



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 28th November 2024 at 7pm

Minute No:	
1.	<p>Attendance, Apologies & Absence: <u>Advisory Group attendance:</u> (Chair) Deputy Mayor Sandra Lilley, Mayor Christine Hallatsch, Cllrs Lisa Greasley, Jenny Borer, Marina Davis, John Saunders, Fiona Poole. Other Town Councillor attendance: Caroline Kearney, Kay Kennedy Hardy, Peter Cook, Christine Cook, Peter Hamilton, Adrian Legge. Also, Sally Parkyn (Town Clerk), <u>Apologies:</u> Cllrs Kendra Kennedy & Beverley Cullen - work, Kevin Heffernan - health.</p>
2.	<p>Notes of the meeting held on 19th September 2024: These were agreed.</p>
3.	<p>It was proposed by Cllr Lilley that the item on Finance be taken first, with the budget to be discussed first. This was resolved.</p>
4.	<p>Finances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. <u>Budget for 2025-6:</u> The clerk and Cllr Saunders gave a presentation and answered questions about the current and future financial situations and the options open to the council. After examining the options it was resolved to recommend the options in column 5 of the draft budget presented for both the general and toilets account.b. <u>Budget monitoring:</u> The current financial situation will leave the council with significantly higher expenditure than income. It was resolved to recommend the option to reduce some items of optional expenditure which would reduce the amount needed to be taken from the general reserve as shown in column 3 of the general budget v5 document.c. <u>To approve the appointment of Charlene Iredale as internal auditor for 2024-5 for £400:</u> It was resolved to recommend this appointment.d. <u>Staff Costs for 2025-6:</u> It was resolved to recommend these be accepted.e. <u>Precept for 2025-6:</u> There will be no Council Tax grant next year but double council tax on second homes will be charged. It is anticipated that some second home classifications will be challenged. It was recommended to request £169275. This was based on an inflation linked increase of 2.5% and the assumption that around 15% of the second homes be reclassified. This is being checked with the Westmorland and Furness Accountancy Team <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. <u>Budget for 2025-6:</u> Proposal to accept 2025-6 Budget options in column 5 of the draft budget presented for both the general and toilets account.b. <u>Budget monitoring:</u> Proposal to accept the options in column 3 of the general budget v5 document for the remainder of 2024-5.c. <u>To propose the appointment of Charlene Iredale as internal auditor for 2024-5 for £400:</u>d. <u>To accept the proposed Staff Costs for 2025-6.</u>



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	<p>e. <u>Precept for 2025-6</u>: Proposal to request £169275. This was based on an inflation linked increase of 2.5% and the assumption that around 15% of the second homes will be reclassified and not pay double council tax.</p>
5.	<p><u>Grant applications</u></p> <p>It was recommended that £100 Band Grants for performances at the Remembrance Parade and service be paid to: Burneside Brass Band and Kendal Sea Cadet Band.</p> <p>Of the general grants the Foodbank have stated that their financial situation had improved since the grant application for £2000 had been made, in addition they did not realise their request would have been for 20% of the total grant budget. They asked that if budget remained at the end of the financial year they be considered for a lesser grant.</p> <p>The Ladyholme asked for a grant of £1789.44 to remove their urinals. The discussion noted their substantial reserves and lack of application for funding from other sources.</p> <p>The Town Twinning Association had asked for a grant of £500. The Mayor proposed to use her allowance to fund the grant</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. That a £100 band grant be paid to the Burneside Brass band.b. That a £100 band grant be paid to the Kendal Sea Cadets.c. That no grant be made to the Foodbank at this time.d. That a grant of £250 towards the refurbishment of the Ladyholme toilets be made.e. That a grant of £500 from the Mayor’s allowance be paid to the Town Twinning Group.
6.	<p><u>Toilets:</u></p> <p>The toilets are on track to on track to match the November 2023 earnings. There are repairs needed but these will be discussed at the Healthmatic Quarterly meeting on 6.12.24 and brought to Full Council. It was agreed that this would include the repair of the disabled cubicle alarms.</p> <p>After the Town Council took over direct management of the public toilets the budget was set to cover cleaning and on going repairs. No budget was set to fund future refurbishment of the public toilets. The aging facilities will need periodic refurbishment. It was proposed to amend the Toilets budget to include a budget item of £10k a year to be put into a toilets refurbishment reserve.</p> <p>In order to increase the viability of the toilets it was proposed to put the cost of a visit up to 60p. As all payment is contactless this should not inconvenience users which finding the right change would have done. Signage will need to be updated.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p>



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	<p>a. That the cost of the toilet visits be increased to 60p.</p> <p>b. That the Toilets budget be amended to include a budget item of £10k a year to be put into a Toilets Refurbishment reserve.</p>
7.	<p><u>Elleray woods</u> The Elleray Wood and Orrest Head advisory group have requested further budget of £5000 for 2024-5 to cover costs associated with additional tree work, patch repairs to tarmac by Town Steward and other costs which may be needed. Since these are needed for safety reasons it is recommended that they be approved.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p> <p>a. That an additional £5000 be moved from general reserves to the Elleray Woods and Orrest Head budget.</p> <p>b. That in 2025 a review of all assets held by the Town Council be carried out at the March Policy and Finance meeting.</p>
8.	<p><u>Longlands</u> The group who had met with Bowness Bowling Club reported back to the Town Council regarding the lease. This will be considered in the closed section of the Full Council meeting.</p> <p>The redevelopment of Longlands play area and the level of community consultation was discussed.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p> <p>a. That the lease be discussed during the closed section of Full Council due to confidential content.</p> <p>b. That a questionnaire be distributed to the residents of Bowness regarding the options for the redevelopment of Longlands. This will also be useful for grant applications.</p> <p>c. That Town Council will not begin applying for grant funding until the results of the survey are known.</p>
9.	<p><u>Remembrance</u> It was felt that the event had been successful and the organisation was ready to be used again next year without taking up a significant amount of the clerk's time. Sunbelt Rental had offered to carry out the road closure again for free in 2025.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p> <p>a. That the Town Council take on the running of a Remembrance Day event for the Town.</p> <p>b. That in future years a wreath with the Town Council's badge in the middle be purchased.</p>
10.	<p><u>Liaison group requests report for W&FC</u> Following the discussions after the W&FC Cabinet Meeting in Windermere the Liaison group had met to put together short list of items which the Town Council would like to accomplish, which align with W&FC priorities and for which support from W&FC would be needed.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u> That a report be prepared by Liaison group to share with all council members before sending to W&FC requesting funding to support Speed Indicator Devices, CCTV, Street Support</p>



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	Officers and the Cumulative Impact Assessment, Longlands redevelopment and the refurbishment of the Glebe Toilets.
10.	<p><u>Christmas Light</u> The clerk gave a verbal update regarding the Winter Lights. The community response was discussed.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> That a report of the decisions made in 2024, Winter Lights assets the council owns and costs incurred be made by the Winter Lights group with the support of the clerk for the January meeting. That a meeting open to the public and businesses be held in January regarding the future of Winter Lights in the Town.
11.	<p><u>Staffing</u> Recruitment for the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) role was underway. Applications close on 2.12.24 and an update will be made at Full Council.</p> <p>Advice from CALC, SLCC and HMRC recommended not splitting up the clerk’s full time role into two separate contracts. Any changes can be made with an amendment to contract letter with 30 days notice both now and should further changes be needed in future..</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u> That the clerk remain on a single contact for the two roles she covers with an amendment to contact letter being sent once the recruitment for the RFO is complete.</p>
12.	<p><u>Policies</u> The Sponsorship Guidelines and Disciplinary and Grievance Policy were noted but not discussed. No recommendations were made. The policies will be on the agenda for discussion at Full Council on 11.12.24.</p>
13.	<u>Langstone House:</u> No updates or recommendations.
14.	<u>Langrigge:</u> No updates or recommendations.
19.	<p><u>Any other business:</u> The results of the 20mph zone consultation was discussed.</p> <p><u>Recommendations to Full Council (11th December 2024):</u> That the clerk write to the police requesting the current 30mph speed limit in Bowness be more regularly enforced.</p>
20.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting:</u> <i>Thursday 23rd January 2025 at 7pm.</i></p>