



PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Customer Name

Customer Address

15 June 2026

Dear Customer Name

Freedom of Information Act 2000, Reference: FOI-211895-2026

The council has completed its search relating to your request about Consultation process, decision-making and Gunning compliance for Grisedale Croft received on Tue, 26 May 2026.

Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to the consultation on the future of Grisedale Croft Care Home, Alston, launched following the Cabinet decision of the 21st April 2026.

Please confirm -

- 1a) The consultation document for Grisedale Croft
 - 1b) The full list of consultees
 - 1c) The distribution plan
 - 1d) How residents without internet access on Alston Moor will be reached
-
- 2a) Confirmation of the start date, end date, and scheduled decision date of the consultation
 - 2b) The names of the officer and the Cabinet member with responsibility for analysing responses

3a) Confirmation of whether the final decision will be taken by Cabinet, by full Council, or under delegated authority by the Director of Adult Care

4a) Confirmation of whether and how the outcome will be scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s)

4b) Whether a call-in procedure is available

5) Any protocol or internal guidance governing how the Council responds to representations from a Parish Council, Town Council, MP or Member of the House of Lords during the consultation period

The Cabinet report dated the 21st April 2026 states at paragraph 9.5 -

"Whilst a potentially suitable property has been identified, the Council has not had a conditional offer accepted."

The Council's response to question 13 of FOI-208440-2026 (received 22 May 2026) states that no feasibility study, site-search report, options appraisal, or correspondence with potential site owners has been undertaken to date in relation to the provision of alternative accommodation.

Please therefore provide -

5a) Any document, note, email, or other record that identifies the property referred to in paragraph 9.5 of the Cabinet report, or records how it came to the Council's attention

5b) Any document, note, email, or other record of any communication — whether formal or informal, written or otherwise — between any Council officer or member and any person with an interest in that property, prior to the Cabinet meeting of 21 April 2026

5c) Confirmation of whether any Council officer or member visited the property prior to the Cabinet meeting of 21 April 2026

Response

The council does hold information within the definition of your request.

1a) The consultation document for Grisedale Croft

This is the link to the online consultation document and survey -

<https://consult.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/adult-social-care/grisedale-croft/>

Please also find attached the print version of the consultation document.

1b) The full list of consultees

We welcome consultation responses, comments and questions from any individual or group.

The following audiences and stakeholders have been identified as part of the consultation process -

Internal:

Grisedale Croft

- Care home residents
- Residents' families and carers
- Care home staff

Westmorland and Furness Council members

- Cabinet members
- Council Leader and deputy leader
- ASC Portfolio holder
- Eden Locality Board
- All members
- Health and Scrutiny Panel

W&F staff/Adult Social Care staff

- Adults DMT
- Wider ASC staff
- Other W&F care home/Care Services staff
- CEO and CMT/SLT
- Eden Locality Manager and Eden Community team
- Trade Unions
- Customer services (Single Point of Access - SPA) staff (enquiries)

External:

Health and social care partners

- Alston Medical Practice
- Cumberland Council
- NHS partners

Alston Moor community

- Local residents, carers

- Potential future care home residents
- Alston Moor community groups
- Alston Moor Parish Council/members
- Penrith and the Solway MP

Advocacy

- N-Compass
- Westmorland & Furness Healthwatch

Westmorland and Furness community

- All residents/council tax payers

1c) The distribution plan

The consultation document is available online, and print copies have been made available in Alston Library, Nenthead Village Shop and Garrigill Post Office.

These have been reprinted and resupplied in response to demand. 550 copies have been distributed as of June 2026.

A member of the community offered to distribute 100 paper copies to older residents at the same time as another communication. This was accepted, and 100 Freepost envelopes supplied in addition.

1d) How residents without internet access on Alston Moor will be reached

Print copies of the consultation pack have been made available at three locations, Alston Library, Nenthead Village Shop and Garrigill Post Office.

Posters about the consultation, including details of where to get paper copies, and dates of all drop-in information sessions, were supplied on Friday the 15th May to these venues and also:

- Mad Hatters Hardware Shop
- TLC Hair Design
- Cobbles Café
- Co-op noticeboard
- Alston Post Office noticeboard
- Alston Pharmacy
- Age UK Carlisle and Eden shop
- Saddlers Bakery Bistro
- Nenthead Village Hall noticeboard

- Alston Spar noticeboard

Drop-in information events have been arranged as follows. These are an opportunity for one-to-one conversations with officers, and are also particularly valuable for older or vulnerable residents who do not have internet access and may need support to take part in the consultation and complete the consultation survey.

- Wednesday the 3rd June, Alston Library, 11.00am - 1.00pm
- Monday the 15th June, Alston Library, 5.00pm - 7.00pm
- Friday the 26th June, The Hive, Nenthead, 10.30am - 12.30pm
- Friday the 26th June, Garrigill Village Hall, 2.00pm - 4.00pm
- Wednesday the 1st July, Alston Library, 2.00pm - 4.00pm
- Monday the 20th July, Alston Library, 11.00am - 1.00pm

A door-to-door leaflet distribution is planned for all Alston postcodes at the beginning of July to update and inform all residents of the consultation, and that there are still 4 to 5 weeks left to take part.

2a) Confirmation of the start date, end date, and scheduled decision date of the consultation

The Consultation period is 12 weeks, from Thursday the 14th May to Wednesday the 5th August 2026

There is no set date scheduled for a decision, but sufficient time will need to be allowed for all information provided to be considered meaningfully and analysed. We will also need to have identified potential suitable accommodation and costed this.

2b) The names of the officer and the Cabinet member with responsibility for analysing responses

A report will be produced on the Consultation responses and will be taken into account by the decision maker.

3a) Confirmation of whether the final decision will be taken by Cabinet, by full Council, or under delegated authority by the Director of Adult Care

The decision has been delegated by the Cabinet to be made by the Director of Adult Social Care.

4a) Confirmation of whether and how the outcome will be scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s)

We are exploring the possibility of involving Scrutiny before a decision is taken.

4b) Whether a call-in procedure is available

Yes, all key decisions are subject to call in.

5) Any protocol or internal guidance governing how the Council responds to representations from a Parish Council, Town Council, MP or Member of the House of Lords during the consultation period

All consultation responses will be considered irrespective of whom they are from, and a report will be produced outlining all the points made.

The Cabinet report dated the 21st April 2026 states at paragraph 9.5 -

"Whilst a potentially suitable property has been identified, the Council has not had a conditional offer accepted."

The Council's response to question 13 of FOI-208440-2026 (received 22 May 2026) states that no feasibility study, site-search report, options appraisal, or correspondence with potential site owners has been undertaken to date in relation to the provision of alternative accommodation.

Please therefore provide -

5a) Any document, note, email, or other record that identifies the property referred to in paragraph 9.5 of the Cabinet report, or records how it came to the Council's attention

We understand that that property has now been sold subject to contract, but discussions are taking place on a confidential basis about another potential property. Please see further explanation below.

5b) Any document, note, email, or other record of any communication - whether formal or informal, written or otherwise - between any Council officer or member and any person with an interest in that property, prior to the Cabinet meeting of 21 April 2026

As soon as a suitable location has been identified and a conditional contract or option is entered into, the Council will introduce the location into the consultation process. Please see further explanation below.

5c) Confirmation of whether any Council officer or member visited the property prior to the Cabinet meeting of 21 April 2026

An officer visited the property on 17th April 2026.

Further explanation relating to questions 5a & 5b -

Whilst we can confirm that Westmorland and Furness Council holds some of the information you have requested, we consider that the information held is exempt from disclosure under Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) relating to Commercial Interest, and therefore I regret to inform you that the Council will not be releasing it. This is because it considers that the disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any party.

In this case, the information relates to a proposed property acquisition which is not finalised. Disclosure at this stage would be likely to prejudice the Council's commercial position by -

Undermining its ability to negotiate effectively

Potentially increasing the purchase price

Revealing sensitive information to third parties, including competing buyers or sellers

This would have a direct impact on the Council's ability to secure best value for public funds.

As Section 43(2) of FOIA, is a qualified exemption, it requires a Public Interest Test to be undertaken. We have undertaken said test to ascertain whether the public interest is best served by the disclosure or the withholding of the information.

The public interest test is set out below:

The Council recognises there is a public interest in -

Transparency and accountability in how public funds are used

Ensuring openness in the decision-making process

However, we consider that the public interest is better served by withholding the information at this time, as disclosure would -

Prejudice ongoing commercial negotiations
Reduce the Council's ability to achieve best value
Potentially result in increased costs to the public purse

In considering all these factors, it is concluded that in all the circumstances of this case, we find that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

This response therefore serves as a formal refusal notice under Section 17 of FOIA.

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For information where the copyright is owned by another person or organisation you must apply to the owner to obtain their permission.

If you have any issues regarding this letter you should contact the council in the first instance to attempt to resolve them.

You can request an internal review within 40 days of receiving the response to your original request. If you would like to request a review, please contact the Information Governance Team using the below details.

- T: 01539 637437
- E: complaints@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner (ICO) at: Information Commissioner's Officer, Wycliffe House, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF or by telephoning 0303 123 1113. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the Information Governance procedure provided by Westmorland and Furness Council.

Further information can be found on the council's website.

Yours sincerely

Information Governance Team