

Workington Town Council



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Minutes of the Policy and Resources committee of Workington Town Council Tuesday 10 March 2015 in the Town Hall, Workington

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|---------------------|-----------|
| C Armstrong (Chair) | Present |
| M Bainbridge | Apologies |
| M Jones | Present |
| J Osborn | Present |
| D Rollo | Absent |
| N Schofield | Absent |
| J Wright | Present |
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PR14.56. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr M Bainbridge.

PR14.57. Declarations of Interest

None.

PR14.58. Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

It was suggested that Item 7 may require the committee to discuss issues in confidence.

PR14.59. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The committee received the minutes of the meeting on 13 January 2015 and affirmed them as a true record.

PR14.60. Community Planning Initiatives.

The Committee received an update from the clerk on the various community planning initiatives that the council had been involved with over the last two years. These included attempts to train councillors in Community led Planning (through Action with Communities in Cumbria), which had been poorly supported, Community Flood Planning (also poorly supported) and a recent proposal for Northside, which had now been reduced to a consultation exercise on the allotments. This would use resources from the Community Planning budget for 14-15.

The committee noted these initiatives and suggested that individual councillors may be somewhat stretched in their various public roles, and their enthusiasm was therefore diminished.

The committee considered reports of young people causing disturbance in the town centre at night. It was noted that this was not necessarily a new problem and that a balance of solutions should be sought which would alleviate the immediate problem, build capacity for the future and not necessarily demonise the young people involved.

Resolved: The clerk should seek advice from professionals to bring a proposal forward.

PR14.61. Forward Planning and Committees

The committee considered the committee structure of the council and its developments over the last four years. It was noted that the Allotment Committee had achieved a number of successes but did not need to meet six times a year.

Resolved: To propose that the allotment committee meets as required but not less than four times per year.

The Culture Committee was meeting in a few days' time to look at its programme for the coming year. It was felt that it was operating successfully and its oversight of Twinning was appropriate. The Environment Committee was also felt to be operating effectively, though the Workington in Bloom element should be kept under observation, as this had now passed from a sub-committee chaired by a councillor, to a working group led by an officer.

There was some discussion about whether the Planning Committee was managing to remain effective, since the Borough Council's development panel was now meeting every three weeks. It was suggested that the committee considered meeting more often, but this was not felt to be practical or desirable at this stage. It was noted that the committee could always convene an additional meeting if a particular application required consideration outside the usual monthly meeting cycle. The clerk explained that he would usually ask for an extension of the timetable for comments if an important application came in straight after a meeting. He also explained that a limited delegation of powers could be made to an officer to deal with items that fell outside the usual meeting cycle.

Resolved: To bring a limited delegation of powers proposal to the next Planning Committee to ensure the council always had the capacity to comment on smaller applications, which didn't require a meeting of the committee.

It was agreed that Finance, Property and Employment and Policy and Resources were operating satisfactorily. The Past Mayors Working Group perhaps required more thought, but this could be developed by the group itself.

The committee considered the method of nominating members to the committees. It noted that there were problems inherent in the current system, but that previous attempts to make the committee structure proportional were not necessarily in accordance with the law.

Resolved: To recommend that all committee nominations be from individual members who wanted to be involved. The clerk would not accept block nominations from a political group, unless each name assented to their presence on the list. If more nominations were received than there were places, then there would be a vote at the Annual Meeting. If there were fewer, then there would be a provision for nominations from the floor at the Annual Meeting, or the positions would remain vacant. The clerk would bring a more detailed proposal to the Full Council prior to the annual meeting.

PR14.62 Workington Town Hall

The committee considered whether it would be prejudicial to the public interest to hold their discussions about the Town Hall in public.

Resolved: To exclude the press and the public from this portion of the meeting, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960 because the issues being discussed were confidential at this stage.

PR14.63

A separate record of minute PR14.63 is kept on file.

The meeting closed at 19.04.