

MELMERBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Melmerby Parish Council held on Thursday 4th June 2026 at Melmerby Village Hall.

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

2026/026 **Apologies for absence – RESOLVED** that there were no apologies for absence.

2026/027 **Declarations of Interest – RESOLVED** that there were no declarations of interest.

2026/028 **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.

2026/029 **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.

2026/030 **Planning application – RESOLVED** that the Parish Council noted the public comments and agreed to support the planning application for Proposed Play Area, Melmerby Village Green (2026/0515/FPA).

Cllr Bardsley outlined the process undertaken to develop the playground proposal and displayed the location plan, images of the proposed playground equipment and the artists impression of the site.

It was noted that the planning application was now “live” on the WaFC planning portal and public comments were invited.

A member of the public queried why a neighbour letter had been distributed. Cllr Bardsley explained that it was standard policy for near neighbours to be informed when a planning application was being considered by the Parish Council to which they had been identified as a near neighbour.

A query was also raised that a resident had contacted the Parish Council on 3 separate occasions to seek additional clarification. The queries were regarding the consultations methods which had been used to develop the playground proposal.

Another local resident had been unaware of the consultations and did not realise that the drop-in sessions at the Village Hall were part of the consultation process. There was concern that some resident’s views had been lost in the process.

Queries were raised regarding when the design plans had been passed to the Parish Council by the project team and why the plans had not been publicly available. It was clarified that the plans had been publicly on display in the Village Hall (visible both internally and externally).

As part of the planning process, a Biodiversity Net Gain report had been produced by EnviroTech. It was queried how this report was paid for and how the 25-30 year commitment in the report will be fulfilled and funded. It was clarified that the BNG report had been funded through local fundraising and likewise the environmental management commitments will also be funded through local

fundraising and volunteer efforts. A resident queried why this would be a concern as the local fundraising had shown a very positive commitment to the project.

Additionally, it was queried why the increased play provision could not be accommodated behind the Village Hall where there was existing playground provision for younger children. It was stated that the existing playground provision at the village hall was in a poor state of repair. It was clarified that the toddler playground at the Village Hall was owned and managed by the Village Hall Committee and therefore not within the Parish Council remit.

It was queried whether there was a habitat management plan in place with details of responsibilities and funding sources, had EniviroTech, as part of the BNG report production, developed a costed schedule to meet the requirements in the report and were the planners satisfied with the management arrangements.

It was clarified that all additional information sought from the planners had been supplied and the application had been approved for public consultation.

Cllr Bell agreed that village resident's concerns will be considered as part of the process.

The planning application was approved for support. The proposal was made by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Burford and all those present were in favour.

2026/031 **Date and time of the next meeting** – The next meeting will take place on 15th July 2026, 7.30 p.m. at Melmerby Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 7.58 p.m.