

# Garsdale Parish Council

## 21 January 2026

**Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting for the Parish Council of Garsdale held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 21 January 2026 at Garsdale Village Hall, Garsdale.**

**Present: Councillors** Simmonds (Chair), Todd, Ellwood, Labbate, Dickinson, Colton, and Koo (welcomed to her first meeting following Co-Option in November and subsequent completion of Acceptance of Office). Also in attendance, the Clerk J Hassam.

### **Part I**

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

All members were present at the meeting.

#### **2. Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations made, or new requests for dispensations.

#### **3. Minutes of Garsdale Parish Council meetings, dated 18 November 2025**

Members resolved to adopt the minutes previously circulated, for the bi-monthly meeting in November, and they were signed as a true record by the Chair Cllr Simmonds.

#### **4. Report/Update from Westmorland and Furness Council**

Cllrs Mitchel and Hodgson were not present at the meeting. **i) Community Governance Review**  
Members noted the recent draft recommendations in relation to the Community Governance Review on Parish Boundaries (no change Garsdale).

#### **5. Progress reports/updates**

- 5.1 Clerk – The Clerk advised that all relevant items are included in the agenda.
- 5.2 Village Hall – Members noted that the Committee were still waiting for confirmation from the Diocese for the installation of the emergency phone.
- 5.3 Highways – Members discussed various works, including Back Lane (ongoing concerns over flooding) and Garsdale Foot (grit bin replacement required). Also, East End Bridge (delayed repairs due to A684 being a diversion route, however, Members noted that urgent traffic management on the A684 (close to the Village Hall) for repairs to a retaining wall at culvert, had been allowed. Cllr Ellwood highlighted her general concern for an increase of heavy goods vehicles/traffic using the A684, perhaps trying to circumnavigate road closure on A66 and M6 which may also be impacting on the condition of A684's surface/integrity. Members have additionally heard, anecdotally, of a road closure between Garsdale Head and Appersett (commencing 2 February 2026), and asked the Clerk to urgently liaise with North Yorkshire Council over access (for commuters and school buses/college students etc). Finally, concern was raised for water run off (from the car park) under the bridge at Garsdale Station. Which is hazardous (particularly due to risk of ice) for passengers trying to access the car park from the north platform. Cllr Labbate advised that he had witnessed a lady fall at this location during the last spell of ice. Given the level of queries relating to highways, and the current lack of progress on some matters, the Clerk was instructed to write to Cllrs Mitchell and Hodgson and ask for a site meeting to discuss their concerns and to copy Lizzi Collinge MP for reference.
- 5.4 B4RN VoIP emergency phones – Cllr Simmonds has been previously been in contact with Garsdale Station, and still awaits further updates about any potential future costs/provision. (see also, Item 5.2)
- 5.5 Update on Transport Group – Cllr Ellwood advised that no update had been received and the Clerk was asked to follow up with the Transport Group.
- 5.6 Statement – Members discussed, in detail, the merit of issuing a public statement in response to various issues/concerns/complaints previously raised (see July 2025). Following various proposals, Members ultimately resolved that a short summary relating to the additional expenditure (points raised to External Auditor, resulting in a £750 fee) would be included in the Chair's annual report. (see also Item 12)

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### 6. Public Participation/Open Session

One member of the public was welcomed to the meeting. The resident was disappointed that there appeared to be no further actions being taken about historical inaccurate claims and allegations made toward Councillors, and acknowledged the situation had been difficult for all concerned.

### 7. Financial Matters

**7.1 Bank statement reconciliation** and update of receipts and payments 2025-2026, with the current bank balance noted as £3733.44 (12/01/26) with all outstanding cheques reconciled.

**7.2 To consider and approve payments to March 2026** Members resolved to approve Clerk remuneration for January, February, and March. Additionally agreeing that once funds had been transferred to the NatWest Bank a standing order should be set up for ongoing monthly salary payments. Cllrs Simmonds and Colton signed the instruction to commence payments from February 2026. PAYE will continue to be collected by direct debit– being noted as circa £156.80 per quarter, and the clerk will update the Inland Revenue with the new bank details as soon as practicable. No other payments were currently known within this finance year, however, if anything further transpires, the Clerk will liaise with Members via email and report at the next meeting.

**7.3 Any update on banking arrangements** The Clerk advised that HSBC had insisted on a specific form being completed to finalise the closure of the account. Cllrs Colton and Todd signed the forms and, in the interim, Members resolved to transfer the sum of £1500 to the new NatWest Bank account and commence use. Additionally resolving that the Precept for 2026/2027 should be paid to this account. Once final transactions had cleared with HSBC, the account should be closed and remaining funds transferred to NatWest Bank. The Clerk will then liaise further with NatWest about adding Cllr Dickinson, as previously agreed.

**7.4. VAT126 refund (1 August 2024 to 31 October 2025).** The Clerk confirmed that the VAT refund had been received - £213.00.

**7.5 Precept requirements 2026-2027** Members considered the revised tax base 146.7, reduced from 160.0. However, resolved to confirm that they did not wish to increase the Precept per household. Members resolved, therefore, to request a Precept of £4540.37 which would retain Band D (equivalent) rates at £30.95 (as 2025-2026). The decrease in tax base was understood to be due to the decrease in registered second homes, and the current number of empty properties. Members additionally took the opportunity to continue to approve the current internal auditor for 2025-2026 and to copy in the new internal auditor proposed for 2026-2027 for background information. The Clerk will additionally send the new internal auditor general guidance available for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for smaller authorities.

### 8. Planning Applications

There had been no applications requiring consultation with the Parish.

### 9. Correspondence, notices, and publications

The Clerk asked Members to consider a list of proposed dates for 2026 (attached), generally the third Wednesday of every other month, and these were approved by Members. The list will be published on the website, and will also be available on the Village Hall notice board.

### 10. Councillor matters/exception items

Members continued to note their concern for lack of progress on Highways matters, noted at Item 5.3. The Clerk had for general reference, relating to highways, also circulated a summary relating to the various ownership and responsibility duties (including riparian) in relation to the questions raised at the November meeting.

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### 12. Date of next meeting

Members resolved that the next meeting would be the bi-monthly meeting of Garsdale Parish Council **7.30pm Wednesday 18 March 2026.** This would be held at Garsdale Village Hall, Garsdale, Cumbria

### Part II

### 12. Statement – Members to consider public statement in respect of previous concerns raised to various authorities in 2025.

Members had resolved this Item under 5.6 above with no requirement to convene Part II

Chairman.....

Date.....

Please note that these are draft minutes, subject to change and will not be signed until the next meeting.

DRAFT