

MINUTES OF THE HEXHAMSHIRE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD THURSDAY 8th JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30 PM IN THE MALCOLM CAISLEY MEETING ROOM, WHITLEY CHAPEL PARISH HALL

1. Councillors present: Nicki Matthews (Chair), Roger Rutherford, John Austin, Edward Parker, Gill Whatmough, David Flatman, Kirsten Johnson (Clerk)
2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Colin Horncastle, Lauren Porteous, Marge Rastall
3. Declarations of Interest - None
4. Minutes of the Parish Council held on Thursday 11th December 2025. The minutes were approved
5. Matters Arising
 - 5.1 B4RN Public Meeting Thursday 5th Feb** Posters have been put in the Parish and the details of the meeting shared on Facebook. It will also appear in the Hexhamshire Magazine and the Courant's Shire Notes. B4RN have been requested to publicise the meeting. We will share any of the social media posts.
 - 5.2 Generator repair.** No further update.
 - 5.3 Bench near Kingslaw** The bench is now in place. The name plate from the original bench has been transferred. Gill will pass an update to the family of Dr Wotton to whom the bench is dedicated.
 - 5.4 NALC session on 15th December** - attended by John. When the presentation is shared, John will share with other Councillors.
 - 5.5 Moving to a Gov.uk domain** – All agreed the need to move to a Gov.uk domain. John reported the IT department of NCC will help to build a basic website with a single registration cost of £100. That department will host the website which includes 12 email addresses at an annual cost of £350. John to share details with Kirsten who will follow up.
 - 5.6 IT Policy and Privacy policy.** It was agreed Kirsten will edit the existing Privacy statement, ensuring it's compliant. It was agreed that the NALC IT template would provide a good basis and Kirsten to edit it so it's appropriate for the Parish's needs.

6. Public participation - none
7. Matters for Discussion with the Unitary Councillor – nothing submitted
8. Correspondence –
 - 8.1 Invitation to Joint Town & Parish Councils Conference** – John will attend with Kirsten.
Kirsten to confirm attendance with Northumberland County Council.
 - 8.2 Traffic notices from NCC**
 - 8.2.1 Causey Hill road will be closed 02.03.26 – 20.03.26 between the hours of 09:00 – 16:00
 - 8.2.2 Hallstile Bank will be closed 23.01.26 – 31.10.26
 - 8.2.3 Tynedale Terrace will be closed 01.02.26 – 06.03.26 between the hours of 08:00 – 20:00
 - 8.3 Tynedale Hospice at Home Donation Request** – Request to be added to the March agenda so any donation can be decided with a clear end of year position.
9. Finance –
 - 9.1 Lloyds complaint** – The complaint has been received by the Financial Conduct Authority; we will receive no further update from the FCA. If the FCA does decide to investigate, they will deal directly with Lloyds Bank.
 - 9.2 Insurance renewal** has been paid.
 - 9.3 Domain name** An invoice of £14.39 (inc VAT) has been received. Agreed this should be paid.
 - 9.4 Precept Summary** A report was shared by Nicki. This anticipates additional costs in 2026 - 2027, particularly with the website costs. All agreed increasing the precept to £9,600.
Kirsten to complete the precept form and submit.
 - 9.5 Payroll reporting** The Parish is registered has an employer and is providing historic information to HMRC. We await further notification from HMRC.
 - 9.6 Xero subscription invoice received** All agreed to pay £21 subscription.
10. Planning Applications –
 - 10.1 **25/03263/VARYCO Land West of Windy Hill** – permission now granted.
 - 10.2 **25/04089 FUL Land West of Windy Hill** – Erection of Agricultural Building
There are significant objections listed to the full planning application on the NCC planning portal, including objections from statutory bodies.
 - 10.3 **25/0462/FUL – Conversion of steel portal farm buildings at Newbiggin.** This is a planning application for 5 residences (4 x 3 bed and 1 x 4 bed). Permission has already been granted for a five bedroom property and 5 three bed properties. With the additional application, there will be 11 new properties and 14 properties in total. Cllr Horncastle has

indicated he is trying to speak to the Senior Planning Officer. There was concern the site will not provide affordable housing as part of the development, particularly given the scale.

- 10.4 **24/00728/BRCOND Lilswood Caravan Park** Nicki reported she has contacted Alex Campbell in NCC Enforcement Department as the breaches were meant to be remedied by 15th December, but have not been. AC will make a site visit shortly.
- 10.5 **Guards Lane** - After withdrawal of the latest planning application, clarification is needed regarding the existing structure, which the applicant had previously admitted did not have planning permission. Kirsten to follow up with the Planning Department.

11. Highways, Footpaths and BOATS Photos of the poor standard of Leazes Lane have been submitted to FixMyStreets by Gill.
12. Reports:
 - 12.1 Wetlands – nothing to report
 - 12.2 Hall – nothing to report
 - 12.3 School – nothing to report
 - 12.4 Dukesfield Arches – website transfer is not yet complete. David to follow up.
 - 12.5 Sportsfield/Play Area – repairs are progressing but not yet completed.
13. A.O.B.
 - 13.1 **Request from National Powergrid to open during crisis** – A request was received to be ready to open the Hall during the next forthcoming named storm, which was agreed.

Meeting closed 8:30pm.

Next meeting is Thursday 12th February