Minutes of a meeting of Cockermouth Town Council held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Cockermouth, on Wednesday 16th September 2026 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillor Howard Beanland
Councillor Chris Bridgman
Councillor Julie Laidlow (Mayor)
Councillor James Samson
Councillor Gillian Telford
Councillor Catherine Bell
Councillor Isabel Burns
Councillor David Malloy
Councillor Alan Smith
Councillor Richard Watson

Mrs Jane Ollerenshaw – Town Clerk
Mrs Amy Jeffrey – Assistant Town Clerk
Councillor Andy Semple – Cumberland Council

Members of the Public: 4

19:00 Meeting Opened.

092/26 Apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Barnes and Cllr Bowman.

093/26 To approve the minutes of the Cockermouth Town Council Meeting of 19th August 2026. Resolved to approve the minutes.

094/26 To receive the minutes of the Twinning Committee Meeting of 22nd July 2026. Resolved to note as received.

095/26 Declaration of Interests. Cllr Telford declared an interest in planning application HOU/2026/0078, stating that she was familiar with the applicant.
Cllr Malloy declared an interest in the premises licence application for Mitchell's Auction Company, as he is a shareholder.

096/26 Exclusion of Press & Public. No items required the exclusion of the Press and Public.

097/26 Mayor's Announcements. The Mayor reported that she and her Consort, Cllr Burns, had the pleasure of attending a wedding held at the Town Hall, where they acted as witnesses.

The Mayor and her Consort also attended the Aspatria Civic Service. The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Stephen Barnes, attended the Wigton Civic Service on behalf of Cllr Laidlow.

098/26 Reports from Cumberland Councillors. A written report was received from Cllr Tucker advising that she and Cllr Semple had raised concerns regarding the slippery pavements with Highways. They had also asked the Assistant Director of Highways and Transport to investigate a permanent solution. Councillors were

advised that further reports from the public via the online reporting system would assist in assessing the extent of the issue.

Cllr Semple was in attendance and provided the following updates.

- **A66.** Cllr Semple reported concerns regarding accidents on the A66 between Oakhurst and Fitz Roundabout. He had contacted Cumberland Councillor Denise Rollo regarding possible measures, including extending the average speed cameras and introducing double white lines. The Clerk advised that the Council had previously raised the matter approximately 18 months ago. Cllr Semple suggested raising the issue again.
- **Greenway.** Cllr Semple advised that the Greenway lighting works would proceed. Cllr Smith noted that the lighting had been anticipated for approximately 12 months.
- **Cumberland Local Plan.** Cllr Semple advised that the Cumberland Local Plan would cover the period 2029–2044, with further information to be provided at the next meeting.
- **Isel Road Play Area.** An update was provided on the Town Council's application to the Lakes to Sea Community Panel for funding towards the Isel Road Play Area. The Panel had recommended a contribution of £4,200, representing 25% of the project cost rather than the 50% anticipated in the application. Cllr Semple advised that he would raise the matter with the Panel, as the reduced contribution would affect the viability of the project.
- **Old Courthouse.** Cllr Bell requested an update on the Courthouse. Cllr Semple advised that works were not expected to commence until next year and that the building was currently being monitored.

099/26 Guest Speakers. None present.

100/26 Public Participation. No questions or matters were raised by members of the public.

101/26 Planning

- **HOU/2026/0078. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **ADV/2026/0008. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **HOU/2026/0125. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **LBC/2026/0036. Resolved** to recommend refusal due to concerns regarding the shared rear access and the potential obstruction of access for hearses and service vehicles, as set out in relation to the associated change of use application.
- **FUL/2026/0106. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **ADV/2026/0010. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **FUL/2026/0118**. **Resolved** to recommend refusal due to concerns that the shared rear access does not provide adequate vehicular access and turning arrangements to ensure safe and unobstructed access for hearses and service vehicles, particularly when the access is being used by other businesses for deliveries. The Council considers the proposal to be contrary

to Policies S22(b) and DM14(e) of the Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1), Adopted July 2014.

Licensing

- **Kukra. Resolved** to recommend approval.
- **Mitchells Auction Company. Resolved** to recommend approval.

102/26 Planning Decisions Under Delegated Authority. None received.

103/26 Clerk's Report. The Clerk's report had been circulated.

- **Cockermouth School Visit.** The Clerk reported that Cockermouth School had responded and offered a suitable assembly slot for the Clerk and Cllr Malloy to attend and speak to pupils about local democracy.
- **Memorial Gardens Footpath.** The Clerk reported that estimated costs for improvements to the footpath ranged from £70,000 to £293,000. It was noted that funding could potentially be met from the proceeds of the sale of Double Mills or through grant funding. The Council considered that the proposed expenditure would not represent good value for money given that the path is subject to frequent flooding. **Resolved** that the Clerk obtain a quotation for the application of quarry waste to the path.
- **Tree Management Plan.** The Clerk reported that Cumberland Council's Tree Officer had a plan in place for full pollarding every three years, with the removal of epicormic growth to be undertaken annually.
- **Leaflets.** The Clerk circulated proposed leaflets for distribution throughout the town. The purpose of the leaflets would be to provide residents with clear information regarding the respective responsibilities of Cockermouth Town Council and Cumberland Council.
- **Community Toilet Scheme.** The Clerk reported that positive feedback had been received from the Chamber of Trade regarding the Community Toilet Scheme and that members were supportive and prepared to participate. Grants were understood to be approximately £550 per annum. The Clerk advised that the scheme has a low drop-out rate and that participation is subject to an application process and is not guaranteed.
- **Tour of Britain.** The Clerk reported that the previous email had been acknowledged but no response had been received. The Clerk provided the Council with an update on the current position and circulated a proposed draft Freedom of Information request to Cumberland Council, together with a draft letter to Markus Campbell-Savours. Cllr Beanland suggested that, although Cumberland Council was responsible for the guest list, British Cycling should also be involved to help prevent similar issues occurring in future. **Resolved** that the Clerk submit the proposed correspondence and that the outcome of the Freedom of Information request be shared with the Town Council and local press.
- **Isel Road Play Area Funding Update.** The Clerk reiterated that the proposed grant allocation from the Lakes to Sea Community Panel would be insufficient to fund the planned improvements to the Isel Road Play Area.

104/26 Reports and Requests from Working Groups.

Climate Emergency Group.

- No update was reported. The Group's next meeting is scheduled for 13th October.

Community Led Plan Group.

- Cllr Bridgman reported that the Group would have a presence at Taste Cumbria. Following this, the Group would move to the next phase, involving more detailed presentations on specific topics.

105/26 External Auditor's Report & Certificate. Resolved the External Auditor's Report and Certificate were received and accepted.

106/26 External Auditor's Recommendations. **Resolved** the External Auditor's recommendations and proposed actions were considered and agreed.

107/26 Internal Auditor – Letter of Engagement. Resolved the Internal Auditor's Letter of Engagement was received and accepted. Cllr Beanland suggested that the Council should consider periodically reviewing the appointment of the Internal Auditor and whether it would be appropriate to change the auditor from time to time.

108/26 Digital TROs. The proposed changes to Digital TROs were considered. No comments were raised.

109/26 Polling Place Review. The Polling Place Review was considered and agreed.

110/26 National Pay Scale Increase. Resolved that the new nationally agreed pay scales be approved, backdated to 1 April 2026.

111/26 Contractual Scale Point Increase. Resolved that the Town Clerk's salary be increased by one spinal column point, effective from 1st September 2026, following the successful completion of relevant professional training.

112/26 CALC AGM. Resolved that Cllr Bridgman attend the CALC AGM as the Council's official representative.

113/26 Proper Practices Consultation. Resolved that the Clerk, in her capacity as Responsible Financial Officer, respond to the Proper Practices consultation and report back to the Council on any matters arising that may affect the Council's current procedures.

114/26 Payments for Approval. Resolved to approve the payments.

115/26 Pre-approved Payments. Resolved to note the schedule of payments.

116/26 Councillor Matters.

Cllr Laidlow asked the Clerk how the arrangements for displaying the A-board on meeting days were progressing. The Clerk reported that it had only been displayed once since the arrangement was agreed, on which occasion staff had carried it out and returned it afterwards.

Cllr Burns advised Councillors that she would be collecting prizes for the Christmas Raffle and asked that any raffle prizes be brought in.

Cllr Laidlow reminded Councillors that her Civic Service would be held on Sunday.

117/26 Date of next meeting.
Confirmed as Wednesday 21st October 2026.

20:27 Meeting Closed.