

ASPATRIA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th November 2024 at 6.00p.m at the Methodist Church Hall, Aspatria.

PRESENT: Councillor S Maxwell (Chair)

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

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

Members of the Public: None

Minutes

Item		Action
1.11.24. Apologies: To receive and accept apologies and note the reasons for absence.	Cllr M Rose – Prior engagement Cllr B Blackburn – Family commitment	
2.11.24. Mayors Announcements/Updates:	Thanks was given to Reverend Matt Richards and St Kentigerns Church for a lovely parade and church service for Remembrance Sunday. The event was well attended however there were fewer wreaths laid at the Memorial gates than in previous years. It was suggested next year a wreath be laid within the Memorial Garden. The Town Clerk also contacted Richmond Hill School to enquire if their pupils would make some poppies next year to be attached to the park railings, the school agreed this is something they would be willing to help with.	
3.11.24. 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	
4.11.24. Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held 15th October 2024 :	The minutes were agreed to be of a true record of the last meeting. Approved and signed by the Mayor/Chair. RESOLVED	
5.11.24. Clerks Report:	The Clerk informed the meeting the funding application has been submitted to Cumberland Council Community Panel to apply for money to purchase an Outdoor Gym at St Mungos Park. The Clerk had to purchase 5 locks for the town noticeboards due to posters, agendas etc being taken down. RESOLVED The Clerk had ordered the winter flowers from the	

	<p>Lakes Centre in Cockermouth which the Caretaker collected and planted throughout the town.</p> <p>RESOLVED.</p> <p>The Defibrillators in town, one being at the Bowling Club and the other being at the Masonic Hall were re-registered on the defib website The Circuit.</p> <p>RESOLVED.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the two Christmas trees the Clerk had donated from Iggesund arrived on 15th November, the Clerk also collected the 'lights in the window' raffle tickets from the printers and also the sponsorship signs from Iggesund to place with the trees.</p> <p>Following a post on our social media pages by the Clerk, messages were received from people wanting to donate money to purchase daffodil bulbs in memory of loved ones. It was also suggested by a family they would like to purchase a memorial bench to place in the Memorial Park. Ongoing.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Clerk had investigated a complaint regarding an outbuilding being built at Croft House, this has had planning permission.</p> <p>The Caretaker, Cllr Reay and the Clerk attended the Methodist Church to remove the councils Christmas trees which were being stored in there. RESOLVED.</p> <p>Some youths had been caught on CCTV at the Brandraw toilet block drawing inappropriate images on the wall with water. The Clerk contacted Beacon Hill School where the youths attend, and this was dealt with. RESOLVED.</p>	
6.11.24. Public Participation:	<p>A local business, who the Clerk had contacted to attend the Christmas light switch on event is wishing to use the Brandraw car park every week or fortnight to park and sell pizzas. The Council decided to wait until after the switch on event to make a decision.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Cllr Marsh requested it be put on social media pages reminding the public to use bins provided when walking their dogs to ensure the mess left on the pavements is reduced.</p>	
7.11.24. Councillor Vacancy Application/Councillor Resignation:	<p>The Clerk had received a resignation from Christine Macdonald with immediate effect due to a change in circumstance she is no longer able to be a councillor. An application was received from a member of the public wishing to become a councillor. Cllr Marsh requested we have an interview style induction before deciding on co-option. Cllr Maxwell suggested inviting the applicant to the next meeting in December. Town Clerk to contact.</p>	TC
8.11.24. Highways:	<p>Thanks was given to Cllr Thurlow for his involvement and funds from his community panel funding on completion of the entrance to Richmond Hill School road surface. It was proposed by Cllr Maxwell and seconded by Cllr Marsh a certificate of appreciation should be presented to Cllr Thurlow for his hard work within the town including his involvement with the park</p>	

	trees, park drains and the removal of Christmas lights.	
<p>9.11.24. To receive for information, reports on issues relevant to the Town from County, District and Independent Councillors:</p> <p>9.1 Councillor Kevin Thurlow</p>	<p>Cllr Thurlow and the Clerk had received an email regarding the closure of the post office on Christmas Eve. The email was also to inform the council, the post office are advertising for potential retail partners who would run the post office on behalf of the Royal Mail. Alternative branches available are in Wigton and Maryport, however the Clerk is to contact Royal Mail to enquire if a mobile van would be possible for the town.</p> <p>The Clerk had reported the school crossing patrol lights as they weren't working correctly. Cllr Thurlow confirmed the highways department are purchasing new ones.</p> <p>Cllr Thurlow has liaised with Rev Matt Richards regarding displaying a union jack flag at the church. It was also mentioned the church clock is no longer working; the Clerk is to contact Rev Matt as a grant was received from the council in order to repair the clock. Ongoing.</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>TC</p>
<p>10.11.24. Financial Matters:</p>	<p>(i) Expenditure and Income Schedule for October 2024:- RESOLVED that the expenditure of £6,200.02 and income of £2,350.00 be approved.</p> <p>Councillors also agreed the following payments to be made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Npower - £68.11 - (Electricity for Brandraw Toilets 1.10.24 - 31.10.24) - J Airey - £109.90 (Internal Audit for first half of 2024/25) - Aspatria Farmers - £75.00 (Various Materials and Locks) - The Lakes Homecentre - £245.93 (Plants) - LR & JA Allen - £99.60 - (Fuel) - CALC - £30.00 - (Effective Councillor Module 2 Training S Maxwell) - K Thurlow - £874.00 (Cleaning Public Toilets for July, August and September 2023) - Thomas Armstrongs - £248.95 - (Caretakers shed) <p>(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation and Statements as at 31st October 2024:- Councillor Hunter asked why the balance on the current account exceeds that of the savings deposit account and questioned whether we should transfer funds between the two accounts in order to maximise interest earned. The RFO explained that the second half of the precept has just been received within the current account and stated that she would enquire as to whether transfer of money, as suggested, could be undertaken given the type of accounts the Council hold, or if not, whether any other options are available to maximise interest on offer. RESOLVED that the Bank Reconciliation and corresponding Statements be confirmed and accepted as a true record. The RFO to speak to the</p>	

	<p>Cumberland Building Society, (where the Council's funding is currently banked), regarding the ability to transfer funds between accounts in order to maximise interest as well as any other options which may be available.</p> <p>(v) Internal Audit Report to September 2024:- The RFO discussed the Internal Audit report received following a review of the first half of the 2024/2025 financial year. RESOLVED that the half yearly financial audit report be accepted. No recommendations were made for implementation.</p> <p>(vi) Proposed 2025/26 Budget:- The RFO informed Councillors that the proposed 2025/2026 budget will be brought to the next meeting and asked that Members give consideration to any planned expenditure. Councillors highlighted a number of potential budget requirements for certain projects and agreed to inform the RFO of any other expenditure and income that may arise during next financial year prior to the next meeting in order for the RFO to incorporate these within the proposed budget. RESOLVED Councillors agreed to inform the RFO of any items of planned expenditure/income for inclusion in the 2024/2025 budget prior to the next Council meeting in December 2024.</p>	
11.11.24. Grant applications:	A grant application had been received from Citizen Advice Allerdale. On reviewing the application and supporting documents it was proposed by Cllr Gregory and seconded by Cllr Maxwell to decline due to it not being of much benefit to our community. RESOLVED.	
12.11.24. Council Policies – Data Breach Policy:	The Clerk has updated and circulated the Data Breach Policy to Cllrs prior to the meeting. This was adopted at this meeting on 19 th November 24 and will be updated on the website.	
13.11.24. Queen Street Car Park:	<p>Cumberland Council have planned a 'Big clean' at Queen St car park which commences on Monday 25th November until Wednesday 27th November. The Clerk was asked to inform the council and also members of the public on our social platforms, in order to evacuate the car park on the set dates.</p> <p>Cllr Maxwell requested the Clerk report the state of the pavements to highways and request for them to be cleaned.</p> <p>The Clerk was informed by Cumberland Council of plans to build a temporary Co-op store to be erected next to the toilet block whilst the Co-op building on King Street is refurbished. Ongoing</p> <p>Cllr Sarah Edmondson leaves at 19.40pm</p>	<p>TC</p> <p>TC</p>
14.11.24. United Utilities Water Issue:	Following issues with the water pressure within town being low or no water at all, United Utilities have failed to find a solution. It was discussed that the Dairy	

	Cheese Factory at Station Road causes a drain on resources leaving families and elderly with little or no water. The Clerk is to contact both United Utilities and the Dairy to try and resolve this. Ongoing.	TC
15.11.24. Parks & Allotments:	<p>Minutes from the Parks and Allotments meeting held on 18th October 2024 were circulated and approved. This was to confirm and agree the terms of letting for the hiring of council facilities including key holders. It was also agreed and minuted the football clubs were to pay a figure of £2000 annually to the council for use of facilities. RESOLVED.</p> <p>Cllr Reay informed the meeting Damon McRea had visited him at home to dispute the invoice amount, it was suggested the Clerk contact the Chairman of the football club John Stoddart, however the Clerk had previously contacted the Chairman and had no reply. It was agreed this situation had continued for too long and it was proposed by Cllr Smith to hold a Park and Allotments meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Marsh. Several trees in St Mungos Park have had to be felled for safety reasons due to the storm.</p> <p>The Clerk has acquired funding from the Charity Shop and also applied to Cumberland Council Community Panel in order to purchase the outdoor gym. The Clerk is awaiting on confirmation from the Community Panel, however if the £1500 is received the Clerk requested the council match fund £3000 to enable the gym to be ordered. It was proposed by Cllr Stephanie Maxwell this be done and seconded by Cllr Smith. RESOLVED.</p> <p>The Kubota Mower is currently registered for road usage, however due to the cost of insurance it was agreed to SORN the mower with DVLA. RESOLVED.</p>	
16.11.24. Town Caretakers Van:	<p>Due to the floor in the Caretakers van being broken and needing repaired, the Caretaker received a price from Atkinsons, which was quoted at £30 per sheet and the van would require two sheets. It was agreed to purchase the wood and get this repaired. RESOLVED.</p> <p>The Caretaker had asked the Clerk if he could take the van home to be parked overnight to prevent him defrosting two vehicles each morning. The Clerk has contacted the insurance company to find out costs of change of address. A decision will be made following a reply from the insurance company. Ongoing.</p>	
17.11.24. Christmas events:	<p>The Clerk received the grant applied for with the charity shop to help fund the Christmas events. The Clerk and Caretaker collected 500 selection boxes and are going to Bookers for all the refreshments. The Clerk circulated the lights in the window raffle tickets to councillors with the areas they are to distribute them. The tickets should be posted through doors from 16th Dec – 20th December. The raffle will then take place in January meeting.</p>	

18.11.24. Town events:	It was suggested by the Clerk that as a council we organise additional events throughout the year for the town. The Clerk suggested a Halloween party for the children could take place and also an event in the summer. It was agreed this would be discussed in further detail at a later date. Ongoing.	
19.11.24. Council Noticeboards:	As per the Clerks Report, the councillors were informed the town noticeboards have now been locked with the Caretaker and Clerk having keys. This is due to the fact someone had removed the council agendas and posters. The Clerk was contacted by a member of the church to request a key for the community centre noticeboard as they display posters frequently. The Clerk has supplied the church warden with a key. Anyone else wanting to use the noticeboards to display anything they should contact the Clerk and it will be arranged. RESOLVED.	
20.11.24. Schedule of Correspondence, Notices and Publications: To receive a schedule of correspondence, notices and publications received since the last meeting.		
21.11.24. Applications for Development:	None	
22.11.24. Items submitted by members:	None	
23.11.24. Items for the next meeting:	Town Clerks working hours Cllr Thurlow- Town Hall	
24.11.24. Confidential Items:	The Town Clerks working hours and the application of the 2024 payrise for both the RFO and the Clerk were discussed, and this is minuted on Page 2 of November minutes (19.11.24) for Councillors only.	
25.11.24. The next meeting of Aspatria Town Council will take place on Tuesday 17th December 2024 at 6pm.		

The Clerk left the meeting at 8.45pm as Confidential Items were discussed.
The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

