

CROSTHWAITE AND LYTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting

held on Monday 12 May 2025 at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Room, Crosthwaite

Present: Cllrs Angela Dobson, D. Atkinson, E. Cartmell, J. Perry, E. Sharp, H. Young

In Attendance: Cllr. S. Bavin (Westmorland & Furness Co.), Martin Curry (Clerk), Malcolm Richardson (Responsible Finance Officer – RFO) and one member of the public.

01/25 Election of Chair: Having indicated her willingness to stand, Cllr. Dobson was proposed by Cllr. Cartmell and seconded by Cllr. Sharp. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Dobson was elected Chair of Crosthwaite and Lyth Parish Council and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

02/25 Apologies: Cllr. G. Harnby (reasons for absence were accepted and noted).

03/25 Minutes of the meeting held on the 07 April 2025: it was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 07 April 2025 be signed by the Chair as a true record.

04/25 Declarations of Interest: No declarations of interest were submitted.

05/25 Requests for Dispensation: No Requests for Dispensation had been submitted.

06/25 Election of Vice-Chair: Having indicated his willingness to stand, Cllr. Sharp was proposed by Cllr. Perry and seconded by Cllr. Young. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Sharp was elected Vice-Chair of Crosthwaite and Lyth Parish Council and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

07/25 Meeting Dates 2025-26: The following dates for meetings of the Parish Council were **Agreed:**

2025: 02 June, 07 July, 01 September, 06 October, 03 November, 01 December

2026: 02 February, 02 March, 13 April, 11 May.

08/25 Representation on Outside Bodies: The following were nominated as Parish Council representatives:
Argles Memorial Hall: It was **Agreed** to check with Cllr. Harnby if he was willing to be the Parish Council representative.

The Landowners of Crosthwaite and Lyth: Cllr. Atkinson

The Charitable Trust: Cllr. Young. It was **Agreed** that work was required to clarify the purpose of the Charity and the role of the Trustees.

09/25 Chair's Announcements: The Chair thanked her fellow Councillors for appointing her as Chair and for their continued work and support of the Parish Council.

10/25 Public Participation: Mr. Casson requested participation in Item 16 (Other Land) and Councillors **Agreed**.

11/25 Reports:

a) Westmorland & Furness Council (W&FC): Cllr. Bavin reported as follows:

- i) He thanked Cllr. Sharp for liaison regarding a recent fire in the area.
- ii) Trees have been cut-back on Watery Lane. The work is very noticeable but was necessary and vegetation will regrow quickly.
- iii) United Utilities are commencing work at Oak Fold week commencing 07 May.
- iv) Taylors lorries have appeared again on the lay-by near Gilpin Bridge. Cllr. Young will investigate.
- v) The Rural Wheels initiative is to be promoted locally to assess the level of demand. If sufficient, this might support the case for a bus service.

b) Police: The Clerk reported that there was nothing in recent Police Focus Newsletters of direct relevance to Crosthwaite and Lyth. The local meeting under the Cumbria Policing Pledge to engage with Parish Councils had been held on 29 April. As an initial meeting, it had been largely one of introductions and aspirations for future liaison.

12/25 Planning

- a) Applications Received: Councillors noted that no applications had been received since the last meeting.
- b) Applications Received and circulated to Members of the Council since publishing the Agenda:
See (d)(ii) below.
- c) Responses submitted: Councillors noted the following response submitted to LDNPA following consideration by the Parish Council:
 - i) **7/2025/5195: Long Green Cottage, Crosthwaite LA8 8HX** – Alterations and extension to existing building to create annex to the main building. **No Objection** and expression of support submitted 24/04/2025.

- d) Decisions: Councillors noted the following decisions notified since the date of the last meeting:
- i) **7/2025/5177**: Land off Woodside Road, Crosthwaite – Erection of Agricultural Building (NOI Agric). No provision for consultation. **Granted** 22/04/2025.
 - ii) **7/2025/5166**: The Barn, Barkbooth, Winster, LA23 3NZ: Commencement of planning application 7/2021/5693 (Convert barn into 3 bed Local Needs Dwelling) - window inserted in south-west elevation. Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use or Development: **Granted** 09 May 2025.
- e) To note any other Planning Matters:
- i) **Enforcement Case E/2024/0236** at Starnthwaite: Following their decision not to act on this case, the Clerk has written to Enforcement to raise concerns about fairness on behalf of those who follow proper process and pay the appropriate planning fee. A reply is awaited.
 - ii) **Enforcement Case E/2024/0041**, 4 Oak Fold, Crosthwaite: Update on representations to LDNPA. Following its decision not to act on this matter, the Clerk has written again to Enforcement on behalf of parishioners who believe that, on the basis of occupancy, the terms of the S106 Agreement are not being adhered to. Additional evidence is required which, if provided, will be forwarded to Enforcement. In the meantime, the Parish Council does not consider that the matter is resolved.

13/25 Highways and Footpaths

- a) **Highways matters**: No matters were raised.
- b) **Footpaths / Tracks Matters**: In respect of the hedge at Jubilee Wood, it was concluded that this was a Highways matter and not Parish Council.

14/25 Trees, Woods, Hedges and Grass: The following matters were noted:

- a) **Trees and Woods**
 - i) Community Tree and Hedgerow Planting Scheme: Cllrs Perry and Atkinson are progressing this with a view to work in the back-end.
 - ii) Electricity Northwest cutback of trees: This work has not yet been done.
 - iii) Other observations under this item were raised:
 - Cllr. Cartmell suggested that a map of footpaths for visiting walkers might be prepared and uploaded onto the website to help both them and landowners.
 - It was also noted that the Curlew Group had placed electric fences at locations in the Parish. Councillors agreed that the Curlew Group are a competent organisation and did not consider these fences to be a health and safety issue.
- b) **Hedges and Grass Cutting**:
 - i) It was **Agreed** to ask Alan Fawcett if he can cut hedges in the Autumn as usual.
 - ii) It was **Agreed** to ask Chris Smith to confirm that his invoicing is up to date and to cut grass on the Green and at Hubbersty Head towards the end of May, as well as the verges at the junction of Mill Lane and the A5074. Also to look at the hedge on the Parish Walkway during the Summer and cut if necessary.
 - iii) On an additional matter, Councillors noted Cllr. Perry's observation about the collapsing riverbank on the River Gilpin at the rear of the Crosthwaite Cornmill. Cllr. Atkinson offered to speak with the owners of the Cornmill to see if they are aware. Subject to feedback, it was **Agreed** that it might be appropriate to notify the Environment Agency.

15/25 Parish Land

- a) **Letting of Vacant Parish Land**: Other than Hubbersty Head, all sites are currently let. Hubbersty Head might be retained in-hand for community benefit.
- b) **Parish Property**: It was confirmed that a visit to Parish sites would take place on Wednesday 28 May starting at 7.00 p.m. from the Parish Room carpark. The Clerk will circulate a briefing note and suggested itinerary.
- c) **Wi-fi in the Parish Room**: Cllr. Dobson will continue with investigations on this.
- d) **Generator at the Argles Memorial Hall**: Cllr. Dobson will liaise with the Trustees on the Hall on this.
- e) **Filing Space in the Parish Room**: For the Landowners of Crosthwaite and Lyth, Martin Casson reported that the extent of archive material was still being assessed, and discussion would take place in due course.

16/25 Other Land

The Chair confirmed that the 5.3 acre field to the west of the Recreation Field was due to be sold by auction the following evening. Through informal discussion and email correspondence, the Parish Council had expressed itself in favour in principle of securing the field for community benefit and to make some contribution to its acquisition depending on the ultimate cost of purchase. The Chair confirmed that there had been conversations between the Landowners of Crosthwaite and Lyth and the Parish Council as to whether and if so, to what upper limit a bid might be made including a site-meeting the previous Tuesday 06

May when representatives of both organisations had been present. The Chair apologised for being unable to attend this meeting. Martin Casson was then invited to address the Parish Council on behalf of the Landowners, and he confirmed their view that the land was worth securing for community benefit if it could be acquired for a reasonable price. At this stage there was no knowing what other interest there might be, but he had received a mandate from the Landowners to bid up to £55,000 with the hope expressed that the Parish Council might contribute to a successful bid. There was some discussion as to whether £55K would be sufficient in the current market, but equally that an upper limit had to reflect reasonable value for money. There was talk about the possible use of Charity capital and the RFO confirmed that there was also £6,000 in NSI savings which could be available. The RFO cautioned that there might be legal constraints on the use of charity assets and that any realisation of funds from the Parish Council would take some time to realise. It was agreed that any contribution should be reflected in proportional joint ownership and future management through a vehicle for the latter that was yet to be constructed. The development of the site for community use (orchard, school use, benches etc.) would be long-term project and that the most likely immediate proposal would be to let the ground to a grazier.

After discussion, **the Chair proposed** that the Parish Council should offer the £6,000 NSI money as a contribution towards purchase which, if necessary, would take the upper bid limit to £61K. Following a vote unanimously in favour, it was **Resolved** to make this commitment. If a bid was successful, The Parish Council would then consider the full extent of contribution that it was prepared to offer. Mr Casson thanked the Parish Council for this support and Councillors wished him success in the bid the following evening.

17/25 Neighbourhood Plan: The Clerk reported that he had received a number of responses to the Informal Consultation which had ended on 23 April. He has collated all responses and summarised this on a paper circulated before the meeting. These comments have also been sent to Louise Kirkup and he will work with her to propose how comments will be incorporated into the next version of the Plan. Several responses had made the point that the notice of informal consultation had been received after the date of the Drop-in Event held on 31 March. The Clerk has responded to these observations and acknowledged that late delivery of the Notice was unfortunate, but also that the event (which had been publicised in other ways including in the previous Minutes, through posters in the village and an advert in Two Valleys News) was only one part of the consultation. The primary purpose of the circulation was to give notice that the Plan was now available for public view and will remain on the website pending the formal consultation which will take place later in the year. The Clerk's full report to the Annual Parish Meeting will be posted on the website as part of the Minutes of that meeting.

18/25 The Annual Parish Meeting: The Chair reported that the Annual Parish Meeting had been held successfully on 28 April with reports from herself, the Clerk (on the Neighbourhood Plan) and from a wide variety of village organisations. There had been some constructive discussion about the Neighbourhood Plan and the draft Minutes would be posted on the website when completed.

19/25 Environmental Initiatives

a) CLEAN: The Chair reported that Clean is very active including the provision of 4 swift boxes in the church belfry and environmental initiatives in the Churchyard including the planting of wildflowers and trees. A recent plant exchange had been successful, and Mike Berners Lee will lead a discussion on global emissions and climate change in the Argles Memorial Hall on 28 May.

20/25 Finance: The RFO presented his report and Councillors noted:

a) Receipts: The following receipts other than investment income since the last meeting:

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| i. Westmorland and Furness Council - Precept 2025/26: | £13,795.00 |
| ii. Rent received (Donkey Field and Scale Hill): | £ 32.50 |

b) That there had no receipts since publishing the agenda.

c) Npower: The Npower payment for March 2025 was: £ 49.97

d) Payments: Councillors **Approved** the following payments:

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|---|----------|
| i. M R Curry – Salary and expenses April 2025: | £ 447.57 |
| ii. HMRC – PAYE and NIC on above salary: | £ 118.85 |
| iii. CALC - annual subscription 2025/26: | £ 248.78 |
| iv. Zurich Insurance - annual insurance premium to 31 May 2026: | £ 521.64 |

This was subject to amendment for items added to the policy. Subsequently confirmed no change.

e) No payments have fallen due since publishing the agenda.

f) Receipts and Payments Account 2024-25: Councillors received and noted spreadsheets from the RFO showing receipts and payments for the 2024-25 financial year and he confirmed that all figures had been reported in the Minutes of Parish Council meetings. He also submitted a bank reconciliation for the year showing a bank balance at 31 March of £25,306.10.

- g) To review and confirm the sums insured under the insurance policy: The sums insured under the insurance policy were reviewed and approved
- h) **Asset Register:** Councillors received and **Approved** the Asset Register at 31 March 2025. This had been increased by £2,110 on the previous year to reflect the purchase of the new noticeboard. It was **Agreed** to put an item on the Agenda for the next meeting to consider the maintenance of assets, including benches, and to clarify responsibilities and budgets.
- i) **Bank Balance:** Councillors noted that the bank balance at 30 April 2025 was £37,498.82 and the Chair was **Authorised** to countersign the bank statement.

21/25 Policies and Procedures: Policies on sexual harassment, bullying and harassment and the Chair's job description remain work in progress.

22/25 Correspondence:

- a) Updates from CALC and other Agencies: Councillors noted that these had been circulated as appropriate. Of note was a 'call for evidence' on second homes and holiday lets circulated by CALC on 28 April and forwarded to Councillors.
- b) The RFO reported that he had received a letter from Barclays requiring completion of the mandate. Cllr. Harnby needs to finalise his forms.
- c) No further correspondence had been received since publishing the Agenda.

23/25 Items 'for Information': Planning matters at Gilpin Bridge were mentioned but deemed to be within Levens Parish.

24/25 Councillors' Issues to be Raised

Other than matters under current discussion, it was **Agreed** to include the following items on the next Agenda:
Maintenance of Parish assets.

Date of the next meeting: It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 02 June 2025 in the Parish Room at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting finished at 9.20 p.m.

Signed as a correct record:

Date: