

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF SEDBERGH

Minutes of the monthly meeting for the Parish Council of Sedbergh, held at 7.30 pm Thursday 9 July 2026 in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People's Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh

Present: Councillors Arnold (Chair), Thomson, Capstick, Brooks, Lancaster, Longlands, Cowperthwaite, Crawford and the Clerk (online).

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Sedgwick gave his apologies and Cllr Bromley was unable to attend. All remaining Members were present at the meeting. (1 x vacancy)

2. Declarations of Interest and any new requests for dispensations

Item 13 iii) Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust – Cllr Thomson. There were no other Declarations of interest made, or new requests for dispensations.

3. Public Participation

The Chair of the Sedbergh and District Public Transport User Group gave a summary of ongoing work and their recent Annual General Meeting. This included notice from Westmorland and Furness Council of their forthcoming bus tender invitation for the Sedbergh area (outcome awaited in August). Also, the recently shared Decline and Opportunity Report (Item 13i) completed by a member of the group. Finally, and whilst all acknowledge the need of the bridge improvements/repairs on the A684, the disappointing news that the four phases (along the Sedbergh to Garsdale Head Road) in the coming months would see sections of the Garsdale road being closed for the majority of the time – with work not anticipated to be complete until October/November. These works will prevent the Dales Bus 832 (Sunday) service operating and the new Hawes Hopper (Tuesday).

4. To adopt the minutes of the Annual meeting of the Parish Council and the monthly meeting held 14 May 2026 (no Full Council meeting held in June, urgent matters dealt with by Finance Committee 11 June 2026)

Following previous circulation of both sets of draft minutes, Members resolved that they were each a true record and they were signed by the Chairman, Cllr Arnold.

5. Matters to note from the Minutes of the monthly meeting held 14 May 2026 not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda and for the Finance meeting held 11 June 2026 i) any relevant Members updates from outside bodies (no Full Council meeting held in June) or items raised at the Annual Parish Meeting

Members agreed that the Clerk should place a notice of the current Councillor vacancy online, (previously agreed in May). There were no other matters, or updates, to note.

6. Report/Update from Westmorland and Furness Council

Cllr Hodgson attended and it was noted that some recent updates from Westmorland and Furness Council had been shared with Members, including Home to School Transport, Business Support, Transport, Highways and Budget deficit at Westmorland and Furness Council. Members noted that it was disappointing that Highways had not yet advised the Council further in regard to their outstanding coach parking request, or the yellow lining. Finally, Cllrs highlighted the poor condition of the cemetery on Busk Lane and WFC Cllr Hodgson advised that cemeteries are now only partially mowed ahead of 1 July annually, as part of WFC's biodiversity policy. Members also noted that the toilets at the cemetery remain closed. Cllr Hodgson agreed to report further. Cllr Mitchell did not attend.

7. Planning

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held 15 June 2026. As there were only two subsequent applications outstanding, they were considered at the meeting.

S/03/787 Blandsgill Cottage, Howgill Householder planning permission for erection of replacement entrance porch incorporating a WC. Members resolved no objections

S/03/622D/LB Millthrop Bridge (GR 366135 491375), Sedbergh Listed building consent to repoint 8.7m of upstream North inside face of the parapet; repoint 3.8m of downstream South inside face of parapet, take down and rebuild 4m section of U/S North parapet using original stone only, take down and rebuild a 5.8m section of D/S South parapet using a combination of original stone and a 10% new and imported material to match original. Members resolved no objections, subject to the proposal (as noted in the application) for repairs to be undertaken at night.

8. Finance

Members resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting held on 6 July 2026 along with the meeting held in 11 June 2026), which included the requests for payments. In addition, a further payment of £425 be authorised for the Internal Auditor (delayed from May). and that additional information had been requested for the Sheepfest Grant application.

9. Amenities Committee

Members had not met, it was hoped that any outstanding issues could be discussed at the next Committee meeting, where a Chair would need to be elected. It was noted that the replacement accessible toilet door/market store door should be fitted soon. The Clerk noted that the contractor had requested to colour match the existing doors.

10. Update on Projects

- i) **Playground Project – Members to review next steps (please see Finance meeting 11 June 2026)** Members noted that the topography survey was due to be undertaken on 28 July. In addition, it was noted that the Chair awaited a quote to remove the condemned playground equipment, and this would now be followed up. In respect of outstanding remedial work to the current playground, it was noted that Cllr Longlands would liaise with the Parish Handyman,
- ii) **Main Street toilets – update on progress of replacement door(s).** Members noted that final spec was awaited from the contractor. When all confirmed, Members resolved that the Clerk could pay 50% of the total costs in advance of the works, as requested by the Contractor. The Clerk also noted that the grant from Westmorland and Furness Council should be received this month (£8,000).

11. Queens Garden

Members had not met; however, thanks were noted to Sedbergh School for all the work they completed in the garden as part of their annual Challenge Week (many other areas of work also undertaken). Members also advised that a wildflower area had been created. However, they had not received a tender for the stonework near the memorial cross. Cllr Arnold also noted, for information and thanks, that Sedbergh School had also completed an additional project at the Bowling Club, to create a compost pit/area that was already in use. This had been completed to assist the Club with the new green bin recycling charges.

i) Tree Survey (and New Bridge/Playing Field) consider recommended works. Cllr Thomson will take this matter forward, in consultation with the Clerk – notably in respect of ownership/responsibility for some trees at New Bridge and ahead of any invite to tender for the recommended works.

12. Sedbergh Economic Partnership

Members reviewed their current suspension from the Economic Partnership. Noting, fundamentally, that the main reasons lay largely with the chairmanship, lack of public access to meetings and financial transparency. Members noted that some information is now shared on the website, though existing financial information was out of date. Members resolved to ask the Clerk to liaise, again, with the Economic Partnership to scope any planned changes to the Chair. Cllr Lancaster noted that 2027 will be an Election year, and a full review could be deferred until then if no resolution found in the interim. Members agreed to await an outcome from the Partnership in respect of the Chairman.

13. Correspondence

Receive items of correspondence (late items to be tabled at the meeting) and additionally consider any items for a future Agendas.

- i) **Sedbergh and District Transport User Group.** Members thanked the group for the recent Decline and Opportunity report (see also Item 3).
- ii) **Westmorland and Furness Council (WFC) – recent Respect/MASCG meeting.** Cllrs Lancaster and Thomson attended the meeting earlier this week, minutes were not yet available. However, it was noted that Cllr Lancaster believes the next Respect meeting must be held in the autumn, as it will not be viable to have the usual pre-planning meeting in March/April due to Elections/purdah. Cllrs Lancaster and Thomson also noted that a meeting between Sedbergh Parish Council, Westmorland and Furness Council and Yorkshire Dales National Park is required, to determine the future of the picnic area, and to consider the financial implications of the significant damage caused this year. The current TTRO and posts and boulder placement were also raised, and hope that this can be reviewed in the future. Finally, Members noted that there was no damage at Ghyllas.
- iii) **Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust – Members to consider a grant application.** Cllr Thomson was able to give Members some background to a potential townwide project to introduce increased wild flower plants/trees in collaboration with local schools, the allotments, Queen's Garden, businesses and some privately owned land. The proposal was for the Council to apply for a grant, and then distribute – though it was noted there were some strict time constraints on the application process. Members agreed that projects to improve the biodiversity of the town were welcomed, however, some concern was raised in respect of the benefit to private land (not accessible to the public) and business areas. Members also noted that the opportunity had not been publicly advertised in the community. Members asked Cllr Thomson if the project would be viable if the private and business areas were removed, however, Cllr Thomson declined to do so at this time.
- iv) **United Utilities – update on progress (July 2026) playing field/Howgill Lane, replacement water main.** Members noted that work had now commenced, and that final connection was scheduled 17 July. Members requested the Clerk to confirm that all work would be completed on time (as delays had been noted) with full reinstatement within original timescales.
- v) **Westmorland and Furness Council – Tour de France.** Members were not currently aware of any events arranged to coincide with the Tour.
- vi) **Visitor stay in holiday accommodation.** Members noted that the Clerk had received several communications around a recent stay in Sedbergh. The Clerk had advised that the issues raised were not within the remit of the Parish Council and had given them contact details for Westmorland and Furness Council. The Chair confirmed that this was a private matter, and no further correspondence would be entered into.
- vii) **Report of litter at rear of Main Street toilets (late correspondence).** The Chair reported that some waste bags had recently been stored at the rear of the toilets, and split, resulting in litter and concern for vermin. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the Parish Handyman. Additionally, it was resolved that the external water tank area be included at the next Amenities Committee meeting, particularly in respect of a grid/decking to protect the area.

14. Date and Time of next meeting. The Parish Council normal monthly meeting 7.30pm on Thursday 13 August 2026 in the Committee Room, Sedbergh People's Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh.

(The meeting closed at 9.00pm)