

MINUTES OF THE FIRE ENGINE HOUSE COMMITTEE

Held on the 30th July 2026 @ 7.30 in the Dorothy Granger Room, Community Hall, Silverton

Present: Cllr Ruth Harrison (Chair) & Cllrs Olivia Kennard, Simon Hedges and Sarah Gooding

The Clerk attended to take the Minutes of the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received

2. Meeting open to any questions from members of the public – 10 mins

No members of the public were present

3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2026

RESOLVED the Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th June 2026 were an accurate record. Proposed by Cllr Kennard. A vote was taken with 2 in favour and 2 abstentions (Clls Gooding and Hedges were not present at this meeting).

4. Notes of a meeting held on 23rd June 2026

Notes were noted

5. Consider terms/clauses of proposes Lease

It was noted that Cllrs Harrison and Kennard had met with Ellen Cocking at the Fire Engine House on the 23rd June 2023 and Notes of that meeting had been circulated to the Committee. A discussion had taken place with Ellen Cocking regarding the financial implications of the set up and running a café in the village. It had been stressed that the Committee wished her success with the venture but it was unsure of the viability and overheads involved. Actions to be taken as a result of the meeting:

- Ellen Cocking is to mock up some table and chair visual scenarios to pass to Cllr Kennard to put forward to the next Richards Educational Charity on the 10th July.
- Café business observations and projections to be sent to Ellen Cocking
- The Silverton Street Committee be asked to confirm what items they wish to retain from the Fire Engine House and the size of the storage requirements – the cost of the removal and re-siting to be covered by Ellen Cocking.
- To ask the Silverton Street Committee to give an update with regard to the provision of electricity to the Fire Engine House and to establish where the Street Committee's outlay and Ellen Cocking's electrical work overlap. It was made clear to Ellen Cocking that electricity was required to supply the Street Market and for the Christmas Tree on the Little Rec. She confirmed she would be able to provide connectivity but wanted the electric usage cost to be covered by the Street Market Committee.
- Ellen Cocking confirmed the building will comply with Building Regulations and it would not be changed to any great degree. She stated there may be a need for a trench to be dug around the outside of the building to prevent any damp ingress.

- Ellen Cocking had pointed out she needed a provision agreement from the Parish Council as soon as possible to enable her to move forward and commit more finance into setting up the café. She asked for confirmation of the rent and a 5 year Lease agreement with break clause. The Parish Council to consider this request at its August meeting.
- It was felt that a reasonably low rent be offered that covers the storage cost for the first 3 years to help establish a café and for the rent to commence on the opening of the café itself.
- Parish Council to check with our Insurers that the building will still be covered under the Public Liability Insurance. Contents to be insured by Ellen Cocking.

The Clerk stated she had spoken to Zurich who had confirmed the proposed usage of the building will not affect the current public liability insurance on the building.

6. Consider planning details Lessee wishes to submit

The draft Lease had been circulated to members of the Council prior to the meeting and various amendments had been to this. It was accepted the document was very much a work in progress draft which will be sent to the Council's solicitors as a guide to the terms which are being proposed.

RESOLVED that with regard to agreeing on an initial rent a Commercial Agent should be asked to provide a formal valuation of the building and Cllr Kennard confirmed she would make the necessary contact.

RESOLVED Hole and Pugsley, solicitors as Tiverton (who were already acting for the Council in relation to the First Registration of the Fire Engine House and the Berry) be asked to provide a quotation in order to draw up a Lease for the building. The Clerk to contact the solicitors.

7. Future meeting dates

It was agreed that meetings would take place every 2 weeks and the Clerk would make the necessary booking of the Dorothy Granger Room in the Community Hall.

Meeting closed at 20.30