



Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
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Minutes of the **EXTRA ORDINARY (ADDITIONAL) MEETING** of **PENRITH TOWN COUNCIL** held at **Unit 2, Church House, Friargate, Penrith.**

PRESENT:

Cllr. Bowen	Pategill Ward	Cllr. Kenyon	North Ward
Cllr. Burgin	South Ward	Cllr. Knaggs	West Ward
Cllr. M. Clark	South Ward	Cllr. Lawson	Carleton Ward
Cllr. Davies	West Ward	Cllr. Rudhall	East Ward
Cllr. Hawkins	East Ward	Cllr. C. Shepherd	East Ward
Cllr. Holden	Carleton Ward	Cllr Snell	West Ward

Services and Contracts Manager
Deputy Town Clerk
Solicitor

MINUTES FOR THE EXTRA ORDINARY (ADDITIONAL) MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL 10 October 2022

PART I PUBLIC SESSION

PTC22/47 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Shepherd.

PTC22/48 New Member Acceptance

Council welcomed two new democratically elected Councillors noting that the Town Clerk had received completed Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms for each member:

- a. Carleton Ward – Councillor Deb Holden
- b. Penrith East Ward – Councillor Mark Rudhall

PTC22/49 Minutes

a. *Confirmation of Full Council Minutes*

Members were asked to authorise the Chair to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of Town Council held on Monday 26 September 2022 and agree they be signed as such by the Chair.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Chair be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 26 September 2022 and the Chair sign them as such.

b. *Committee Minutes*

Members noted that the minutes from committee meetings had been circulated and published on the Council website since the previous ordinary meeting.

PTC22/50 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Members were invited to provide declarations of interests in respect of items on the agenda and apply for a dispensation to remain, speak and/or vote during consideration of that item.

Cllr. Davies declared an interest in relation to item 8b on the agenda as he is a member of Amnesty International.

PTC22/51 Public Participation

- a) Receive any questions or representations that have been received from members of the public. A period of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments.

Members received one representation from a member of the public. The resident made a presentation concerning social media coverage, corporate communication and potential conflicts of interest. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as an appendix.

PTC22/51 Public Participation, continued

There were no reports from District and County Councillors.

PTC22/52 Excluded Item: Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

Members were asked to determine whether items 18 and 19 should be considered without the presence of the press and public, pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, as publicity relating to that (any of those) matter/s may be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for the other special reasons noted in relation to that matter on the agenda.

RESOLVED THAT:

Agenda items 18 Grants and 19 Staffing Matters be considered in private session, without the press or public present as the matters involved financial information of third parties and sensitive staffing matters.

BUSINESS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

PTC22/53 Castle Park

Members noted the email correspondence submitted to Penrith Town Council and Eden District Council on 15 September 2022 from the Penrith Futures Partnership regarding Castle Park and that Castle Park and that play area assets within Penrith would be considered at the next scheduled Full Council meeting.

Motions on Notice

PTC22/54 Climate Justice – Councillor Bowen

Motion by Councillor Bowen
Seconded by Councillor C Shepherd

And **RESOLVED THAT:**

Council resolve to sign the Community Declaration organised by the Fairtrade Organisation, and by doing so, affirm its commitment to a fairer system of farming and trading across the world.

PTC22/55 Social and News Media – Councillor Knaggs

Motion by Councillor Knaggs

Seconded by Councillor C Shepherd

That Penrith Town Council strives to maximise the security and effectiveness of its own social media platforms and to receive positive and accurate coverage from external media and to this end Councillor Knaggs ask that Council resolves to :

- i. Review the PTC Social Media Policy.
- ii. Devise and agree a strategy to address and respond to posts and stories that are either factually incorrect, inaccurate and/or intentionally, or unintentionally, misleading.
- iii. Explore the feasibility of producing a 'fact check' page on the PTC website.
- iv. Organise training in media skills and effective communication skills for all Councillors.
- v. Engage a third-party organisation to ensure increased security of PTC social media platforms in order to prevent reputational damage.
- vi. Review the activity of hosting material produced by the Eden District Council and Cumbria County Council or other third parties to avoid confusion about the responsibilities and accountabilities of either the PTC, the EDC and the CCC.
- vii. Research the use of localised 'domain names' of social media sites to ensure that there can be no confusion about what belongs to Penrith Town Council and what does not.
- viii. Provide a report for all full Council meetings on recent news and social media coverage related to the PTC and its Councillors
- ix. Ensure that Councillors intending to write a report on any aspect of any meeting for a news media organisation or social media platform discloses this information at the appropriate point on the agenda, i.e. Declaration of Interest.
 - The approval of corporate media communications must be authorised prior to publication by the Town Clerk or nominated deputies, if written in the role of Councillor.
 - If a Councillor is writing an article about the business of a meeting as a journalist, it must be declared that the Councillor is attending the meeting as a both a councillor and a journalist.
- x. Ensure that, if Councillors have a business interest of any kind in a news media organisation or a social media platform, this is declared as a pecuniary interest both at meetings and on the Register of Interest.

Amendment by Cllr Knaggs

Seconded by Cllr C Shepherd

- i. Review the PTC Social Media Policy.
Devise and agree a strategy to address and respond to posts and stories that are either factually incorrect, inaccurate and/or intentionally, or unintentionally, misleading.

PTC22/55 Social and News Media – Councillor Knaggs Continued

- ii. Explore the feasibility of producing a 'fact check' page on the PTC website. Organise training in media skills and effective communication skills for all Councillors.
Engage a third-party organisation to ensure increased security of PTC internet activity (e.g. email accounts, webpages, social media usage) in order to prevent reputational damage.
Review the activity of hosting material produced by the Eden District Council and Cumbria County Council or other third parties to avoid confusion about the responsibilities and accountabilities of either the PTC, the EDC and the CCC.
Research the use of account names used on social media sites to ensure that there can be no confusion about what belongs to Penrith Town Council and what does not.
Provide an opportunity at full Council meetings for Councillors to comment on recent news and social media coverage related to the PTC and its Councillors.
- iii. Ensure that corporate media communications written by Councillors, are approved when the communication is written, when acting as, or on behalf of, the Council
- iv. Ensure that, if Councillors have a business interest of any kind in a news media organisation or a social media platform, this is declared as a pecuniary interest.

Further Amendment by Cllr Davies
Seconded by Cllr Lawson.

That the Council reviews its Social Media Policy.

The further amendment carried and became the substantive motion.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Council reviews its Social Media Policy.

PTC22/56 Help with Cost-of-Living Crisis – Cllr. Knaggs

Motion by Councillor Knaggs
Seconded by Councillor Lawson

That Penrith Town Council believes that there must be urgent action to respond to the food and energy poverty crisis to ensure that all members of our local community are able to keep warm and free from hunger and resolves to:

- i. Lobby local and national (Councils and Government) politicians to urgently call for an expanded entitlement for free school meals, an annual increase in the school meals budget to match the rates of inflation, and for free school meals to continue during school holidays.
- ii. Agree to write to the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Kit Malthouse, requesting a review of Free School Meals arrangements.

PTC22/56 Help with Cost-of-Living Crisis – Cllr. Knaggs Continued

- iii. Work with other organisations, such as Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS), to campaign for the establishment of a local Retrofitting Taskforce to secure funding to establish an 'Eco-refurbishment Skills Hub' in Penrith to provide local people with the skills to undertake this work and to contribute to the regeneration of our local economy.
- iv. Provide information and references, via signposting to CAfS and other helpful websites and guidance, on the PTC website about actions that can be taken to reduce energy usage and increase energy efficiency.
- v. Work with Eden Resilience Group and CCC research, publish and promote a list of organisations offering warm community spaces where residents are able to meet and keep warm at no cost.
- vi. Meet regularly with the Eden Resilience Group to monitor the situation, share information and resources.
- vii. Support the Salvation Army and Churches Together in their provision of warm spaces by donating refreshments and publicising when their spaces are open.
- viii. Promote the EDC Hardship Fund to the organisations that establish warm spaces in Penrith.

Amended by Cllr Davies

Seconded by Councillor Lawson

That the Town Council act to establish a heat haven to support the residents of Penrith.

A vote was taken, and the amendment was lost.

The original motion became the substantive motion, and a vote was taken when it was: **RESOLVED THAT:**

- i. Lobby local and national (Councils and Government) politicians to urgently call for an expanded entitlement for free school meals, an annual increase in the school meals budget to match the rates of inflation, and for free school meals to continue during school holidays.
- ii. Agree to write to the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Kit Malthouse, requesting a review of Free School Meals arrangements
- iii. Work with other organisations, such as Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS), to campaign for the establishment of a local Retrofitting Taskforce to secure funding to establish an 'Eco-refurbishment Skills Hub' in Penrith to provide local people with the skills to undertake this work and to contribute to the regeneration of our local economy.
- iv. Provide information and references, via signposting to CAfS and other helpful websites and guidance, on the PTC website about actions that can be taken to reduce energy usage and increase energy efficiency.
- v. Work with Eden Resilience Group and CCC research, publish and promote a list of organisations offering warm community spaces where residents are able to meet and keep warm at no cost.
- vi. Meet regularly with the Eden Resilience Group to monitor the situation, share information and resources.

PTC22/56 Help with Cost-of-Living Crisis – Cllr. Knaggs, continued

- vii. Support the Salvation Army and Churches Together in their provision of warm spaces by donating refreshments and publicising when their spaces are open.
- viii. Promote the EDC Hardship Fund to the organisations that establish warm spaces in Penrith.

PTC22/57 Inspiring Eden - Pilot Project – Penrith Decarbonisation “Whole Place Approach”

Members considered the report and the recommendations contained within.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. The Town Clerk meet regularly with representatives from Penrith Action for Community Transition (PACT) and CAfS to monitor and support the project.
- ii. Assist in networking and sharing information.
- iii. Provide a meeting venue as and when required.
- iv. The Council’s Climate Change Strategy be reviewed.

PTC22/58 Ticket Office review – Penrith Train Station

Members noted that Penrith Train Station was under threat of losing staff and facilities as train operator Avanti West Coast sought to “modernise” its services and to date no decision had been made for Penrith.

Members were asked to consider writing to the Secretary of State for Transport, Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP to raise their concerns regarding the future of Penrith station ticket office.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Council write to the Secretary of State for Transport Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP imploring the Government and Avanti Trains to ensure that the ticket office and overall level of customer support and service remains as it is now at Penrith Railway Station.

PTC22/59 Civility & Respect Pledge

Members considered the report and the recommendations contained within and noted that the Code of Conduct would be reviewed in May 2023 to align with the new Westmorland and Furness Council's Code of Conduct. Cllr Davies declared that he had recently resigned from NALC and CALC.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. Council adopts the values of the pledge as follows and sign the pledge on the NALC website.
- ii. Penrith Town Council agrees that the Council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:
 - a) Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff.
 - b) Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors.
 - c) Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy.
 - d) Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
 - e) Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
 - f) Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the Local Council Award Scheme.
 - g) Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

PTC22/60 Vacancy North Ward and Council Implications

- a) Members are aware that Cllr. Jackson resigned and an election for Penrith North Ward had been called the cost of which would be met by the Town Council if the election was contested.

RESOLVED THAT: Scott Jackson be thanked for all his dedication and work with the Town Council

- b) Council were asked to appoint a chair for Planning Committee.

RESOLVED THAT:

Cllr C Shepherd be appointed chair for the Planning Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

- c) Council were asked to appoint a lead for Devolution.

RESOLVED THAT:

Cllr Lawson be appointed lead for Devolution for the remainder of the municipal year.

PTC22/60 Vacancy North Ward and Council Implications Continued

d) Council members were asked to volunteer for Finance Committee to replace Council Jackson.

RESOLVED THAT:

Cllr Rudhall be appointed to the Finance Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

ROUTINE BUSINESS MATTERS

PTC22/61 Report from the Council Chair

Members noted the duties undertaken by or on behalf of the Town Mayor The Mayor had attended a recent book launch 'between before and after' by a Bosnian Refugee who had been based in Penrith, represented the Proclamation for King Charles III at Penrith Town Hall, and attended the civic Commemoration Church Service for the life of Queen Elizabeth II. He asked that the Deputy Town Clerk be thanked for her work in relation to the commemoration service. The Mayor also reported that that three speed indicator devices had been installed at Bridge Lane, Beacon Edge and Carleton Road and that this was in part thanks to grants from Cumbria County Council and Eden District Council.

PTC22/62 Reports from Members

Cllr Snell reported that she had applied to English Heritage to save the Castle Park Kiosk which was rejected. She had attended an Eden Refugee Network Picnic in the Park at Fairhill Playing Field.

Cllr Knaggs reported that he had attended Climate Change training, the commemoration service for Queen Elizabeth II, and reported that he had facilitated the removal of graffiti on two electricity substations in his ward. He had also raised the issue of a dangerous wall in Castletown.

Cllr Davies raised the issue of dog fouling across town and defective items of play equipment at Castletown which is being raised with Eden District Council. He raised that there had been an issue with parking permits in Castletown. Litter picking is continued to be done by Eden Wombles.

Cllr Bowen reported that she had recently delivered 700 newsletters to her ward households and meets with her local residents association monthly.

Cllr Lawson reported that there are problems with traffic speeding and children playing in the road at Carleton Meadows and ongoing issues with the town bus route in this area.

Cllr Holden reported that the community are undertaking a tree planting event at Carleton Park in November. This is in conjunction with Cumbria County Council.

Cllr Kenyon reported that he had attended a Borderlands Meeting and about traffic speeding issues on Wordsworth Street.

Cllr Clark reported that a tree on Castle Terrace had been used as a climbing frame but that it had been removed by Eden District Council.

PTC22/63 Resolutions Tracking Report

Members noted the Resolutions Tracking Report.

PTC22/64 Matters from Finance Committee

Council was asked to ratify items **a to fi** following approved recommendations from the Council's Finance Committee from their meeting held on Monday 26 September 2022. These matters had been considered and approved by the members of the Council's Finance Committee, and the Committee Chair, requested the matters be brought to Full Council for ratification.

RESOLVED THAT:

Matters a to fi inclusive be ratified:

a) Budgetary Control Statement

Budgetary control statement for the period 31 July 2022.

b) Risk Assessments

Corporate risk assessments for:

- i. Allotments
- ii. Bandstand
- iii. Business Continuity
- iv. Bus Shelter
- v. Fairhill
- vi. Finance
- vii. Fire
- viii. Governance
- ix. IT & Website
- x. Lone Working
- xi. Musgrave Monument
- xii. Morrisons Recycling Bring Site
- xiii. Office
- xiv. Seats
- xv. Thacka Beck Field
- xvi. War Memorial (St Andrews)
- xvii. Remembrance Day Parade and Service

c) Policy Review

- i. Procurement Policy
- ii. Financial Regulations.

d) Signature Events Fund

e) Internal Audit 2022-23

Scope of Internal Audit for 2022-23.

f) Fairhill Playing Field

- i. The Record of Decision Taken under Delegated Powers to progress a scheme to restrict unauthorised vehicular access on to Fairhill Playing Field.
- ii. The costs of the work for £2,500 be met from the Devolution Reserve be approved.

RESOLVED THAT:

The cost of the work of £2,500 to install timber bollards and a service gate at Fairhill Playing Field be met from Devolution Reserve.

PTC22/64 Matters from Finance Committee Continued

g) Finance Committee Membership

A nomination was sought to elect a replacement Councillor for Finance Committee to fill the position created by the resignation of Councillor Davies from the committee.

RESOLVED THAT:

There were no nominations, and Cllr Holden would attend future Finance Committee meetings as an observer.

PTC22/65 Next Meeting

Members noted the next meeting of the Full Council was scheduled for Monday 19 December at 6.00pm, Unit 2, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith

PART II PRIVATE SECTION

The following is exempt information as it relates to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and personal sensitive information relating to members of staff.

PTC22/66 Grants

Members considered the Grants Report and recommendations contained within.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. Members noted that PACT have been awarded a grant of £960 from the Grow Nature Fund under officer delegated authority.
- ii. An application from Penrith BID be referred back to the applicant to be resubmitted by 09:00 Monday 17 October 2022.

PTC22/67 Staffing Matters

Members received an oral update.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. Members noted the Community Services Officer is scheduled to commence in post on the 24 October 2022.
- ii. Members noted the position with Sustainability Officer post.

CHAIR:

DATE:

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL
MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Access to Information

Copies of the agenda are available for members of the public to inspect prior to the meeting.

Agenda and Part I reports are available on the Town Council website:

<https://www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk/>

Background Papers

Requests for the background papers to the Part I reports, excluding those papers that contain exempt information, can be made between the hours of 9.00 am and 3.00 pm, Monday to Wednesday via office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

On social and media coverage which YOU claim is ‘undermining the work of the council, provoking negative reaction and giving a poor impression of PTC thereby provoking hostility’.

I suggest this outcome is - YOUR own fault !

YOU have LOST the narrative ! YOU do NOT welcome debate, YOU do not welcome questioning !

With NO newsletters, NO ward surgeries, NO communication with ward residents, NO consultation even NO answers to emails

WHAT else do COUNCILLORS expect ?

If YOU don’t communicate YOUR story, YOU have no one else to blame if the story – or stories – subsequently published, don’t meet with YOUR approval !

On conflict of interest, do councillors here this evening, know who they are here to ‘represent’ ?

- **Yourself and your own personal or political agenda ?**
- **Eden council, where you may also sit ?**
- **A political party ?**
- **A business ?**
- **An outside group such as Penrith Futures Partnership ?**
- **Or maybe even – heaven forbid - your ward residents ?**

I believe, Penrith Town Council has too many default, unelected, recycled councillors, with clashing interests, undermining democracy and free speech.

The perception of councillor secrecy, coupled with conflict of interest, has created the position you now face.