

# LPC

## LAZONBY PARISH COUNCIL

### DRAFT BEFORE APPROVAL

### THE ANNUAL OPEN PARISH MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL

#### Minutes

held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025, starting at 7 p.m, in Lazonby Village Hall.

**Present:** Chair Councillor Phillip Whitehead.

Councillors Andrew Miller, Ryan Wilson-Lane, Maralyn Wade and Andrew Sharples.

Also in attendance: Westmorland & Furness Councillor Hilary Carrick, the Treasurer to the Council Chris Hoy and the Clerk to the Council Rebecca Wyatt.

ITEM / MINUTE No.	ITEM	BUSINESS
1.	<b>Apologies for absence.</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the apologies received from Parish Councillors Tim Wright, be accepted and noted.
2.	<b>Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.</b>	The Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024 were considered. <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2023 be approved and signed as a true record of those proceedings.
3.	<b>Reports from the Minutes of the Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that there were no reports from the Minutes of the last Annual Open Parish Meeting held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024.
4.	<b>The Parish Council's Annual Report for the period May 2024 to May 2025.</b>	
	<p>Welcome to Lazonby Parish Council's Annual Open Meeting. Thank you for your attendance and we look forward to any of your questions or comments in the open session following this report. It's been yet another year of challenges and successes for the Parish Council, especially with up and down Council membership which to a degree impacts the work of the Parish Council. However, thankfully even with Council member losses we were lucky to have new Councillors join the Parish Council, and are forever hopeful in bringing our numbers up again.</p> <p>We sadly said goodbye to Councillor Ruth Hookway, and our most recent Chair Councillor Craig Wilkinson during the last year who we would like to thank for their time working on behalf of the local community with the Parish Council. We were also very fortunate to welcome Councillor Ryan Wilson-Lane and returning Councillor Andrew Sharples, who have both already got stuck into their roles helping the local community, so we look forward to continuing to work with them over the coming years. We currently have four vacant seats in the Parish Council which is hoped will be filled in the near future, as it is so important that the Parish has a grass roots organisation like the Parish Council to ensure the Parish</p>	

is well maintained and represented.

As always the Parish Council would like to thank those Parishioners who have contributed towards the running of the Parish Council and kept an eye on the way we conduct parish business to ensure we maintain a high standard of governance and accountability. We hope you will continue to support the Parish Council over the coming year. As volunteers, Council Member give their time for free and are committed to ensuring that the parish has the best representation and carries out much needed maintenance projects in the parish, but more can always be done and support from the local community is always welcome.

The Parish Council we would like to thank both Parish Council Officers - Beccy Wyatt in her role as Clerk, and Chris Hoy in his role as Treasurer, for their professional and tireless efforts in the smooth running, financial security and effectiveness of the Parish Council. They have worked another year with continued dedication making the Parish Councillors jobs easier.

The Parish Council would like to thank Westmorland & Furness Councillor Hilary Carrick for her continued dedication and time that she spends on parish matters, especially regarding Highways issues. Other people that have worked exceedingly hard for us and deserve a thank you are: the Parish Council webmaster Shaun Bunting for his work maintaining the Parish Council website; Geoff and Jennifer Wilson for another year of kindly volunteering to keep the recycling centre tidy and free of fly-tipping, and for the work they do keeping the Village Green maintained; the grass-cutting volunteers who keep the village looking tidy; and the school staff and pupils who deliver the Parish Council newsletter through Lazonby Lines.

There are always reoccurring issues that the Parish Council deal with such as Highways issues like potholes, resurfacing and footways; dog fouling and dog control; flooding in the parish; traffic and speeding issues: footway lighting; litter; general maintenance issues; and flytipping at the recycling centre and other parts of the parish. The Parish Council would like to thank the parishioners, who report problems in the parish so that the Parish Council can look to resolve them.

Unfortunately, after several years of working on the Egg Packing Station Housing Project, the Parish Council after consultation with the other parties involved, came to the sad decision to close down the project due to escalating costs that made the project no longer viable. It was upsetting and not an easy decision to have to make.

The Parish Council continues to receive revenue from the recycling site and fishing licences. The Parish Council also continues to look at ways that visitors using the parking/picnic area by the recycling centre can voluntary contribute to parking there. So the Parish Council have decided to build a stone cairn that will hold a donation box. This will be carried out this year. However, the Eden Bridge car park is also going to have a makeover with a new stone surface being put down in the coming months, and the damaged fence repaired. The Parish Council were kindly awarded £3000 from Lazonby & Hesketh Place Action Group (PAG) towards the cost of the car parks resurfacing project.

Will Pool is also going to undergo a makeover this year, with a parishioner kindly volunteering to rebuild the dipping platform with the Parish Council paying for materials. The Will Pool information board is also having a makeover too. The project was kindly award £500 from Locality through Westmorland & Furness Councillor Hilary Carrick.

The Parish Council are still very much involved with helping to solve the flooding issues in the parish, continuing to work alongside external agencies, Westmorland & Furness Councillor Hilary Carrick and parishioners to resolve these issues. Officers from the Local Lead Flood Authority and Highways worked together to produce a comprehensive report on potential solutions, with the Culvert being one of the issues that needed addressing. This is still ongoing.

The Parish Council were in discussions with an Angling Club to see if they would be happy to take over the management and balliffing of the fishing in the parish. However, this did not go ahead as the terms and conditions could not be agreed on. This still may happen in the future but the Council want to make it clear that it will only happen if parishioners have the rights to fish for free in the parish.

Westmorland & Furness have taken the decision to ask Parish Councils if they wished to hand back the responsibility of the footway lighting costs to them. Lazonby Parish Council have taken the decision to hand all financial and maintenance responsibility back to Westmorland & Furness. The Footway Lighting

hand over is currently being finalised.

As a Council, we have continued to support organisations in the Parish or organisations that benefit the parish, through the grants we award. There were three requests for financial support from a local service in the parish for 2025/2026. The FellRunner have been awarded £702 to provide a scheduled local bus service for Parishioners. Lazonby & District Swimming Pool have been awarded £2500 to replace the interior surface of the pool which is 60 years old and badly worn and damaged. The third grant application from the Lazonby Village Hall is still being finalised.

Finally, the Parish Council would like to welcome everyone who has moved into the Parish over the last year. They would also welcome any parishioner input in helping the Parish Council to run a successful and happy parish, and encourage people to join the Parish Council especially as there are currently four vacancies. Please continue to read the notices that are put up on the parish notice boards and Parish Council website and also keep up to date with the planning applications and other parish matters through our website ([www.lazonbyparishcouncil.org](http://www.lazonbyparishcouncil.org)), as we can only represent the people of the parish if we know your views. The Parish Council now has a social media presence with its own facebook page displaying local Council news and other issues relevant to the parish.

Meanwhile, everyone is very welcome to attend our meetings, which are held on the first Wednesday each month at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, with no scheduled meetings for January or August. We look forward to seeing you then.

Lazonby Parish Council - May 2025.

**RESOLVED** that the Chairs Report be noted with thanks to the Chair Phillip Whitehead for reading the report.

5.

**Treasurer's  
Financial  
Report and  
Accounts.**

The Treasurer presented the financial report and the Income and Expenditure Accounts for 2024 - 2025 (please see attached), which were issued to all those present after which questions were invited. The following report was given.

**Total Reserves held at yearend 2024/25 were £49959**

The External Auditors strongly recommend that the maximum reserves should not exceed twice the Precept amount. The Precept for the year stood at £14350. Therefore the maximum Reserve balance would equate to £28700. Reserves were substantially above this threshold by £21259. The explanation for such an increase is attributed to the Parish Council instigating an affordable housing project on the site of the old Egg Packing Station. The grant from the former Eden DC for affordable housing was paid in two phases, firstly £27000 and secondly £34000, the first phase has been spent and the second only partially, with £28839 remaining.

**Therefore Parish Reserves less the remaining unspent grant were £21120, inside the recommended reserve threshold.**

**The PC agreed that the Precept should be increased by £650 to £15000 for 2025/26.**

This decision was based on the Street Light policy that W & F Council were reviewing. The Street Lights are currently owned by the PC and W & F were considering repatriating the Lights but were unable to clarify their position before the deadline to submit the Precept in early January. Without this clarification a small increase in the Precept was agreed to cover potential costs of up to £4000 per annum.

It can now be reported that in the last month W & F have agreed to repatriate the Lights saving the PC a considerable cost which can now be reflected in the PC Budgets going forward.

A full audit externally is not necessary (this will be highlighted later after the open meeting) because of the turnover thresholds not breaching the £25k limit of either income and expenditure. Greater detail will be available on the Parish website after this meeting in accordance with the guidelines set by the external auditors under self – certification/ full review of our accounts. However, I have provided some basic detail in the variances between the accounts of 2023/24 and present day 2024/25 that have a significant difference.

**Fishing Permits UP £233** - The Parish Council has fishing rights on a stretch of the River Eden and sells permits to non - parishioners to fish. Receipts vary from year to year due to interest/economics/weather.

**VAT Recovery DOWN £1438** - This reflects less projects undertaken by the PC.

**Rents UP £975** - Whilst the donations from the Angel Lane Chip Van remain the same and the rental of the Old School from Bud Designs, the insurance paid by Bud Designs on the property increased and a new operator in Barugh foods donated for the use of the car park. Two other operators donated for using the site to launch canoes and a contactor rented space for a unit to be parked for a short while.

**Bank Interest UP £155** - The result of a reasonable balance on deposit predominately belonging to the former Eden DC as a grant for the Egg Packing Station Project and HSBC had increased its rates marginally. This has partly offset the previous costs of having to pay for full external audit reviews over the last few years compounded by the high reserves and transactions pertaining to them regarding the Egg Packing Station.

**Staff Salaries UP £581** - due to an increase in wages under local authority guidelines. Over time this will impact the Precept decision making if inflation remains higher.

**Staff Expenses DOWN £125** - Less mileage claims due to less visits to the Parish by the Clerk.

**Local grants DOWN £390** - A reduction in grant applicants locally, just Fellrunner Bus for £810.

**Operating Costs DOWN £1736** - Costs were substantially lower than 2023/24 as that financial year a new lap top was purchased for the Clerk costing (£463), the Kings Coronation was celebrated costing (£429), three Councillors retired and recognized by two different parties costing (£542), external audit fees costing (£378) and annual electricity costs incurred by the Village Hall for the two PC owned street lights attached to the Hall costing (£125).

Chris Hoy  
Treasurer to the Council  
7th May 2025

**RESOLVED** that the financial report and accounts submitted for 2024 to 2025 by the Treasurer be noted and approved and that the Treasurer be thanked for his report.

6.

**Open Forum – Parishioners’ Questions & Suggestions.**

The Chair opened the Meeting to the floor and invited those present for their contributions for debate

**RESOLVED** that there were no comments or issues raised by parishioners.

There being no further items raised for discussion the Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all Parishioners for their attendance and closed the meeting at approximately 7.20 pm.