



Workington Town Council

Annual Report 2017-18

Councillor Ann Bales

Mayor of Workington

Workington Town Council

Membership 2017-18

Name	Ward
Cllr Ann Bales (Town Mayor)	Moorclose
Cllr Barbara Cannon (Deputy Town Mayor)	Moss Bay
Cllr Carole Armstrong	Salterbeck
Cllr Mary Bainbridge	St Michaels
Cllr Lillian Baldry	Salterbeck
Cllr Peter Bales	Moorclose
Cllr David Cashman	St Michael's
Cllr Beth Dixon	Northside
Cllr Mark Fryer	Stainburn
Cllr Konrad Hansen	St John's
Cllr Hilary Harrington	Harrington
Cllr Michael Heaslip	St John's
Cllr Peter McHarry	Ellerbeck
Cllr Frank Johnston	Stainburn
Cllr Joe Holliday	St John's
Cllr Andrew Lawson	St Michael's
Cllr Antony McGuckin	St Joseph's
Cllr Billy Miskelly	St Michael's
Cllr Vonnie Morgan	Harrington
Cllr Jim Osborn	Harrington
Cllr Bill Reville	Salterbeck
Cllr Denis Robertson	Moorclose
Cllr Denise Rollo	Salterbeck
Cllr Mike Rollo	Moss Bay
Cllr Kate Schofield	St Michael's
Cllr Neil Schofield	St Michael's
Cllr Stephen Stoddart	Moorclose
Cllr Matthew Suddart	Moorclose
Cllr Tricia Wardley	Iredale
Cllr Joan Wright	Moorclose

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The Council continued to invest in the cultural and social life and environment of the town through its principal committee programmes and a series of grants to third sector organisations. In 2017 it funded the work of the town's RNLI lifeboat, the service of the Blood Bikes, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, the Town Band, Mind In West Cumbria, South Workington Youth Partnership, the Carnegie Theatre, WAOS, Vintage in the Town and several other organisations and schemes.

The Council's Culture Committee continued to develop its programme of activities and events to support the town's growing reputation. These included the ever-popular Christmas Festival and lights switch on, which survived some severe technical challenges as new contractors began to make headway through the latest compliance regulations. Party in the Park built on the success of the Paint the Town Red event from previous years, and celebrated the 20th anniversary of the town's twinning relationship with Val de Reuil in Vulcan Park.

Two new events, which the council hopes will become regular features in the Town's calendar, stood out as 2017's success stories. The Harrington Kite Festival in August brought an imaginative and exciting new use to the vast open space of Harrington Marina. Supported by kitemaking workshops and local food suppliers, it was great day enjoyed by all, and hopefully the first of many. Also making an innovative return to the town's cultural offering was a performance of Shakespeare's Macbeth, in the grounds of Workington Hall. Using the Hall's mediaeval east front as its backdrop, Oddsocks Theatre Company built a stage and performed their novel steampunk version of the bard to over 400 people. The day was completed with storytelling and archery around the Curwens' historic home. The council also continued to support Family Fun Days in Moorclose, Moss Bay, Harrington and Vulcans Park, and live music under the Hub on Saturdays throughout the summer.

The Town Council's Environment Committee was also very active this year, continuing to back the investment required to transform our allotment estate into sites fit for the 21st century. This has included managing the water supplies, improving paths and fencing, and increasing the overall occupancy rates on sites by more active monitoring and plot renovation.

The restoration of Harrington Reservoir became the dominant theme for the Workington Nature Partnership, as the funding was found from the Town Council and the Borough Council to match the contribution from external funders such as WREN and Robin Rigg. The restoration scheme began in March 2018 and will continue into the spring. The Partnership was also successful in gaining Heritage Lottery funding for a 'Resilient Heritage' scheme to advise it on the continued viability of the arrangement between the Town Council and Allerdale Borough Council. The Town Council funds half the budget of the Nature Partnership, and the committee chair and town clerk sit on the Steering Group, which reports to the Environment committee.

Workington achieved second place in Cumbria in Bloom this year, with another creditable silver gilt certificate, reflecting the enormous efforts put in by volunteers and staff around the town to develop its environmental credentials. In Bloom is not just about the impressive show of flowers on Washington Street, though these continue to be a visible and popular element of the scheme. Judges are also interested in the sustainability of the town's open and green space management, how the population of the town relate to the council's activities and take their own initiatives to improve their own environment. This year the judges met friends groups, allotment holders, school children and third sector volunteers, all of whom contribute to the story of the town's In Bloom entry.

The Town Council's commitment to improving the environmental quality of back lanes continued in 2017 with the long awaited completion of the back lane link from the 'Dardanelles' towards Islay Place at the rear of Frostoms Road. Costing over £60,000, the works were the first to be managed by the Town Council acting alone, with the support of contractors and consultants. Following this, the council has identified three more lanes where action could be completed to bring considerable improvement to the 'streetscene' of local residents.

Chris Bagshaw, Town Clerk

An overview of the Town Council's Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2018

The council collected £439,030 from council taxpayers in 2017-18. Additionally it received £14,921 as a Council Tax Support Grant, a payment from central government 'passported' through Allerdale Borough Council to compensate for changes to the way the council tax is calculated. Income from allotment tenants increased slightly as occupancy levels rose and there was an improved contribution from grants and sponsorship for events.

Staffing levels fluctuated as Councillors continue to review the council's needs. At the year end the total complement was 5.8 FTE.

The council also continued to fund the Workington Nature Partnership in conjunction with Allerdale Borough Council, which supports one member of staff.

The council's brief year end receipts and payments (estimated, unaudited).

Income

Precept	£439,030
Council Tax Support Grant	£14,921
Rents and fees	£15,002
Other income*	£39,558
Total	£508,511

Expenditure Total £594,152

The difference between income and expenditure was made from earmarked Reserve funds.

Full audit accounts will be available for inspection by the general public on 1 June.

A View on the Budget for 2018-19

The council has set a budget for 2018-19 based on an 8% increase for Band D council taxpayers. The council tax base for the town only increased by 2% in the previous year, meaning the council had to raise slightly more than anticipated. A Band D property in the town will pay £73.16 in parish precept, however the vast majority of properties are in Bands A and B, which will pay only £48.77 and £56.90 respectively, representing equivalent weekly increases of 7.2p and 8.4p respectively.

It is anticipated that this will bring in a precepted income of £482,933. The Borough Council has once more decided to pass on the reduction in their central government funding to the Town Council by reducing the council tax support grant to £7,460. This contribution will now reduce to zero in 2019.

The council anticipates much of the increase will go towards investment in the running of Vulcan Park, the freehold for which is due to transfer from Allerdale Borough Council in April 2018. The council has committed to continue to invest in the the cultural life of the town through it events programmes, and its environment programme will keep supporting the extension of play facilities to all communities of the town, as well as supporting the renovation of allotment sites and back lanes. The council will also support the development and renovation of the Jane Pit site as a memorial to the contribution of coal mining to the town's history.

Chris Bagshaw, Town Clerk

WORKINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

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