Workington Town Council

*Trustee of the Borough of Workington*

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**Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting of Workington Town Council, held on Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 7pm in the WTC Community Centre, Princess Street, Workington.**

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| Cllr Mary Bainbridge | Present |
| Cllr Beth Dixon | Present |
| Cllr Sue Fryer | Apologies |
| Cllr Hilary Harrington | Present |
| Cllr Michael Heaslip (chair) | Present |
| Cllr Allan Hodgson | Present |
| Cllr Bernadette Jones (vice chair) | Present |
| Cllr Jacqueline Kirkbride | Apologies |
| Cllr Susan Martin | Present |
| Cllr Lynda Williams | Apologies |

In attendance: Deputy Proper Officer.

**E23.61 Apologies**

Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs Sue Fryer, Jackie Kirkbride and Lynda Williams.

**E23.62 Declarations of Interest:** None.

**E23.63 Exclusion of Press and Public**

Committee agreed to keep certain information discussed under the parks maintenance agenda item (13) as confidential. This will form part two of the minutes.

**E23.64 Public Participation:** None

**E23.65 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The committee requested that 6th July 2023 minute E23.52 be changed from 2/3/23 to 25/5/23. Once this change has been made the committee confirmed the minutes as a true record.

**Resolved:** To amend 2/3/23 to 25/5/23 on minute E23.52 from the 6th July 2023 meeting.

**Resolved:** To accept the minutes of 6th July 2023.

**E23.66 Public Questions:** None

**E23.67 Questions and Statements from Members:** None

**E23.68 Motions on Notice:** None

**E23.69 Environment Budget**

The committee noted the reports and discussed that the budget is committed up to the end of the year to allow for projects already in progress to be finished. There may be additional spends the committee wish to agree to further along in the agenda, which would be discussed and a way forward would be agreed.

**Resolved:** To note the Environment budget report up to 22nd Sept 2023.

**Resolved:** To note the Environment commitments report up to 22nd Sept 2023.

**E23.70 In Bloom and In Bloom Development**

1. **In Bloom Grant Requests**

The committee reviewed three grant requests which they felt were all worthwhile and were happy to support.

**Resolved:** To award Grow Well West CIC £300 from the In Bloom Development budget line.

**Resolved:** To award Vulcan Park Bowling Club £300 from the Parks Maintenance budget line.

**Resolved:** To award Workington Academy £300 from the In Bloom Development Budget line.

1. **Floral Display Costs 2024**

The Chair updated the committee on the planned re-tender process for the floral displays within the town. This was not possible this year as the consultants the council were hoping to use to help prepare tender documents were not available, but could help next year.

The committee agreed it would be sensible to keep the current contractor for another year and work with the consultant next year for the floral displays in town for 2025.

The committee discussed the importance of sustainable planting and asked for this to be considered in the re-tender.

The committee agreed to take on the planting scheme of the large silver planter at the end of Pow Street, which is owned by Cumberland Council.

**Resolved:** Committee to propose to F&GP/Full Council that the current contractor is awarded the floral displays contract for 2024 at a cost of £17,086.31, which would be a pre-approved spend in the 2024-2025 budget.

**Resolved:** To take over the maintenance and planting of the large silver planter in the Town Centre.

1. **In Bloom Report on other matters**

The committee noted the report for information.

**E23.71 Parks Development**

1. **Pump Track report from Cumberland**

The committee discussed a request from Cumberland Council for a contribution of £5,500 towards the new pump track which is planned for Moorclose.

The committee were very supportive of this, however there is currently no money in the budget to pay this. It would therefore need to be requested to Full Council as a pre-approved payment out of the 2024-2025 budget.

The request from Cumberland Council also asked for WTC to consider taking on the maintenance of the pump track once installed.

The committee discussed this and concluded that they did not object to this, but would need to have a meeting with Cumberland Council to establish the finer details and would also require a review of current resource within the Estates Team depending on the outcome of other agreements and projects that the committee/council are working on.

The committee discussed that it would be beneficial to have more warning for funding requests such as these, so the council can be proactive in looking for match funding to further help projects.

**Resolved:** To request to F&GP/Full Council a pre-approved payment of £5,500 from the 2024-2025 budget for a contribution towards the pump track at Moorclose.

**Resolved:** To write to Cumberland Council with regards to the following:

1. Committee should be able to confirm their contribution following the Full Council meeting on 6th December 2023, but are supportive of the request.
2. To discuss in more detail maintenance plans and expectations.
3. To discuss ownership once installed if the council agrees to the maintenance.
4. **Park Development Report on other matters**
5. **Vulcan Park Café**

The committee discussed options for the use of Vulcan Park café.

The Council has received two proposals from the public; one for a café and one for a nursery.

The committee discussed these options and noted that the Council did not have the funds or resource to be able to progress these ideas, but thanked both parties for their interest.

In addition to this the committee noted that there could possibly be an option for the Council to form a CIC, who would then lease/rent the building from the Council. It was agreed that the Council did not have the resource or funds to be able to carry out a large project such as this.

The committee discussed that the old café is currently being used as an Estates Team base and storage area and it would cause a problem if the cafe building was to be used for something else as there is no room in the Princess Street offices for the team or their equipment.

The committee was asked if officers should look into the possibility of using the café building as a park depot / storage area - vote: for: 6, against: 1.

Therefore, it was resolved that officers should look into the possibility of keeping the building as a Park Depot area and bring it up to standard with the addition of a public changing places facility and toilet that would be opened and locked by the Estates Team each day.

**Resolved:** To prepare a report and costings for using the café building as a Park depot area with changing places facility and toilet.

1. **Letters to Heaven Post box**

The committee liked this idea and thought it would be well received in the community.

It would be preferable to install it somewhere near the Reflection Garden.

Committee approved spend of £295 for purchase and installation to come from the Park Development budget line.

The committee asked officers to investigate the possibility that once the letters have been kept for 6 months; that they are shredded, composted and used in the park.

**Resolved:** To spend £295 on the purchase and installation of a ‘Letters to Heaven’ post box from the Park Development budget.

**Resolved:** To investigate the possibility of the letters being shredded, composted and used in the park.

1. **Ashfield Road South Play Area**

Committee discussed plans to move Ashfield Road South Play area so it was nearer to the playing fields and basketball hoop off Furness Road at an estimated cost of £4,700.

Currently there is £4,500 in general reserves that was received from Cumbria County Council in February 2023 for this purpose. Plus another £4,500 promised by Castles and Coasts, although the invoice has not yet been paid.

It was agreed to request to Full Council, via F & GP, to move £4,500 from reserves to the Park Development budget line to allow the Estates team to move the play area as it is. In the meantime officers are looking at securing additional funding to purchase additional play area equipment.

**Resolved:** To request £4,500 from general reserves at the next F & GP and Full Council meetings to be added to the Park Development budget line.

1. **Westfield Play Area**

Committee discussed the proposed location for a new play area in Westfield, the land currently belongs to Cumberland Council.

Officers to discuss appropriate spec and play equipment requirements with ward councillors and create a report on what would be required / needed for this project, including funding opportunities.

**Resolved:** To create a report on what is required / needed for a new Westfield Play Area.

The committee noted the rest of the report for information.

**E23.72 Workington Nature Partnership**

The committee noted the report.

The Committee also noted the new requirement under Environment Act 2021 for the establishment of Local Nature Recovery Strategies by principal Councils in collaboration with other bodies including Local Councils. The strategies are intended to identify land of importance for nature and bio-diversity, in whatever ownership or current designation, which can be safeguarded and actions taken to promote nature recovery.

The committee further noted that this was exactly the thinking behind the establishment of Workington Nature Partnership 10 years ago by WTC and Allerdale Borough Council: that the WNP was ideally suited to development and implementing LNRS in the Council’s area; and that Cumberland Council be advised that this council was eager to work with them, through WNP, on LNRS.

**E23.73 Parks Maintenance**

1. **Purchase of a Trailer**

The committee noted a request from officers to purchase a trailer for Council use.

Committee agreed to purchase the proposed trailer at a cost of £1,950 ex VAT. This will be paid for from the Parks Maintenance budget line.

**Resolved:** To approve the purchase of a trailer at a cost of £1,950 from the Parks Maintenance budget line.

1. **Report for information on other matters**

The committee noted part of the report for information.

Parts of the discussion under this agenda item are confidential and moved to part two of the minutes.

**E23.74 Streetscene**

1. **Defibrilators**

The committee discussed public requests for defibrillators. After seeking advice from Cumberland Council’s Public Health team, the committee agreed to continue to review requests for defibrillators as and when they are received.

However, the Committee would not be willing to install community defibrillators in private, domestic places.

Community defibrillators should be positioned where there is good footfall, in a location accessible to the public and those in the vicinity can be provided with full training.

**Resolved:** To decline with thanks to the request for a defibrillator at a domestic property in Harrington.

The committee noted the rest of the report for information.

The Chair asked for an email to be sent to Full Council to ask for any suggestions for footpaths/rights of way within the town that are not officially registered as such with Cumberland Council.

**Resolved:** Email Full Council to request a list of any footpaths/rights of way which need to be registered as such.

**E23.75 Allotments**

1. **Allotment rent increases and deposit consideration.**

The committee reviewed the current costs charged to allotment holders and agreed that a cost increase of 10% should be applied to allotment rents this year.

The committee agreed that a deposit of £50 should be charged to new allotment holders. This will help cover any costs incurred by the Council when tenants leave their allotment site and the Estates Team have work to do to clear it for the next tenant. Tenants who leave their plot in a good state will have their deposit returned to them at the end of their term.

**Resolved:** To add a 10% increase to all allotment rent charges for 2023-2024.

**Resolved:** To charge a £50 deposit for new allotment holders and amend the allotment terms and conditions accordingly.

1. **Allotments report for information on other matters.**
2. **Mountain View Allotments**

The committee agreed to formally hand back Mountain View allotments to landowners Cumberland Council.

Officers will contact those on the waiting list and notify them of this.

It is proposed that those already on site will be left to stay until the end of their term and then the site will be left as a natural wildlife area.

**Resolved:** To confirm to Cumberland Council the return of Mountain View allotments.

**Resolved:** To contact all those on the Mountain View waiting list to advise of the change.

1. **Annie Pit Fencing**

The committee discussed the request for a fence at Annie Pit allotments, however the cost is so high the committee can’t commit to this amount of money.

The committee noted the rest of the report for information.

**Meeting date**

The committee noted the next meeting date of the 26th October 2023 which was very soon after this meeting. It was therefore unlikely that there would be any business to update the committee on, however The Chair would monitor the situation and notify Council accordingly.

**PART TWO – confidential**

*Confidential minutes have been removed.*

**The meeting ended at 9pm.**