - £847.20 - PLants for hanging baskets, trough etc LR & JA Allen - £107.98 - Van Fuel CALC - £471.04 - NALC/CALC annual Subscription Access Pro Scaffolding - £150.00 - Hire of scaffold to</p>	

	<p>repair and maintain Brae Cumberland Council - £116.00 - Annual Play Area Inspections</p> <p>The RFO also requested approval to change the water rates bill for Brandraw toilets to monthly rather than quarterly and also reminded Councillors that they had previously agreed this could be paid via a Direct Debit. RESOLVED that the RFO change the billing period to monthly rather than quarterly and arrange for a Direct Debit to be put in place.</p> <p>The RFO also explained that new Model Financial Regulations have recently been released by NALC. The RFO informed the Councillor's that she was reviewing the Council's current Financial Regulations in line with these and making the required amendments. It was explained that the amended Financial Regulations will be brought to a Council meeting for approval and adoption.</p> <p>(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements as at 30th April 2024: - RESOLVED that the circulated Bank Reconciliation Statements be confirmed and accepted as a true record.</p> <p>(iii) Date for Internal Audit:- The RFO informed Councillors that the Internal Audit for the 2023/2024 year end has been scheduled for the 5th June 2024.</p> <p>Council Insurance Renewal:- Councillors agreed to the renewal of the Council's annual insurance. The RFO requested the invoice so this could be paid. RESOLVED that the Clerk contact the insurance company to accept the insurance renewal offer and request an invoice which can be passed onto the RFO for prompt payment.</p> <p>Grant applications - St Kentigerns Church – Clock Repairs:- The Clerk informed the Councillors of the information received around the questions raised in respect of other funding sources and timings of the church clock repairs. RESOLVED that the Council award a grant towards the Church Clock Repairs to the value of £500. The RFO requested sight of the bank statement which supported the grant application in order to pay the grant over.</p>	
<p>14. Council Insurance Renewal:</p>	<p>The Clerk informed the meeting the council insurance was due to be renewed. All agreed to accept the renewal and the RFO will make payment on receipt of the invoice.</p>	

15. Council Website request:	The Clerk had received an email from a mental health/rehab centre in Cumbria wishing to have their website link placed onto the councils web page. The Clerk is to investigate further and if the Clerk feels this would benefit the public, all agreed to upload the website link.	
16. Grant applications:	Following an application brought to April meeting, St Kentigerns Church are looking to repair the church clock. On receipt of further information from the Clerk it was agreed the council would grant the church £500 towards the repairs	
17. Parks & Allotments:	<p>Cllr McRea proposed to the Cllrs the football teams pay £2000 annually for the use of the pitches and changing rooms as opposed to paying as and when matches are played, this would help to maintain and running costs of both the pitches and changing rooms. The Clerk secured funding through the FA however the councillors agreed, due to the drainage problems within the park, monies received from the football could be used differently and using local companies. Cllr Maxwell suggested an agreement be drawn up and signed by the football teams and the council. Cllr Thurlow proposed we turn down the funding from the FA, seconded by Cllr Gregory.</p> <p>The Clerk wrote to the land owner of the Lawson Street allotments regarding the lease, awaiting a reply.</p> <p>The Clerk put to the meeting the idea of an outdoor gym which would benefit older children and adults. All agreed it was a good idea and the Clerk is looking to secure funding for this project.</p> <p>The Town Caretaker has requested a long handled hedge trimmer for the hedges. All agreed to purchase one.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>TC</p>
18. Brae Lamp – D Day 80th Anniversary:	Thursday 6 th June 2024 marks the D Day 80 th Anniversary and councils are marking the event with lighting a beacon. The Clerk suggested we light the Brae Lamp following its restoration. All agreed. The Clerk is to advertise this on social pages. We will meet at 9pm for the Mayor to recite a speech followed by the lighting of the lamp.	
19. Senior Citizens Trip:	The council is to provide the Senior Citizens with a free trip again this year. Cllr Smith proposed Durham, which was seconded by Cllr Macdonald. The trip will take place on Tuesday 13 th August 2024 leaving Aspatria at 9am and returning at 5pm. The Clerk will retrieve quotes for two coaches.	
20. Applications for Development:	Applications have been made to erect a battery energy storage system (BESS) at West Farm. This is to be placed in a none productive field. The Clerk is to contact the planning dept to enquire of the benefits for Aspatria people.	Ongoing
21. Schedule of		

Correspondence, Notices and Publications: To receive a schedule of correspondence, notices and publications received since the last meeting.		
22. Items submitted by members:		
23. Items for the next meeting:	None	
24. The next meeting of Aspatria Town Council will take place on Tuesday 18th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m. at the Methodist Hall, Aspatria.		

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

Chairman.....

Date.....

