

ASPATRIA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th September 2023 at 6.00p.m. at the Methodist Church Hall, Aspatria.

PRESENT: Councillor A Maxwell (Chair)

Councillors: Cllr S Maxwell, Cllr A Reay, Cllr K Thurlow, Cllr R Gregory, Cllr A Hankin, Cllr K Smith, Cllr M Rose, Cllr L Hunter, Cllr S Edmondson, Cllr J Marsh

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

Minutes

Item		Action
1. Apologies: To receive and accept apologies and note the reasons for absence.	Cllr C Wilkinson – Holiday Cllr D McRea - Holiday	
2. Mayors Announcements/Updates:	<p>Cllr Maxwell gave thanks to everyone for attending the meeting and welcomed new councillors Sarah Edmondson and Jennifer Marsh, introductions were made.</p> <p>Cllr Maxwell updated the meeting on the Civic Service which was held at St Kentigerns Church on Sunday 3rd September. The service was delivered by Canon David King and was attended by several Mayor’s from across the County. Thanks was given to the Town Clerk for organising the event.</p> <p>On Sunday 10th September, Cllr Maxwell attended Wigton Mayor, Christopher Scott’s Civic Service and is to attend Workington Civic Service on Sunday 24th September.</p> <p>The Senior Citizens trip went ahead in August and was well attended. Two coaches were booked for the trip, however due to a malfunction with one of the coaches, two minibuses accompanied the main coach.</p>	AM/TC
3. 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.	None	
4. Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held 18th July 2023:	Approved. Cllr Maxwell explained as there is no meeting in August, the minutes to be approved are the last meeting, which was held in July.	
5. Clerks Report:	The Clerk informed the Councillors of annual leave requested by Mike Blair, Town Caretaker. Mike will be	

	<p>off 21st September and 2nd October-9th October. As per July minutes, section 6 and 26, plans to open a new gym on the Business Park have now been approved. Councillors objected to these plans and correspondence was made to the planning department. Town Clerk is to make contact to request the grounds in which the plans have been approved. As per July minutes section 16 the Councillors are requiring additional information on the Civility and Respect Programme. A sub-committee meeting was held to discuss the Christmas events in the town. The light switch on will take place on Sunday 3rd December from 4pm. There will be rides available on the school car park/Brandraw car park and possibly a food van. The grotto will be on the stage in the school hall, where refreshments will also be served. The Town Clerk is to purchase the selection boxes for the event and contact businesses for raffle prizes for the 'lights in the window' raffle. The Christmas tree, which is supplied by Iggesund will be delivered and erected prior to the switch on event. The Senior Citizens party will take place on Tuesday 12th December at The Masonic Hall.</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>TC</p>
6. Public Participation:	<p>Cllr Rose has asked if the drains at Crookey can be reported to Cumberland Council. The drains seem to be blocked and causing flooding to the houses due to the adverse weather conditions. Cllr Thurlow agreed to investigate.</p>	<p>KT</p>
7. Vacancies on Council:	<p>An application was taken to the meeting by the Town Clerk. Christine Macdonald who has lived in Aspatria for 10 years and also ran a business in the town for 9 years. Christine helps with the Aspatria Hornets, the music festival and Dreamscheme. Cllr Reay proposed the council accept the application; this was seconded by Cllr Smith.</p>	
8. Highways:	<p>Cllr Stephanie Maxwell informed the meeting the pavement from College Close to Beacon Hill School is in bad condition and in need of repair. Town Clerk to report. Cllr Hankin mentioned the kerb at Queen Street car park is damaged, adjacent to the pothole which has previously been reported. Town Clerk to investigate. Two vehicles, which seem to have been abandoned on Queen Street car park is to be reported. The maximum stay on this car park is 72 hours. Cllr Gregory stated the four blue bins on Queen Street car park has now been reduced to one. This is now overflowing, and waste scattered on the car park. Town Clerk to report to CC.</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>TC</p> <p>TC</p> <p>TC</p>
9. To receive for information, reports on issues relevant to the Town from County, District and Independent	<p>A road closure which will affect Aspatria is to commence on 9th October. Details will be posted on our social pages. Town Clerk to contact CC to clarify access due to the closure and how to inform the public not on social media.</p>	<p>TC</p>

<p>Councillors: 9.1 Councillor Kevin Thurlow</p>	<p>A workshop is to be held in Wigton Market Hall on 11th October from 3pm-5pm to discuss the community panels for Cumberland Council. Aspatria Councillors are encouraged to attend.</p>	
<p>10. Financial Matters:</p>	<p>(i) Expenditure and Income Schedules for July and August 2023:- RESOLVED that the attached schedule detailing expenditure of £7,429.94 (including VAT) and income of £0 for July 2023 and expenditure of £5,255.43 (including VAT) and income of £738.75 as detailed in the attached August 2023 schedule be approved.</p> <p>Councillors also agreed the following payments to be made:- Aspatria Farmers £119.35 for July and August - (Refuse Bags, Padlock, Plant Food, Wipes & Toilet Rolls) Ellenvale Ltd £1180.00 - (Senior Citizens Coach Trip to Edinburgh) Mike Dowling Contracting Ltd £480.00 - (Verti drain football pitch and extra area) LR & JA Allen £329.90 for July and August - (Fuel) Npower £9.02 July and August - (Electricity for Brandraw Toilets 1.7.23 - 31.8.23) Michael Coates Joinery £60.00 - (Fixing door and frame in the toilets) Cumbria Pest Services £145.20 - (Rodent Control in Allotments for Oct to Dec 23) Kevin Thurlow £606.99 - (Cleaning of Toilets for July and August & Toilet Rolls) Moore £504.00 - (External Audit of the 2022-2023 year end)</p> <p>(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements as at 31st July and 31st August 2023:- RESOLVED that the circulated Bank Reconciliations and supporting statements be confirmed and accepted as a true record.</p> <p>(iii) External Audit Sign Off and Publication of the 2022/2023 financial year end:- The RFO stated that she was still waiting for the External Auditors Report and Certificate for the 22/23 year end. It was explained that the RFO had been asked by the auditors to complete box 10 of the AGAR as a zero had accidentally been missed. There is a requirement that the signed off accounts be published on the Council's website by 30th September 2023, along with a notice of completion. Since the next Council meeting will be after this date, the RFO requested permission to publish the signed off audited accounts once received, thereby ensuring compliance to the legal publication requirements. RESOLVED Councillors agreed that the audited accounts, Auditors report and certificate along with the notice of completion be published within the required timeframe.</p>	

	<p>(iv) Electricity Contract with EDF:- The RFO explained that the Council's three year contract with EDF for the supply of electricity to the changing rooms is due to end on the 20th October 2023. This was fixed at extremely low rates, prior to the energy price boom. The RFO presented a table of various suppliers, comparing their standing charges, day and evening/weekend rates. These were then used to calculate potential annual and monthly electricity costs based on usage of the previous year. RESOLVED that the Council enter into a three year contract with EDF. The RFO will contact EDF to arrange for this contract to be implemented.</p>	
11. Grant applications:	None	
12. Council Policies:	The Town Clerk has updated the Complaints Procedure policy and the Sickness/Absence Policy. These were circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. It was reviewed and adopted at this meeting on 19 th September 2023. This will now be updated onto the council website.	TC
13. Councillor Training Courses:	The Clerk has contacted a training company for the Councillors to complete the 'effective councillor' course. The Town Clerk is to seek availability for a weekend. Date to be confirmed.	TC
14. Brandraw car park:	<p>Two vehicles were parked long term at Brandraw car park. One was recovered and removed by the police. The owner of the second van was approached and agreed to move the vehicle. Following another visit from Cllr Maxwell, the vehicle has been moved. The councils concern for any vehicle parked for a length of time attracts vandalism. It was discussed new signage needs to be erected at the car park with the Town Clerks details. Town Clerk to retrieve quotes for these.</p> <p>Cllr Marsh informed the Cllrs the barriers on entering and exiting the car park need cleaning as the height restrictions aren't very clear.</p> <p>Since the library has been under development and no wifi available, the youths don't seem to congregate in the area. On the opening of the new library, it is felt the wifi should be disconnected in the evenings to help reduce ASB.</p> <p>Mike Blair is to retrieve quotes for the steel panels to be replaced at the two bus shelters, one at Brandraw and the other on King Street.</p> <p>The flag stones at Brandraw bus stop are due to be replaced in the upcoming weeks. The Town Clerk was happy to announce she has acquired funding to help us pay for this work to be carried out. Cllr Reay gave thanks to the Clerk for funding she has attained and saving the council money.</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>MB</p> <p>MB</p>

<p>15. Parks & Allotments:</p>	<p>The gate at Victoria Park needs repaired. Mike Blair is to contact the contractor.</p> <p>Cllr Maxwell has received green fees from the Bowling Club and also payment from Aspatria Football Club for use of the pitch/changing rooms. It is understood that matches are being played regularly and no payment is being made. Cllrs asked the Town Clerk to contact the football clubs for a fixtures list and payment should be made in advance. The fee will increase to £30 per match, and if for any reason a match does not take place, the fee will be refunded. This was proposed by Cllr Gregory and seconded by Cllr Smith.</p> <p>The motorised mower used by Mike Blair is severely damaged due to a metal rod which was in the ground. The mower could not be welded, however Cllr Thurlow assisted Mike to repair the mower for the foreseeable future. This will be looked at getting replaced in the new year.</p> <p>The changing rooms are to be painted out and work carried out inside to make improvements. The Town Clerk is to apply for a grant to pay for labour and materials needed.</p> <p>The waste land on Outgang Road has been let to a member of the public, who has commenced work on the area.</p>	
<p>16. Maintenance of Council noticeboards:</p>	<p>The noticeboards around the town, which are relatively new are in need of attention. It was agreed Mike Blair is to stain them.</p>	<p>MB</p>
<p>17. Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's Chains:</p>	<p>It has been brought to our attention, other councils have their chains engraved with the Mayor/Deputy Mayor's name and date of service. It was agreed Aspatria chains should also be engraved, beginning with this year. Proposed by Cllr Gregory and seconded by Cllr Smith.</p>	
<p>18. Co-op building:</p>	<p>Plans to develop the Co-op building were delayed due to Covid, however the external building is in disrepair. The Town Clerk to email the Co-op to enquire what the plans are for the future.</p>	<p>TC</p>
<p>19. Cumberland FA:</p>	<p>A meeting is to be arranged for Monday 25th September for the Town Clerk and Cllr McRea to meet with the Cumberland FA to discuss the possibility of funding for the changing rooms and pitches.</p>	
<p>20. Brae Lamp painting:</p>	<p>It was felt the lamp could be painted by the Town Caretaker. It was discussed scaffolding would be the safest option. Cllr Marsh is to make enquiries on who owns the land, as it has been stated in the past this was public land.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>21. Anti-social behaviour:</p>	<p>A hanging basket containing the towns flowers, which was hanging on the Viking Ship has been lifted down and destroyed. Reports were made, this was smashed on the car park and the remnants of the flowers placed on peoples' vehicles.</p>	

<p>22. Schedule of Correspondence, Notices and Publications: To receive a schedule of correspondence, notices and publications received since the last meeting.</p>		
<p>23. Applications for Development:</p>	<p>Prima Homes Ref: VAR/2023/0028 development for 38 dwellings. The concerns were of extra traffic on Station Road and the availability of pupils for the towns schools and doctors.</p> <p>Prima Homes Ref: ADV/2023/0012 housing development board.</p> <p>John Baker Ref: LBC/2023/0031 Listed building to install new window – no objections.</p> <p>The applications of development can be found, along with the links on our council website.</p>	<p>TC</p>
<p>24. Items submitted by members:</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>25. Items for the next meeting:</p>	<p>Cllr Smith – Christmas Party</p>	
<p>26. Confidential Items:</p>	<p>Town Caretakers salary and updating of contract. Details of the contract between ATC and the Town Caretaker needs updating due to change of pay, change of Clerk. A sub-committee which will comprise of Cllr Maxwell, Cllr Gregory, Cllr Hankin, Cllr McRea and the Town Clerk will meet to discuss this in further detail.</p>	
<p>27. The next meeting of Aspatria Town Council will take place on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 6pm.</p>		

The meeting ended at 8.45pm

