

Minutes of a meeting of Casterton Parish Council held at Casterton Village Hall on Thursday 21st August 2025 at 7pm.

Present were Councillors Ken Humphris (Chairman, Steve Richmond and Ray Smith, two members of the public and Parish Clerk Kevin Price. Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Stephen Evans and Rob Leese.

25/56 Public participation: None.

25/57 Requests for Dispensations: None.

25/58 Declarations of Interest:

There were no Declarations of Interest made in respect of any matters on the agenda.

25/59 Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2025, having been circulated were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

25/60 Updates/Councillor announcements:

- a. Councillor Humphris reported on recent complaints, made by residents, against the Council that had been submitted to the Information Commissioner. The matter had been dealt with and the Commissioner had ruled that 'on the balance of probabilities' some of the information requested no longer existed and therefore case was closed and the Parish Council fully exonerated. This had taken more than 12 months and added considerably to the Clerk's workload.
- b. Councillor Smith had attended the 'wash-up' meeting and gave a verbal report on Police activities, especially during the busy summer season and the Appleby Fair. Over 130 arrests had been made, with two more serious incidents and the Police had coped well.
- c. Councillor Humphris reported on the 'Casterton hole'. There had been a site meeting last week and a further meeting is planned for tomorrow. It is a complex issue, involving, as it does, private land and public Rights of Way.
- d. The launch of the new history book by Cumbria County History Trust is taking place on 21st September. Councillor Humphris will attend and represent the Council at this event. Councillor Paul Cassell, Chairman of Kirkby Lonsdale Town Council will be giving a presentation.
- e. The Council had been asked to contribute to a survey on the availability of mobile phone connections in the parish, but so far taken no action. This is a long-standing problem and Councillor Richmond agreed to do some research into this.

25/61 Westmorland & Furness Council Monitoring Officer:

A number of complaints by residents again Councillors had been made through Westmorland & Furness Council. These had all been responded to. Councillor Humphris outlined the Council's problems in obtaining any acknowledgement or response from the Monitoring Officer, which experience had been most unsatisfactory, leading to a formal complaint against this officer being considered.

There had been a refusal of a face to face meeting in Kendal with representatives of the Parish Council, but a 'virtual meeting' had been offered with the Monitoring Officer's Deputy.

It was resolved to initially accept this offer and then to review the situation, before making a formal complaint if this proves necessary. The Council is disappointed that the Monitoring Officer is unwilling to be present, as she is the person signing and issuing the complaints made against Councillors.

25/62 Casterton Community Trust:

No report, as there had not been a meeting held recently.

25/63 Recording of Parish Council meetings:

The Council already has a 'Protocol on the recording and filming of Council and Committee meetings. An item will be added to this, indicating that any recordings made of meetings will be deleted as soon as the minutes are published.

Councillor Humphris agreed to circulate the NALC/CALC retention and disposals policy for discussion at the next meeting with a view to adopting this as a formal policy document.

25/64 Finance:

a. It was resolved to pay the following accounts:

Community Heartbeat Trust		
	£120.00	Village Emergency Telephone System
K M Price	£69.65	Backpay
K M Price	£183.53	Quarterly expenses to 30 th June, Including use of home office and travel

- b. The cash and budget statements were noted.
- c. The Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2025-26 was noted and approved. (The Clerk at Casterton is currently employed for 6 hours weekly, plus one hour for extra workload, at point 21 on the Salary Scale.
- d. The report from the Internal Auditor was noted, with thanks. There were no matters to be brought to the attention of the Council.

- e. The Clerk said that Westmorland & Furness Council has confirmed that grants from the Community Infrastructure Levy monies could be made to the Village Hall, it was agreed that for each project, an application would be made to the Council, with appropriate documentation

25/65 Planning:

- a. *The following applications had been received since the last meeting, to which the Parish Council submitted comments, on the Clerk's delegated authority:*

S/05/51 – Woodside, Casterton. Householder planning permission for removal of existing UPVC conservatory and replacement with new single storey extension including the removal of chimney and the installation of inset solar panels to South West elevation of main house roof and air source heat pump. The Council supports this application.

S/05/75 - High Folly Barn, Casterton. Householder planning permission for erection of summerhouse. The Council supports this application but it is assumed/hoped that there is to be no lighting in this summerhouse. The Council supports this application.

- b. In order to deal with planning applications that arrive between meetings, it was resolved to formalise the process by adopting a Standing Order. Councillor Humphris agreed to circulate a draft of this for consideration at the next meeting as a formal policy document.

25/66 Website:

- a. A report on the website had been submitted by Sally Hodge and this is now on the website.
- b. It was resolved to add an Item to the website, outlining the duties and powers of the Parish Council, for public information, as there is often uncertainty concerning the role of a Parish Council. Councillors Humphris and Leese had produced a suitable document, and a final version with minor modifications will be circulated for consideration at the next meeting as a new policy document.

25/67 Village Plan:

Councillor Richmond reported as follows:

'The Village Plan project team would like to thank the Casterton community for the responses to the Village Plan survey, There were 96 completed surveys received, which is a great response and provides an excellent starting point to consider what can be done to improve the village.'

Since then, the team has met several times to analyse the responses and work continues to prepare the information ready to present the results of the survey back to the community at a public meeting which will be held in the Village Hall towards the end of September. More information on this will follow shortly'.

25/68 Casterton Community Hub Ltd (Save the Pheasant):

The situation is unchanged and it is at present expected hoped that the planning application will be considered in either September or at the October meeting of the YDNPA Planning Committee.

25/69 Footpaths Officer: No report.

25/70 Asset Register:

The Clerk had obtained full details of the Council's insurance policy and cover provided and this will be added to the information provided at the last meeting. A draft Register will be drawn up in due course, in time for the next insurance renewal. The Village Hall AV system will be added to the Policy.

25/71 Correspondence:

- a. An email, covering a number of issues, had been circulated by Councillor Hazel Hodgson. It was agreed to ask if she could one of the forthcoming Council meetings to go through any relevant issues with Councillors.
- b. A request from a resident to place a safety mirror on the Village Green (which is Council land) had been received. The Council has no objections to the resident placing a mirror there, providing that they accept total liability for it and thereby indemnify the Council in the event of any claims. The Clerk will check with Westmorland & Furness Highways.

25/71 Date of the next meeting:

Tuesday 30th September 2025 at 7pm at Casterton Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed:

Dated: