

TOWN OF KESWICK

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Keswick on Thursday
17 April 2025 at 6.00 pm

Chair

Councillor Louise Dunn

In attendance: 1 member of the press, 10 electors of Keswick, Vivien Little (Town Clerk), Catherine Parker (Responsible Financial Officer)

1. **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting held on Thursday 18th April 2024 be signed by the Chair as a true record.
2. Councillor Dunn thanked all those who attended the meeting, and expended on her annual report. She stated that it had been a good year, and that the Council were focused on the things that mattered to the electors of Keswick – housing, fighting to reopen the swimming pool, as well as finding out the needs of the local community.

She also paid thanks to Councillor Steve Harwood, who was leading on the fight to reopen the swimming pool.

Councillor Murray spoke in regard to her parks report. She was especially pleased to see that the new staff building in Fitz Park was in place, and that Café HNW had completed its alterations, with it becoming a true hub for the community. She was pleased to have announced the planned upgrades to the play area, as well as launching the fundraising campaign. She thanked parks staff for all their hard work throughout the year.

RECEIVED the Town Council's annual report for 2024/2025 including reports from representatives on voluntary organisations in the town.

3. A written report was submitted by Councillor Sally Lansbury, Cumberland Council (attached).
4. To consider resolutions of which written notice has been given.
The Town Clerk reported that two written notices of resolution had been received.
 - i) **Keswick Community Housing Trust calls on the Town Council to request that Cumberland ringfences 100% of the council tax premium raised from 2nd home owners in Keswick, so that the money can be used towards the provision of affordable rental housing in Keswick, whether that is via new build, conversions or the purchase of existing properties within Keswick.**

Councillor Laphorn expanded on this, explaining that previous grant funding which had been received had helped to provide 12 properties within Keswick.

Councillor Taylor agreed, and stated that as Cumberland Council was the local authority with responsibility for housing, it should be doing all that it could to support the provision of housing in an area known for lack of affordable housing.

RESOLVED that this item be brought to a future Town Council meeting to be considered further.

- ii) **Keswick Community Housing Trust calls upon the Town Council to request that Cumberland actively works to identify opportunities in Keswick, including disused buildings and other spaces, that may be able to be used to add to the stock of affordable homes available for the people of Keswick.**

This matter was discussed in depth by all present. It was noted that there are opportunities to use disused buildings and other spaces innovatively for housing, though the difficulty remains in how to access funding for it at the appropriate time. It was felt that the Town Council could be proactive in this matter as they had previously done work relating to places within the boundaries of Keswick that could work for a project like that, and so it would be useful to find any information that still remained.

RESOLVED that this item be brought to a future Town Council meeting to be considered further.

5. To receive matters raised by members of the public

A member of the public spoke in relation to the state of two footpaths he had been pursuing with Cumberland for a significant time. He thanked Councillor Sally Lansbury for her help in getting positive responses regarding this. With regard to the Howrah's path, he was hopeful that there would be solution to improve drainage, as that appeared to be the major issue there. He had also reported the path from Stanger Street leading to Knights Bridge, and the potholes there. Cumberland had agreed that one pothole was an issue, which had been filled in, however the rest of the surface repairs was the responsibility of the owners of the houses adjoining the path, but Councillor Lansbury had been helping identify the owners in order for them to be written to.

The meeting closed 6.42 pm

Town Mayor

Date

Cumberland Councillor, Sally Lansbury

Report to Keswick Town Council April 2025

I was elected to this role six months ago in October 2024. Having worked for Allerdale for the four years preceding LGR, I am familiar with most of the protocols and much of the role - although the breadth of responsibility and range of roles is now much larger and covered by a single representative. Of course, this leads to issues of time management and I am sadly unable to accept additional committee and trustee roles that are offered, as there is simply not enough time to take them on. That said, it remains a priority for me to support Keswick Town Council in their work and to develop effective and efficient partnerships in the interests of getting things done in this great town. I do feel that the access to lead officers and portfolio holders is much better since local government organisation and they have always responded well to my reports of issues and incidents as well as being forward thinking in most areas of Cumberland's priorities. Climate and nature issues could and should be better communicated and acted upon as the Council's sphere of influence is wide and should be used more. I await further information on how a devolved council will better serve its residents. More on that to follow.

Since my election, I have been working closely with Keswick, Borrowdale, and St Johns, Wythburn and Castlerigg Councils, on the following key issues

Keswick Pool. To move forward with a strategy to re-open the pool, looking at new partnerships and options. Together with the Town Council we have been advising Cumberland on behalf of the Keswick community and continuing to push for action on ensuring we have a pool facility in Keswick.

A condition report is currently underway to establish if re-opening the currently facilities is an option.

An options appraisal of the whole area surrounding the pool is also underway with broader possibilities under consideration.

A further meeting between Cumberland and Keswick Town Council is planned in May. There is no guarantee of any funding at this stage but we remain hopeful that it can be found and that we can help to show that a great pool facility can be run successfully here.

Holiday Let Registration and control:

Whilst recognizing the economic importance of these businesses to local families and to the economy of Keswick, we need balance. I strongly believe that there needs to be a cap on numbers, in order to make more housing available to local families. I will continue to work with our MP and with Cumberland and LDNPA on potential registration schemes.

The issues of waste, noise and antisocial behavior, arising from some holiday accommodation, needs to be addressed. Commercial lets should have commercial bin collections and

sufficient collections for the volume of waste. I encourage everyone to continue to report properties where standards are not maintained. Keswick Town Council has recently had some success with LDNPA planners in stalling the growth in the number of S/C properties by collecting evidence of the issues caused by accommodation with no on-site management. This work led to a recent refusal in a change of use application. This reporting work needs to continue and is being adopted by other Councils in the Lake District.

Drainage and Flood Protection: I liaise regularly with Cumberland Highways on reporting blocked drains and culverts and am involved on the big picture issues through KCERP and KFAG. Some new land drainage issues appear to have arisen as a result of the United Utilities pipeline project. I am working as the Cumberland rep on the LDNPA to ensure that UU are held to account on delivering their planning conditions and remediation work.

Environment: I will be actively and continuously working on nature recovery, waste reduction and climate action, in partnership with other local groups and stakeholders. I sit on Cumberland's Climate and Nature Advisory group and am looking forward to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy gaining momentum and having stronger influence on developments and use of green spaces.

I support the recent changes to Cumberland's waste collection system which brings the three different schemes for Allerdale, Copeland and Carlisle into alignment and provides us with fewer general waste collections but additional recycling collections. I have long advocated household waste reduction and promoted re-use and recycling so this is a positive step in terms of responsible use of resources and in reducing the fuel needed transportation of general waste. There are however, still issues for some people, especially in Borrowdale where there is currently no doorstep recycling or bring site – I'm working on it and hope to ensure some additional collections and facilities are provided.

Road Safety: The initial community engagement with residents and businesses on new traffic regulation orders in Keswick has taken place. There was very good engagement and many suggestions. Plans will now be reworked and represented for consultation in May. Officers have taken all eighty+ responses into consideration and the second draft plans have been considerably adjusted, to take into account these representations. The formal consultation will take place in May and then the project goes on to the next stage of funding and planning of the works.

Childrens Services and Adult Social Care: Childrens services recently achieved a 'good' rating from Ofsted which is an excellent outcome and a step change from where the Council was a couple of years ago. I am advocating for better communication in terms of what help is available regarding adult social care and for elder care. Cumberland are working on new pathways to care and I feel optimistic that things are moving in the right direction in this area of work.

Communication: contact me at any time via email

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