

STANWIX RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 12th February at 7.30pm in Houghton Village Hall

PRESENT

The Chairman Cllr C Nicholson, Cllrs A Bell, B Bell, P Nedved, A Robinson, and N Watson.

IN ATTENDANCE

Cumberland Cllrs J Mallinson and B Wernham. One member of the public. The Clerk, S Kyle.

SR 513/02/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs C Savory, D Small, and E Leitch. Apologies were also noted from Cumberland Cllr H Davison.

SR 514/02/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2024

Resolved to authorise the Chairman to sign, as a true and accurate record, the minutes of the last meeting of the Parish Council. Thanks were offered to Cllr Robinson for taking the notes in the Clerk's absence.

SR 515/02/25 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Nicholson declared an interest in planning application 25/0008. No dispensation requests were received.

SR 516/02/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

516.1 Members of the Public

No comments were received.

516.2 Cumberland Cllrs

Cumberland Cllr J Mallinson informed members that a recent application for 3 new benches had been approved. He also reported that the Council budget setting was underway and noted concerns in the Highways department, with approximately 100 employee vacancies.

Cumberland Cllr B Wernham updated Cllrs regarding proposals to parish the remaining areas of Carlisle, which had not been approved. He also noted the arrangements for the new panel meetings and the lack of transparency without streamed Council meetings. Cllr Wernham also urged those present to advocate the importance of regular prostate health checks.

SR 517/02/25 PLANNING MATTERS

517.1 Resolved to Ratify Responses Submitted Prior to the Meeting:

25/0008 9 Whiteclosegate, Carlisle, CA3 0JA - Erection Of Single Storey Rear Extension To Provide Additional Living Accommodation; First Floor Side Extension To Provide Bathroom; Installation Of 1no. Dormer To Rear Elevation To Facilitate Loft Conversion

517.2 To Consider New Applications Received:

25/0031 - 104 Tribune Drive, Houghton, Carlisle, CA3 0LF - Demolition of Garage; Erection of Single Storey Rear and Side Extension to Provide Additional Living Accommodation

Resolved that the application be determined in accordance with local and national planning policy and guidance.

517.3 To Receive Updates regarding Ongoing Planning Issues:

23/0347 Land at Brunstock Lane, Houghton, Carlisle - Residential Development Consisting Of 163no. Dwellings & Associated Infrastructure

Members were informed that the application is still ongoing, with an expectation that it will not go to Committee prior to May or June at the earliest.

SR 518/02/25 Village matters.

518.1 Houghton in Bloom

Consideration was given to the provision of support to the above for the planting season in 2025.

Resolved that the group will be paid a nominated sum from the maintenance budget. The arrangement will be reviewed after 12 months for suitability. If the group are unable to fulfil the arrangements, any unspent funds must be returned to the Council.

518.2 Drainage

Cllrs were updated with regards to ongoing drainage matters in the parish. First, regarding Brunstock, a schematic plan of a potential drainage solution was circulated. Costs are not yet known therefore the matter will be considered at a future meeting.

Regarding Houghton, a new manhole had been installed to allow for exploratory works to be conducted revealing that the drainage pipe has been broken, in part due to roots from the willow tree on the Riverside land. Riverside have been contacted to discuss any actions necessary. Follow-up jetting had consequently taken place along with a camera survey. The results of the survey and any further action required by the Council will be considered once the report is received.

Furthermore, concerns were raised regarding the drainage outside Houghton Village Hall, noting again that one of the two willow trees, has again blocked the pie with its roots. Consideration was given to removing the tree outside the Hall, as recommended by the drainage contractor.

Resolved to consider further works necessary at a future meeting and to seek quotations for removing the nuisance willow tree.

518.3 Cold Callers

A report of an increase in nuisance cold callers had been received from a concerned resident in Houghton.

Resolved that the matter be referred to Cumberland Council for their advice via Cllrs Mallinson and Wernham.

518.4 Noticeboard

The public noticeboard on Houghton Village Green had blown down in Storm Éowyn. Members were asked to consider whether the board should be replaced with a new complimentary board to the recently installed Council version. Alternatively, repairs to the board could potentially be made.

Resolved to seek quotations for the repair of the board and legs.

518.5 Cumberland Ward Boundary Consultation

Resolved to submit the Parish Council response which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

518.6 Houghton Village Green Boulders

An offer to donate trees if the boulders on Houghton Village Green were removed was considered. Concerns regarding the cost of moving the boulders was raised and it was noted that funds would need to be made available, following a review in April after the publication of the annual accounts.

Resolved to accept the proposal after a budgetary review enables the release of sufficient funds, under the following terms:

- The trees must be as specified (i.e., flagpole cherry) or an alternative, non-shedding, native variety.
- The trees must be planted in accordance with recommended guidelines and be provided with a tree collar/guard to protect against strimmer damage and wildlife.
- The trees must be donated to the Parish Council for ongoing upkeep and maintenance. Once planted, the Council will assume own ownership and be responsible entirely for them.

519/02/25 Clerk's Report

In addition to the items on the agenda proper, the following points were noted:

Linstock Track Resurfacing

Quotations are still being sought for the works.

Bus Shelter Noticeboard Relocation

This matter remains outstanding whilst waiting for a response from Cumberland Council.

Replacement Street Furniture

The bench in Linstock is expected to be installed by the end of February.

Traffic Data, Linstock

This data has now been received and will be brought forward to the March meeting for discussion.

Tarraby Bench

A replacement bench is expected to be installed via Top Notch contractors soon.

SR 520/02/25 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

520.1 Vehicle concerns

Concerns had been previously raised regarding vehicles damaging the roadside verges in Houghton and Linstock. The matters have been referred to Highways for their attention.

Concerns have also been raised regarding vehicles parking in the vicinity of the newly opened café in Houghton. The matter has been referred to the Police following confirmation from Highways that it was not within their remit.

SR 521/02/25 FINANCE MATTERS

521.1 Payments

Resolved to authorise the payment of invoices below:

Sarah Kyle	February Salary	£ 1,340.21
HMRC PAYE	February	£ 176.25
NEST	Pension February	£ 99.70
A Kyle	February Salary	£ 249.00

Unity Bank	Monthly charge	£ 6.00
Cluaran	Grass cutting	£ 1,053.00
Rod Hind Drainage	Brunstock drainage	£ 876.00
Rod Hind Drainage	Houghton drainage	£ 2,598.60
Cluaran	Grass cutting	£ 864.00
		£ 7,262.76

521.2 Bank Reconciliation

Resolved to note the bank reconciliation on 31st January 2025:

Balance at 01.04.2024	£ 54,817.42
Receipts to 31.01.25	<u>£ 51,591.69</u>
	£ 106,409.11
Expenditure to 31.01.25	<u>£ 44,400.56</u>
Cash book balance 31.01.25	<u>£ 62,008.55</u>

SR 521/02/25 COUNCILLOR MATTERS

No matters were raised.

SR 522/02/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that the next meeting of the Parish Council be held on Wednesday 12th March at 7.30pm in Houghton Village Hall. Agenda items must be submitted by 3 March 2025.

Exclusion of Press & Public - Part B Item

The following item is considered confidential and the exclusion of members of the public or press as permitted under the Local Government Act 1972 is necessary.

Cumberland Cllrs J Mallinson, B Wernham, 1 member of the public and the Clerk left the room.

12. Review of Staffing Requirements

Consideration was given to a proposal to amend the staffing arrangements, initially for a 12-month period commencing 1st March 2025. The proposal will bring cost savings of approximately £4,500 per annum to the Council.

Resolved that from 1st March 2025:

- The Clerk/RFO will reduce their working hours to 28 per month (a decrease of 50 hours per month);
- The Admin Assistant will be regraded as Assistant Clerk and increase their working hours to 50 per month (an increase of 30 hours per month).

The proposal will be reviewed each quarter to ensure that the Council continues to receive a high level of service.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed by the Chairman at 8.32pm.