

MELMERBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Melmerby Parish Council held on Wednesday 25th March 2026 at Melmerby Village Hall.

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

Five members of the public were present.

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

2025/087 **Apologies for absence – RESOLVED** that apologies were received from Cllr Bill Burford.

2025/088 **Declarations of Interest – RESOLVED** that there were no declarations of interest.

2025/089 **Minutes – RESOLVED** that the minutes from the Ordinary Parish Council meeting on 28th January 2026 were signed as a correct record.

2025/090 **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.

2025/091 **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.

A member of the public had asked for copies of correspondence from residents regarding the playground and sought clarification whether permission had been granted to share the content of the correspondence. It was report that permission from the authors of the correspondence had not been granted.

2025/092 **Westmorland and Furness Council report – RESOLVED** that the update from Cllr Michael Hanley, Westmorland and Furness Council, be noted.

It was reported that WaFC faced a £40 million shortfall largely due to a decrease in central government funding by way of the Rural Service Delivery Grant. WaFC are looking to balance this shortfall by the introduction of green waste collection charges, increase in car parking charges and increase in council tax.

There is currently a consultation underway regarding school transport which is proposing to reduce choice for funded school transport. Some fellside villages will only be given the option of funded transport to Samuel Kings School in Alston rather than the Penrith schools due to smaller travelling distances.

The Eden Locality Board has working groups to allocate grants for climate change. The Croglin Trust and the North Pennines National Landscape Partnership have been involved.

2025/093 **Playground Project – RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

It was reported that fundraising activities are ongoing and that the NISA community fund has allocated additional funds to the playground.

The planning application was submitted in early March and additional information has been requested which will be actioned as soon as possible.

2025/094 **Assertion 10 regulations - RESOLVED** that further contact would be made with Vision ICT to progress the work needed.

Despite several emails and phonecalls the work needed to comply with Assertion 10 regulations has not yet been completed.

2025/095 **Damage to Noticeboard – RESOLVED** that an update be sought from Mike Wilkinson.

It was reported that during high winds and storms the doors of the main noticeboard in the village were damaged at the end of February. Mike Wilkinson has agreed to complete the work. Further contact will be made with Mike to ascertain timescales and cost.

2025/096 **Adult Social Care Community Conversation – RESOLVED** that individuals can respond to the consultation which closes on 30th March 2026.

2025/097 **Highways – RESOLVED** that the potholes in the village be reported to Highways.

2025/098 **Progress list – RESOLVED** that the progress list be noted.

2025/099 **Finance – RESOLVED** that the items outlined in the RFO report be paid.

It was noted that back dated VAT reclaims have been submitted and paid and the system is now set up to reclaim VAT smoothly and promptly.

The payments listed in the RFO were proposed to be paid by Cllr Fletcher and seconded by Cllr Bell. All those present were in favour.

2025/100 **Correspondence – RESOLVED** that the correspondence register be noted. It was reported that there had been an increase in the number of letters and emails received from a small number of residents.

2025/101 **Date and time of next meeting.**

The next meeting will take place on 15th April 2026, 7.30 p.m. at Melmerby Village Hall. The purpose of the meeting will be to approve the annual accounts in order to allow time for the accounts to be audited and presented at the May meeting before submission to AGAR.

The dates for the ordinary Parish Council meetings for 2026/27 are:

20th May 2026 (Annual General Meeting), 15th July 2026, 23rd September 2026, 25th November 2026, 27th January 2027 and 24th March 2027 (which will follow the Annual Parish Meeting).

All meetings will take place at 7.30 p.m. at Melmerby Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.28 p.m.