



WINDERMERE & BOWNESS TOWN COUNCIL

Representing the interests of the communities of Windermere, Bowness and Troutbeck Bridge

Notes of the Policy & Finance Advisory Group Meeting held at Langstone House on 25th January 2024 at 7pm

Minute No:	
	<p>Election of a Chairperson to run this meeting: Sandra Lilley was proposed by John Saunders, seconded by Jenny Borer and unanimously elected as chairperson for the meeting.</p>
1.	<p>Attendance, Apologies & Absence: <u>Advisory Group attendance.</u> Kate Tripp, John Saunders, Peter Hamilton, Jenny Borer Other Town Councillor attendance: Cllrs Sandra Lilley, Adrian Legge, Beverley Cullen Also, Sally Parkyn (Town Clerk), Apologies: Deputy Mayor Lisa Greasley, Cllrs Christine Hallatsch and Marina Davis, Facilities Officer Beccy Pinder</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2023: These were agreed with the addition of the third outstanding item. <u>Outstanding items:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Toilet Emergency plan - see item 3 ii. Christmas lights - on putting up the Christmas lights Windermere Lights Group expressed that they may wish to continue and will discuss with the Council after the lights are taken down at the end of January. iii. Questions regarding the payment of subscriptions to Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and clerk employment conditions - were responded to by the clerk explaining that CALC and SLCC had both been invaluable sources of advice during recent events. Also, that while clerks could be hired under minimum legal employment conditions professional clerks are generally paid to the National Joint Council (NJC) pay scale with green book conditions.
3.	<p>Toilets update by Facilities Officer (FO) December income was over £1000 up on previous year and despite bad weather is on track to exceed the previous January income too. There was a burst pipe at Braithwaite Fold last week which Healthmatic caught quickly, and their engineer is fixing. FO to carry out a frost heater audit to check they are all working and fitted where needed. Two very similar quotes to fit the defibrillator have been obtained. The clerk will try to obtain a third.</p> <p><u>Toilets Disaster Plan - Clerk and FO:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The notice period for the lease with W&FC is a minimum of 6 months before the end of the 5 year lease period. It is a peppercorn rent. • Healthmatic notice is 2 months and we pay £9000 a month = £18000, however they negotiated a much lower fee during covid when running only 2 loos at a once a day clean. This payment is the biggest risk. • Nayax 30 days prior to the annual renewal, most fees are a proportion of income but monthly service fee £168 x 12 £2016 • Water standing charge £150/month



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power standing charge less than £100/month • FO 50% salary <p>In a cliff edge scenario where all expenses continue but there is zero income the two months until Healthmatic could be terminated would need £25k. The risk of this scenario is really low. Even with covid, Healthmatic chose to lower their costs rather than lose the contract. Previous disaster events like covid and foot and mouth have also resulted in government support.</p> <p>A much more likely scenario is a downturn in tourist numbers resulting in a gradual loss each month eroding the reserves which happened in 22-23. In this situation the reserves will last much longer.</p> <p>It is recommended that the toilet reserves are kept to £25k but that falling to £30k triggers a review where measures such as increasing the entry fee be considered.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Toilet reserves are kept above £25K. b. Reserves falling to £30K triggers the formation of a working party where measures such as increasing entry fees are considered and notifying Westmorland & Furness Council. c. That the clerk try to get a third quote for defibrillator installation.
4.	<p>Finances:</p> <p><u>Internal Audit:</u> Charlene Iredale will carry out 2023-4 internal audit if Council wish to appoint.</p> <p><u>Budget monitoring:</u> no comments or questions as unchanged from Full Council on 18.1.24.</p> <p><u>Scribe:</u> Accounting software for local councils. The clerk has seen a demonstration and believes the system will save time, increase accuracy and boost both transparency and security.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Charlene Iredale be appointed as the internal auditor for 2023-4 accounts at a cost of £400. b. That Scribe software be trialed for 2024-5 at a cost of £1139 (ex VAT) including £479 onboarding fee.
5.	<p><u>Grant applications</u></p> <p><u>North West Air Ambulance:</u> £500</p> <p>There was a discussion where it was felt that previously Air Ambulance grants had been given to Great North and North West air ambulances in alternate years.</p> <p><u>Aviation activity Day:</u> £500</p> <p>This would benefit the Air Cadets and other young people in the area who would have to opportunity to experience hands on learning linked to science and engineering on 20.4.24.</p> <p>Update grant application guidance to state local charities only</p>



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	<p>There was a discussion about changing the wording to the grant awarding policy to clarify which organisations were eligible. The Clerk was asked to find out from CALC how much other parishes give as grants each year.</p> <p><u>Update Bandstand grants to include civic events not just at bandstand:</u> Adding to the wording of the grant application to include performances at civic events as well as at the bandstand was unanimously agreed.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That a grant for the North West Air Ambulance not be awarded in 2023-4 as a £500 grant to the Great North Air Ambulance has already been paid this financial year. That a grant of £500 be paid to the Air Cadets towards the Aviation Activity Day. Update the grant awarding policy to state: The Town Council awards grants, at its absolute discretion, to not-for-profit, charitable or volunteer organisations. This includes worthy causes which can demonstrate a clear need for financial support to achieve an objective which will substantially benefit the Town. This includes providing a service, enhancing the quality of life or the local environment. Grant applications will only be made to local organisations. (Changes in bold) Update the Band Grant application form to state: In order to bring vibrancy to the area the Town Council offer a grant to encourage musical performances on the Glebe or at Civic Events. (Changes in bold)
6.	<p><u>Annual Review</u></p> <p>To remain compliant with legislation the Council is required to review the following items annually.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Financial regulations - these were reviewed. They will be updated when the new model financial regulations are published, which is anticipated to be in March. Asset register - this was reviewed. This was updated in 2023. There are no changes this year. Risk assessment - this was reviewed. This was updated in 2023. There are no changes this year. <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the financial regulations be accepted pending updating as soon as the new model financial regulations are published. That the asset register and risk assessment be accepted.
7.	<p><u>Facilities Officer Appraisal</u></p> <p>The Councillors were asked for their input regarding the performance of the facilities officer over the previous year. This feedback was added to the documentation for the appraisal to be carried out by the Clerk on 2.2.24.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the Facilities Officer's pay increment be awarded following her appraisal backdated to 1.1.24.
8.	<p><u>20mph Scheme</u></p> <p>There was a discussion about the action to be taken ahead of the February deadline. Current and previous consultations had produced mixed results but with the majority of residents</p>



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	<p>who responded broadly in favour of 20mph zones targeted to the town centres, residential streets and those without pavements.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. That Westmorland and Furness Council be asked to consult on implementing 20mph zones in the areas marked on Map 2 from the 2023 consultation plus Crag Brow and the Town Centres. b. That installation of Speed Indicator Devices be investigated.
9.	<p><u>Baddeley Clock electrification</u></p> <p>Even with the cost of upgrading the power supply electrification is cheaper than fixing the current clockwork mechanism. It should be more reliable and accurate.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To accept the quotation from the Cumbria Clock Co of £2260 + VAT. b. For the Clerk to try to get an additional quote to bring to full council for the electrical work required before the work by Cumbria Clock Co can begin.
10.	<p><u>Bus shelter repairs</u></p> <p>It was decided that using the town steward to replace the two panes of damaged glass with polycarbonate would be the best value option.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. That provided the bus shelter will still be covered by insurance the Town Steward be asked to replace the broken glass with polycarbonate. b. The clerk to check the insurance issue before full council make a final decision.
11	<p><u>War Memorial</u></p> <p>The war memorial garden has a separate contract to the work carried out by the Town Steward. There has been a slight increase this year.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To accept the renewal quote for the War Memorial Garden to 2024.
12.	<p><u>Elleray Woods Sculpture Trail:</u></p> <p>The clerk reported the impressive response to a Facebook poll about residents' use of Orrest head showing a large number who had gone up it in 2023. This showed that the current council expenditure on the land was valued by many residents.</p> <p>There was discussion about the current sculpture trail plan and the previous larger sculpture trail to Bowness plan. It was remembered that there may have been ringfenced funding which might be available for this project.</p> <p>There were concerns about theft and vandalism as well as the large expense of ten sculptures.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To see if there is funding available from the previous project held by the chamber of trade. b. To approach organisations such as the National Park, W&FC and the Friends of the Lake District Landscape Fund to see if grant funding is available. c. To start with one large sculpture to gauge public opinion and resilience to thieves and vandals.



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	d. To ask the three sculptors for a quotation for a single roe deer sculpture to be installed in a concrete base by the Town Steward.
13.	<p><u>Community Drop in Event</u> The Communication Advisory Group reported broadly positive feedback from stall holders' evaluation forms and Facebook Comments while acknowledging the clear need for a larger venue.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That a future event be held at the Ladyholme Centre. That consideration to holding it on a weekend be given. That it be held annually. That consideration be given to linking it to the annual parish meeting in 2025. That data gathering be a specific task given to a person with no other roles at the event.
14.	<p><u>Longlands</u> The input of the community on future development of the Longland Recreation area had taking place at the community drop in event with about 30 people giving their thoughts and further comments on Facebook and children from two local schools submitting designs. The majority expressed a wish to keep the park the way it is and just update the current offering replacing the equipment that had been removed.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That on the Deputy Mayor's return a larger community response on the redevelopment be sought including using a Facebook Poll so people could choose between alternatives.
15.	<p><u>Langstone House</u> W&FC officers have put the new council chamber scheme out to tender. There was discussion about the suitability of the plans.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That liaison group discuss the tender process and Langstone House scheme and report back to full council.
16.	<p><u>Langrigge Play area</u> The lease has been updated with the new signatories and has been signed and will be sent to the solicitor for signing by Windermere Endowed School's Foundation.</p>
17.	<p><u>Community Asset Transfer</u> Cllr Saunders drew the advisory group's attention to the new W&FC Community Asset Transfer scheme.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (7th February 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the Clerk investigates the potential surplus W&FC assets in our area. That the possibility of taking on the Library Building and Garden be investigated.
18.	<p><u>Any Other Business</u> None</p>
19.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting:</u> <i>Thursday 21st March 2024 at 7pm.</i></p>



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