

## **DALSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting**

Held on Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 6.00pm in Dalston Victory Hall

#### **Councillors present**

Cllr McKerrell (Chair)

Cllr Baxter

Cllr Byers

Cllr Dinning

Cllr Ebbatson

Cllr Irving

Cllr Kyle

Cllr Laycock

Cllr Melrose

Cllr Potter

Cllr Warburton

Cllr Clarkson Webb

#### **Absent**

Cllr Drouet

Cllr Newton

Cllr Craig

#### **In attendance**

Cumberland Cllr Allison

44 members of the public

M Watling (Assistant Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer)

Ms J Cornah Wade (Locum Clerk)

#### **Apologies**

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr Drouet (holiday) and Cllr Newton (work commitments).

#### **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to authorise the Chairman to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7 April 2026.

#### **Requests for Dispensations**

None received.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

#### **56/26 Public Participation**

Please see **Appendix B**.

At the Chairman's discretion, and in accordance with Standing Order 1.a, agenda items 1 (Public Participation) and 8 (Planning Applications) were taken at the end of the meeting.

#### **57/26 Election of Chairman for the Council year 2026/27**

Cllr Byers proposed, and Cllr Irving seconded the proposal, that Cllr McKerrell be elected as Chairman.

The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to elect Cllr McKerrell as Chairman.

#### **58/26 To accept the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr McKerrell signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**59/26 To appoint a Vice Chairman for the Council year 2026/27**

Cllr Warburton proposed, and Cllr Dinning seconded the proposal, that Cllr Melrose be appointed as Vice Chairman. The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Cllr Melrose as Vice Chairman.

**60/26 To accept the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Melrose signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**61/26 Appointment of Councillors to Council Committees**

The Committee Working Group structure 2026-2027 had been distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting. All Councillors accepted their appointments on the committees.

**62/26 Report from the Cumberland Councillor – for information only**

The report was received and noted (Appendix A).

**63/26 Planning Decisions**

The following decisions were noted:

**21/1091** Barn adjacent Dalston House, Townhead Road, Dalston, Carlisle, CA5 7PZ. Change of use of Existing Grade II Listed Barn including partial demolition; Rebuilding of modern shed to rear of barn; Refurbishment & restoration of original barn to provide 1no.dwelling. Grant Permission.

**22/0240** 1 Village House, Carlisle Road, Dalston, Carlisle, CA5 7NQ. Change of use of outbuilding used by Cake Company to holiday let. Grant Permission.

**22/0078** Bridge End Inn, Bridge End, Dalston, Carlisle, CA5 7BH. Change of use of garage to dual use consisting of staff accommodation & holiday let to be used in association with the Bridge End public house (Revised Application). Grant Permission.

**26/0119** Roebeck, Cumdivock, Dalston, Carlisle, CA5 7JJ. Demolition of conservatory; single storey extension to provide additional living accommodation and utility room; single storey front extension to provide sunroom. Grant Permission.

**Applications**

**26/0228** Land South of Nook Lane, Dalston, Carlisle. CA5 7JG. Erection of 99no. Dwellings Including New Vehicular Access, Landscaping and Associated Works.

The Council thanked all residents who had submitted written representations or spoken at the meeting and acknowledged the offers of assistance received.

The Council considered:

- the written and verbal representations submitted by members of the public,
- the planning documents published by the applicant, and
- the material planning matters raised during discussion.

Cllr Melrose proposed that the Council establish a Working Group comprising Councillors and members of the community to assist in preparing an objection to the planning application. Cllr Baxter seconded the proposal. Following a vote, the proposal was carried, with all present in favour except one abstention. The Council **RESOLVED** to form the Working Group

The Council further **RESOLVED** to:

- request speaking rights at the Cumberland Council Planning Committee when the application is determined, and
- explore the option of engaging a planning consultant to support the preparation of the Council's formal submission.

Cumberland Councillor Allison offered his support, including seeking to ensure that the application is considered by a formal Planning Committee and indicating his willingness to speak on behalf of the Parish Council at that meeting.

**64/26 Clerk and Chairman Report**

- The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published final recommendations setting out new electoral arrangements for Cumberland. The formal document (a draft Order) to start that process will be laid in Parliament shortly. The draft Order will provide for the new electoral arrangements for Cumberland to come into effect for local elections in 2027.
- The new computer and laptop are now set up.

**65/26 Correspondence**

- CALC are hosting a Cumberland Council Highways event on 20 May 2026 at 7pm on Microsoft Teams.
- CALC Annual General Meeting is on 10 October 2026 at Roundthorn, Penrith. Time TBA.
- Carlisle Half Marathon and 10K run taking place on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2026 starting and finishing at The Racecourse. The route will pass through Raughton and Unthank.
- Carlisle West Rural Neighbourhood Policing Pledge meeting 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 6pm on Teams.

**66/26 Defibrillators** - to consider the discussion paper regarding the provision of defibrillators in Dalston. The Council **RESOLVED** to defer consideration of the discussion paper until the next meeting.

**67/26 Financial**

The following payments were approved:

Chq	Payee	Details	£
BACS	Wigton Town Council	Parish grass cutting January to March 2026 3759.42 Cemetery grass cutting January to March 2026 2222.48 Summerfield grass cutting January to March 2026 145.19 VAT 1225.42	£7,352.51
BACS	Dalston Recreation Association	Hall Hire for Rural Funtime Playdays	£337.50
BACS	Cache4 IT Solutions	Computer Monitor	£90.00
BACS	R & M Lowther	Tree work from tree survey and Cumberland Council instruction	£1,560.00
BACS	Dalston WI	Parish Meeting Teas	£50.00
BACS	M Watling	New rope for coop flagpole 23.52 Flowers and card for Sue 37.00 Stamps 14.48	£75.00
BACS	Martin Broatch	Window cleaning May	£10.00
CHQ 812	Ian Davidson	Dig grave for R Williamson	£500.00
Total			<u>£9,975.01</u>

The Clerks/RFO agreed Salary, PAYE, National Insurance and pension contributions were paid.

A transfer of £10,000 from the 30-day notice deposit account to the current account was approved.

**To receive the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026**

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026 had been circulated. No queries were raised on the figures. Council noted that the year-end accounts were with the internal auditor and no queries had been raised to date.

**68/26 Cemetery Matters**

The Council approved:

- The purchase of grave in Ward 5, Section L, Space 17 by Mr Robert Williamson.
- The burial of the late Ruth Denise Williamson in Ward 5, Section L, Space 17 on 22 April 2026.

**69/26**

**Councillor Matters**

- Cllr Byers raised a concern regarding access to the recycling facilities and requested that the end parking space in the Glave Hill car park beside the recycling has a Keep Clear sign on the tarmac to ensure unobstructed access. Cllr McKerrell agreed to take this forward.
- Cllr Baxter reported that a coping stone outside the Co-op was broken. The Assistant Clerk would follow this up.

**Dates of forthcoming meetings**

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place in Forge Green on Tuesday 9 June at 7.15pm.

Policy & Resource Meeting Dates for 2026 - TBC

Property & Maintenance Meeting dates for 2026 – TBC

The meeting closed at 7.02pm

## **Appendix A**

### **Cllr Allison report to Parish Council Meeting on 12 May 2026**

I will keep my report to the PC to a single subject of the Sustrans cycleway which I raised at the last meeting, that of the use of S106 funds from local developments. Thank you for your recent note.

There are two issues

- 1) Annual cutting back or treatment of the overgrowth, particularly nettles, along the edges. This is simply too much for volunteers.
- 2) Repairs to the tarmac surface;

In 2018 Cycle Carlisle (CC) set up two bank accounts, one supporting the Cargo Cycleway project (now commissioned) and the other the Sustrans Cycleway. CC income is from regular donations, from grants and contributions.

In 2020 CC applied for a grant for the Sustrans from the £20K remaining in The Grange S106 pot. At the time the city council were the administrative authority.

On 16/11/20 a Section S106 grant of £7,000 was channelled through Dalston parish council as CC is not recognised as satisfying the requirements of a “properly constituted body” such as a parish council.

On 8/11/22 .CC paid the contractor £38,820 for repairs to a section in Dalston parish.

The late councillor Hugh McDevitt was a master at securing S106 funds by getting in early and having dialogue with the case officer and the developer. Prompted by the Story Homes application 26/0228 for 99 houses on Nook Lane, CC intend to apply for a grant to undertake the essential maintenance indicated above.

CC has established itself as an independent vehicle and have made significant contributions to the two projects that they identified, the Cargo and the Sustran cycleways.

### **I ask the parish council**

**At the appropriate time, if CC apply for a S106 grant (or whatever replaces it) via Application 26/0228, will you allow it to be channelled through the parish council as before?**

**More immediately, CC have funds to commission the cutting back/treatment of vegetation as required during the growing season. With your agreement It would be sensible to employ the same contractor as the parish council.**

This will also be put to Cummersdale parish council.

## Appendix B

### Written Representations Received Before the Meeting – Combined Summary

The Assistant Clerk had circulated these to the Councillors prior to the meeting for consideration.

Several residents submitted written objections to planning application 26/0228 (Nook Lane). The majority asked the Parish Council to oppose the proposal, to seek speaking rights at the Planning Committee, to engage an independent planning consultant, and to hold a public meeting due to the volume and technical nature of the documents. Some also requested an extension to the consultation period.

Residents raised a wide range of concerns. Many highlighted highway safety issues, describing Nook Lane and Townhead Road as narrow rural roads with tight bends, limited footways, no road markings, and frequent flooding, including at the junction with Glebe Close. They noted that these routes are heavily used by walkers, cyclists, runners, horse riders and children, and expressed concern that the development would introduce significant additional traffic, create a dangerous crossroads, and increase risks for vulnerable road users.

Several residents raised issues relating to drainage and sewage capacity. They reported that the Dalston sewage treatment works is already operating at or near capacity, with storm overflows into the River Caldeu, and that water pressure in parts of the village has previously dropped following development. They expressed concern that further hard surfacing would exacerbate existing surface water flooding on Nook Lane, Townhead Road and surrounding areas.

Residents also referred to pressure on local services, stating that the medical practice and village schools are already full and have limited or no scope for expansion. Some questioned the suggestion that additional healthcare provision could be delivered from the Village Hall at weekends.

A number of submissions objected to the loss of agricultural land, hedgerows and wildlife habitat, noting the presence of species such as bats, owls, hares and hedgehogs, and emphasising the importance of retaining the rural character of the village. Several residents referenced the Dalston Neighbourhood Plan, stating that the site lies outside the Defined Development Boundary and is not allocated for housing. They argued that the proposal would constitute an unacceptable intrusion into open countryside and could encourage further speculative development.

Concerns were also raised about sustainability, with residents noting that the site is more than double the recommended walking distance from primary services and that the closure of the station car park has made access to public transport more difficult. Some questioned the need for additional housing in Dalston given the scale of planned development at St Cuthbert's Garden Village and the lack of new employment opportunities locally.

Across the submissions, residents expressed strong opposition to the proposal and urged the Parish Council to lodge a robust objection with Cumberland Council.

### Planning Policy Officer Written Response – Summary

A planning policy officer provided clarification regarding the status of planning application 26/0228. They explained that the proposal will be assessed under the "windfall housing" policies of both the Carlisle Local Plan and the Dalston Neighbourhood Plan, as the site is *"land not allocated for such in a local plan."* They noted that the new Cumberland Local Plan is at a very early stage and is unlikely to be adopted until *"2029 at the earliest."*

The officer stated that the application has *"jumped the gun a little bit"* in relation to the forthcoming Local Plan allocations but emphasised that the Council cannot control when developers choose to submit applications. Once submitted, each application must be assessed *"on its own merits against planning policies and other material considerations."*

They confirmed that the planning policy team will raise concerns about the scale and suitability of the proposal as a windfall site and will stress that it would ideally be considered through the Local Plan allocation process. However, the final decision rests with the development management case officer.

The officer advised that if the Parish Council has concerns, it is important that it lodges any objections through the usual process.

### **Verbal Representations Made at the Meeting - Summary**

The Chairman invited residents to speak regarding planning application 26/0228. Five residents addressed the meeting.

#### **Representation 1**

A resident expressed appreciation for the Parish Council's work and highlighted the importance of the Dalston Neighbourhood Plan, noting that it was created through extensive consultation and approved at referendum with "88% support".

The resident stated that the proposed development lies outside the Defined Development Boundary set by the Plan, "*spilling housing into land which is currently open countryside*". They noted that development beyond this boundary is only supported where a district-wide five-year land supply shortfall is demonstrated.

They referred to Cumberland Council's 2026 Housing Land Position Statement, arguing that existing and pipeline sites provide "*7-10 years' supply*", meaning the exception does not apply. They also referenced the forthcoming St Cuthbert's Garden Village, which will deliver "*10,000 homes over a ten-year period*", questioning the need for further housing given projected population decline.

The resident urged the Council and community not to remain neutral, warning that failing to defend the Neighbourhood Plan risks reinforcing the view that "*it's already decided... there is no point*" in objecting. They concluded by encouraging the Council to stand up for the Plan and the village.

#### **Representation 2**

A resident reported that, during a recent door-knocking exercise, they had received approximately 200 verbal objections to the application. They also stated that 95 written objections had been submitted directly to the Planning Department.

The resident referred to housing market data sourced from Rightmove, noting that around 50 houses, flats and bungalows had sold in the village over the past two years, compared with 80 sales in the current year. They argued that this demonstrates an existing and healthy mix of housing types already available within Dalston. They further observed that, of the 99 dwellings proposed, more than half would comprise 4-5 bedroom properties, with no provision for 1-2 bedroom homes or bungalows.

The resident stated that the average starting price for a property in Dalston is approximately £90,000, suggesting that the village is not difficult to move into and that affordability is not a barrier to new residents. They objected to the proposal on design grounds, stating that the development does not reflect the scale, form and character of existing buildings, contrary to Policy SP 6 (Securing Good Design) of the Carlisle District Local Plan 2015-2030. They also referred to Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which sets out national expectations for good design and landscape integration.

The resident expressed concern that the development represents large-scale encroachment into open countryside, would place additional pressure on local services, and would increase congestion on access roads. They also highlighted the capacity of local schools and medical provision as areas of concern, and referred to existing sewage overflow into the River Caldew, stating that available data indicates this occurs on average for eight hours per week.

#### **Representation 3**

A resident raised concerns regarding the environmental impact, drainage arrangements and transport implications of the proposed development.

They stated that the land identified for development supports priority and protected species, and that the stretch from Nook Lane to the barn contains mature oak trees and an ancient hedgerow. They noted that the plans show three new access points being cut through this hedgerow. The resident also expressed concern that the site has been classified within the developer's ecological assessment as "*cereal field*",

arguing that this inaccurately lowers the biodiversity net gain requirement.

The resident raised issues relating to surface water management, noting that the site comprises clay soil and that there is already a deficiency in emergency flood outlets. They stated that the development proposals provide very limited detail on drainage arrangements, simply indicating that run-off will enter the existing drain and be discharged further downstream. They argued that this does not address the increased surface water generated by the development.

The resident also highlighted concerns about highway safety and accessibility. They described Nook Lane as a very narrow lane with low existing traffic levels, and stated that Townhead Road is similarly constrained, with a footpath that is already inadequate. They noted that the plans indicate provision for 273 parking spaces, 39 garages and 10 visitor spaces, which they believe would significantly increase traffic on both roads. They further observed that national benchmarks for sustainable development use a 400-metre walking distance to community services, whereas the proposed site lies between approximately 800 and 1,200 metres from the village.

#### **Representation 4**

A resident raised concerns regarding sewage capacity and the suitability of Townhead Road for construction traffic. They noted that these issues had also been highlighted by a representative of United Utilities and by a Cumberland Council Highways Officer.

The resident referred to existing sewage discharge into the River Caldew, which within Dalston is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. They stated that this makes it essential for United Utilities to address current capacity constraints before any further development is permitted. They also referred to correspondence between United Utilities and Cumberland Council dated November 2012, which indicated that the Grange development would absorb all remaining headroom in the system. The resident reported that they had written to United Utilities two months ago to ask whether capacity had increased since 2012 or whether any upgrades were planned. United Utilities responded confirming that no increase had been required and that no improvements were currently planned.

The resident also raised concerns about the suitability of Townhead Road for construction traffic. They noted that, during consideration of the 2014 Grange development, the Highways Officer advised that all traffic should exit via Station Road because Townhead Road was unsuitable, and that this position was endorsed by the Planning Officer.

The resident stated that seeking Section 106 contributions or imposing planning conditions would not adequately address these issues, and they therefore objected to the proposal in full.

They suggested that possible next steps for the Parish Council could include arranging a meeting with Planning Officers, engaging a planning consultant to assist, submitting strong objections to the Planning Department, and requesting a right to speak.

#### **Representation 5**

A resident raised concerns regarding the capacity of local healthcare and education services to accommodate the scale of the proposed development. They reported that, although the existing surgery cannot be physically extended, it has been suggested that additional appointments could be delivered from the Village Hall at weekends. The resident questioned whether this represents a sustainable or appropriate long-term solution.

In relation to education, the resident noted that Dalston currently comprises approximately 1,000 homes, and that the proposed development would increase this by around 10%. They stated that the three primary schools serving Dalston admit 6, 8 and 30 pupils per year respectively, and that these admission levels must be maintained. They expressed concern that the development could generate demand for up to 50 additional primary school places. They noted that the proposal suggests that schools could expand their catchment areas to accommodate this increase but argued that this does not address the practical ability of the schools to manage higher pupil numbers.

The resident also highlighted that Nook Lane is one of the few safe cycling routes for young children within

the parish and expressed concern that increased traffic associated with the development could compromise this.

**Other Public Participation Items**

Residents also raised the following matters:

At the consultation meeting last month it was raised that Dalston does not have village status and it is a town?

The Chairman confirmed that this was accurate.

Is the classification based on facilities? If so Brampton and Longtown have far more than Dalston and we do not have the ability to expand in the same way. This should be explored further to assist in challenging the settlement status of Dalston as a town.

Cllr Baxter reported that the village nature and surrounding green spaces are vital to the character of Dalston. With reference to numbers and schools, the Morton West development is underway, and those residents may also wish to educate their children in Dalston. It should be noted that individual responses, especially in high volume, to the planning application could carry far more weight than any parish council response.