

# ASPATRIA TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 at 6.00p.m at the Methodist Church Hall, Aspatria.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Maxwell (Chair)

**Councillors:** Cllr R Gregory (Deputy), Cllr K Thurlow, Cllr A Hankin, Cllr K Smith, Cllr S Edmondson, Cllr A Maxwell, Cllr A Reay, Cllr J Marsh, Cllr B Blackburn, Cllr M Rose, Elaine Yates (to be co-opted)

**Also in Attendance:** Mrs K Cooper (Town Clerk), Ms S Hullock (RFO), Jack Baker (Caretaker)

**Members of the Public:** Two members of the public attended for the Christmas raffle then left at 6.20pm.

## Minutes

Item		Action
<b>1.01.25. Apologies:</b> To receive and accept apologies and note the reasons for absence.	Cllr Edmondson explained her daughter, who had previously applied to become a councillor has since revoked her application due to a change in circumstances.	
<b>2.01.25. Mayors Announcements/Updates:</b>	<p>The Mayor welcomed Elaine Yates to the meeting. Elaine had written to the Clerk to apply to become a councillor. Cllr Maxwell addressed the meeting with the application, which was most impressive. It was proposed by Cllr Reay and seconded by Cllr Rose to co-opt Elaine onto the council with immediate effect. The Clerk will send out the Councillor 'welcome pack'. The meeting was informed of the official opening day of Aspatria Library which is due to take place on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January – 11am-12pm.</p> <p>The Christmas 'lights in the window' raffle was drawn at this meeting and are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1<sup>st</sup> prize – The White House, Arkleby Road</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> prize – 57 Noble Croft</li> <li>3<sup>rd</sup> prize – 6 Whinbarrow Lane</li> <li>4<sup>th</sup> prize – 70 Lawson Street</li> <li>5<sup>th</sup> prize – Monkroyd, Brough Street</li> <li>6<sup>th</sup> prize – 64 West Street</li> <li>7<sup>th</sup> prize – 47 Harriston</li> <li>8<sup>th</sup> prize – 80 North View</li> <li>9<sup>th</sup> prize – 21 Brough Street</li> <li>10<sup>th</sup> prize – 17 East Crescent</li> </ul>	
<b>3.01.25. Declarations of Interest:</b> Members are invited to make any declarations of Pecuniary Interest or other Registerable Interest (other than those recorded on their Notification of Pecuniary Interests or	None	

<p>other Registerable Interests) relating to any items on the agenda.</p>		
<p><b>4.01.25. Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024 :</b></p>	<p>As per item 5.12.24 on the December minutes, Cllr Reay congratulated the Clerk on her work in securing £20,000 funding from the National Lottery to purchase and install a Ninja Trail in St Mungos Park. The minutes were agreed to be of a true record of the last meeting. Approved and signed by the Mayor/Chair. <b>RESOLVED</b></p>	
<p><b>5.01.25. Clerks Report:</b></p>	<p>The Mayor's end of year review was circulated in the town's noticeboards and also on the council social pages. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>The Clerk is waiting on quotes for a new noticeboard which is to be placed at Harriston. Ongoing.</p> <p>The Clerk had organised for the pizza van and the donut van to attend the Tractor Run event in December. The money received from the vans parking on Brandraw car park (£75) was transferred to Hopes Auction, who organised the tractor run, to be shared to the charities involved. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Clerk visited Park Lodge in December to see the staff and residents. The Clerk retrieved a quote for the Memorial bench due to be placed in St Mungos Park. The family of Andrew Mounsey are to purchase the bench. The Clerk asked if the bench should have the town councils name engraved on the bench as the others do, however it was agreed not to due to it being for memorial purposes. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>Aspatria Juniors have paid the revised invoice of £500 for use of facilities at St Mungos Park, however this is to be reviewed for next season.</p> <p>The Clerk is awaiting on dates when Fletchers fun fair is able to visit Aspatria for the weekend. It was agreed the fair would visit regular and set up on Brandraw car park. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>Letters to the nominees for the Town Council Appreciation Scheme were sent out. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>The Clerk is continuing to try and apply for funding to purchase a defibrillator to erect on the main street. The Clerk contacted members of the Methodist Church for permission to place it on the building. It was proposed by Cllr Maxwell and seconded by Cllr Smith to go ahead with the purchase as it is of great importance. Ongoing.</p>	
<p><b>6.01.25. Public Participation:</b></p>	<p>A complaint had been received on the council Facebook message page stating the road and pavement were in disrepair on Harriston Road, leading out of Aspatria. The resident had reported this to Cumberland Council, as had the Clerk. The resident then contacted the Clerk to inform her the surface had been recovered. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>Cllr Blackburn requested a grit bin at St Mungos Park, however the caretaker confirmed there are several grit bins in that area which have recently been filled by</p>	

	Cumberland Council. <b>RESOLVED.</b>	
<b>7.01.25. Highways:</b>	Nothing to report.	
<b>8.01.25. To receive for information, reports on issues relevant to the Town from County, District and Independent Councillors:</b> Councillor Kevin Thurlow	<p>Cllr Thurlow had received an email which the Clerk circulated to all councillors inviting them to a Community Health and Wellbeing Conference hosted by Cumberland Council on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 10am-2.30pm at The Market Hall, Wigton.</p> <p>Park Lodge had held their 2<sup>nd</sup> Family Forum meeting, the Clerk is to be invited to attend the next one in March.</p> <p>New school crossing patrol lights are due to be installed near Richmond Hill School on 10<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p>Cllr Maxwell reported the speed light at Lawson Street is not working at the moment. Clerk to report.</p>	
<b>9.01.25. Financial Matters:</b>	<p>i) Expenditure and Income Schedule for December 2024: <b>RESOLVED</b> that the expenditure of £8,076.60 and income of £2,484.98 be approved.</p> <p>Members also approved the additional invoices for payment:  JI Fletcher &amp; Son - (Hire of rides for Christmas light switch on) £1,400.00  Aspatria Farmers - (Various Materials) £60.36  NPower - (Electricity for Toilet Block for December 2024) £83.43  Aquatrust - (Legionella Monitoring) £151.20  LR &amp; JA Allen - (Fuel and Head Lamp) £131.69  Craig William Gibson - (Emergency tree work following storm) £5,420.00</p> <p>(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements as at 31st December 2024 - <b>RESOLVED</b> that the circulated Bank Reconciliation Statements be confirmed and accepted as a true record.</p> <p>(iii) Quarter 3, 2024/25, Budget Monitoring Report <b>RESOLVED</b> that the income and expenditure position for the third quarter to December 2024 was accepted and approved. The RFO gave an overview of the net position at that date and commented on areas of budget under/over spends as recorded in the schedule. Councillors agreed to the transfers made within the report.</p> <p>(iv) Precept for 2025/2026 The Council must set a precept each year by 1 March. At its meeting held on 17 December 2024, the Committee agreed, in principle, a 2025/26 Budget which totalled £139,580. The RFO explained that this would require a substantial contribution from balances. Councillors were then asked to consider the figures presented to them in a report which highlighted the impact of a 0%, 3%, 5%, 10%, 11%, 12% and</p>	

	<p>13% increase on the precept, recommend whether or not to increase the precept for 2025/26; and by what percentage the increase should be, (if any), in order to assist with the Councils 2025/26 expenditure budget of £139,580. Various discussions were held around what impact various levels of precept increases would have on a band D property.</p> <p>The RFO reminded Councillors that the Council were incurring ever increasing costs on all purchases they made, including events organised for the residents of the town. In addition to this, the RFO reminded Councillor that there was no longer a contribution due from Cumberland Council towards the toilet block following the asset transfer. In addition, increases in staff hours and associated payroll and pension costs as well as legal costs around the allotment land were significantly impacting the 2025/26 proposed budget.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> It was agreed that a 13% increase be applied to the 24/25 precept amounting to a precept request of £98,960.00 for 2025/26. Councillors understand that this is based on a draft Council Tax Base figure for 2025/26 as supplied by Cumberland Council, (not finalised until the end of January 2025), and that any change to this will impact the figures discussed. Councillors also agreed that requesting this level of precept will still require a contribution from balances to fund the proposed 2025/26 budget.</p>	
<b>10.01.25. Cumbria Community Foundation Grant:</b>	<p>The Clerk had received correspondence from Cumbria Community Foundation (CCF) requesting a donation to the Cumbria Winter Warmth Appeal. This appeal helps the vulnerable and elderly in winter across Cumbria. It was felt there are no guarantees any of the donation made from the town council would benefit people of Aspatria. It was suggested an initiative could possibly be set up in the future to help the elderly within the town as opposed to across the county. The Clerk will respond to the CCF.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED.</b></p>	
<b>11.01.25. CCTV Council Policy:</b>	<p>Due to damage occurring at St Mungos Park with the changing room Christmas lights, this was reported to the police and CCTV footage sent. As the police believe some of the parties involved are below the age of 18, they suggested the council circulate the CCTV images on the council social pages as per our policy. The Clerk contacted CALC for advice on adopting a CCTV Policy but unfortunately no template is available. Cllr Gregory is to send the Clerk extra information on this. Ongoing.</p>	
<b>12.01.25. Applications for Councillor Vacancy:</b>	<p>As per item 1 and 2 of these minutes Rebecca Edmondson revoked her councillor application and Elaine Yates was co-opted onto the council to represent East Ward. <b>RESOLVED</b></p>	
<b>13.01.25. Meeting with Dairy Cheese Factory:</b>	<p>Cllr Maxwell, Cllr Marsh and the Clerk attended the Dairy on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January to discuss with their</p>	

	<p>engineers the water issues affecting the town. The main area which seems to be affected with low pressure, or no water is from Market Square up to West Street. The Clerk had contacted United Utilities (UU) and had no response. The Dairy met with UU who confirmed they had located a leak at the builder's yard near the factory in October, which coincides with when Beacon Hill School also had to close due to no water. The factory explained they have a constant 28-hour cycle (24hours production and 4hours cleaning) therefore there are no periods of time where the drain on resources would be higher, as per the explanation from UU. The Health and Safety Officer at the Dairy is to provide the Clerk with contact details for UU.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p><b>14.01.25. Railway 200:</b></p>	<p>To mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the modern railway throughout 2025, the Clerk suggested contacting Richmond Hill School to organise a drawing competition. The competition will be for years 3-6 to each draw/design a train and the entrants will be judged at a council meeting. One child from each year group will be chosen as a winner and their picture will be displayed at the station and on the council social pages. The council will also provide the four winners with a book token. The Clerk is to email the school. Ongoing.</p>	
<p><b>15.01.25. Parks &amp; Allotments:</b></p>	<p>A new Parks &amp; Allotments Committee comprising of Cllr Alan Reay (Chair), Cllr A Maxwell (Deputy Chair), Cllr K Thurlow, Cllr A Hankin and Cllr S Edmondson will meet on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January at 5pm.</p> <p>Due to the storm which occurred in October causing damage to the trees in St Mungos Park and the tree surgeon advising they be felled; the Clerk has made contact with the insurance company who require a written report and pictures of the trees to process the claim. Ongoing.</p> <p>The rental renewals for the Lawson Street and Outgang Road allotments are due at the end of February to begin 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025. The Clerk advised the councillors that the rent for this year should remain the same as last year due to many plot holders no longer wishing to continue with their allotment and no waiting list at this present time. <b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>The Clerk asked if it could be authorised to purchase some new numbers for the plots at the allotments as it is difficult to establish which plot is which. All agreed. <b>RESOLVED.</b></p> <p>It is possible new CCTV/Lighting is to be purchased and erected at the changing rooms in retrospect of the damage caused at Christmas. To be discussed at the P&amp;A meeting.</p> <p>New equipment for the caretaker is required – to be discussed at the P&amp;A meeting.</p> <p>Inspections by Cumberland Council at St Mungos Park and Victoria Park have taken place and reports sent to the Clerk. The Clerk forwarded these reports</p>	

	to the Caretaker as both the tyre swing and the zip wire needs repair work or replacing as soon as possible. A quote was received from Wicksteed, the manufacturer for a new swing and rubber gaiter at an estimate of £2067.61 excluding VAT. It was proposed by Cllr Gregory and seconded by Cllr Smith to purchase what we need to rectify the problem. To be discussed further at the P&A meeting.	
<b>16.01.25. Town Events:</b>	A new Events Committee comprising of Cllr Stephanie Maxwell (Chair), Cllr K Smith, Cllr M Rose, Cllr E Yates and Cllr J Marsh along with the Clerk will meet on Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> January at 6pm. The Clerk has requested the council organise a Halloween party for the children of the town. To be discussed at the Events meeting. The date for the Christmas events also to be discussed and agreed at the meeting.	
<b>17.01.25. Town Council Appreciation Scheme:</b>	Cllr Marsh proposed two letters of appreciation, one being John Wright the lollipop man for Richmond Hill School and Linda Hunter, thanking her for her input as a councillor. The Clerk had been informed of two local lads helping grit the towns pavements, when it was icy, on North View and St Kentigerns, making it safer for children, elderly and all pedestrians to walk. Letters of thanks and appreciation will be sent. <b>RESOLVED.</b>	
<b>18.01.25. Christmas Lights in the window raffle:</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the Mayor opened the meeting and the raffle was drawn. The winners as listed above. The winners will also be displayed on the council's social pages and in the towns noticeboards.	
<b>19.01.25. Schedule of Correspondence, Notices and Publications:</b> To receive a schedule of correspondence, notices and publications received since the last meeting.		
<b>20.01.25. Applications for Development:</b>	Applicant: Janet Fleming, 32 Station Rd – change of use on detached outbuilding. REF: FUL/2025/0004.  Applicant: Co-operative Group – to erect pop-up retail kiosk at Queen Street car park. REF: FUL/2024/0248. The councillors were all agreed in their concerns that the pop-up shop would take up too much space on the car park and reduce the parking spaces available. It was suggested the Clerk contact Cumberland Council and request the gate be moved further down the car park to allow space for residents/customers to park.	
<b>21.01.25. Items submitted by members:</b>	Cllr Smith has requested the Clerk see if it is possible to have the mobile post office van visit the town as the post office is now closed. Ongoing.	

<b>22.01.25. Items for the next meeting:</b>		
<b>23.01.25. Confidential Items:</b>	None	
<b>24.01.25. The next meeting of Aspatria Town Council will take place on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 6pm.</b>		

The meeting ended at 8.20pm.

