

# Workington Town Council

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## Minutes of the Environment Committee of Workington Town Council, 6pm on 11 October 2018 in Town Hall, Workington

D Rollo (Chair)	Present
A Bales	Present
B Cannon (Mayor)	Present
D Cashman	Present
B Dixon	Absent
H Harrington	Present
J Holliday	Present
P McHarry	Present
B Miskelly	Present
J Osborn	Present
B Reville	Present

In attendance: Town Clerk

### Public Participation

Prior to the meeting, Mr M Barnes of the Newlands Lane Allotment and Heritage Garden Association gave a brief overview of how the association was progressing the development of the allotment site under the new self-management arrangements. Mr Barnes described the new paths, and the redevelopment of Plot 10, which had always caused the council problems. This would now have raised beds, fruit and wildflowers, and had proved popular with the local school after a visit. Members had visited a site in Bolton, which was an excellent learning experience and showed them a very impressive possible future for Newlands Lane. The Mayor's visit over the summer had also been successful and the members felt they were now in a position to mentor or federate with any other sites in the town contemplating going down the same route. The Chair thanked Mr Barnes for his valued input.

### E18.28 Apologies

No apologies were received.

### E18.29 Declarations of Interest

The Chair drew members' attention to her position on the Board at Lakes College, and as an allotment tenant in Salterbeck.

### E18.30 Exclusion of Press and Public

No issues.

### E18.31 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting on 26 July 2018 were accepted as a true record.

### **E18.32 Flood Issues**

The Clerk reported that the community pump facility in Barepot was progressing well, with the container now installed, awaiting insulating prior to the transfer of flood sacks for local use.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

### **E18.33. Back Lanes**

The Clerk reported that the council's Back Lane earmarked funds remained available for projects, though there had been no capacity to deliver anything in the past 10 months. It was noted that one of the Frostoms Road sections had not been improved and that a number of other areas and issues could be considered for investment.

**Resolved:** To consider next steps at a future meeting, including issues such as footway lighting at Wybrow Terrace.

### **E18.34 Allotment Rents**

#### **a) Rents**

The committee noted that the Full Council had been asked to make a decision about the level of allotment rents rises, following some scheduling issues with the Committee's programme of meetings.

**Resolved:** To note the 2 per cent rise in allotment rents for 2018-19 and for 2019-20.

**Resolved:** To bring the proposed rental increase for 2020-21 to the committee's budget setting meeting in November 2019.

### **E18.35 Northside**

The Committee noted that the Full Council had accepted its decision at a previous meeting to withdraw from managing Northside Allotments. It considered a number of issues relating to the timetabling of that withdrawal, including the impact on the existing tenants, and the necessity to prevent the council from being exposed to further losses on the site.

**Resolved:** That the Council cooperates with Allerdale Borough Council over the precise timetable for withdrawal, keeping tenants informed, disconnecting water supplies and liaising with Castles and Coasts Housing Association over the possibility of restoring the Hillcrest site as soon as possible.

### **E18.36 Newlands Lane**

The Committee noted that the Newlands Lane Community Allotment and Heritage Garden Association begins its lease of the site on 1 November. As a bursary it has been suggested that the council puts £500 at the society's disposal for their future development.

**Resolved:** To offer a bursary of £500 from the Allotment Development budget.

### **E18.37 Development**

The Committee heard the Clerk briefly describe the general direction of future plans for the allotments, once the Northside expenditure had been removed. The

programme of improvements to pathways was continuing with Annie Pit receiving particular attention.

**Resolved:** The Committee endorsed the approach taken by officers, and further requested that provision be made where possible for wheelchair access to some raised plots. A Site visit to Annie Pit would also be arranged.

**Resolved:** That an outline development plan be submitted as a part of the budget setting in November.

#### **E18.38 Cumbria In Bloom**

The Committee considered the Cumbria in Bloom results for 2018, in which the town was awarded a Silver. Members felt that this was an acceptable result, given the number of concerns which arose on the day of the inspection. The Chair suggested that some of the matters which arose appeared to be down to planning and communications issues with stakeholders, and that clearly a rethink of the way in which the process is managed could net some necessary improvements. A particular concern was the proliferation of Working Group meetings attended by a variety of people who were not in a position to action the results of their deliberations. There was a need to allow officers to get on with the process of delivering a presentable route through working with a variety of partners across the town – from the town centre to the schools and the nature reserves. The Environment Committee is the sovereign decision making body within its terms of reference delegated by the council, and so the schedule of meetings to consider the In Bloom entry should be tailored to fit and report to the parent committee. The committee noted that the boats in Harrington Harbour were now going to be cared for by a local group of enthusiasts.

**Resolved:** The chair convenes a focused working group to make a recommendation to the next committee meeting on the structure of the In Bloom application.

#### **E18.39 Planting and baskets 2019**

The Committee briefly considered the priorities for planting and baskets in 2019. It was noted that the Working Group had recommended a bee theme, with yellow and purple as the dominant colours.

**Resolved:** To confirm that an entry will be made in 2019. The colour scheme and general theme will reflect the importance of bees as pollinators, perhaps with a series of 'bee routes' for the public to follow.

#### **E18.40. Workington Nature Partnership**

The Committee considered a circulated report from the Nature Partnership Officer which had been delivered to the Nature Partnership Steering Group on Monday 8 October. An element in the report covered possible funding from Natural England for Siddick Pond. It was noted that Natural England were the licensing body for badger culling. Councillors went on to consider whether there should be a council response to recent publicity over badger culling in the county. Badgers are believed by some to be responsible for the spread of tuberculosis in cattle. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)'s preferred control for this has been to authorise the shooting of badgers, a cull which has recently been extended to Cumbria. Councillors who had seen footage of a trapped badger being shot expressed their disgust at the treatment of an otherwise protected animal.

Vaccination methods were believed to be available and Councillors felt these were surely more appropriate.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

**Resolved:** To write to the Secretary of State for the Environment, with a copy to his shadow, highlighting the council's abhorrence of the inhumane and apparently unnecessary slaughter of protected animals.

#### **E18.41 Harrington Reservoir Restoration contributions**

The Committee considered a report on the completion of the Harrington Reservoir renovation project and confirmed the final payment of £17,000 for the council's contribution to the works from the Nature Areas budget.

**Resolved:** To confirm the final payment as described.

#### **E18.42 Play Areas**

The Clerk gave a brief report on the current status of the council's plans to renovate and develop play areas across the town. The Castles and Coasts site at Cusack Crescent was virtually completed, except for one remaining item, and advice was being sought on the best approach to refurbishing the Ashfield Road South site, which although only two years old had suffered some recent damage to the climbing frame, causing it to be dismantled for safety reasons and was still experiencing difficulties with the disappointing performance of the grass mat play surface. The Clerk had previously warned the council that this may require replacement in favour of a surface which supports greater footfall and is less prone to damage in wet weather.

**Resolved:** To note the report and consider costs for a renovation plan at Ashfield Road South at the next meeting.

#### **E18.43. Vulcan Park**

The Committee were presented with a number of reports relating to the future management of Vulcan Park. However, it was noted that the Policy and Resources Staffing Review Sub-Committee were still deliberating on issues relating to the best use of the council's resources as they relate to matters like this. It would therefore be inappropriate to consider the matters until the council's overall policies had been determined.

**Resolved:** To postpone consideration

#### **E18.44 Glyphosate**

The Committee considered a recommendation from the Estate Team Leader (ETL) that the council adopts a policy for Vulcan Park of minimal weedkiller use, moving to no use in due course. Whilst the Committee noted that there was no risk in using Glyphosate in line with the correct procedures for which town council staff have been trained, there is a public perception that its use is incompatible with areas of public parkland. The ETL had suggested a number of design solutions which would lessen the need for routine Glyphosate use.

**Resolved:** To accept the recommendation and adopt a 'low to no' approach for Glyphosate use.

The meeting closed at 19:19