

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber - Allerdale House, Workington on Friday 26 July 2019 at 9.30 am

Members

Councillor Alan Pitcher (Chair)
Councillor Carmel Bell
Councillor John Crouch
Councillor Iain Greaney
Councillor Joe Holliday
Councillor Adrian Kirkbride

Councillor Nicky Cockburn
Councillor Malcolm Grainger
Councillor Michael Heaslip
Councillor Daniel Horsley

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tony Annison and Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes

Staff Present

R Carr, A FitzGerald, N Hardy, I Hinde, J Irving and L Jardine

86. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2019 were signed as a correct record.

87. Declaration of Interests

None Declared

88. Questions

None Received

89. Public Participation

None Received

90. Councillor Call for Action

Councillor Peter Kendall submitted a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) on 28th June 2019.

The Councillor Call for Action was in relation to health and safety concerns with lack of access to current plots at Flimby Cemetery and the condition of the Boundary Wall.

Councillor Kendall was in attendance to make his representations. He advised he was representing the residents of Flimby who have sent him numerous complaints in relation to this issue. Councillor Kendall also states that over 200 letters from residents, expressing concerns at the poor public access to the Cemetery have been submitted.

Councillor Kendall explained that the Cemetery needs a new footpath given a lack of suitable access to the new graves in the Cemetery; the current access is on challenging terrain which gets worse in poor weather conditions, making it difficult for both the public and Funeral Directors. The boundary wall also requires attention as it is a state of disrepair.

Councillor Kendall requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attend Flimby Cemetery for a site visit before making a decision on the CCfA, and that all letters received from residents should be acknowledged.

Before answering questions from the Committee, the chair advised that they were only considering items included in the CCfA, not the rest of the Cemetery.

Members then asked questions to Councillor Kendall in relation to his CCfA and in particular to the carrying of coffins within the graveyard. The Bereavement Services Manager clarified that the carrying of coffins is permitted but Allerdale is looking into whether to prohibit this due to Health and Safety concerns.

Councillor Heaslip asked what steps had been taken to resolve this issue before presenting the CCfA. Councillor Kendall explained that this issue was brought before Maryport Town Council and had been raised with the Head of Community Services. He confirmed that discussions had not been held with the relevant executive portfolio holder or raised the issue at Executive or Council.

The Chair then asked members of the public to make representations.

Councillor Keith Little (Cumbria CC) and Carol Tindall reiterated the concerns shared by Councillor Kendall but also expressed that the state of the Cemetery is a Health and Safety concern that Allerdale should be addressing as a matter of community safety.

In response to the representations and questions from members, the Bereavement Services Manager advised that she had not received any complaints from Funeral Directors and that they have never had issues accessing grave plots. In relation to the boundary wall, she advised that a fence could be erected rather than repairing the wall.

In final questions to Councillor Kendall, Councillor Cockburn asked why he had not discussed this issue with the relevant portfolio holder. Councillor Kendall advised he was following the protocol established as per the previous CCfA, made a number of years ago.

The Chair then advised the committee of the options available.

Councillor Heaslip shared his view that this was a valid CCfA and moved the motion that an investigation should be conducted in consultation with executive members.

Councillor Grainger seconded the motion with Councillor Holliday sharing support for an investigation.

A vote was held on the motion, 10 voted in favour, 0 against and 0 abstentions.

The motion was carried

Resolved

That the CCfA is valid and that an investigation is to be conducted with the relevant officers and executive members.

91. Forward Plan

The Head of Strategy, Policy and Performance advised the meeting that a report on the delivery options for the waste and recycling service would be presented at the next Executive Meeting (6 August 2019).

Further items were discussed on the forward plan including budget setting and Council Tax setting.

Members also asked questions in relation to Members Allowances. In response the Democratic Services Officer explained that members can make representations either verbally or in person to the Independent Panel for Members Allowances.

92. Draft 2019/20 Work Programme

Members discussed the work programme and agreed the contents.

93. Formation of Task and Finish Group

Members had previously agreed to proceed with a task and finish group to review the process of procurement.

In relation to membership of the task and finish group, members agreed that the full committee should form the task and finish group, with the exception of Councillor Heaslip due to his previous role as executive member for community services in the previous administration. The committee however agreed that another Labour councillor could be admitted onto the task and finish group to substitute for Councillor Heaslip.

Councillor Grainger then proposed that Councillor Bell be elected chair of the task and finish group, this was seconded by Councillor Horsley, and the committee were all in agreement.

The terms of the task and finish group will be decided at its first meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am