



BARROW TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness LA14 2LD

Minutes of the Meeting of Barrow Town Council held on 18th November 2025 at 18.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness. LA14 LD

C Aلتree	Present	D Morrison	Apology
G Beddoes	Apology	J Murphy	Present
F Chatfield	Present	D Petrova	Present
A Coles	Present	N Phillips	Present
B Elliot	Present	C Thomson	Present
P Griffiths	Present	J Tyson	Present
S Hall	-	J McEwan	Present
K Hyland	Present	W McEwan	Present
M Leach	Present	R Worthington	Present
C Rudd	Present	S Churcher	Present
N Holmes	Present		

In Attendance: Lesley Smyth (Town Clerk). Claire Nolan (Deputy Clerk)

The Chair welcomed the attending members of the public noting **“Any member of the public who wished to ask a question, make representations or present a deputation or petition at this meeting should have applied to do so three days before the commencement of the meeting.”**

280/25/26 Cumbria Police Presentation – Sgt P Holmes and Sgt J Hart

An in-depth report was received outlining the following issues –

1. The appointment of 5 new PCSO's and their respective Town locality.
2. The overall increased number of Officers in the Barrow Force over the past year.
3. The £1m funding made available to tackle the 4 'Hot Spots' of anti-social behaviour in the area, 3 of which relate to Barrow. During the period of 1st April 2025 to 30th September 2025 the anti-social behaviour in these 3 areas has been reduced accordingly:-
 1. Hindpool – down 57%
 2. Town Centre – down 38%
 3. Ormsgill – down 84%. The excessively high reduction is partly due to new incidents that arose during this period.

4. Co-operation with Trading Standards in connection with the recent closure of premises offering illicit tobacco products.
5. Co-operation with the Home Office in connection with immigration checks on Uber Drivers.
6. The knife crime initiative to prevent shops selling knives to young persons which is taking place this evening.
7. Plans are in place for the Christmas period, their busiest period of the year.
8. Successes were noted in respect of off-road biking violations, although this does continue to be a national problem and reference to Section 59 'The Power to Seize Bikes' was outlined. Such problems will continue with the sales of E-Scooters. Drones are also a problem.
9. Their close working relationship with Team Barrow leading to an increase in number of a further 8 CCTV's in the centre of Town, 3 of which are fixed but 5 of which can be deployed to provide the most effective surveillance. The deployable cameras giving live time access have been trialled by commercial businesses in the Town and proven to be successful.

Further, a fixed camera is now in place in the Barrow Park.

Sgt Holmes, in conclusion, noted that although giving due regard to the issues noted above Barrow remains one of the safest Towns in the Country.

Cllr W McEwan thanked the officers for their report and requested a map of the Ormsgill hotspots, which will be supplied. Further he enquired if the CCTV's near to the shops and the Community centre in Ormsgill can be re-instated. Sgt Holmes said the old system has been decommissioned and a new Contract has been agreed with the supplier providing up to date new technology.

Cllr Coles said the report has provided positive news which is a boost to the Town.

Cllr Rudd noted the continuing problem of fly-tipping on the allotment sites and the resultant high levels of expenditure being incurred by the Council for the removal. He enquired if the Town Council could aid the Police in respect of this matter. Sgt Holmes asked the Council to inform the Police when such incidents occur.

The Chair thanked both Officers for their excellent informative update and for their attendance. Both Officers retired from the meeting at 18.15pm.

281/25/26 BID Presentation – Paul Hodgson

An in-depth report was received outlining the following: -

1. The work undertaken throughout the Town by this business led initiative.
2. Their existing partnerships.
3. Links with the new University of Cumbria supporting businesses to capitalise on the increased number of students in the Town.
4. Delivery of the Christmas Lighting event on 15th November and noting a 341% increase in attendance since year 1.
5. Their annual costs of £25k for replacement Christmas lighting. However, this figure was exceeded in 2024 due to heavy losses caused by storm damage.
6. The Large Gift Box damaged last year has been repaired and a new 5m high Stag purchased.
7. Free Christmas trees are available to empower businesses in the town centre.
8. Forthcoming attractions/events during the Christmas period –
 - Santa Express – 6-7 December
 - Christmas Market – 13 December (including an Ice Rink and various activities)
 - Christmas Stamp Trail – 20 December
9. A request to Westmorland and Furness Council to agree to free parking on named days during the Christmas period to encourage visitors.

The provision of the Festive Lighting is a partnership between BID and the Town Council, with the former Barrow Borough Council defraying the remit of the lighting to the Town Council in 2023. However, for the initial year Westmorland and Furness Council agreed to meet all expenditure. The cost to the Town Council for the installation and de-rigging (including repairs to the infrastructure) of the lights is estimated at £15k pa for which approval is here sought following a recommendation from Finance Committee on 11th November 2025. Noted under Min 287 below. No maintenance was undertaken in 2025 as Council approval had not been granted, but it is vital that the maintenance is on-going to avoid excessive expenditure in the future. Cllr W McEwan thanked BID for the presentation and expressed the gratitude of the Council for all the work they do throughout the year. P Hodgson retired from the meeting at 18.27pm.

282/25/26 Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from Cllr Beddoes and Cllr Morrison.

283/25/26 Declarations of Interest

Received from Cllr W McEwan, Cllr Coles, Cllr Phillips and Cllr Worthington in respect of their membership on the Westmorland and Furness Council. From Cllr Phillips in respect of his association with the Sea Cadets who recently received a Grant from the Council.

284/25/26 Exclusion of Public and Press (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No items were considered for exclusion.

285/25/26 Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th September 2025

Proposed by Cllr Worthington and seconded by Cllr W McEwan, and a vote having been taken

Resolved

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th September 2025 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a correct record.

286/25/26 Mayors Communications & Announcements

Cllr F Chatfield reported on his Mayoral engagements since the last meeting.

- 16th August 2025 - Push the Boat Out
- 17th August 2025 - Dock Museum
- 19th August 2025 - Mind Be well in the garden
- 30th August 2025 - Medieval Fair
- 2nd September 2025 - Exchange Bond of Friendship gifts
- 3rd September 2025 - Merchant Navy Day
- 9th September 2025 - Chance to Dance
- 10th September 2025 - World Suicide Day
- 12th September 2025 - Festival of Heritage
- 13th September 2025 - LBF Autumn Celebration
- 13th September 2025 - Town Hall Tour
- 14th September 2025 - AE1 & AE2 Remembrance Service
- 18th September 2025 - Signal Films Launch Event
- 21st September 2025 - Battle of Britain Day
- 22nd September 2025 - Kings Visit, Royal Port of Barrow
- 23rd September 2025 - MIND afternoon tea
- 26th September 2025 - Social Enterprise Fund Celebration

26th September 2025 - FGH Bereavement team Voce
13th October 2025 - Financial Times interview
16th October 2025 - Cumbria In Bloom
18th October 2025 - Mayors Charity Craft Fair
19th October 2025 - Trafalgar Day
21st October 2025 - HMS Achilles Trafalgar Dinner
22nd October 2025 - Town Hall Tour
23rd October 2025 - Furness Academy Awards
24th October 2025 - Kings Trust Celebration
24th October 2025 - Sea Cadets Trafalgar Ball
25th October 2025 - Autumn Fest
30th October 2025 - Visit to new University Campus
2nd November 2025 - Cumbria V Nigeria Rugby League
3rd November 2025 - Dane Ghyll School Presentation
4th November 2025 - Art Gene Exhibition
6th November 2025 - Judges Service Carlisle
7th November 2025 - Crane Memorial St. John's Church
8th November 2025 - Railway Remembrance Day
8th November 2025 - Our Freedom Barrow Library
8th November 2025 - 25 Words
9th November 2025 - Remembrance Sunday
11th November 2025 - Peace Pitch
15th November 2025 - Open Cumbria Sewing Shop
15th November 2025 - Christmas Lights Switch On
19th November 2025 - Walney School Awards
20th November 2025 - Furness Multicultural
21st November 2025 - Kings Trust Presentation
21st November 2025 - Furness Rotary Charter

287/25/26 Minutes of Committees

Finance Committee

Cllr Leach reported on the actions of the Committees of 9th September 2025 and 14th October 2025 and 11th November 2025.

Resolved

To receive and approve the Minutes of the Finance Committee of 9th September and 14th October 2025. Proposed by Cllr Churcher and seconded by Cllr Holmes. All agreed.

The Draft Minutes of 11th November 2025 submitted were for information only and will go to the next parent committee for approval before returning to Council in January 2026 for ratification.

Committee Minutes can be viewed on the Council website.

Resolved:

Proposed by Cllr Churcher and seconded by Cllr Holmes that the £15k Christmas Lighting Budget recommended by the Finance Committee of 11th November 2025 be approved. All agreed.

Planning Committee

Cllr J McEwan reported on the actions of the Committees of 2nd October 2025 and 6th November 2025. It was noted the Planning Committee have agreed to schedule meetings during the August recess to facilitate planning matters occurring during that period. The Clerk to note on the 2026-27 schedule of meetings.

Cllr W McEwan, who is a member of the W&F Planning Committee, noted the lack of W&F Planning meetings during recent months and that decisions are being determined by Council Officers. He agreed to enquire why objections to Planning Applications raised by the Town Council are not receiving due responses.

Cllr Phillips noted his concern regarding the application for the St. Paul's development. A structure of such proportion is totally unsuitable for that area of Town. Further, the consultation on the application for the development at Lakes Parade has been suspended pending the receipt of correspondence from all concerned parties, delays due to W&F current e-mail difficulties.

Resolved

To receive and approve the Minutes of the Planning Committee of 2nd October 2025. Proposed by Cllr Atree and seconded by Cllr Petrova. All agreed.

The Draft Minutes of 6th November 2025 submitted were for information only and will go to the next parent committee for approval before returning to Council in January 2026 for ratification.

Committee Minutes can be viewed on the Council website.

Allotments Committee

Cllr F Chatfield reported on the actions of the Allotments Committees of 24th September 2025 and 22nd October 2025.

Resolved

To receive and approve the Minutes of the Allotments Committee of 24th September 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Petrova and seconded by Cllr W McEwan. All agreed.

The Draft Minutes of 22nd October 2025 submitted were for information only and will go to the next parent committee for approval before returning to Council in January 2026 for ratification.

Committee Minutes can be viewed on the Council website.

Cllr Coles thanked Cllr Chatfield, the Town Clerk and Allotment Officer for their continued diligence in pursuing all matters.

288/25/26 Minutes of Working Groups

Events Working Group.

Cllr W McEwan noted the many Tri-Services events celebrated throughout the past year and expressed his thanks to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for their hard work.

He especially wished to note his thanks to the people of Barrow who attended the Service of Remembrance on 9th November 2025. The weather was most inclement, yet the footfall was greater than in previous years, a true reflection of the Town's commitment to remember those who fought to ensure our freedom.

This year for the first time a poppy wreath was placed on the Memorial Stone in the Coronation Gardens, Abbey Road. However, the next day it had been removed by person(s) unknown. Truly an act of abhorrent vandalism.

Cllr Phillips reported on comments/feedback received following the Remembrance Day Service which shall be reviewed at the next meeting of the Events Working Group.

Group Minutes can be viewed on the Council website.

In conclusion Cllr McEwan noted membership of the Working Group is open to all Councillors.

Town Twinning Working Group.

Cllr P Griffiths reported on the actions of the Group since its inception in July 2023, noting its difficulties, yet confirming the desire of the existing members to pursue and establish a 'Twin'.

Minutes of the Group Meetings can be seen on the Council website.

Cllr Chatfield extended his best wishes to the Group for their future endeavours.

289/25/26 Finance Report

The following documents had been distributed prior to the meeting. No issues were raised.

- Income and Expenditure Account for the period 1st April to 31st October 2025.
- Allotments Receipts and Payments Account for the period 1st April to 31st October 2025.
- Draft Precept Budget 2026-2027
- Internal Audit Report for 2024-2025
- External Audit Report for 2024-2025

Resolved

To receive the Financial Reports here submitted. Proposed by Cllr Coles and seconded by Cllr W McEwan. In respect of the Draft Precept 1 vote against, 1 abstention. All other members agreed.

290/25/26 Draft Motion

The following Motion which had been distributed prior to the meeting was read by the proposer, Cllr S Churcher.

18 NOVEMBER 2025.

DRAFT MOTION – GROOMING GANGS

Proposed by: Councillor Sienna Churcher.

Seconded by: Councillor Colin Rudd.

Title: Request to Include Barrow-in-Furness in the National Grooming Gang Inquiry.

Reform UK Councillors:

1. Welcome the full national statutory inquiry into grooming gangs, announced by the prime minister in June 2025, which aims to investigate these horrendous crimes across multiple towns and cities in England and Wales.
2. Recognises that Barrow-in-Furness has, like many other communities, been affected by organised grooming gangs, and that local victims and survivors deserve truth, accountability and justice.
3. Believes that the inclusion of Barrow-in-Furness will facilitate a commitment to openness and transparency, hold those that directly and indirectly facilitated the crimes accountable and keep future generations of children safe from harm.
4. Acknowledges the immense courage of whistle-blowers and grooming gang survivors that have tirelessly campaigned for the national inquiry.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Formally write to the Home Secretary and to the Minister for Safeguarding requesting that Barrow-in-Furness be added to the list of towns and cities subject to detailed examination within the national inquiry's terms of reference once established and offering this council's full co-operation.
2. Send copies of this resolution to the local Member of Parliament, Westmorland and Furness safeguarding children partnership, and Cumbria Police urging their support for this request.

The Town Clerk is instructed to send the letter within seven days of this motion being passed and to publish both the letter and any response on the Barrow town council website thereby reaffirming this council's commitment to protecting our community and ensuring full accountability and transparency in all safeguarding matters affecting our children.

- A named vote shall be taken on this motion

MOTION AMENDMENT

Cllr A Coles had distributed prior to the meeting the following ‘Amendment’ to the Motion. Seconded by Cllr W McEwan. Cllr Coles explained his reasons for the amendment.

TITLE: Request to Include Barrow-in-Furness in the National Grooming Gang Inquiry.

Reform UK Councillors:

1. Welcome the full national statutory inquiry into grooming gangs, announced by the prime minister in June 2025, which aims to investigate these horrendous crimes across multiple towns and cities in England and Wales.
2. Recognises that Barrow-in-Furness has, like many other communities, been affected by organised grooming gangs, and that local victims and survivors deserve truth, accountability and justice.
3. Acknowledges the immense courage of whistle-blowers and grooming gang survivors that have tirelessly campaigned for the national inquiry.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Formally write to the **independent commissioner offering this town’s full support for grooming gang survivors views being at its centre** within the national inquiry’s terms of reference once established and offering this council’s full co-operation.
2. Send copies of this resolution to the local Member of Parliament, Westmorland and Furness safeguarding children partnership, and Cumbria Police urging their support for this request.

The Town Clerk is instructed to send the letter within seven days of this motion being passed and to publish both the letter and any response on the Barrow town council website thereby reaffirming this council’s commitment to protecting our community and ensuring full accountability and transparency in all safeguarding matters affecting our children.

- A named vote shall be taken on this motion – check councils standing orders.

Cllr Rudd noted the wording of the Amendment to be disgraceful and negates and sabotages the original Motion. He requested the Amendment be withdrawn. There followed a heated debate.

Cllr Altree requested the aggression in the chamber be removed, reminding all members they seek the same outcome, the safety and protection of the vulnerable, and that the Independent Commission must lead the way and hear the voices of the victims, not the politicians. The Amendment does not negate the Original Motion.

Cllr Worthington commended Cllr Churcher on the presentation of her Motion and noted the Amendment should be withdrawn.

The Chair then called for a show of hands to either approve or disallow a named vote. 11 against a named vote, 5 for and 1 abstention. A named vote was disallowed.

The Chair then called for a show of hands on the Amendment to the Motion. 11 for, 5 against and 1 abstention. The Amendment was passed.

The Chair then called for a show of hands on the ‘Substantive Motion.’ 11 for, 5 against and 1 abstention. The Substantive Motion was approved.

291/25/26 Community Notice Boards

Cllr Griffiths outlined recent correspondence between himself, the Clerk and Westmorland and Furness Council for the installation of a Notice Board in each Ward in areas of high footfall (e.g. Lesh Lane Shops) to advertise the work of both Councils and to continually update residents on local community activities.

He proposed this be a shared expense project between the Town Council and W&F. The Town Council meeting their portion of the costs either from a designated budget or from individual Councillor's 'Brighten Our Corner' allowances. The estimated cost per board was quoted as £769 with an additional £250 installation cost.

Councillors noted on-going maintenance concerns, current existing redundant notice boards throughout the Town Centre, and the impact of social media. Further, the BOC allowance award is a Councillor's individual choice which Cllr Hyland said she would be unwilling to lose.

Cllr J McEwan gave her BOC allowance for a Notice Board at Ormsgill Community Garden which is proving to be very successful and is well maintained by the local community.

Cllr Coles said for the project to work there needs to be a genuine commitment from the local community to maintain and update, and one way of funding would be the use of the BOC allowances. However, the matter cannot be progressed without a firm commitment from W&F to share the costs.

Cllr Phillips said notice boards are indeed a way of keeping the community involved, on which the Town Council could publish all the wonderful work they are doing, and he recommended a separate budget be established. Initially the existing notice boards throughout the town could be better utilised, and new ones purchased where required.

This matter was deferred to the next meeting. Cllr Griffiths to provide the Clerk with costings, and to ascertain the views of W&F and their assured commitment to a jointly funded project.

The Chair thanked Cllr Griffiths for his report.

292/25/26 Any Other Business

The Clerk reported CALC have a vacancy on their Board from the Furness Area and are seeking to appoint a member from a Parish/Town Council as a Director. She will distribute the details in respect of the process timetable, generic director role and nomination form.

Any Councillor wishing to volunteer should contact the Clerk direct.

293/25/26 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 18.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.22 pm.

Lesley J Smyth

Town Clerk

For the attention: All Members of Barrow Town Council

Councillors

Cllr Chatfield	Barrow Central Ward
Cllr D Petrova	Barrow Central Ward
Cllr Phillips	Barrow Hawcoat Ward
Cllr Worthington	Barrow Hawcoat Ward
Cllr Morrison	Barrow Hindpool Ward

Cllr Tyson	Barrow Hindpool Ward
Cllr Holmes	Barrow Island Ward
Cllr W McEwan	Barrow Newbarns Ward
Cllr M Leach	Barrow Newbarns Ward
Cllr Altree	Barrow Ormsgill Ward
Cllr J McEwan	Barrow Ormsgill Ward
Cllr Coles	Barrow Parkside Ward
Cllr Hall	Barrow Parkside Ward
Cllr Rudd	Barrow Risedale Ward
Cllr S Churcher	Barrow Risedale Ward
Cllr Beddoes	Barrow Roosecote Ward
Cllr Griffiths	Barrow Roosecote Ward
Cllr Elliot	Barrow Walney North Ward
Cllr Hyland	Barrow Walney North Ward
Cllr Murphy	Barrow Walney South Ward
Cllr Thomson	Barrow Walney South Ward