

# MELMERBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Melmerby Parish Council held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023, at Melmerby Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr Chris Jones, Cllr David Bardsley, Cllr Bill Burford, Cllr Gary Fletcher and Claire Rankin, Interim Parish Clerk.

Eleven members of the public were present. Cllr Michael Hanley, Westmorland and Furness Council was also in attendance.

All those councillors present signed the declaration of office forms following their (uncontested) election on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

2023/032 **Election of Chair – RESOLVED** that Cllr Chris Jones was elected as the Chair of Melmerby Parish Council. Cllr Bill Burford nominated Cllr Chris Jones and Cllr Gary Fletcher seconded the nomination. All those present were in favour.

2023/033 **Election of Vice-Chair – RESOLVED** that Cllr David Bardsley was elected as the Vice-Chair of Melmerby Parish Council. Cllr Gary Fletcher proposed Cllr David Bardsley and Cllr Bill Burford seconded the nomination. All those present were in favour.

2023/034 **Apologies for absence – RESOLVED** that apologies were received from Cllr Dougie Bell and Cllr Mary Robinson (Westmorland and Furness Council).

2023/035 **Declarations of Interest – RESOLVED** there were no declarations of interest.

2023/036 **Minutes of the last meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 – RESOLVED** that Cllr Chris Jones was authorised to sign the minutes as a correct record.

2023/037 **Exclusion of Press and Public (Public bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960) - RESOLVED** that there were no items on the agenda that required this exclusion.

2023/038 **Public Participation RESOLVED** that there were a number of contributions from the public particularly in terms of issues listed under item 11 on the agenda.

Cllr Chris Jones thanked those present who had been involved in the organisation of the Coronation Picnic on the green. The event had been enjoyed by approximately 120 people and the medals for the children were a lovely keepsake. There was a suggestion that this could become an annual event around the time of Mayday.

Cllr Chris Jones reported the contents of two emails received from a resident regarding some of the issues under item 11 on the agenda in particular the consideration of extra play provision in the village and the proposal to request a 20mph speed limit along the top road in Melmerby.

A resident involved in the parent's group looking at play provision explained that there are currently 110 adults in the village supportive of the concept of increased play provision. The project is very much at stage one which is opening up a dialogue with the landowner around permission to use some of the space on the village green. Clearly until permission has been granted, there is little merit in

working on the detail of the project. It is envisaged that the next step will be to hold an open meeting in the village to hear everyone's ideas and develop the project from there.

In addition, there had been representations that previous generations of children have not needed additional play provision. Several members present highlighted that the need for play provision may be more needed now to act as an incentive for children to seek an active lifestyle away from technology and also as a family based resource rather than allowing children to play unsupervised as perhaps was more acceptable in the past.

The action proposed by those present was for the parent representatives to contact the landowner again to open up communication. The Parish Council agreed they were happy to support this action where possible.

A representation had also been made ahead of the meeting in terms of "Celia's bench". This issue has now been resolved through community action by Melmerby villagers. The Parish Council and all those present welcomed this action and thanked those involved for the time, materials and effort. (The timber was supplied by Dougie Ivinson and the bench made and installed by Monty and Kay Marsh with other helpers).

A discussion also followed about the proposal to seek a 20 mph speed limit along the top road in Melmerby. It was clarified that the proposal would cover the area from the church to the bakery. Those present recognised the need for consideration in this area in the village particularly because it contained key businesses and facilities e.g. The Village Bakery, Tower House Pool, the village hall, Melmerby Hall and the church. Many of these facilities are used by tourists and those not familiar with the village. Additional considerations were discussed in terms of the additional street furniture a new speed limit may attract and also the provision in the new Highway Code for "Home Zone" areas.

**2023/039 Annual Accounts 2022/23 - RESOLVED** that the accounts were proposed for approval by Cllr Bill Burford and seconded by Cllr David Bardsley. All those present were in favour of approving the accounts. It was explained that the main income for the Parish Council comes from the precept (which in 2022/23 was £5,100). In 2022/23 there was also £2,150 grant income for the parish projects. It was emphasised that the village was very fortunate to have a supportive community who are often willing to donate materials or volunteer labour to support projects.

**2023/040 Recruitment of Parish Clerk – RESOLVED** that a working party of Cllr Bill Burford, Cllr David Bardsley and Cllr Chris Jones was established to formulate the next steps in terms of the recruitment of a parish clerk. There may be a need for an extraordinary meeting to consider the findings of the working party. Claire Rankin was thanked for her work as the interim parish clerk.

**2023/041 Westmorland and Furness Council Report – RESOLVED** that the report from Cllr Michael Hanley was received. Cllr Hanley reported that there was still a locality board in place for Eden with 15 members of the Westmorland and Furness Council who represent wards in the former Eden District Council area. It was reported that a grant funding pot of £10,000 was available this financial year to support projects to promote safer and stronger communities. It was also reported that Cllr Mary Robinson has been appointed as the representative for the North Pennines AONB.

**2023/042 Local concerns – RESOLVED** that the local concerns raised at the Annual Parish Meeting were noted and the following actions supported:

- 20 mph speed limit along the top road. Following the discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would contact Highways to seek advice and request suggestions for the best approach.

- Increased play provision. It was agreed that the Parish Council supports the project in principle and welcomes feedback from the parent's group regarding their progress in terms of seeking permission.
- Restoration of Celia's bench. A great asset for the village, thanks to community effort as noted under public participation.
- Repairs needed to the bridge over the beck on the village green. It was reported that although this is not a Parish Council asset, the landowner has been contacted due to the health and safety concerns about the condition of the bridge.
- Secondary school bus drop off. It was noted that the school transport team has been contacted and an assessment will be carried out. The Parish Council will await the findings and report back to the next meeting.

2023/043 **Highways Matters – RESOLVED** that the height of the village hall sign on the junction with the A686 be noted and reported to Highways. The issue of the potholes at the bottom of Gale Hall lanning was reported after the last meeting and is in the Highways system.

2023/044 **AONB Information Board – RESOLVED** that the new officer at the AONB will be contacted to progress the project.

2023/045 **Newsletter – RESOLVED** that Cllr David Bardsley updated the meeting on progress with the newsletter and in particular the inclusion of a request for volunteers to support the emergency plan for Melmerby.

2023/046 **Policy review – RESOLVED** that a schedule for the review of the Parish Council policies will be developed after the recruitment of the Parish Clerk.

2023/047 **Finance – RESOLVED** that the payments outlined in the RFO report be agreed. This action was proposed by Cllr Gary Fletcher and seconded by Cllr David Bardsley. All those present were in favour.

2023/048 **Correspondence – RESOLVED** that the correspondence register be noted.

2023/049 **Date and Time of Next Meeting – To be confirmed.**