

## MINUTES OF MEETING OF HEXHAMSHIRE PARISH COUNCIL

THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> MAY 2026 AT 7.30 PM IN THE MALCOLM CAISLEY MEETING ROOM, WHITLEY CHAPEL PARISH HALL

### Agenda

1. Councillors present: Marge Rastall (Chair), David Flatman, John Austin, Lauren Kristensen, Roger Rutherford, Gill Whatmough, Nicki Matthews, Kirsten Johnson (Clerk)
2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Colin Horncastle, Ed Parker
3. Declarations of Interest: None declared
4. Approval of Minutes of the Parish Council held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026: The minutes were approved.
5. Matters Arising
  - 5.1 Update B4RN support in the Parish: We are continuing to have two weekly meetings to support the uptake of the B4RN offer. The outreach team is talking to landowners who are affected by the cabling. B4RN are offering additional support where landowners are unsure. It is important for the economic future of the Shire to get the B4RN provision as it is a better service than alternative providers are able to offer.
  - 5.2 Bonfire Clean up: The land has been fenced off while work takes place; work is expected to start shortly.
  - 5.3 Lilswood Caravan Park: Alex Campbell has informed us she will inspect in May and if the site is not compliant the remaining course of action is legal proceedings.
  - 5.4 Activity at Rushwood: There is an increase in machinery and horses on the site, with additional tree felling. Kirsten to inform the NCC planning department of the presence of the static caravan and that more trees have been felled, seeking clarification of what has been permitted at the site.
  - 5.5 Shield Green Nursery Road: Andy Olive has referred the Parish Council report referred to Andy Jeffers and no response has yet been received from him. Kirsten to follow up with Andy Jeffers.
  - 5.6 Email addresses from the .gov.uk transition: Cllrs have all received their email address and will change passwords for data security. There is an autorecognition function which should allow personal devices to recognise the email address. All agreed, by next meeting, all Councillors and Clerk to be using new addresses.
  - 5.7 Rural Crime Network: Marge has circulated the notes from Sam Gibson which researched the best way to set up a group. The proposal is to create a Whatsapp group with an

admin team who knows parishioners. The police advice is to include neighbouring parishes of Slaley and Blanchland. It was agreed that it might be useful to include Allendale. All agreed that a code of conduct, including GDPR compliance, should be agreed before the group invites people to join. David to draft proposed code of conduct and create a trial run group with the Parish Council.

6. Public participation: None

7. Matters for Discussion with the Unitary Councillor: Nothing received

8. Correspondence –

8.1 Citizens Advice Northumberland - donation request: Unfortunately there are no further funds available for donations. Kirsten to communicate to the Citizens Advice

9. Finance –

9.1 Monthly Update

9.2 VAT reclaim update: Nicki reported that all VAT has now been reclaimed. £2,206.80 has been reclaimed, the majority of which relates to the purchase of the generator.

9.3 Clerks PAYE: All agreed to pay the outstanding amount of £2,391.51.

9.4 Galbraith invoice: Whitley St Helen's Field: All agreed to pay the invoice of £750

9.5 NALC subscription invoice: All agreed to pay the invoice of £191.49

9.6 Parish Hall Invoice: All agreed to pay invoice of £67.50

10. Planning Applications

10.1 26/01646/FUL High Rawgreen Cottage: All agreed to support this application.

10.2 26/01401/VARYCO Land South of Leafields Hexham Northumberland: No action required

10.3 26/01681/FUL Land East of Shawwood Farm Guards Lane: All agreed no objection to this application.

11. Highways, Footpaths and BOATS:

11.1 Wicket Gate opposite Red Lead Mill – Feedback from Northumberland County Council Officer, Duncan, is it is the landowner responsibility to fix the gate. Gill has stressed the gate is dangerous. The fence post has rotted making the use of the gate unsafe. Kirsten to find the legal mandate for the landowner's responsibility. Gill will enquire whether it's tenant or landlord responsibility to resolve public right of way infrastructure.

11.2 Field outside of Ordley Village has a shepherd hut which now has a balcony around and a new gateway onto the highway. Kirsten to contact Alex Campbell to check

permissions are in place for both the shepherd hut and the additional access to the highway.

12. Reports:

12.1 Wetlands – Ponies arrived last week.

12.2 Hall – nothing to report

12.3 School – An open day was held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May.

12.4 Dukesfield Arches – Nothing to report.

12.5 Sportsfield / Play Area – Goalposts are yet to be finished and rabbit control has begun.

13. A.O.B. No additional business

Meeting Closed at 20:51