MURTON PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING OF MURTON PARISH COUNCIL 4 August 2025

Present: Alastair Bell, Jim Hardman (Vice Chair), Anne King, Tina Longstaff, John McDarren (Chairman), Willie Patterson, George Slack and three members of the public.

57/25 **Apologies for Absence:** There were no absences.

58/25 **Declarations of Interest from Councillors:**
No declarations of personal or pecuniary interests in respect of items on this Agenda were made by elected members.

59/25 **Minutes of Previous Meetings**
Resolved: The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Murton Parish Council and Ordinary Meeting held on 28th April 2025 accepted as a true record.

60/25 **OPEN SESSION** – the following points were raised:

60/25/1 **Loan and erection of stakes for Appleby Horse Fair** – Murton Parish Council extend their thanks to James Harker for the loan of wooden stakes to restrict access to Murton Green and to Chris Phelan for erecting and removing the stakes. No issues were reported in this area during the Horse Fair.

60/25/2 **Village Green at corner opposite Flakebridge road** – discussion as to the necessity of erecting stakes on the Green during Horse Fair week as this was left accessible this year.
Resolved: No objections were raised.

60/25/3 **Report of crowding of Caravans and vehicles at Coupland Beck** on Thursday prior to Appleby Fair. These quickly dispersed once the Fair field was opened.

61/25 **Parish Council Electronic Mailing List**
An additional eight members have been added to the circulation list. Cllr Bell reported a further three to add. Councillors encouraged to continue to promote inclusion on the mailing list.

62/25 **Hilton Drains**
The Chair reported that Hilton Drains are on the list of actions for United Utilities. Recent communications suggest completion is expected before 2030. UU are trying to push the date forward but this is budget dependent. Three options were discussed with the favoured option being to invite local residents to contribute to the cost. A suggestion that interest be canvassed. As the anticipated cost is unknown, this was seen as too pre-emptive at this stage.

63/25 **Murton Water Channel**
Due to the lack of heavy rain recently, the extent and impact of rainwater run-off has yet to be determined. The possibility of diverting water run-off from the fells was discussed. Cllr Hardman will make enquiries to the feasibility of diverting this flow.

64/25 **Murton Broadband Working Group**
The recent meeting regarding Broadband roll-out to the area was attended by two councillors. Murton Parish Council area is included in the roll-out. Concern was raised that much of the infrastructure will be fed by poles above ground, a particular risk in this area. Progress is not expected until 2026-27. The working group will continue to consult on the process.

65/25 **Digital Switchover**

The switchover to digital is progressing, with specific impact on those reliant on home phones. Anyone concerned should contact their current supplier and check what support can be offered.

66/25 W&F Council – Appleby & Brough Place Action Group

Cllr Hardman attended the recent meeting and requested upgrades to stiles and kissing gates on local walking routes, along with the addition of a footbridge to enable walking route across the feels between Hilton and Murton. Actions are being considered.

67/25 Local Liaison Meeting Warcop Range

Erosion along Scordale/Hilton beck was noted. Attention is currently being paid to maintaining damaged areas.

Tree planting on Hilton fellside had previously been proposed, but this had to be brought to the attention of the MOD due to inaction. Cllr Hardman has produced a document displaying photos of areas requiring action.

68/25 WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS COUNCIL

68/25/1 Planning Applications

None current in the Parish area.

68/25/2 Highway Faults

- Hilton Bridge – repair completed.
- Broken fence at Coupland Beck following Horse Fair weekend – repaired
- Keisley Bridge – damage to bridge wall during Horse Fair weekend. Notified to Highways 9th June. Passed to the maintenance team.
- Request for road re-surfacing from Murton sign near Hilton Bridge to Keisley bridge.
- Streetlight at Murton crossroads repaired.
- Roadside grass verges cut.
- Public Footpath at Keisley closed due to damaged footbridge. Awaiting a replacement bridge. Due to re-open January 2026.

69/25 PARISH OWNED PROPERTY, VILLAGE GREENS & ENVIRONMENT

69/25/1 Parish Owned Property

- The Parish Council extends their thanks to Derek Hodgson for regularly cutting Murton top and middle greens.
- A bench is still to be fitted on Hilton top green.

Murton bus shelter:

- The bench outside the shelter is due to be repaired using spare parts from dismantled benches.
- The bookshelf is no longer large enough to hold donated books. An additional bookcase or plastic tub will be sought to hold additional books.

70/25 CEMETERY MANAGEMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

70/25/1 Cemetery Management

Three monthly grass cuts have been completed, with a further two planned by end of September. It was noted that the grass may require an interim cut at the height of summer. The Clerk will request an additional cut when necessary.

70/25/2 Health, Safety and Maintenance

One of the window frames in Murton bus shelter has perished and requires repair.

70/25/3 Review of Cemetery Fees (Appendix 1)

The Clerk presented a comparative review of cemetery fees in the local area. It was noted that the annual Cemetery income should cover the costs of maintaining the cemetery – specifically grass cutting and wall repairs. Following discussion, a vote was proposed, seconded and agreed by six councillors, with one abstention (Cllr Patterson) to increase the interment fee for an adult to £300 and the Exclusive Rights of Burial

(ERB)to £300. To include in the policy, provision of a refund of ERB should a living person who has paid the fee, rescind their decision to hold a burial plot. The Clerk will action and update the website.

70/25/4 Cemetery Memory Wall

To encourage use of the Memory Wall in the Cemetery, the Clerk will contact the local Funeral Directors and request that the opportunity is shared with their clients.

71/25 FINANCIAL REPORTS

71/25/1 Current Financial Situation (Appendix 2, p1 & p2)

The current financial situation was outlined. Current bank interest rates were presented and a vote proposed, seconded and carried by all councillors to take advantage of a higher interest one-year fixed account with the Cumberland Building Society.

Resolved: The current Financial Report and Clerk's Expenses claim signed by the Chairman

71/25/2 Clerk's Pay

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, which affects the Clerk's Pay. Clerk's salary increase will cost £110.40 pa. A vote was proposed, seconded and carried by all councillors in favour of accepting the increase.

Resolved: Salary increase approved.

72/25 Co-option of Councillor

After over 10 years of service, Cllr King has decided to step down from her role. The Chairman extended sincere thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to Cllr King for her dedication and service.

A vote was proposed, seconded and carried by all councillors to co-opt Rosemary Mandale onto the Parish Council.

Resolved: Rosemary Mandale to be co-opted to the Parish Council. A Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed by Rosemary Mandale.

73/25 Clerk's report on any actions under delegated powers not otherwise mentioned, and to note any particular items of correspondence

Expressions of Interest are sought for communities to volunteer to take part in a Technical Feasibility Study – Very Small-scale, Low Carbon Energy Systems - to explore how small-scale, community led energy systems can help rural settlements transition to Net Zero. Funded through the SPARK Grant Programme and Futureproof Cumbria, the study will build the evidence base for resilient, locally appropriate energy solutions. Councillors were all in favour of submitting an Expression of Interest. The Clerk will respond accordingly.

74/25 Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

None raised.

75/25 Next Ordinary Meeting

Monday 3rd November 2025 at 7:30pm

The meeting closed at 8.39 pm.

Signature
Chairman, Murton Parish Council

Date of Meeting
3 November 2025