

SEDGWICK PARISH COUNCIL

*Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14th January 2026 at 7:30pm
at Sedgwick Village Hall.*

Present: Cllr B Holmes (Chair), Cllr B Tanham (Vice chair), Cllr G Stoker, Cllr J Hall, Mrs Rachel Harrison (Parish Clerk), Westmorland & Furness Cllr D Rathbone and 3 members of the public.

79/25 Apologies none

80/25 Minutes: It was resolved for the Chairperson to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2025 as a true record.

81/25 Declarations of Interest / Dispensation Requests:

Cllr B Tanham declared that as she is the owner of a part of the canal towpath, she can take part in discussion regarding the Canal but cannot vote on any decisions.

82/25 Public Participation:

- a) Three members of the public attended and all were interested in the vacant Parish Councillor roles.
- b) Reports from residents regarding anti-social behaviour and vandalism were discussed and W&F Cllr D Rathbone advised that contact with PCSO Hayley Newman should be made again.

83/25 Reports

Westmorland & Furness Council Cllr D Rathbone reported the following;

Gritting – Cllr Rathbone had chased the issue of getting on the section of road from Force Bridge and up Cooper's Hill and believed it was already on the gritting schedule, however as this is not a bus route he will check again. It was advised the diversion and gritted route is a right turn at Force Bridge and along Back Lane into the village.

Flooding – The issue on the road to Natland is ongoing and as the 1st option was not viable the issue has been referred back to engineers at the highways team and we will be updated in due course.

Resurfacing at Cooper's Hill – This is scheduled for the 2025/26 financial year.

Permission to cut grass around Bus Shelter on Back Lane. – The Parish Council have had no response to their request and Cllr Rathbone will therefore try and get us a contact at W&F Council regarding this.

Chief Executive – As previously reported W&F Council have appointed a new chief executive and her role has begun.

Pollinators Sites – Cllr Rathbone will forward us an email regarding potential Pollinator Sites.

84/25 Planning Application submitted/received:

None

85/25 Highways/Footpaths

- a) The Highways report was presented and updated.
- b) The Parish Council will discuss the bedding in period at the March 2026 meeting.
- c) The new noticeboard has been delivered, and the contractor will be contacted regarding installation.

86/25 Playground /Millennium Field

- a) Cllr G Stoker gave his monthly Safety Report and reported that the bins have been emptied The Basketball net will be changed in the spring and some weeding will also be needed around the slide.
- b) The regular helpers with general maintenance jobs on the Millennium Field were once again thanked for all the voluntary work.

87/25 Fundraising & Events

- a) Equipment Replacement – no updates.

88/25 Safeguarding Report

- a) Cllr Tanham will soon be completing her Safeguarding course.

89/25 Canal

- a) A report by Cllr B Holmes can be seen on the website and in the noticeboard.
- b) The dry stonewall has been repaired and the adjacent landowner will be written too and thanked for all their hard work
- c) James Park is expected this week for his annual maintenance work on the canal
- d) A letter received from W&F Council regarding the canal path was discussed and a meeting will be held with them on 20/01/2026 to discuss their resurfacing request. The priority of the Parish Council

remains for their work to create a high quality natural habitat, carried out by residents over the last 40 years, to be continued and for it to be maintained as a wildlife area with a pedestrian footpath.

90/25 Website/social media

- a) Cllr B Holmes reported that the website is up to date and Facebook posts are being made.
- b) The new .gov.uk website is in the process of being transferred and the Parish Council are happy with the current progress. Further new .gov.uk email addresses will be obtained as needed.
- c) An IT Policy and an Accessibility Statement were both circulated and approved by the Parish Council ready for the new website.

91/25 Finance

a) Bank balances as of 28/11/2025 Current = £13163.04 and 20/11/2025 Reserve = £22695.71 were noted and the bank reconciliation including payments agreed on 12th November 2025 was signed.

b) The below payments were approved:

Parish Clerks Salary November/December = £470.87

Parish Clerks Expenses November/December = £52.00

HMRC PAYE (Rachel Harrison) November/December = £143.55

D&C Atkinson (Grass Cutting) = December 1 x £91.00 = £91.00 (January – a credit will be applied to the account for the missed October cut).

Treble 3 (Gov.uk domain name registration) = £54.00

Treble 3 (annual web hosting/domain name renewal .org.uk) = £192.00

Printing Plus (Christmas Newsletter) = £102.00

Sedgwick Cricket Club (cheque re-issue) = £200.00

Rachel Harrison (Green Barnes Noticeboard) = £728.21

- d) The budget was discussed and due to potential higher costs for a new Clerk plus extra training costs, that may be now needed, it was decided that the budget would be increased to allow for this.
- e) As a result of increased costs in the budget mentioned above it was decided that the precept should be increased by 5% above last year. The precept amount to be requested for 2026/2027 will be £13202.19.
- f) The Financial Reserve Policy was circulated and approved and will be updated on the website.
- g) Malcolm Richardson has been contacted regarding the 2025/2026 audit and he is happy to undertake this again this year.

92/25 Newsletter

- a) The Christmas Newsletter was well received and resulted in interest for the roles of Parish Councillors. The Spring newsletter will be drafted ready for circulation before the APM. Topics for the next newsletter include the new noticeboard, the clerk vacancy and an introduction to our new Parish Councillors.

93/25 Correspondence: All the documents have been received and circulated to the Councillors.

94/25 Open Action not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- a) Councillor Gerry Stoker sadly resigned from his role at the meeting after 10 years of service. He was thanked for all of his hard work especially all his work on the Millennium Field over the years. His support and dedication will be greatly missed by all.
- b) A new Parish Councillor was co-opted at the meeting. Adrian Heffernan will be a great asset to the team and he was thanked for attending and joining the Parish Council.
- c) The role of Parish Clerk was discussed and Cllr Holmes will contact any interested parties within the week. The current clerk has kindly offered to remain in her role until a suitable replacement is found.
- d) Sedgwick Cricket Club will be asked if they would like to come to the APM to speak and discuss the planned extension.

95/25 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the next Parish Meeting will be on **Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7.30pm.**

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Topics- *Cllr Roles & Responsibilities, Fundraising, cheque for money to be transferred to reserve account, Emergency Plan any changes now Cllr Stoker has resigned.*

Signed:..... (Chairperson) Date: 11th March 2026