**Penrith Town Council appoints new Chair in first meeting since May elections**

A new Chair and Deputy Chair of Penrith Town Council were appointed at the Council’s annual meeting tonight (Monday 15 May).

Councillor Doug Lawson, Green Party Member for the Penrith Carleton ward was elected the new Chair of Penrith Town Council.

Councillor Mark Rudhall, Liberal Democrat Member for the Penrith East ward was elected the new Deputy Chair of Penrith Town Council.

**Councillor Doug Lawson, Chair of Penrith Town Council, speaking of his appointment, said:**

*“I am immensely proud and honoured to be the new Chair of Penrith Town Council in what is my third non-consecutive term as Chair.*

*“This next four years is a really exciting time for the Town Council and the town with lots of exciting projects coming up.*

*“The Penrith Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion, and my dream is that Penrith begins to shine again post-Covid, with its own special identity clearly marked out in all the hard work that has gone into this important planning document. The document is based on huge amounts of public engagement and, despite setbacks, has continued to reflect what Penrith people tell us they want. My desire is to work with my fellow councillors and our excellent officer team, to get this completed, so we can begin to realise Penrith’s potential.*

*“We also have the possible devolution of town assets from Westmorland and Furness Council on the horizon, a process I look forward to working with them on to achieve effective asset transfer and ultimately what’s best for the Town.*

*“Penrith has a council it can rightly be proud of* and *no-one in Penrith should be in any doubt that their council is here and is acting for them.*

*“I can’t wait to get started!”*

The inaugural meeting also saw Chair’s and members appointed to the various committees of Penrith Town Council:

**Finance (7 Members):**

* Chair – Cllr Charlie Shepherd
* Members: Cllr Daniel Jayson, Cllr Scott Jackson, Cllr Roger Burgin, Cllr Ron Kenyon, Cllr Mark Rudhall, Cllr Doug Lawson.

**Planning (7 Members):**

* Chair – Cllr Scott Jackson
* Members: Cllr Hilary Snell, Cllr Charlie Shepherd, Cllr Dan Jayson, Cllr Deborah Holden, Cllr Valerie Bowen, Cllr Jeff Thomson.

**Communities (6 Members):**

* Chair – Cllr Hillary Snell
* Members: Cllr Paul Donald, Cllr Barbara Jayson, Cllr Valerie Bowen, Cllr Ron Kenyon, Cllr Scott Jackson

Deputy Chairs of the committees will be appointed at the first meeting of the respective committee.

Councillors also agreed to express an interest in owning the village hall at Carleton Heights after an invitation from Persimmon Homes Lancashire. Penrith Town Council officers will now be working on a business case for the hall and will be engaging closely with the local community to ascertain their aspirations for the hall.