

Minutes of a meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Cockermouth, on Wednesday 19th August 2026 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillor Stephen Barnes

Councillor Catherine Bell

Councillor Chris Bridgman

Councillor Julie Laidlow (Mayor)

Councillor James Samson

Councillor Gillian Telford

Councillor Howard Beanland

Councillor Marion Bowman

Councillor Isabel Burns

Councillor David Malloy

Councillor Alan Smith

Mrs Jane Ollerenshaw – Town Clerk

Mrs Amy Jeffrey – Assistant Town Clerk

Members of the Public: 11

19:00 Meeting Opened.

072/26 Apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Watson.

073/26 To approve the minutes of the Cockermouth Town Council Meeting of 15th July 2026. Resolved to approve the minutes.

074/26 To receive the minutes of the Twinning Committee Meeting of 3rd June 2026. Resolved to note as received.

075/26 Declaration of Interests. There were no Declarations of Interest.

076/26 Exclusion of Press & Public. No items required the exclusion of the Press and Public.

077/26 Mayor's Announcements. The Mayor reported that she had attended the King's Award for Voluntary Service Presentation at the Town Hall, the 'Back Yam' event at Jennings Brewery to launch their new ale, and the launch of Cockermouth Live! at Wordsworth House. The Mayor had also attended the Mayfield School fashion show and Broughton Carnival.

078/26 Reports from Cumberland Councillors. Councillor Semple had submitted apologies.

079/26 Guest Speakers. None present.

080/26 Public Participation. A question was received by a member of public.

"Thanks for the attached links, it's very much appreciated. However I have tried to contact the Skate and bike through their website and haven't been successful, which leads me onto my next question.

Although we all appreciate the efforts of a local charity to provide a skate park. My question is, what is the local council doing to ensure this happens? What professional support are they providing and what budget will they provide to ensure the young people of this town are now forgotten. Yes, there is plans for play parks and swings, but this does not cater for the older children.”

The Clerk responded as follows:

To clarify the Town Council's role and position regarding these projects, please note the following points:

- **Financial Support.** The Cockermouth Bike & Skate Charity has not yet formally requested financial assistance from us, although we understand they intend to apply for a grant from the Town Council in the future.
- **Project Leadership.** Because this initiative is entirely managed by an independent charity group, we cannot intervene in or take over their project.
- **Isel Road Facilities.** The upcoming play area planned for Isel Road is designed to be inclusive and does feature equipment specifically for older children.
- **Existing Funding.** Cumberland Council is already actively backing the charity's efforts and assisting them with grant funding.
- **Website Issues.** We are sorry to hear you had trouble using their website contact form, but please note that their external website is completely independent of the Town Council and we have no control over its technical functionality.
- **Community Led Plan.** We have been consulting widely as part of our Community Led Plan. Everyone in the community - including local children - has the opportunity to comment and contribute their ideas toward the town's future recreation facilities.

The Council agreed that the Clerk's response be provided to the member of public.

081/26 Planning

- **HOU/2026/0077. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **CAT/2026/0015. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **ADV/2026/0007. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **FUL/2026/0100. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **HOU/2026/0117. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **WTPO/2026/0020. Resolved** to recommend approval. Subject to confirmation that the applicant has the necessary legal standing to make the application, as it does not appear that they are the registered owner of the property.
- **WTPO/2026/0021. Resolved** to recommend approval. Subject to confirmation that the applicant has the necessary legal standing to make the application, as it does not appear that they are the registered owner of the property.
- **CAT/2026/0016. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **VAR/2026/0013. Resolved** to recommend approval.

Licensing

- **PL0647. Resolved** to recommend refusal. The Council considers that, in keeping with other similar establishments in the area, the proposed closing time should be no later than 1.30am.

082/26 Planning Decisions Under Delegated Authority. None received.

083/26 Clerk's Report. The Clerk's report had been circulated.

- **Windows.** The Town Hall window refurbishment works were ongoing and nearing completion.
- **Policing Pledge Meeting.** The Assistant Town Clerk attended a Teams meeting with the Inspector and raised a number of concerns relating to Cockermouth, particularly anti-social behaviour, speeding and parking.
- **Meeting Table.** Several businesses had been contacted to explore options for a replacement meeting room table. One quotation had been received and circulated should any Councillor wish to pursue the matter further.
- **Outstanding Responses.** Responses were still awaited from Cumberland Council regarding the noticeboard, Station Street trees, the Tree Management Plan for Cockermouth, recycling enquiries and permission for Bitterbeck Toilets.
- **Tour of Britain.** The event had been extremely successful. Thanks were expressed to everyone who had assisted, including the contractors who had gone above and beyond at short notice.

Cllr Smith expressed his disappointment that the Mayor of Cockermouth had not been invited to participate in the opening and closing of the Tour of Britain event and proposed that the Clerk to write to Cumberland Council seeking clarification as to why the Mayor had not been invited. At the suggestion of Cllr Smith, it was resolved that the Clerk write to Cumberland.

Cllr Burns also raised concerns regarding the number of shops that had received little or no correspondence regarding the road closures.

084/26 Reports and Requests from Working Groups.

Climate Emergency Group.

- **Lamplugh Road.** Cllr Barnes suggested that two pedestrian crossings be considered on Lamplugh Road, one at Parkside Avenue and the other near Oakhurst Garden Centre. The Group also recommended that consideration be given to reducing the speed limit from 30 mph to 20 mph. It was requested that the Council put these proposals forward to the Project Manager for consideration.
- **Vernal Scrape. Resolved** that the Council approve the quotation.

Community Led Plan.

- Cllr Bridgman reported that the Group had a presence at the Chamber of Trade marquee at Cockermouth Show, where a further 120 responses were received regarding the future of the town. A final effort is required to obtain responses from the 20–34 age group, which remains an under-represented demographic. The Group will also have a presence at Taste Cumbria.

085/26 Request from Cockermouth Bike and Skate Park. Cllr Burns asked why the Memorial Gardens had been selected as the location for the demonstration of the mobile track and suggested that Bellbrigg, the proposed location for the Bike and Skate Park, would be more appropriate.

Michael Stott, Secretary of Cockermouth Bike and Skate Park, explained that the Memorial Gardens had been chosen as it was considered the most visible location. Cllr Malloy raised concerns regarding the potential for damage to the land at the Memorial Gardens and the need to make suitable arrangements in the event of bad weather. **Resolved** that the request be granted, subject to appropriate contingency arrangements being put in place in the event of bad weather and consultation taking place.

It was further agreed that this matter would be included in the Council's response to the Member of the Public's prior question.

086/26 Update from the Public Toilet Public Meeting. The Clerk provided an update on the next steps following the Public Toilet Public Meeting. Investigations will be undertaken into the Community Toilet Scheme, with the findings to be shared with the Chamber of Trade and subsequently reported back to the Town Council.

Councillors discussed the need for a clear plan to inform future budget decisions, including potential improvements to the existing toilet facilities. **Resolved** the Clerk obtain quotations for the refurbishment of the Main Street toilets in the meantime, with the quotation to be reviewed and amended as necessary following the outcome of the Community Toilet Scheme investigations.

087/26 Violet Bank Update. Cllr Beanland explained that the Town Council had previously written to Cumberland Council's Planning Department regarding outstanding planning conditions at Violet Bank. Councillors were advised that some conditions remained outstanding and potential breaches had been identified. **Resolved** that the Clerk write to Cumberland Council's Planning Department to request a site inspection to establish whether the developer is complying with the planning conditions.

088/26 Payments for Approval. Resolved to approve the payments.

089/26 Pre-approved Payments. Resolved to note the schedule of payments.

090/26 Councillor Matters.

Cllr Beanland raised a query regarding street cleaning in Cockermouth, noting that street cleaning services are provided in Maryport, and asked whether this was funded by Cumberland Council. Cllr Smith raised concerns regarding the condition of streets and footpaths in Cockermouth. The Clerk would investigate further.

091/26 Date of next meeting.

Confirmed as Wednesday 16th September 2026.

20:48 Meeting Closed.