

# MELMERBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Melmerby Parish Council held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Melmerby Village Hall.

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

Cllr Michael Hanley, Westmorland and Furness Council was also present.

Six members of the public were present.

2024/115 **Apologies for absence – RESOLVED** that apologies were received from Cllr Mary Robinson, Westmorland and Furness Council.

2024/116 **Declarations of Interest – RESOLVED** that there were no declarations of interest.

2024/117 **Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 22nd January 2025 – RESOLVED** that Cllr David Bardsley was authorised to sign the minutes as a correct record.

2024/118 **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.

2024/119 **Public Participation - RESOLVED** that the Chairman of the Parish Council opened the meeting for members of the public to speak and also asked members of the public to speak at the start of the relevant agenda item.

It was commented that the engagement with the Westmorland and Furness Council officers was very much welcomed in particular the face to face contact and was a positive development for the Parish Council.

A query was raised regarding the next steps in terms of speed reduction in the village. Cllr Bardsley confirmed that due to lack of community support, the 20mph speed limit will not be progressing in the village. It is now very much up to the community to come forward with ideas for solutions to address the speeding issues in the village. The road past the pool, the road past the pub and the bends on the A686 were highlighted as areas of concern.

2024/120 **Westmorland and Furness Council – RESOLVED** that the matters raised were noted.

Cllr Hanley updated that the electric vehicle charging strategy highlighted the need for 3300 further charging points in the area.

The Health Forum also highlighted the need for increased support following the discharge of patients from hospital.

The recent full council meeting of Westmorland and Furness Council shows a budget deficit for 2025/26 of £10million. This was due in part to the loss of the central government Rural Services Grant. The deficit will be balanced with savings and additional revenue from tax on second homes. Council tax is also due to increase by 4.99%.

2024/121 **Emergency Plan – RESOLVED** that there is no further update.

Cllr Bardsley confirmed there was no clarification on the requirement for emergency plan volunteers to be DBS checked. Cllr Bardsley is due to attend a workshop regarding emergency planning.

2024/122 **Woodland Creation, Eden Rivers Trust – RESOLVED** that the information be noted. It was reported that some small sections of woodland are to be created in the parish (on private land) which will be grant funded by Eden Rivers Trust.

2024/123 **Planning Protocol – RESOLVED** that the updated Planning Protocol be approved. In response to changes in the planning procedures following the creation of Westmorland and Furness Council, the Melmerby Parish Council Planning Protocol needed updated.

A draft revised protocol was presented. The only query was how “affected neighbours” will be determined. It was agreed this would be determined through consultation with Westmorland and Furness Council and through local knowledge. When Melmerby Parish Council receives a planning application, a letter will be sent to the applicant and the affected neighbours informing them of the date the application will be considered at the Parish Council.

The revised Planning Protocol was proposed by Cllr Bardsley and seconded by Cllr Fletcher. All those present were in favour.

2024/124 **Sexual Harassment Policy – RESOLVED** that a draft policy be brought to a future meeting. It was reported that all Parish Councils need to have a Sexual Harassment Policy in place. It was agreed that the guidance would be reviewed and a draft policy be brought to a future meeting.

2024/125 **Harmonising Town and Parish Council Elections- RESOLVED** that the information be noted. It was reported that elections for Melmerby Parish Council are due to be held in May 2027 which is aligned with the Westmorland and Furness Council elections.

2024/126 **Neighbourhood Policing Pledge – RESOLVED** that a Parish Council representative be nominated. Cumbria Police is introducing a Neighbourhood Policing Pledge to facilitate better engagement with local communities. The proposal is to hold online forum meeting twice per annum. Cllr Chris Jones agreed to be the representative from Melmerby Parish Council.

2024/127 **Finance- RESOLVED** that the finance report to approved. The motion was proposed by Cllr Fletcher and seconded by Cllr Jones. All those present were in favour.

2024/128 **Highways – RESOLVED** that the potholes at the junction of the Ousby Road and Gale Hall Lonning will be reported to Westmorland and Furness Council.

2024/129 **Progress List – RESOLVED** that the progress list be noted.

2024/130 **Correspondence – RESOLVED** that the correspondence list be noted. A query was raised regarding the monthly Police report and how widely the detail can be distributed or displayed at the Parish Council meetings. This will be clarified and reported to the next meeting.

2024/131 **Date and time of next meeting –**The next meeting will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 which will also be the Parish Council AGM.

There will also be an additional meeting held in April to consider the Parish Council annual accounts in order to comply with auditing timescales.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.

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