

# Workington Town Council

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## Minutes of the Environment Committee of Workington Town Council, 6.30pm on 14 November 2019 in the Moorclose Community Centre, Workington

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Cllr H Harrington (Chair)     | Present |
| Cllr C Armstrong              | Present |
| Cllr H Briggs                 | Present |
| Cllr R Briggs                 | Present |
| Cllr G Glaister               | Present |
| Cllr J Hunter                 | Present |
| Cllr P McCarthy               | Absent  |
| Cllr S Stoddart               | Present |
| Cllr W Wilkinson (vice chair) | Present |
| Cllr L Williams               | Present |
| Cllr J King (Mayor)           | Present |
| Cllr D King (Deputy Mayor)    | Present |

In attendance: Town Clerk.

### **E19.40. Apologies**

The Deputy Mayor, who is an ex officio member of the committee, explained that he doubted whether he would be able to attend many future meetings due to his health, but he would attend when he could.

### **E19.41. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Wilkinson drew the Committee's attention to his allotment tenancy from the council.

### **E19.42. Exclusion of Press and Public**

No issues.

### **E19.43. Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the previous meeting on 12 September 2019 were accepted as a true record.

### **E19.44. Allotments**

The Vice Chair reported that he had chaired a meeting of the Allotments sub-committee on 7 November which had been well-attended by around 11 tenants and 2 councillors, along with the Clerk and the Estate Team Leader. He reported that the meeting had been very positive about the advantages of self-government in the style of Newlands Lane Allotments, and had been particularly struck by the size of the council's investment in the allotment estate when compared with revenue from rents. He anticipated that further discussions with plot holders would lead to some significant proposals in the coming months.

The Sub-Committee had reviewed the available income and was recommending a 2.1 per cent increase for period commencing in November 2021. Cllr Wilkinson was thanked for his continued drive and commitment in this matter.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

#### **E19.45.        Workington Nature Partnership**

The Chair reported that the Partnership Steering Groups first meeting had unfortunately been postponed, so she was still awaiting more details about the Partnership's activities. The Clerk reported that he had recently attended a meeting of the Friends of Harrington Reservoir which had been very concerned about the impact of new housing upstream from the reservoir. There were reports that the site was again suffering from silting, and this could be considered in the context of developments such as Potters Meadow, with its surface water draining directly into the Ellerbeck. The Committee went on to air its concerns about the problems of a lack of attenuation for surface water drainage in the town, generally, in the light of Climate Change related stronger pulses of rain.

**Resolved:** To write to the candidates in the forthcoming General Election seeking their reassurance that they would consider the impact on surface water drainage of Climate Change related rainfall when such matters should arise in their parliamentary term of office.

#### **E19.46.        Workington in Bloom**

There was some discussion about how the In Bloom committee could be revitalised. It was suggested that empty shops in the town centre made this a particularly negative experience for a judging route. A Councillor suggested that Stainburn should be incorporated into the route as all the gardens were particularly nice. Ward Councillors would be available to leaflet the area if required

**Resolved:** To arrange a meeting on 9 December, at 11am, during which attendees may visit the bottom end of Station Road and assess its potential for developing floral displays. The meeting would be open to all those with an interest in developing In Bloom in the town.

#### **E19.47        Workington In Bloom Grant Application**

The Committee considered an in Bloom Development Grant as follows:

**Applicant:** Newlands Lane Allotment Association

**Value:** £300

**Purpose:** Towards the cost of installing two demountable containers to serve as workshops and learning areas.

**Resolved:** To offer a grant of £300 from the in Bloom Development budget.

#### **E19.48        Local Heroes Award**

The Committee considered a proposal for the Council to create an award to give recognition to local people or businesses that show leadership or outstanding commitment to improving their local area. It was suggested that the award could be presented at Mayor Making, after the Mayor has rewarded their Volunteer of the Year. The idea came about when a councillor was asked by the press if he had any

comments which would be critical of the new hotel being built on The Green. He felt there should be some good news stories which celebrated people's efforts to clean the town up.

**Resolved:** That the Clerk should draw up a draft proposal and terms of reference for a future meeting.

#### **E19.49. Back Lanes**

The Vice Chair reported that he had recently made headway with County Highways and Allerdale officers working through a joint framework, which appeared to be little known. He had managed to get some gully and surface cleaning on Dora Crescent back lane, and was optimistic that Findlay Place back lane could also be cleared, possibly for the first time since 1974. The Clerk reported that he had requested information relating to Housing Action Areas from Allerdale Borough Council, which he believed would shed light on the various responsibilities created by council improvement schemes in the 1980s in St John's, St Michael's, Moss Bay and Harrington.

**Resolved:** To note the reports.

#### **E19.50 Public Seating**

The Clerk reported that seating would begin being installed in the coming week. Permissions were largely complete except for one in Stainburn which awaited a meeting with County Highways officers. An additional seat commemorating the Marina status was also being installed. The Deputy Mayor requested that seating have some form of badging, so that it could be recognised as Workington Town Council seating. The Clerk drew the Committee's attention to a suggestion in a previous meeting that this was not necessary. However, the Committee now believed that there was merit in the idea and it should be done.

**Resolved:** To expedite badging of the Council's public seating, particularly in Stainburn.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

#### **E19.51 Play Area Development**

The Clerk reported that the new bank slide was being installed in Garnet Crescent by contractors. There was some discussion about the difficulty in getting local, suitably experienced contractors for this work. The problem of finding a site in Westfield continued. It was suggested that the Chair arrange a meeting with the relevant officers at the Allerdale Investment Partnership to see if a way forward could be sought. The Deputy Mayor requested that an area of open space in Stainburn be investigated for its suitability for the installation of some form of low intensity play equipment. The Chair reported that she had visited Northside Play Area on Hillcrest. She understood that Castles and Coasts HA were going to effect some repairs which greatly improve the site. She felt it would be appropriate for the Town Council to offer to co-fund (half/half) a small slide feature, if required.

#### **E19.52 Park End Shelter**

The Clerk reported that Grow Well West Cumbria had expressed an interest in taking forward a joint grant application to renovate the shelter for community use. The Chair

reminded the Clerk that the High Sheriff's interest in funding the site would be time limited

**Resolved:** To note the report.

#### **E19.53          Bowling Club**

The Committee heard that a date had not yet been agreed with the Bowling Club for a meeting. It was agreed that meeting the Club's members fact-to-face was an important precursor to making any decisions about developing the green.

**Resolved:** To arrange a meeting with Club members, preferably on a Thursday afternoon.

#### **E19.54          Vulcan Park General Management**

The Committee considered a number of budgetary provisions from the Estate Team Leader (ETL) relating to the resurfacing of paths in Vulcan Park. The total work would cost in the region of £20,500, but much of it was not urgent. They agreed that urgent ones should be attended to first, with subsequent budget provision picking up the others in later years.

**Resolved:** To address the ETL's priority zones 1, 2 and 3 in the current year, up to £600.

#### **E19.55          Budget 2020-21**

The Committee considered the draft budget for 2020. It was noted that new play areas would have an impact in due course on the Parks and Play area Maintenance budget. It was requested that the maintenance of Play Areas be disaggregated from the cost of Vulcan Park's general costs, where possible.

**Resolved:** To make recommend the following budget to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The meeting closed at 20:39

|  | 2019    | estimated outturn | % of budget | 2020    | % of 2019 | Notes |
|--|---------|-------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Workington in Bloom – Displays           | 15,000  | 13,000            | 87%         | 15,000  | 100%      | a)    |
| Workington in Bloom – Development Grants | 3,500   | 1,600             | 46%         | 3,000   | 86%       | b)    |
| Play Area Development                    | 10,000  | 10,000            | 100%        | 15,000  | 150%      | c)    |
| Workington Nature Partnership            | 23,500  | 23,500            | 100%        | 23,500  | 100%      | d)    |
| Allotments Running                       | 8,000   | 8,000             | 100%        | 8,000   | 100%      | e)    |
| Allotments Development                   | 5,000   | 5,000             | 100%        | 3,000   | 60%       | f)    |
| Back Lane Environmental Improvement      | 5,000   | 5000              | 100%        | 5,000   | 100%      | g)    |
| Flood resilience                         | 0       | 0                 |             | 0       |           | h)    |
| Parks and Play areas Maintenance         | 41,000  | 41,000            | 100%        | 41,000  | 100%      | i)    |
| Footway lighting                         | 200     | 200               | 100%        | 500     | 250%      | j)    |
| Public seating                           | 5800    | 5,800             | 100%        | 2,000   | 34%       | k)    |
| Bus shelters                             | 3000    | 3000              | 100%        | 3,000   | 100%      | l)    |
| Totals                                   | 120,000 | 116,100           | 97%         | 119,000 | 99%       |       |

### Key to Notes

- a) Seasonal floral displays around Workington
- b) Paid out in grants up to £500 to local groups to develop their In Bloom related work.
- c) A capital reserve sum set aside for the development of play areas. Fund to date is around £48,000 (including contributions from third parties).
- d) £20,000 is paid to Allerdale direct to cover WTC contribution to WNP. Remainder is for additional expenditure such as publicity and projects to be determined by WNP steering group.
- e) Revenue budget to cover day to day running costs on estate. Matched by revenue from rents.
- f) Capital reserve fund for regeneration of allotment estate. Fund currently at around £65k.
- g) Capital reserve fund for environmental improvement work to back lanes. Fund current around £53k.
- h) Sum set aside to support flooded communities. Around £9k remains earmarked.

- i) Revenue fund for day to day management of parks and play areas, includes HP agreements on vehicles and equipment, and maintenance of mowers, strimmers etc. See additional notes below.
- j) Revenue and repair fund assuming adoption of 29 footway lights from ABC subject to process
- k) Revenue budget created in 2019, vired from footway lighting and WNP, to pay for installation of public seating
- l) Revenue and repair fund set aside for replacement, assuming adoption of 18 bus shelters from ABC.

Funds earmarked for spending which will be rolled over into subsequent years if not spent.

|                       | Proposed 2020 | Estimated value of current funds | Total available in 2020-21 |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Allotment Development | 3000          | 30,000                           | 33,000                     |
| Play Area Development | 15,000        | 47,605                           | 62,605                     |
| Back Lanes            | 5,000         | 50,750                           | 55,750                     |
| Flood resilience      | 0             | 9,289                            | 9,289                      |
| Public seating        | 2,000         | 0                                | 2,000                      |
| Bus shelters          | 3,000         | 2,200                            | 5,200                      |

### Estimated Income 2020

|                   |        |   |
|-------------------|--------|---|
| Allotment rents   | 9,000  |   |
| Allotment water   | 1,800  |   |
| Grants            | 3,000  | Restricted for use in Siddick Play Area |
| ABC VP Dowry      | 10,100 |   |
| Bowling Club Rent | 590    |   |
| S106              | 6,600  | (received in 2019-20)                   |

### A Note on Parks and Play Area Maintenance

The Council received approx £40k in 2018-19, and £21k in 2019-20 as dowry payments for the running of Vulcan Park and Harrington Marina Play Area. The third and final payment will be £10k in 2020-21. The Council also raised over £25k in Council tax in 2017-18, in anticipation of the additional costs. in the first year of the park's operation (it was transferred in July 2018), staffing and maintenance costs were mostly paid to Tivoli, and we were able to make a number of savings to reflect the lower value of the work they had done. From April 2019, the town council estate team took full responsibility for Vulcan Park, expanding by two members of staff to accommodate this. As a consequence maintenance costs formerly paid to external contractors should disappear from the budget (except for specialist services such as green maintenance and tree work), to be replaced by equipment costs and staffing costs. Equipment costs are largely front loaded, diminishing as the payment schemes expire. Staffing costs are sourced from an F&GP budget line. However, Vulcan Park will continue to require investment in its paths, gardens and buildings. For this reason, it is proposed that the earmarked funds for Parks and Play area Maintenance revert to the general funds, but the Parks and Play area Maintenance budget remains at the level estimated as the running costs by Allerdale in 2018.