



Carnforth Town Council

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

**Summons to attend meeting of the Property & Environmental Committee
on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at 5:30pm at Carnforth Civic Hall**

A G E N D A

- 25082. Apologies:** To receive apologies
- 25083. Declarations of Interests and dispensations:** To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations on items on the agenda
- 25084. Urgent Business:** To consider any items of urgent business not on the agenda.
- 25085. Minutes:** To consider and approve Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 1st July 2025
- 25086. Public participation & information only updates:** To adjourn the meeting for a period of public discussion and to provide 'information only' updates on activities in recent weeks. (Note: Matters raised for items not on the agenda that require a 'decision' may be deferred to a future meeting)
- 25087. Council Property:** To consider property and assets and related operational updates including:
- 1) Carnforth Civic Hall & Crag Bank Village Halls updates (See Town Clerk's Report)
 - 2) Refurbishment of Kitchens and Hall Floors at Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall
 - 3) Carnforth (Highfield) Allotments
 - 4) All other Council Assets
- 25088. Health & Safety & Fire Risk Assessments:** To consider any updates on actions arising from Health & Safety Reviews and Fire Risk Assessments
- 25089. Environment & Public Realm:** To consider Outdoor Maintenance Officer report and any other environmental updates and matters
- 25090. Date & Time of next meeting:** Tuesday 7th October 2025 at 5:30pm

L. Longhorn

Assistant Town Clerk

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28 August 2025

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PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1st July 2025

Present: Councillors (Steven) Richmond (Chair), Downes, Grisenthwaite, Hanna, and Laurence,

In attendance: Bob Bailey, Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (TC&RFO); and Kath Bromilow, Facilities Manager

25072 Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillors Bassinder, Parker and Turner, Leah Longhorn, Assistant Town Clerk and Simon Jobling, Outdoor Maintenance Officer

25073 Declaration on interests and dispensations: There were no declarations of interest relating to items on the meeting agenda.

25074 Urgent Business:

Keyless Entry Systems – Power Outage Contingency: The TC&RFO presented an email from Councillor Smith highlighting urgent concerns regarding the functionality of the keyless entry systems at both Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall in the event of a power outage. The correspondence also included a suggestion for a minor adjustment to the main door at Carnforth Civic Hall.

A discussion followed, during which several potential solutions were considered. These included the installation of fail-secure locking mechanisms, the provision of an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) or battery backup, and the designation of dedicated keyholders to ensure continued access and security during power failures. It was noted and confirmed that emergency egress from within the buildings remains possible at all times.

RESOLVED: That the TC&RFO contact the system suppliers to obtain further information and recommendations on suitable solutions to address the issue.

Residents' Parking Scheme: Councillor Grisenthwaite informed the meeting that a public consultation on the proposed Residents' Parking Scheme will take place on Tuesday, 23rd July, with two sessions scheduled to accommodate a wide range of residents at 2:00pm to 4:00pm and 6:00pm to 7:30pm. Both sessions will be held at Carnforth Civic Hall. The consultation will provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions and share their views before any final decisions are made.

Community Funding – Quarry Contributions: Councillor Grisenthwaite also reported on a recent meeting involving representatives from the two local quarries and neighbouring parish councils. The meeting focused on the valuation, arrangements, and practicalities of a proposed community funding agreement, which is expected to be finalised once all legal matters are resolved.

Under the proposed agreement, an annual financial contribution will be made to Carnforth Town Council, Nether Kellet Parish Council, and Over Kellet Parish Council, distributed on a 3:1:1 ratio. This funding is intended to support local community projects and initiatives in areas affected by quarry operations.

RESOLVED: That the Council welcomes the progress made on both the Residents' Parking Scheme consultation and the community funding agreement and will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure positive outcomes for residents.

25075 Minutes: It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd June 2025 be approved.

25076 Public participation and information only updates: There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

Sizzle Inn Clock Update: TC&RFO reported that he had made several attempts to contact a local iron craft company to assess the condition of the Sizzle Inn Clock. However, no response has been received to date.

Facilities Update – Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall: The TC&RFO reported that the Wi-Fi connectivity issue at Carnforth Civic Hall has now been resolved.

At Crag Bank Village Hall, staff have reviewed and optimised the heating system settings. It was noted that the planned repositioning of the temperature sensor by the gas engineer is expected to further improve the system's performance.

In addition, the TC&RFO confirmed that preparations for the planned clean-up campaign are in hand, and arrangements are being made to secure tables in the hall using ratchet straps to enhance safety and organisation.

RESOLVED: That the Council notes the updates and supports the continued monitoring and improvement of facilities, including the clean-up campaign and safety measures in both halls.

25077 Carnforth (Highfield) Allotments: (TC&RFO) reported that National Gas has confirmed the purchase of four new water butts for the allotment site and is currently coordinating their installation.

It was noted that *National Allotment Week* will take place from 11th to 17th August, with this year's theme being "*Allotments and Wellbeing*." The campaign aims to celebrate the many benefits of allotments for individuals and communities, particularly in promoting health, wellbeing, and environmental sustainability.

Reference was made to the recent and well-received Hi-Thrive lunch held at the allotments, which aligned closely with the upcoming theme. Considering this, it was suggested that the newly formed *Friends of Carnforth Allotments* take the lead in organising activities and events during National Allotment Week, with support from the Town Council as required.

RESOLVED: That the Council supports the involvement of the Friends of Carnforth Allotments in leading National Allotment Week activities and will assist where appropriate to ensure the success of the initiative.

25078 Council Property / Assets:

Facility Managers Report: The Facilities Manager reported that lights in the toilet areas at both Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall are frequently being left on after use. To address this, it was suggested that vacancy sensor lighting be installed in these areas to improve energy efficiency and reduce unnecessary electricity usage.

It was also noted that the planters and hanging baskets recently installed at Carnforth Civic Hall have significantly enhanced the appearance of the building. However, regular watering is required, and it was proposed that an external tap or alternative safe and convenient watering solution be explored.

The Facilities Manager further reported that the vacant flat above Carnforth Civic Hall has now been fully cleared. Office supplies and materials have been transferred from the current Council offices. The next step will be to decorate the flat, after which it will be suitable for use as a staff and hall office, as previously planned and budgeted for.

RESOLVED:

- **That the installation of vacancy sensor lighting at both halls be investigated.**
- **That options for a safe and practical watering solution for the planters and baskets be explored.**
- **That the decoration of the upstairs flat proceed as planned, with a view to establishing it as a functional staff and hall office**

Asset Register – De Minimis Threshold Policy: TC&RFO presented a draft policy proposing the establishment of a de minimis threshold for the inclusion of assets in the Town Council's Asset Register. The purpose of the policy is to promote consistency, transparency, and efficiency in the management and reporting of council assets.

The proposed threshold is set at £100, with the provision that assets valued below this amount may still be recorded in specific circumstances where deemed appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the Finance & Governance Committee be recommended to approve the proposed de minimis threshold of £100. Subject to approval, the TC&RFO will update the Asset Register accordingly in preparation for the forthcoming physical review of all council assets.

Storage Container – Crag Bank Village Hall: TC&RFO reported that efforts to obtain comparable quotations – in addition to the one already reported – for the purchase of a 24-foot storage container to be located at Crag Bank Village Hall Car Park had been unsuccessful, despite reasonable attempts to source multiple suppliers.

The proposed container will serve a dual purpose:

- To provide secure and weatherproof storage for Town Council assets, including equipment used for events and maintenance.
- To act as a dedicated lock-up facility for the Outdoor Maintenance Officer, improving operational efficiency and safeguarding tools and materials.

The installation of the container will help to:

- Reduce clutter within the halls and other council facilities.
- Improve asset management by centralising storage.
- Enhance security for valuable equipment.
- Support the Outdoor Maintenance Officer in delivering timely and effective services.

RESOLVED: That the Finance & Governance Committee approve the purchase of a 24-foot storage container, to be funded from general reserves, and that the TC&RFO proceed with the acquisition and necessary arrangements for its installation at Crag Bank Village Hall Car Park.

25079 Health & Safety Reviews and Fire Risk Assessments.

Draft Risk Assessments – Workplace Safety, Contractor Safety, and Environmental Risk

TC&RFO) presented three draft risk assessments covering these key areas: While these assessments are not yet exhaustive, they represent a strong and structured foundation upon which more comprehensive risk management documentation can be developed.

Each draft assessment includes:

- A clear description of the identified risk
- An evaluation of the current likelihood and potential impact
- Mitigation measures currently in place or recommended
- Assigned responsibility for managing each risk
- A proposed review schedule to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness

The approach aims to enhance the Council's ability to proactively manage operational, health and safety, and environmental risks in a consistent and transparent manner.

RESOLVED: That the draft risk assessments be welcomed as a positive first step, and that the TC&RFO continue to develop and refine them in consultation with relevant stakeholders, with a view to formal adoption at a future meeting.

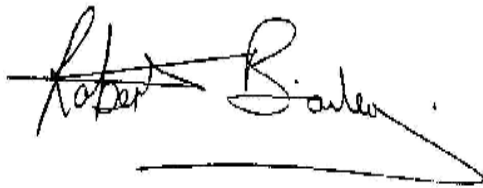
25080 Environment & Public Realm: In the absence of the Outdoor Maintenance Officer, no formal report was presented at the meeting.

TC&RFO advised that a request had been received from a Councillor regarding the need for hedge cutting along a Public Right of Way footpath at Carnforth Brow, North Road. This matter has been noted and will be passed on to the Outdoor Maintenance Officer for action upon their return.

Councillors were aware that the Town Council receives an annual contribution from Lancashire County Council specifically to support the maintenance of Public Rights of Way. This funding is intended to cover works such as hedge cutting, path clearance, and general upkeep to ensure accessibility and safety for the public.

RESOLVED: That the TC&RFO liaise with the Outdoor Maintenance Officer to ensure the requested hedge maintenance is carried out in a timely and appropriate manner, subject to access and weather conditions, and in line with the Council's responsibilities under the Public Rights of Way maintenance agreement.

25081 **Date of next meeting:** The next meeting of the Property & Environment Committee will be on **Tuesday 2nd September 2025**. The meeting closed at 6:15pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert B. Bailey', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

Clerk's Report to Property & Environment Committee

1. Use of Delegated Authority, Asset Review, Fire Alarm Check & Lighting Improvements

In accordance with the Council's **scheme of delegation** and within the approved budget, I have authorised initial refurbishment works to the former flat at Carnforth Civic Hall. This includes:

- Redecoration of the interior spaces.
- Arrangements for new carpeting.
- Installation of shelving and storage units to support future use.

These works have been commissioned under delegated authority, as the associated costs fall within the designated budget previously approved by the Council.

Further work is anticipated to complete the conversion of the space, including:

- Acquisition of tables and chairs appropriate to the intended use.
- Assessment and potential upgrade of internet access to ensure reliable connectivity.

Once these works are complete, a submission will be made to the Valuation Office Agency to request a revaluation of the entire building for National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) purposes. This will include a request to remove the Council Tax liability currently associated with the former flat, reflecting its change of use.

In parallel, a **review of Council assets** has commenced, beginning with Carnforth Civic Hall. All assets within the building are being checked and verified, and the Council's Asset Register is being updated accordingly to ensure accuracy and compliance with audit requirements.

Additionally, following concerns raised about the relatively new **fire alarm system failing in an 'open' state during power outages**, a technical check has been arranged with the installer. The aim is to identify and resolve the issue to ensure the system operates in accordance with its intended fail-safe configuration.

A quotation has also been received for the installation of **vacancy sensor lighting** at both halls. These sensors automatically switch lights off when rooms are unoccupied, offering several benefits:

- **Energy efficiency:**, reducing electricity consumption and costs.
- **Improved sustainability:**, supporting the Council's environmental objectives.
- **Convenience and safety:** ensuring lighting is available when needed without manual operation.

I will continue to keep members informed of progress and will bring forward any further decisions requiring Council approval.

2. Refurbishment of Kitchens and Hall Floors at Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall

Background: Following the withdrawal of the **Community Ownership Fund** after the last general election, plans to invest significantly in Crag Bank Village Hall have stalled. The Council had previously earmarked reserves for this purpose. Considering this, it is proposed that these funds be redirected to support essential refurbishment works at **both Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall**, focusing on:

- **Kitchen upgrades** to improve functionality, hygiene, and accessibility.
- **Refinishing or replacement of hall flooring** to enhance safety, appearance, and suitability for community use.

Funding: The works would be funded from **Council Reserves** previously allocated for Crag Bank Village Hall improvements. This reallocation ensures that the funding continues to support the original intent of enhancing community facilities.

Benefits:

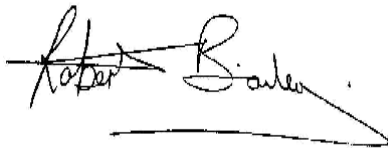
- **Improved community experience:** Upgraded kitchens and floors will enhance the usability and appeal of both venues for hirers and community groups.
- **Increased bookings and revenue:** Better facilities may attract more users, supporting the Council's income generation strategy.
- **Asset preservation:** Timely refurbishment helps maintain the condition and value of Council-owned buildings.
- **Equitable investment:** Ensures both halls benefit from improvements, supporting wider community engagement.

Risks

- **Loss of opportunity for larger-scale investment at Crag Bank Village Hall** if future funding becomes available.
- **Cost escalation:** If works are delayed, prices may rise due to inflation or changes in contractor availability.
- **Scope creep:** Without clear specifications, there is a risk of additional, unplanned costs.

Recommendation to Finance & Governance Committee

- 1. That Finance & Governance Committee considers the proposal (or as amended) and makes a recommendation to Full Council that the Reserves previously earmarked for investment in Crag Bank Village Hall be reallocated to fund refurbishment of kitchens and hall floors at both Carnforth Civic Hall and Crag Bank Village Hall.**
- 2. Authorises the Town Clerk to obtain quotations and manage the works within the approved budget.**
- 3. Requests a progress report to be brought back to Council once quotations are received and a timeline is established.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Bailey', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bob Bailey, Town Clerk