

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF EGREMONT TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2025 AT 5.30PM 2025 IN EGREMONT MARKET HALL**

Present:

Mrs Elaine Woodburn (EW) Chairperson

Mr Sam Pollen (SP) Mr Patrick McMahon (PM)

Mr David Wright (DW) Mr Chris Colley (CC)

Mr Chris Whiteside(CW)

Mrs Jean Lewthwaite (JL)

Mr Chris Colley (CC)

Mr Graham Minshaw (GM) Cumberland Councillor

Mrs Geraldine Pritchard (GP) Town Clerk

Mrs Nicola Cattanach (NC) Assistant Town Clerk

Nik Schickhoff (NS) Cumberland Council Officer

Member of the general public - Amy Fowler (AF)

109.25.26	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	RESOLVED to accept with reasons noted, apologies from Councillor Gareth Stringer, Councillor Robbie Tear & Councillor Graham Calvin.	NC
110.25.26	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA	RESOLVED to note that there were no declarations of interest.	
111.25.26	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	<p>EW invited NS to give a short presentation on Emergency Planning. NS introduced himself and said he was new to the role as part of the Local Resilience Forum. He works on community projects to encourage and promote resilience in emergency situations, alongside Highways, Utilities, Emergency Services and the Environment Agency, who provide free flood warnings, although there seems to be a low sign up for this in Cumbria. NS said the work is to ensure that if emergencies occur within a community a household, for example, would know who to contact and know where provisions were. One idea was for families to have a grab bag located near an exit point, with essential items, should they ever have to leave home quickly. It was suggested that it is a good idea for Council's to put together an emergency plan, no matter how basic, to suit the needs of the local area and to raise awareness in the community of who has what, to help in dire situations, with appropriate contact numbers. NS said that the emergency plan system is particularly popular in rural New Zealand, where they have Community Emergency Hubs.</p> <p>EW said she could see the benefits of having an emergency plan but also negatives as there would be a lot of work involved to ensure a plan was up to date.</p> <p>SP, CW & PM all agreed that it would be a good thing to have something in place. CW suggested Councillors should have a think about ideas and discuss in the new year.</p> <p>DW asked what a low maintenance document would look like as it would be better to have something in place. NS said plans do change but even if someone updated it once a year and to see what works well and go from there. EW said she was happy for this to go on the next agenda.</p> <p>GM said each community could have their own plan to suit them and do with it what they will.</p>	



	<p>EW thanked NS for attending the meeting he left an example of an Emergency Pack for the Town Council to keep and leaflets with information.</p> <p>GM gave his Cumberland Council report:</p> <p>There is a consultation ongoing with Highways regarding having a one-way system at service station at Bigrigg.</p> <p>There had been a street light survey along the A595 and subsequently all lights out were fixed.</p> <p>The Cumberland Go bus service is due to go live early next year, as part of the Rural Mobility Fund, financed by Cumberland Council, to cover Egremont to St Bees. The buses will have lowered floors and will be 16 seaters.</p> <p>CW asked if it would be possible to divert the route through Moor Row. GM said that the 22 and 22A service would cover Moor Row and this would carry on if viable. EW said usage of the bus services should be encouraged, especially by those who have bus passes.</p> <p>GM said he is due to meet Highways Officers to discuss Moor Row and Bigrigg and asked Councillors to contact him if they have any issues to report.</p> <p>SP said that several local bus services had been rolled out, covering Egremont, St Bees, Cleator Moor, Whitehaven and West Cumberland Hospital, which is good news for the area.</p> <p>GM left the meeting at 6.10pm.</p> <p>SP gave his Cumberland Council report:</p> <p>There have been several complaints regarding Stagecoach buses not picking up residents, in particular leaving elderly people and school children stranded. This is a safeguarding issue and SP is in communication with the portfolio holder, Denise Rollo.</p> <p>CW said this is a historic problem which was rectified for a while but is happening again and it is not Cumberland Council at fault the bus company. SP agreed and said that Stagecoach are not fulfilling their contracts.</p> <p>SP said he attended a Highways inspection to address parking issues in Egremont. He would welcome any comments from Councillors on TRO's.</p> <p>Aaron Butterworth had been due to attend the meeting as a member of the public to discuss a Youth Council pilot scheme, which SP said would be great for the community. He will be invited to attend a meeting in the new year to pitch to Councillors.</p> <p>SP had a walk around with PM and the Police, concentrating on the castle, Chapel Street and Beck Green. He said they witnessed some shocking antisocial behaviour at the bungalows on Beck Green and asked that the Police address this area as a priority.</p> <p>SP and PM are due to attend a meeting at Whitehaven Police Station, this week.</p> <p>SP said that he had noted the Town Council being criticised on social media regarding some areas of flooding in the cemetery but that it was inevitable due to unprecedented rain.</p> <p>SP thanked Egremont Amenity Committee for all the hard work, gearing up to the Christmas Winter Wonderland event on 7th December.</p> <p>As SP had mentioned the cemetery the, the cemetery report was brought forward.</p> <p>EW said most of the areas in the cemetery that have flooding water usually reduces within a few hours. She also said that there are two graves in the cemetery where surface water lies and action to remedy the situation has been discussed with the curator and the families involved. GP said this is a job to be done in Spring. EW said the Town Council will deal with all formal complaints and SP said the Town Council and employees will do their best to alleviate any issues.</p>
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SP

	<p>SP left the meeting at 6.25pm</p> <p>EW said she meets with the curator every few months and CW and PM had met with the curator to have a walk about and identify any problem areas. Then had an inspection of Cemetery House, at the request of the tenant. There are some issues with damp, particularly in one upstairs room. A new bespoke front door has been made and has been fitted, which will be a big help in reducing draughts.</p> <p>CW said he had been concerned to hear that the tenant of Cemetery House had a member of the public knocking on the door in the early morning asking for the Cemetery gates to be open.</p> <p>AF, tenant of Cemetery House, was invited to join the meeting. She mentioned that the stair carpet was fraying at the edges and had asked if she could replace this with painted stairs and a runner up the middle of the steps.</p> <p>AF asked if the damp problem would be addressed for her or for any future tenants going forward. EW said that a lot of money had been put into the house and it doesn't reach a point where the house is problem free. CW suggested seeing how things are now that the house has a new roof, new front door and once the Velux window is repaired. If there are still problems, then they can be addressed. DW said the Town Council have a duty of care to the tenant and her child and it is much easier to be aware of problems whilst there is someone living in the house. He also said it's important to look after the heritage of the house.</p> <p>EW said that if the house is not fit for purpose then perhaps the Town Council might look at options to help re-house the tenant. EW said she had tried, in the past, to look at funding from English Heritage but hadn't got anywhere.</p> <p>CC suggested getting expert advice and a report with recommendations. DW asked the tenant if she would be comfortable staying in the property over Christmas as not a lot can be done until the new year. AF said she was as long as she knew things would be moving forward she was happy to stay.</p> <p>EW said the Town Council would get the facts together and it was agreed to get a damp expert to survey the property.</p> <p>AF left the meeting at 6.50pm.</p> <p>Councillors also agreed for the Curator to repair the stair carpet for now and not make any changes until the survey has been carried out.</p> <p>112.25.26 CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS</p> <p>EW asked Councillors to view the Christmas windows of the businesses on Main Street and send nominations to the office. EW & GS will judge and present the trophy.</p> <p>EW reminded Councillors that the Winter Wonderland event is on Sunday 7th December from 1.00pm and will end with a firework display at 5.15pm.</p> <p>EW announced an appeal from West Cumbria Baby Bank, DW & CC donated funds.</p> <p>113.25.26 TO CONSIDER, APPROVE & SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Egremont Town Council held on 21st October 2025.</p> <p>114.25.26 TO CONSIDER & REVIEW ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS</p> <p>4/25/2332/0F1 Re-consultation on amended description and additional/amended information:</p> <p>Planning Application Reference: 4/25/2332/0F1</p>	<p>GP</p> <p>EW, GS</p>
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	<p>Permanent use of site for storage, contractor offices and construction training academy following temporary planning permission reference 4/23/2251/0F1; and retention of car parking, security fencing, amended site layout, additional stores, work stations & welfare unit & associated services.</p> <p>Plot 5B, Westlakes Science Park, Ingwell Drive, Moor Row No objections</p>
4/25/2379/0F1	<p>Single storey side extension</p> <p>35 Clintz Road, Egremont No objections</p>
4/25/2383/0F1	<p>Proposed single storey side and rear extension and internal alterations</p> <p>Endotrack, Springfield Road, Bigrigg, Egremont</p> <p>Councillors comments: This is a large extension and it would be courteous to check that it is not overlooking neighbourhood properties and that there is neighbourhood consultation</p>
4/25/2390/0F1	<p>Application to determine if prior approval is required for the installation of 1 fibre optic pole (9 metres in height) as part of the upgrade of the fibre optic infrastructure off the A5086</p> <p>Woodend, Egremont No objections</p>
115.25.26	TO RATIFY COMMENTS WITH REGARDS PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BETWEEN MEETINGS
4/25/2332/0F1	<p>Permanent use of contractor's offices & construction training academy, car parking and hard standing for site cabins with security fence & associated services following temporary planning permission reference 4/23/2251/0F1</p> <p>Plot 5B, Westlakes Science Park, Ingwell Drive, Moor Row No objections</p>
116.25.26	TO CONSIDER ANY REPORTS INCLUDING FINANCE, PERSONNEL, WEBSITE, BOWLING GREEN, ALLOTMENT, CEMETERY, MARKET HALL, CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, EG CASTLE, PUBLIC REALM/BORDERLANDS & LENGTHSMAN SCHEME.
	<p><u>Allotments</u></p> <p>GP said there had been a report regarding a garage at East Road Allotment site that has loose corrugated panels. DW suggested it could be reported to Building Control as a dangerous structure to see if a survey highlighted any issues.</p>
	NC

There is an infestation of rats at East Road. Pest Controller Ian Sharples will carry out a cull on Sunday 30th November and report back; he will also send his invoice. GP asked if it would make a difference if the allotment site was for cultivation only. DW said it would be an option to announce on 1st April 2026 that between 6 and 12 months' time the option to house hens on site would not be renewed.

Cemetery/Defibrillators

CW said on the site visit to the cemetery he noted that although cemetery house is a listed building permission to install a defibrillator may be allowed as it is lifesaving equipment; the other, preferable option is to site one on the wall of the cemetery office. CW said he had spoken to Bill Morley and agreed that now would be a good time to buy a new defibrillator to replace the one outside of the Co-op and re-site it elsewhere to ensure more coverage of Main Street.

GP referred to the recent Internal Auditor report identified areas such as the cemetery that are assets, especially as the cemetery has a service to provide and other areas were identified as making a loss, such as the Market Hall. EW said the Council's long term financial position would be an agenda item for the January meeting.

On the subject of defibrillators GP said she would speak to the proprietor of the Olive Social/Bill Morley to discuss the possibility of installing the new defibrillator there. DW left the meeting at 7.20pm

GP

Market Hall

An electrical fault with one of the hot water urns had caused a power outage. The electrician said this highlighted the issue that if our equipment could cause this then any hall hirer who brings in electrical equipment could cause the circuit to trip and he said from now on any equipment brought in from outside should also be PAT Tested. The Fairtrade Farmer's Market organiser and West Lakes Academy were contacted to request that all electrical items they bring in to the hall must be PAT Tested and labelled.

Amanda Hyland the developer of the Central pub has been having problems of the cellar flooding. She came to the Town Council office to say that she had arranged for a drainage survey to be done. This identified a couple of issues with down spouts and drains at the back of the Market Hall and although this was not contributing to the refurbishment it was causing water to flow into the Market Hall and so would need addressed. The drainage firm gave an approximate price of £500.00 and Councillors agreed to accept the work being done.

Christmas Lights

GP said that the maintenance of the tree and street lights from Lite, the contractor, has been poor this year with a lot of lights not working. Councillor Gareth Stringer was chasing this up with the company.

GS

115.25.26

CONSIDER & REVIEW CORRESPONDENCE

The Head teacher of Bookwell Primary School had asked for an update on the progression of securing a school crossing. RESOLVED to write to Cumberland Council to enquire.

An email was received from Cumberland Council with a request to remove the Christmas motif decoration on the greasy pole, as it was not built for that purpose. They have requested that the Town Council have a structural assessment carried out to see if it can withstand additional loads and they also asked if the Town Council would enter a joint Licence Agreement to regularise the position of the lights being installed on the greasy pole.



	RESOLVED to contact a structural engineer to carry out a survey of the greasy pole. An email was received from Cumberland Council, Electoral Services with electorate figures and potential costs for 2027 elections. It was RESOLVED to contact Cumberland Council to ask if the local parish election could be run alongside another parish to keep costs down.	NC
117.25.26	TO CONSIDER & RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT RESOLVED to accept, consider and approve the Clerk's report.	
118.25.26	TO RATIFY THE PAYMENTS MADE BETWEEN MEETINGS RESOLVED to ratify the payments at 19 th November 2025 amounting to £33,486.81.	
119.25.26	TO RECEIVE & APPROVE THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT AT 19TH NOVEMBER 2025 RESOLVED to accept, consider & approve the financial statement at 19th November 2025 amounting to £13,539.97.	
120.25.26	TO DISCUSS THE SOUTH CUMBERLAND AREA VACANCY ON THW CALC BOARD There was no interest expressed in the vacancy	
121.25.26	TO CONSIDER & ACCEPT THE INTERNAL AUDITORS HALF YEARLY REPORT It was RESOLVED to accept the Internal Auditors report and also RESOLVED that matters highlighted in the report regarding financial situation of the Town Council going forward will need to be discussed in the new year. EW said that as stated earlier, the long term future of the Market Hall would be an Agenda Item for the next meeting.	GP
122.25.26	COUNCILLORS MATTERS – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO RAISE MINOR MATTERS NOT ON THIS AGENDA AND NOT FOR DISCUSSION PM reported that 4 new solar lights had been installed at the castle and Anti-social behaviour appears to have lessened, perhaps due to the time of year. PM said he was informed by Police Sergeant MacDonald there would be more Police patrols in place. PM said that the Friends of Egremont Castle group were trying to increase their finances including obtaining matched funding. CC said he had received a complaint about someone urinating on the wall near to West Lakes academy. He said he would try and find out any more information as without the Town Council are unable report it. CC left the meeting at 8.10pm	CC
123.25.26	ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA RESOLVED THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING Internal Auditors recommendations, future plans – item 4 RESOLVED the next ordinary meeting of Egremont Town Council will be held on <u>Tuesday 20th January 2025 at 5.30pm.</u> The meeting was then brought to a close at 8.30pm and the Chairperson wished everyone a Happy Christmas.	