Workington Town Council

*Trustee of the Borough of Workington*

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**Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting of Workington Town Council, held on Thursday 14th March 2024 at 7pm in the WTC Community Centre, Princess Street, Workington.**

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| Cllr Mary Bainbridge | Present |
| Cllr Beth Dixon | Apologies  |
| Cllr Sue Fryer | Apologies |
| Cllr Hilary Harrington | Present |
| Cllr Michael Heaslip (chair) | Present |
| Cllr Allan Hodgson | Present |
| Cllr Bernadette Jones (vice chair) | Present |
| Cllr Jacqueline Kirkbride  | Not present  |
| Cllr Susan Martin | Present |
| Cllr Lynda Williams | Present |

In attendance: Cllr David Tennyson as a substitute for Cllr Sue Fryer, Deputy Proper Officer and 4 members of the public.

**E23.78 Apologies**

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Sue Fryer work commitments and Cllr Beth Dixon – family ill health.

**E23.79 Declarations of Interest:** None.

**E23.80 Exclusion of Press and Public:** Committee agreed to exclude the press and public from agenda item 17, which is in the confidential part two of the agenda.

**E23.81 Public Participation:** None

**E23.82 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The committee approved the minutes from 11th October 2023 and affirmed them a true record.

Moved by Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Mary Bainbridge.

**Resolved:** To accept the minutes of 11th October 2023.

**E23.83 Public Questions**

A member of the public spoke with regards to a request to install a defibrillator on his property in Harrington. Committee advised that it was not Council policy to install community defibs on private residents, however Officers would meet with the member of public to discuss potential locations and bring a report back to committee at a future meeting.

**Resolved:** Officers to meet with member of the public and discuss potential locations for a community defibrillator in Harrington.

**E23.84 Questions and Statements from Members:** None

**E23.85 Motions on Notice:** None

**E23.86 Environment Budget**

Committee noted the reports and discussed the following:

* Issue with large water bill from Annie Pit allotments, which was due to the tap being left on by one of the allotment holders. Estates Team to look into preventative measures and report back to committee at a future meeting.
* Committee agreed for officers to pay the water bill of £1,155.07 to Water Plus from the Allotments Water budget line.
* Committee noted that the Allotment Water budget line was now overspent by £2,247. Committee to request to F & GP and Full Council to vire money from the Allotment Running budget line to cover this overspend.

**Resolved:** Estates Team to look at how to prevent taps being left on again at allotment sites and report back to committee at a future meeting.

**Resolved:** To pay Water Plus bill for £1,155.07 from Allotment Water budget line.

**Resolved:** To request to F & GP and Full Council to vire £2,247 from the Allotment Running to the Allotment Water budget line to cover overspend.

**E23.87 In Bloom and In Bloom Development**

1. Cumbria in Bloom results 2023 – Committee noted the report and thanked everyone involved.
2. Workington in Bloom Group Review – Committee discussed their desire for this group to be led by the community rather than WTC. WTC would support with funding and guidance. Officers to contact current WiB meeting attendees and establish if they would be interested in taking over the group.

The group would be responsible for developing their own areas within the town and encouraging other organisations to join; in the hope of creating a town wide group which focusses on environmental initiatives throughout the year and not just when the CiB judges visit.

Officers to create an annual programme of events and activities.

1. Cumbria in Bloom awards 2024 - Committee wished to enter the awards this year. Officers to look at projects already completed or underway that could be entered rather than creating new ones.
2. Floral displays contract 2025-2026 – Committee noted the report for information.

**Resolved:** To establish to WiB group as community led.

**Resolved:** To create an annual programme of environmental events and activities, working with WNP.

**Resolved:** To enter Cumbria in Bloom awards 2024.

**E23.88 Bloom Development**

Committee agreed to support Harrington Youth Club with £300 for their In Bloom project from the In Bloom Development budget line 23/24.

**Resolved:** To support Harrington Youth Club with £300 from the In Bloom Development budget 23/24.

**E23.89 Estate Development**

1. **General estate development**
2. **Play Area Policy**

Committee discussed the new Play area policy and requested the following changes:

Point 3 – remove 5 minutes and add in ‘reasonable walking distance for a child’.

Point 12 – add in conventional play area

Point 17 – add in ‘or other appropriate powers’

Committee were happy for the policy to be taken to Full Council for approval and adoption once the above changes have been made.

1. **Ashfield Road South Play Area**

Committee noted the report for information.

Currently there is £6,500 from Cumberland Council for this project in the Council’s current account.

Committee noted that the following funding has also been received for this project:

£4,500 WTC received funding in Feb 2022 from Cumbria County Council (in general reserves)

£4,500 WTC received funding in Dec 2023 from Castles and Coasts (in general reserves)

**Resolved:** To request to F & GP and Full Council to accept the funding of £6,500 from Cumberland Council.

1. **Westfield Play Area**

Committee noted that funding has been agreed from Allerdale GDF Partnership for £61,200 for this project. The money has not yet been received.

Committee agreed that it would be a fitting tribute to a well-known local resident who recently passed away and agreed for the park to be called ‘Springfield Park’, in memory of Anita Milligan.

**Resolved:** To request to F & GP and Full Council to accept the funding of £61,200 from Allerdale GDF Partnership once received.

1. **Pump Track**

Committee noted the commitment of £5,500 for this project which would be paid on 1st April 2024.

Committee discussed the request from Cumberland Council to take over the maintenance of the pump track once installed.

It was noted that there was a 1 year defect warranty and an 8 year tarmac guarantee; meaning it would not cost the council any money until the 8 years has passed; other than time for the Estates Team to carry out litter picks and grass cutting.

Committee agreed they would possibly consider taking on the maintenance after the defect warranty had expired, but only if they were the owners of the land the pump track was built on. Committee request that F & GP consider discussing a land transfer (leasehold or freehold) to WTC once installed and after the defect period has expired.

 **Resolved:** To request that F & GP discuss land ownership of the pump track location with Cumberland Council.

Committee noted the rest of the report for information (Harrington and Northside play areas, play area annual inspections and The Ranch). The Chair advised that an Environment Committee meeting would be held in April to discuss all the play area projects in more detail, once the results from the community consultations were available.

1. **Park depot / Changing Places**

It was agreed that the Changing Places option couldn’t progress at this time, but Officers will inform committee if any funding should become available again.

Committee agreed to pay the £2,000 for the relevant surveys to be carried out from the Estate development budget line 24/25.

**Resolved:** To commission the following surveys for the Park Depot (café) at a total cost of £2,000 from the Estate Development budget line 24/25:

Building Survey, Electrical Safety Inspection, Fire Risk Assessment, Asbestos Refurbishment Survey and Legionella Assessment.

1. **Green Hub**

Committee noted that Groundworks have agreed to provide £5,000 for this project. This will allow for surveys to take place which will establish what works need to be carried out in the building.

Committee noted a quote from a company to carry out the required works to bring the building up to a standard where it could be used by the community, estimated at £42,460.

**Resolved:** To request to F & GP and Full Council to accept the funding of £5,000 from Groundworks once received.

**Resolved:** To commission surveys to the value of £2,000 from the Estate Development budget line 24/25 for required surveys on the Green Hub building.

**Resolved:** Officers to look for funding for the additional works to be carried out, estimated at £42,460.

**E23.90 Park Maintenance**

1. **Closed churchyards**

It was noted that WTC may have a statutory responsibility for closed Churchyards which would include St John’s Churchyard. At present this is being looked into and committee will be updated once Officers have more information.

1. **Dog exclusion zones**

Cumberland Council have been in touch to discuss dog exclusion zones; WTC sent a list of all the areas within the Town where dog exclusion zones would be useful. CC advised however that there needs to be evidence of an issue in order for them to enforce these areas, otherwise they would be challenged legally. As WTC has signs up in all of their play areas and The Ranch and people mostly are compliant there wouldn’t be sufficient evidence to support orders for dog exclusion zones.

WTC may be able to create a by-law however this will take some time to research.

1. **Use of The Ranch**

Committee noted the report for information.

**E23.91 Workington Nature Partnership**

Committee commended the work of the Nature Partnership Officer/Nature Ranger and complimented them on the amount of work they carry out for such a small team. Thanks go to all the volunteers who carry out a lot of the work on their behalf.

Committee noted that the invoice for £23,500 for WTC’s contribution to WNP has been paid, which was approved by Full Council on 24th Jan 2024.

A meeting of the WNP Steering Group has taken place with all parties happy with arrangements. A copy of these minutes have been sent to committee.

A full service plan will also be sent to committee.

Committee noted that a 10 year anniversary celebration will be held at HTM on 24th May 2024. Committee will receive invites in due course. Any costs that need to be covered by WTC will come from the WNP budget line 24/25. A breakdown of costs will be brought to the next committee meeting or approved by The Chair/DPO if within the approval limit.

**E23.92 Allotments**

Committee noted the minutes from the last two allotment meeting, a meeting was also held on 11th March 2024. Minutes would be sent to committee for information.

Committee noted that annual information has been received by Newlands Lane Allotments and all appears to be in order. Feenans Allotments have requested a meeting which is being set-up.

Committee reviewed a draft Allotments Policy and requested changes / made decisions on options as follows:

Add a clear definition of what an allotment is at the start of the policy.

* Eligibility: Committee are happy to impose the following rule ‘only one tenancy will be allocated per household (that is, a person or persons occupying the same housing unit with own front door)’.
* Application: Committee are happy to impose the following rule, with conditions; Residents whose home does not incorporate a garden or shared garden area, are given priority on the lists over applicants with access to a residential garden area for any site upon submission of a valid application.’ Committee wishes for a size limit to be put on this rule ‘a garden area’, should include an area large enough to allow children to play and to grow flowers / vegetables.
* Tenancy: Committee decided upon option two, but with a caveat that if the second tenant is from the same household as the main tenant they may automatically take over the tenancy, but this may only happen once.

**Resolved:** To make the amendments as above and agree a garden size limit for the next committee meeting to approve.

**E23.93 Streetscene**

Committee agreed to partner with Cumbria Police and Cumberland Council and provide £1,950 funding from the Streetscene budget line for The Line project.

**Resolved:** To support Cumbria Police with £1,950 from the Streetscene budget line 23/24.

**PART TWO – confidential**

**E23.94 Bowling Club**

Committee confirmed that they were happy with the partnership agreement proposed and the maintenance fee of £2,750 for year one of the agreement.

The agreement will start from 1st April 2024 and will allow the Bowling Club to manage the bowling green and building on behalf of the Council. The Council remains owners of the green and building.

Committee discussed the need to bring the building up to standard and ensure it is safe for community use, it was therefore agreed to pay the £2,000 from Park Maintenance 24/25 for surveys to be carried out on the building; building survey, electrical safety inspection, fire risk assessment, asbestos refurbishment survey and legionella assessment.

Committee agreed to reimburse the Bowling Club £880 for new toilet flooring which they had purchased and installed.

Committee agreed to costs of £1,552 for the installation of new disabled ramps and handrails. Installation will be managed by WTC Estates Team with help from the Bowling Club.

**Resolved:** For the DPO to sign the partnership agreement on behalf of the committee, along with a Bowling Club representative.

**Resolved:** To request Full Council approval for a pre-commitment of £2,750 from the Park Maintenance budget line 24/25 to the Bowling Club which will be paid on receipt of an invoice.

**Resolved:** To request Full Council approval for a pre-commitment of £880 to the Bowling Club for new toilet flooring in the bower from the Park Maintenance budget line 24/25 which will be paid on receipt of an invoice.

**Resolved:** For the Estates Team to work alongside the Bowling Club to install new disabled ramps and handrails on the bowling green at a total cost of £1,552 from the Park Maintenance budget 24/25 line.

**Resolved:** To commission surveys to the value of £2,000 from the Park Maintenance budget line 24/25 for required surveys on the bower building.

**The meeting ended at 8.45pm.**