



# 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 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 7pm

| Minute No: |   |
|------------|---|
| 1.         | <p><b>Attendance, Apologies &amp; Absence:</b><br/><u>Advisory Group attendance.</u> Deputy Mayor Lisa Greasley (chair), Mayor Leith Hallatsch, Cllrs Christine Hallatsch, John Saunders, Kate Tripp, Marina Davis,<br/>Other Town Councillor attendance: Cllrs Beverley Cullen, Jackie Cooper and Kevin Heffernan<br/>Also Sally Parkyn (Town Clerk), Beccy Pinder (Facilities Officer)<br/>Apologies:<br/>NONE</p>  |
| 2.         | <p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023:</b><br/>These were agreed.</p>  |
| 3.         | <p><b>Toilets update by Facilities Officer (FO)</b><br/>The October toilet income was higher than last year, continuing a positive trend.<br/>Broad Street Paddlegate:<br/>The Broad Street men's toilet paddlegate cannot be fixed. To replace the paddlegate with a Mark 2 would cost around £12k + VAT, a turnstile around £7900 and a door lock mechanism around £4800. This toilet only made £3980 in the year before it broke. The ladies still has a working paddlegate so could be made unisex for the moment as it seems discriminatory to charge ladies but not men to use the facilities.<br/>Door Alarms:<br/>The FO has been unable to find a system designed for toilets. The ones available in the UK are designed for keeping fire doors closed on student kitchens. The costs would be around £650 for the alarm purchase and installation on both toilets. With no certainty that it will work as needed.<br/>Healthmatic operatives are to be reminded that removing obstructions from the door is a necessary check.<br/>Cllr Kevin Heffernan has had experience of similar alarms and has offered to assist the FO in finding a more suitable system.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>That the Broad Street men's toilets be closed over winter and the ladies operated as a unisex facility while the clerk investigates the cheaper door lock mechanism to replace the paddlegate.</li><li>That Cllr Heffernan assist the FO in finding a suitable alarm system to discuss at the January Policy and Finance meeting.</li><li>That the FO put up a notice regarding the emptying of cassette toilets and the clerk follow up with Westmorland &amp; Furness Council and the National Park about the proposal to put chemical toilet disposal facilities in place.</li><li>That the clerk investigate a "disaster plan" for the toilets should another event like Covid mean the reserves were used up to prevent them becoming a drain on the wider council reserves.</li><li>That the clerk and FO investigate, through W&amp;FC and other sources, grant funding for the refurbishment of the Glebe Toilets.</li></ol> |



# 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 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 7pm

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 4. | <p><b>Finances:</b></p> <p><b>Budget monitoring</b><br/>The 6 month position was noted.</p> <p><b>Precept Setting</b><br/>The clerk passed on the information received from Westmorland and Furness Council (W&amp;FC) regarding the calculation of the precept and the reason for the 8.1% increase shown on Council Tax Bills. The 2023-4 precept had been set by W&amp;BTC as a 4% increase. The issue was caused by the cost of the district owned footway lighting increasing due to the electricity price increase and a falling council tax property base. This cost is calculated in this way by W&amp;FC to avoid double taxation.</p> <p><b>General Budget setting</b><br/>Due to the continued inflationary pressures the council need a 4% increase in the precept. That a £10k reserve be created for the proposed office relocation should it occur.</p> <p><b>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November2023):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) That the clerk ask both the legal and financial teams at W&amp;FC to explain the issue of the district footway lighting charge to ensure that it is being used correctly and ensure that the increase we request is the percentage shown on the council tax forms.</li><li>b) That the council accept the draft budget and request a 4% increase in the precept (provided that it will appear as that figure on the council tax forms).</li></ul> |
| 5. | <p><b>Grant applications</b></p> <p><u>The Marchesi Roof repair grant</u> was discussed and there was a request that the clerk get further information about the Marchesi Centre finances as the records received did not include all the necessary information to decide if a grant was a good use of public money.</p> <p><u>The Christmas Market Grant</u> applicant has been invited to speak at the next Council meeting to give more detail about their application. Questions to be answered included: As a commercial venture, why didn't stall holders' fees cover the cost of the event? Why money was asked for as a grant and spent on Santa, but the parents were still charged and the money then donated to the mountain rescue? What was the policy for the Santa visits? Because there were complaints of local children being turned away last year.</p> <p><b>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November2023):</b><br/>That the marchesi grant request be deferred until January P&amp;F when the full financial information will be known.</p>   |
| 6. | <p><b>Windermere Christmas Lights and other Festive Events</b></p> <p>Windermere Lights Group is stepping down in January. They will put up and take down the lights this year and then will hand over their equipment and remaining funds to the Town Council.</p> <p>The Town Council need to start planning for winter 2024-5.</p> <p>There were a range of suggestions for Christmas events -Library Tree lights, New Year's Eve Fireworks, soap box derby, Christmas Markets, New Year's Eve event.</p> <p>The mayor will consult with the Chamber of Trade and run a best dressed festive window with trophies purchased from his mayoral allowance.</p>  |



# 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 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 7pm

|     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | <p><b><u>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) That a £5000 budget be set to investigate lighting options. This will initially be carried out by the FO, with support from Councillors, if it can be done within her working hours.</li> <li>b) That Christmas light planning begin in January 2024.</li> <li>c) That the Drop in Evening be used to consult the community on what they would like to see.</li> <li>d) That a working group be set up in January to consider the different options and how they could be carried out.</li> </ul>   |
| 7.  | <p><b><u>Elleray Woods</u></b><br/>Following recent storms, the clerk asked the group to consider whether it would be prudent to set up a ring fenced Elleray Woods disaster fund. Work required after Storm Arwen in 2021 had cost £8500. Discussion felt that such funding would be better to come out of the general contingency fund, but that this should be increased.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</u></b><br/>That the level of the general contingency fund be raised to £10000.</p>  |
| 8.  | <p><b><u>Town Steward Succession Planning</u></b><br/>The Town Steward is planning to step down at the end of March 2025. This will have financial implications for recruitment, job organisation and possible need for a handover period.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) That a sum allowing for a handover period be included in the 2024-5 budget which can be returned to the reserves if not needed.</li> <li>b) That an up-to-date job specification be drawn up by April 2024.</li> <li>c) That a working group be set up at AGM 2024 to oversee the process of finding a new Town Steward.</li> </ul>  |
| 9.  | <p><b><u>Longlands:</u></b><br/>Lease: The clerk read the response from the legal advisor. There was a discussion about how to proceed.<br/>Playground development: There is a need for a development budget (separate to sinking fund) for work prior to grant applications.<br/>Public consultation: This will take place at the Community Drop in evening. John Saunders has offered to run that stall.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Clerk to clarify the legal situation with the lawyer and CALC and report to Full Council.</li> <li>b) £20k be put in a development fund to start the process. This matches the sum given to the Windermere Queen's Park redevelopment and was agreed previously.</li> <li>c) The clerk to research community consultation methods and feed back to the Parks and Open Spaces group to decide on their approach.</li> </ul> |
| 10. | <p><b><u>Langstone House</u></b><br/>There are no updates but Phil Hunter not Graeme Woodman is now the main contact. The clerk has asked for an update.</p>  |



# 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 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 7pm

|     |  |
|-----|--|
|     | <b>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</b><br>That a £10k reserve be created for the proposed office relocation should it occur.  |
| 11  | <b>Community Drop in Event</b><br>Publicity: suggestions included roller banners, street banners or a sign on the A591, mail drop by Councillors or the Royal Mail, Radio stations, the Gazette and Parish Magazines. Due to cost and timing many were discounted.<br>At the event: slideshow of council activity adapted from previous Windermere in Bloom Show, Leaflet of council activities adapted from Website and previous annual reports.<br><b>Recommendations to Full Council (15<sup>th</sup> November 2023):</b><br>a) The clerk to purchase 2 roller banners which can be reused.<br>b) The clerk with support to create PowerPoint and leaflet for use on the night. |
| 12. | <b>Any other business</b><br>NONE  |
| 13. | <b>Date of Next Meeting:</b><br><i>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7pm.</i>   |