

Workington Town Council

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Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Workington Town Council held on Wednesday 28th January 2026 at 6pm in Allerdale House, Griffin Street, Workington, CA14 3YJ.

Cllr Mary Bainbridge	Absent	Cllr John Mills	Present
Cllr Barbara Cannon	Absent*	Cllr Billy Miskelly	Present
Cllr Beth Dixon	Present	Cllr Patricia Poole	Present
Cllr David Farrar	Present	Cllr Denise Rollo	Absent
Cllr Sue Fryer	Absent	Cllr Mike Rollo	Present
Cllr Mark Fryer	Present	Cllr Neil Schofield	Present
Cllr Hilary Harrington	Present	Cllr Kate Schofield	Present
Cllr Michael Heaslip	Present	Cllr Stephen Stoddart	Present
Cllr Allan Hodgson	Present	Cllr David Tennyson	Absent
Cllr Bernadette Jones	Present	Cllr Lynda Williams	Present
Cllr Paul Larkin	Present	Cllr Ellie Wood	Present
Cllr Susan Martin	Present	Cllr Joan Wright	Present
Cllr Sean Melton	Absent*		

In attendance: Chief Officer/RFO and one member of the public.

The Mayor's chaplain said a prayer prior to the start of the meeting and then departed.

25.66 Absences: Absences notified prior to the meeting were noted from Cllrs Sean Melton and Barbara Cannon.

Cllr Miskelly advised that absences should be changed to apologies and stating absences is a contravention of LGA.

The Mayor advised this had already been resolved by Council and would not be discussed further.

25.67 Declarations of Interest: None

25.68 Exclusion of Press and Public:

Council discussed if members of the public should be removed from the discussion with regards to F & GP minutes at agenda item 13, as Cllr Miskelly advised he had several questions to ask on the part two confidential minutes of the meeting.

The Mayor advised he would decide at that agenda item depending on what questions were asked and the information it may disclose.

25.69 Public Representation: None

25.70 Minutes from previous meeting

Resolved: Council approved the minutes from the meeting on 3rd December 2025 and affirmed them a true record.

25.71 Public Questions: None

25.72 Questions and Statements from members:

Statement by Councillor Billy Miskelly to the meeting of Workington Town Council scheduled for Wednesday the 28th of January 2026.

At the meeting of this Council on Wednesday the 15th of October 2025 at 18.00 hours at Allerdale House, Griffin street, CA14 3YJ agenda item 15 "Committee recommendations" Sub item (B) Councillor Heaslip presented a recommendation from the Workington Town Council Environment committee.

That recommendation was that the land owned by Workington Town Council known as the Ranch should considered to apply for fields in trust status.

- After Councillor Heaslip satisfied questions from Councillor Stephen Stoddart it was agreed by the Council that Officers should investigate this issue.

However, it has been brought to my attention that due to the status of a long standing and good tenants occupying the aforementioned land known as the Ranch the Council is prohibited from gaining the status of "Fields in Trust".

The reason being is as follows.

In Appendix A of the Fields in trust 10-step protection process it states and is very clear as it states.

Any green space where public access is restricted by exclusive events and activities that take up more than 50% of the space for more than three months of in a calendar year is not suitable for protection under this scheme.

Facilities owned by or leased to private clubs are not suitable for protection under this scheme.

So, as the present long standing and excellent tenants of the land known as the Ranch have no intention of leaving, further investigation would prove a fruitless and an expensive waste of Officer time.

25.73 Motions on Notice: None

25.74 Reports from Outside Bodies: None

25.75 Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor advised that he had joined three schools at the Harrington Marina litter pick that morning and it was refreshing to see so many children wanting to get involved in keeping Workington tidy. The Mayor encouraged all Councillors to try and attend litter picks in their wards which take place at the end of each month.

Council noted the report for information.

25.76 Budget 2025-2026

Council noted the budget summary, reserves and income reports YTD.

25.77 Committee minutes

Council discussed the minutes from the Finance and General purposes committee meeting held on Monday 19th January 2026.

As the minutes being discussed formed part two of the F & GP meeting the member of public present was asked to leave the room.

Minute FG25.78 The Ranch

Cllr Heaslip asked the Chair of F & GP for clarification if there was any lease, license or other legal agreement in place with users of The Ranch. Confirmation was also required that there has been no exclusive use granted and that The Ranch is to open to all the people of Workington to hire.

Cllr Mike Rollo confirmed that there was no legal agreement in place with any users of The Ranch and no exclusive use has or can be given.

Cllr Miskelly asked about WJFCL. Cllr Mike Rollo advised that there is no formal agreement in place, and that they are required to complete the hire forms and provide the relevant information the same as anyone else who wants to hire the land. They do not and cannot have exclusive use.

Cllr Miskelly advised he did not agree with this, and the Council purchased the land to save the football club.

The Mayor moved to the next item, Cllr Miskelly stated he had more questions to ask.

Cllr Miskelly advised that The Ranch report written by the Chief Officer which went to F & GP was untrue. The Mayor advised that reports that go to Council are not untrue and apologies should be made to those who were involved in the writing of the report.

Cllr Miskelly stated that the Chair has accused a Councillor of sending confidential information to a member of the public and how does he know it was not a staff member. The Mayor asked Cllr Miskelly to refrain from talking about individual Cllrs or staff.

The Mayor advised the discussion with regards to this minute was finished and asked Cllr Miskelly if he had any other questions.

Minute FG25.79

Cllr Miskelly stated that any complaints from staff about elected members was a matter for the monitoring officer. The Mayor advised that no discussions would be had about staff.

Minute FG25.81

Cllr Miskelly advised that on 5th September 2024 the Chief Officer sent an email advising that staff would move out of the Princess Street offices temporarily and when was it decided that staff would not be moving back.

A point of order was called by Cllr Fryer, contravention of SO 6a. Cllr Miskelly is disrupting the business of the Council. He has been asked numerous times by The Mayor to ask his questions but continues to make statements which are negative towards the Council and staff.

Cllr Miskelly apologised if Council thought he was being disruptive at this was not his intention.

The Mayor advised that a report with regards to the Princess Street building was on the main agenda and questions could be asked then.

The member of the public returned to the room.

25.78 Budget 2026-2027

No questions were asked with regards to the proposed budget, which was moved and seconded by Cllr Mike Rollo and Cllr Heaslip.

Council voted to approve the 2026-2027 budget as recommended by F & GP and request a precept from Cumberland Council of £1,124,740.

			FOR	Against	Abstain
Cllr	Mary	Bainbridge		Not present	
Cllr	Barbara	Cannon		Not present	
Cllr	Beth	Dixon	1		
Cllr	David	Farrar	1		
Cllr	Sue	Fryer		Not present	
Cllr	Mark	Fryer	1		
Cllr	Hilary	Harrington	1		
Cllr	Michael	Heaslip	1		
Cllr	Allan	Hodgson	1		
Cllr	Bernadette	Jones	1		
Cllr	Paul	Larkin	1		
Cllr	Susan	Martin	1		
Cllr	Sean	Melton		Not present	
Cllr	John	Mills	1		
Cllr	Billy	Miskelly			1
Cllr	Patricia	Poole	1		
Cllr	Denise	Rollo		Not present	
Cllr	Mike	Rollo	1		
Cllr	Neil	Schofield	1		
Cllr	Kate	Schofield	1		
Cllr	Stephen	Stoddart	1		

Cllr	David	Tennyson	Not present		
Cllr	Lynda	Williams	1		
Cllr	Ellie	Wood	1		
Cllr	Joan	Wright	1		
TOTALS			18	0	1

Resolved: Council approved the 2026-2027 budget and precept request from Cumberland Council of £1,124,740.

25.79 Staffing

Council noted the report. Which was moved and seconded. No questions or objections.

Resolved: Council approved recruitment of a part time Admin/Events Assistant on a one-year contract (total cost approved £18,120.69 salary, NI and pension).

Resolved: Council approved delegated authority to Mayor, Chief Officer, Chair and Vice Chairs of F & GP and Culture and Social Investment Committees for the appointment of an event management company and associated services to carry out the Council's approved events programme 2026-2027.

25.80 Council Assets Princess Street and Park Café

Council noted the report. Which was moved and seconded. No questions or objections.

Resolved: Council approved for Officers to tender for refurbishment works at Princess Street.

Resolved: Council approved the demolition of the old park café building. £15,000 from reserves to be added to the asset management budget line 25-26 budget to cover costs.

25.81 Brewery House Wall

Council noted the report. Which was moved and seconded. No questions or objections.

Resolved: Council approved spend of £36,000 to repair the wall at Brewery House. £36,000 from reserves to be added to the asset management budget line 25-26 budget to cover costs.

The meeting ended at 18.36.