APPLEBY-IN-WESTMORLAND TOWN COUNCIL

Sue Gilbertson: Town Clerk
Telephone: 017683 51177
Email: clerk@applebytown.gov.uk

www.applebytown.gov.uk

Town Clerk's Office
Moot Hall, Boroughgate
Appleby-in-Westmorland
Cumbria, CA16 6YB

Appleby Town Council Minutes

For the meeting held in the Moot Hall

Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 6.45pm

Councillors Present:

Cllr Davidson (Chair)
Cllr Anderton
Cllr Curley
Cllr Heap
Cllr Hilsden
Cllr Kemp
Cllr Potts
Cllr Railton
Cllr Rooke

Also in attendance:

Town Clerk and Clerk's Assistant
1 Member of the Public (left at 6.51pm)

C1/01/26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllr Connell, Cllr Chalmers, Cllr Pape, Cllr Smith and Cllr Turnbull.

C2/01/26 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Anderton declared a personal interest in Fair Hill, as her property borders the land.

C3/01/26 Public Participation

Mr Ian Mycock attended the meeting to read a statement relating to Fair Hill regarding how it was conveyed to the Council and how the income generated from it is used.

Cllr Davidson thanked Mr Mycock for attending and said he would receive a response from the Clerk in writing, as soon as this had been properly considered.

Mr Mycock left the meeting at 6.51pm.

C4/01/26 Minutes

- **Ordinary Meeting of the Council**

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chair of the meeting to sign the minutes of the **Ordinary Meeting of the Council** held on **Wednesday 17th December 2025** as a true and accurate record.

- **Planning and General Purposes Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chair of the Committee to sign the minutes of the **Planning & General Purposes** Committee held on **Monday 12th January 2026** as a true and accurate record.

- **Finance Committee Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chair of the Committee to sign the minutes of the **Finance Committee** meeting held on **Monday 12th January 2026** as a true and accurate record. All recommendations were approved unanimously:

- To accept the Management Accounts for December 2025.
- To accept the Budget for 2026-27.
- To accept the Precept request of £168,330 for 2026-27.

As in previous years, a precept flyer has been produced to explain to residents how the precept is calculated and what the Council spends it on. This will be published once Westmorland & Furness Council approves the precept request.

- **Property Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chair of the Committee to sign the minutes of the Property Committee held on **Monday 12th January 2026** as a true and accurate record.

C5/01/26 Unitary Authority Reports

Cllr Connell's report was received and noted. In his absence, the Clerk highlighted some of the main points.

It is expected that Westmorland & Furness Council's Council Tax for 2026-27 will be increased by 4.99%, which is the statutory maximum without triggering a referendum. The Council believes that the government's funding formula does not adequately recognise or address the issues of rurality and negotiations with government are ongoing.

Funding has been confirmed to continue the current bus services in 2026-27, including the weekly 561 Appleby-Kendal Wednesday service and the daily 563 return journeys between Kirkby Stephen and Penrith via Appleby.

There has been an influx of roadworks in and around Appleby, primarily Fibrus. The Clerk is in contact with the works foreman who has been very helpful at dealing with any issues.

Concerns have been raised about the lack of highway lighting on the B6542 between upper Bongate and the Shining Stars nursery. Westmorland & Furness Council's lighting manager has confirmed that new lighting columns have been agreed in this area and will be installed in the 2026-27 financial year.

C6/01/26 Police Newsletter – January 2026

The Police Newsletter was received and noted.

C7/01/26 Mayor's Report

Cllr Davidson attended Appleby's Christmas carol service in the Methodist Church, which was a lovely evening and well supported.

She also attended the Junction 38 protest in Kirkby Stephen, which had a very good turnout, including MP Tim Farron.

C8/01/26 Clerk's Report

- **Public Hall Caretaker**

Our Public Hall Caretaker is retiring after 27 years' service. An advert for the position was publicised last week, and we have received 7 expressions of interest for the job so far, with 3 applications already received. Interviews will start next week.

- **Christmas Lights**

ACAT have informed the Council this week that they can no longer continue to be responsible for the town's Christmas lights and tree, as they are unable to meet the risk assessment requirements needed for insurance purposes.

Although ACAT are the legal owners of the lights, they have always considered them to be a community asset and would like to donate them to Appleby Town Council. They will endeavour to meet the verbal agreement made with the Town Clerk that the lights will be taken down as soon as possible after the lights are switched off on 31st January, with help from the Rotary Club.

It was agreed that the Clerk would organise a meeting with ACAT and Rotary to find out more details on what is involved and following this, the Council will meet to consider ACAT's request.

- **Appleby Carnival**

The Clerk met with members of the carnival committee to see how the Council could help them with this year's carnival. They were also informed that Broad Close car park would not be ready to use for the carnival. Although they have use of the football field for the weekend of the carnival, they need additional space and the fun fair ideally needs to go on hardcore. Enquiries have been made with Oaklea Trust and the Environment Agency about using Edenside car park for this purpose. Oaklea Trust have given their permission, and we are awaiting confirmation from the EA. Although they have been busy fundraising and will continue to do so leading up to the event, they will need some grant funding to make it happen. The Clerk has offered to help them apply for grants.

Cllr Potts suggested getting in touch with some local contractors, such as VolkerStevin, Morgan Sindall and Storey Homes, as the larger schemes usually have a pot for local benefit.

- **Doomgate Flood Defence Scheme**

Last week, VolkerStevin, the principal contractor for the scheme, informed the Clerk that work was behind schedule and they would not be completed by the end of May as scheduled. This is due to issues encountered underground in Broad Close car park and worse weather conditions than expected. They will be issuing an announcement in the next week.

- **Lune Valley Bridge works - J38 Closure**

Kirkby Stephen Council have setup an online petition and we have said we will promote and share this. There is a stakeholder meeting in Tebay next week, so an update will be provided following this.

- **Voluntary Car Scheme**

The Voluntary Car Scheme continues to be extremely busy, with January even busier than ever. It is quite time consuming, but also very rewarding as most people are very grateful and relieved to have transport. We've got two new drivers signed up this month and another in the pipeline. There is a district-wide coordinators meeting next week organised by W&FC Integrated Transport team, which will be good to attend to hear how the other schemes in the district are run and to see if we can learn any lessons from them.

- **Use of the Cloisters**

Following a recent issue, a meeting has been arranged to discuss the terms and conditions of using the Cloisters.

- **Employment Rights Bill**

The Clerk attended a seminar outlining the key changes of this bill, which will be implemented in 2026-27. It represents one of the biggest changes to employment law in recent years. The Council will need to review employment contracts, policies and make any changes as necessary to ensure compliance.

Cllr Connell arrived at 7.15pm

- **Community Governance Review**

As part of W&FC's Community Governance Review, the number of councillors for each parish is being reviewed in line with how many electors each ward has. Based on the NALC recommendations, the proposal is to reduce the number of Councillors as follows:

Appleby Ward - currently 8 – recommend reduce to 5

Bongate Ward – currently 8 – recommend reduce to 6

= 11 Councillors instead of 16

It was agreed that this proposal will need to be discussed by Council.

C9/01/26 Outside Body Reports

ACAT: Cllr Anderton confirmed that ACAT would still continue to organise Sparkle Day and big breakfasts, providing they can get suitable insurance.

C10/01/26 Schedule of Payments & Bank Transfers – December 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair be authorised to sign the schedule of payments for the month of **December 2025**, totalling £17,371.85. This figure includes employee salaries and all other expenditure and purchases; and is inclusive of VAT.

C11/01/26 Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

- Cllr Heap reported that Eden Animal Rescue are provisionally planning another Dog Show for Sunday 5th July.
- Cllr Kemp said she had seen on the news about a new initiative called 'towns of culture' and suggested that this was something Appleby could get involved in.

In Cllr Smith's absence, the Clerk reported on the following which he wanted to raise for future agendas:

- An update regarding the youth council – the Clerk has been in contact with Appleby Grammar School and has made some initial enquiries.
- Cllr Smith feels it is essential for the Council to look at all aspects of Appleby, including roads, housing, future businesses, keeping young people in Appleby, to see what can be done to improve it for the future. The Clerk commented that this idea is essentially a community plan, which requires a lot of work.
- As many community organisations are lacking new and younger members to continue with their good works, Cllr Smith would like to suggest the Council hosts a meeting with representatives of each of the organisations to discuss a more extensive diary of events and how better to market them, and if any of the organisations require assistance, other members of the different community organisations may be available to assist. The Clerk suggested this is something that can be included in the Annual Town Meeting.
- There is a lack of parking in Appleby and thinks Broad Close car park should be extended onto the grass area behind.
- He would like to see a quarterly Town Council newsletter to inform the community about what the Council has been up to. It was commented that the Council communications are already pretty extensive, including regular Facebook updates, website, press releases and a monthly update in the Heart of Eden newsletter.

C12/01/26 Next Meeting

To note that the Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be on **Wednesday 18th February 2026** at **6.45pm** in the Moot Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.36pm.

At the Council Meeting held on **Wednesday 18th February 2026**, the Chair of this meeting was authorised by the Council to sign these minutes, to confirm they are a true and accurate record:

P Davidson

_____