

ASPATRIA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 6.00p.m at the Methodist Church Hall, Aspatria.

PRESENT: Councillor S Maxwell (Chair)

Councillors: Cllr K Thurlow, Cllr A Hankin, Cllr K Smith, Cllr A Maxwell, Cllr R Gregory, Cllr D Richardson, Cllr M Rose, Cllr B Blackburn

Also in Attendance: Mrs K Cooper (Town Clerk), Ms S Hullock (RFO)
Mr J Baker (Caretaker)

Members of the Public: None

Minutes

| Item | | Action |
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| 1.1.26. Apologies: To receive and accept apologies and note the reasons for absence. | None. | |
| 2.1.26. Mayors Announcements/Updates: | Cllr S Maxwell announced the resignation of Alan Reay. Thanks was given for his time over the years at the council. | |
| 3.1.26. Declarations of Interest: Members are invited to make any declarations of Pecuniary Interest or other Registerable Interest (other than those recorded on their Notification of Pecuniary Interests or other Registerable Interests) relating to any items on the agenda. | None | |
| 4.1.26. Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Meeting held 16th December 2025: | <p>Cllr Smith asked if there was any update from the damaged bus shelter on Queen Street. The Clerk is to contact the company liable.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed to be of a true record of the meeting. Approved and signed by the Mayor/Chair. RESOLVED.</p> | |
| 5.1.26. Minutes of Aspatria Town Council Extraordinary Meeting held 13th January 2026: | The minutes were agreed to be of a true record of the meeting. Approved and signed by the Mayor/Chair. RESOLVED. | |
| 6.1.26. Clerks Report: | The Clerk has issued a complaint to the supplier of the outdoor gym equipment. Pieces of the | |

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| | <p>equipment are marked and paintwork needing repaired, one of the pieces was also loose. These had been reported by the Caretaker and due to a lack in communication nothing had been done. Workmen arrived at the park for 20 minutes and simply sprayed the equipment with paint and poured cement then dirt onto the ground where the equipment is loose. The Clerk stipulated this was not up to standard when spending over £6000 for the gym. Ongoing.</p> <p>The tree surgeon attended to the park trees on 7th January. The trees were dead wooded and made safe in the play areas and benched areas. Approximately 11 trees have been completed however the tree surgeon is to return at a later date.</p> <p>The Clerk informed the meeting that Heavenly Fish and Chips are to visit the town twice a month starting in February, this will be on the first and third Tuesday. From March, Stone House Pizza Co are expecting to return on the second and fourth Tuesday each week.</p> <p>The Clerk is to look at courses for the Caretaker to enrol on to ensure all his certificates are up to date.</p> <p>The Clerk is taking annual leave from 5th – 11th March 2026.</p> | |
| 7.1.26. Public Participation: | <p>Cllr Blackburn suggested the council approach Cumberland Building Society to request the installation of an ATM due to the ATM's in the town not accepting Cumberland Building Society cards. Cllr Gregory confirmed he had placed this request several months ago however the Cumberland do not have the space required for an ATM. RESOLVED.</p> <p>Cllr Blackburn has received complaints from members of the public due to the amount of cigarette ends lying on the pavements throughout town.</p> <p>Cllr A Maxwell was approached by a resident of the town who suggested our Caretaker shouldn't be weeding throughout the town as this is the responsibility of Cumberland Council, however all councillors were agreed the town needs weeded regularly and due to it being in the Caretakers job description he will continue to do</p> | |

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| | <p>so at the council's discretion. RESOLVED</p> <p>Cllr Smith mentioned the complaint and comments which had been posted on social media regarding the issues with traffic and the discontinuation of the lollipop man at Richmond Hill School. We previously agreed to reduce the speed limit at the school to 20mph in order to reduce the speeding and the Clerk had suggested opening Queen St car park for parents to use whilst dropping off and picking up their children. The councillors are aware of the problems, and the required authorities are dealing with this, however it was suggested the Clerk contact the parking services at Cumberland Council to request traffic wardens visit the area daily to issue fines to those who are parked illegally, blocking the road and reducing visibility. Ongoing.</p> <p>Cllr S Maxwell received a letter from a concerned resident regarding the junctions at Market Square. It was suggested the Clerk contact the Highways Dept for them to inspect the area to see if anything can be done. Ongoing.</p> <p>It was brought to the Caretakers attention, Brandraw car park of an evening is very dark especially as the Christmas lights have been removed. It was suggested we install a sensor light which would bring on the lights around the toilet block. This would also help to make our CCTV recordings more visible. Proposed by Cllr A Maxwell and seconded by Cllr Gregory.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> | |
| 8.1.26. Highways: | <p>Cllr Blackburn mentioned the road from Aspatria to Hayton requires remedial work; however, Cllr S Maxwell has already reported this.</p> | |
| 9.1.26. To receive for information, reports on issues relevant to the Town from County, District and Independent Councillors: Councillor Kevin Thurlow | <p>Cllr Thurlow reminded the meeting anyone can report potholes in the road. The Clerk has reported the entrance to First Milk/Sealy at Station Road as this needs repaired.</p> | |
| 10.1.26. Financial Matters: | <p>i) Expenditure and Income Schedule for December 2025:</p> <p>RESOLVED that the expenditure of £7,713.88 and income of £700.94 be approved.</p> | |

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| | <p>Members also approved the additional invoices for payment:</p> <p>Cumberland Council - (S171 Permit for Temporary Excavation Works) £407.00</p> <p>K Thurlow - (Cleaning Toilets Oct - Dec 25) £874.00</p> <p>Gwen Atkinson - (Senior Citizens Christmas Party Meal) £2000.00</p> <p>Aspatria Farmers - (Various Materials) £159.53</p> <p>NPower - (Electricity for Toilet Block for December 2025) £202.81</p> <p>Reimbursement To Clerk - (Christmas Lights) £25.50</p> <p>Aspatria Methodist Church - (Hire of hall for meeting) £264.00</p> <p>Aquatrust - (Legionella Monitoring) £158.70</p> <p>LR & JA Allen - (Fuel) £130.59</p> <p>Mark Eve - (Sockets for Christmas Lights) £696.00</p> <p>Burnetts - (Ongoing Allotment Work) £504.00</p> <p>Jardine Tree Care - (Tree Work) £840.00</p> <p>(ii) To receive the Bank Reconciliation Statements as at 31st December 2025: RESOLVED that the circulated Bank Reconciliation Statements be confirmed and accepted as a true record. It was also resolved that £15,000 be transferred from the Council's 30 Deposit Account to their Current Account.</p> <p>(iii) Quarter 3, 2025/26, Budget Monitoring Report: RESOLVED that the income and expenditure position for the third quarter to December 2025 was accepted and approved. The RFO gave an overview of the net position at that date and commented on areas of budget under/over spends as recorded in the schedule. Councillors agreed to the transfers made within the report.</p> <p>(iv) Precept for 2026/2027: The Council must set a precept each year by 1 March. At its meeting held on 17 December 2025, the Committee agreed, in principle, a 2026/27 Budget which totalled £141,725.00. The RFO explained that this would require a substantial contribution from balances. Councillors were then asked to consider the figures presented to them in a report which highlighted the impact of a 0%, 3%, 5%, 10%, 11%, 12% and 13% increase on the precept, recommend whether or not to increase the</p> | |
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| | <p>precept for 2026/27; and by what percentage the increase should be, (if any), in order to assist with the Councils 2026/27 expenditure budget of £141,725.00. Various discussions were held around what impact various levels of precept increases would have on a band D property, given the proposed increase by Cumberland Council, as well as the decrease in the number of Band D properties within the town in comparison to last year. The RFO reminded Councillors that the Council were incurring ever increasing costs on all purchases they made, including events organised for the residents of the town.</p> <p>RESOLVED It was agreed that a 10% increase be applied to the 25/26 precept amounting to a precept request of £108,856.00 for 2026/27. Councillors understand that this is based on a draft Council Tax Base figure for 2026/27 as supplied by Cumberland Council, (not finalised until the end of January 2026), and that any change to this will impact the figures discussed. Councillors also agreed that requesting this level of precept will still require a contribution from balances to fund the proposed 2026/27 budget.</p> | |
| <p>11.1.26. Parks & Allotments:</p> | <p>Allotments: Outgang Road – The work on the entrances into the park are hoping to commence on Monday 26th January.</p> <p>Lawson Street – Following the Extraordinary Meeting held on 13th January where it was agreed the Clerk would contact the solicitor for further advice to resolve the issues with the tenant at the allotments, the agreements and the lease, the solicitor quoted in the region of £4000 to draft the lease and assist with the agreements. It was proposed by Cllr Hankin and seconded by Cllr Gregory we instruct the solicitor to draw up the lease as priority. The agreements will then be drawn up to mirror the lease.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>St Mungos Park – The Clerk applied for a permit to begin drainage works at St Mungos Park. This has been successful following a payment of £407. Ongoing.</p> <p>Lights in the Caretakers workshop need replacing due to them not working or being a hazard. 4 lights from Screwfix at £22.98 each. The lights in the changing rooms are often left on when teams have been using the building, the Caretaker suggested trialling a sensory light to avoid them being left on. 1 light from Amazon is £12.99.</p> | |

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| | <p>The gutters on the changing rooms are damaged and leaking, these need repaired. The quote for the materials is £110.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr A Maxwell and seconded by Cllr Gregory to purchase all of the above.</p> <p>Clerk to arrange. RESOLVED</p> <p>The paths at St Mungos Park have recently been pressure washed, and areas of the tarmac need repaired. The Clerk suggested a Parks and Allotments meeting to discuss this further; the meeting will take place on 30th January at 1pm.</p> <p>Caretakers Tools – Cllr Thurlow has received a quote for some new tools for the Caretaker. The quote from J T Atkinsons was for £758 incl VAT however they would reduce the quote by £195 + VAT due to them donating us a new drill. Thanks were given. An inventory of equipment in the Caretakers shed needs to be drawn up and the asset register updated. RESOLVED.</p> <p>Cllr Rose asked if there was any progress with getting the park railings painted. The Clerk informed the church were interested in being involved. Cllr Richardson suggested CTS, the company who are waiting to begin work on the Co-op as they are looking to be involved within the community. Ongoing.</p> <p>The Caretaker has currently removed the roundabout in Victoria Park and is restoring it. He is to move the roundabout to a better location in the park due to flooding. Ongoing.</p> | |
| 12.1.26. Town Flowers: | <p>The Clerk is waiting on a list of previous flowers ordered to retrieve quotes for the summer flowers. We need to look at purchasing the Caretaker some watering equipment, this will also be discussed at the P&A meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Rose and Cllr S Maxwell suggested some areas of the town could be replaced with rockeries. Ongoing.</p> | |
| 13.1.26. Equality and Diversity Policy: | <p>The Clerk circulated the Equality and Diversity Policy to the Cllrs prior to the meeting. The policy was agreed and adopted at this meeting 20/01/26. This will also be updated on the council website. RESOLVED.</p> | |
| 14.1.26. Events Meeting Update: | <p>Dates for events this year are as follows: Easter Monday 6th April is Easter Races, 13th June is Party in the Park, 13th Sept is the Great Aspatria Bake Off and our Christmas light switch on will take place on 29th November.</p> | |
| 15.1.26. Christmas Lights Raffle: | <p>The winners of the raffle are as follows:</p> <p>1st prize – 35 Queen St</p> | |

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| | 2 nd prize – 43A Park Road 3 rd prize – 3 King Street 4 th prize – 2 Cherry Tree Court 5 th prize – 46 Harriston 6 th prize – 20 Whinbarrow Lane 7 th prize – 37 Park Road 8 th prize – 12 Ellengarth 9 th prize – 5 Brayton Road 10 th prize – Lakeland Retreat 11 th prize – Lees Gill, West St 12 th prize – 64 Harriston 13 th prize – 7 Noble Croft | |
| 16.1.26. Schedule of Correspondence, Notices and Publications: To receive a schedule of correspondence, notices and publications received since the last meeting. | | |
| 17.1.26. Applications for Development: | Harry Ward – Brayton Park, Aspatria. FUL/2025/0201 | |
| 18.1.26. Items submitted by members: | None | |
| 19.1.26. Items for the next meeting: | | |
| 20.1.26. Confidential Items: | To be minuted confidentially. | |
| 21.1.26. The next meeting of Aspatria Town Council will take place on Tuesday 17th February 2026 at 6pm. | | |

The meeting ended at 8.30pm.

