

A MEETING OF HEXHAMSHIRE PARISH COUNCIL

THURSDAY 11th JUNE 2026 AT 7.30 PM IN THE MALCOLM CAISLEY MEETING ROOM, WHITLEY
CHAPEL PARISH HALL

Minutes

1. Councillors present: Marge Rastall, John Austin, David Flatman, Ed Parker, Roger Rutherford, Lauren Kristensen, Kirsten Johnson (Clerk)
2. Apologies for absence: Nicki Matthews, Gill Whatmough, Cllr Colin Horncastle
3. Declarations of Interest: none were received
4. Approval of Minutes of the Parish Council held on Thursday 14th May 2026: The minutes were approved. All wished to record thanks for the additional work put in by Nicki Matthews on recent financial matters.
5. Matters Arising
 - 5.1 Section 9 of the AGM agenda – the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025 – 2026
 - 5.1.1 *To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor. All approved with no actions listed*
 - 5.1.2 *To approve the Annual Governance Statement. All approved.*
 - 5.1.3 *To approve the draft annual accounts for 2025/2026.*
 - 5.1.4 *To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances. All approved*
 - 5.1.5 *To confirm and approve the Certification of Exemption. All approved.*
 - 5.2 Update B4RN support in the Parish – The wayleaves are being returned. B4RN are recommending investment meeting where parishioners are invited to investment in Phase 1 (Catton to Whitely Chapel) can now go ahead. It may be possible for B4RN to apply directly to the Community Chest fund for any short fall in funding. There was a discussion about the best position of the box at the Parish Hall and whether it could be sited on land owned by the Hall rather than the land owned by the Diocese. Nicki is following up with the Hall committee. Phase 1 still requires some sign ups. The B4RN outreach team are following up with people in Phase 1 who are not yet signed up.
 - 5.3 Bonfire Clean up: The clear up will take place when the ground is drier. All felt the best solution was to remove the contaminated soil as burying the material would only be a temporary solution.

- 5.4 Shield Green Nursery Road response from Highways: Andy Fisher from NCC has confirmed the gullies were cleaned on 13th April and the potholes were repaired on 1st April.
- 5.5 Activity at Rushwood: No reply to the query or follow up email so far.
- 5.6 Wicket Gate opposite Red Lead Mill: The gate has been fixed by the tenant. All offered thanks to him for resolving this situation and ensuring the right of way access is safe. There are a number of FixMyStreet tickets relating to different departments which are not progressing. All felt we needed Cllr Horncastle's input to address these tickets. Kirsten to contact NCC Governance team to establish the process for NCC support when the County Councillor not available.
- 5.7 Field outside Ordley Village: Alex Campbell reported she has contacted the owner who is not intending to use the Shepherd's Hut for stays, but to advertise the Shepherd's Hut sales. Alex is following up in the week commencing 15th June to establish whether the owner intends to move the shepherd's hut every 28 days (and remove the access) or apply for planning permission. Kirsten to follow with Alex Campbell.
- 5.8 Emails from the .gov.uk transition: All councillors have an email address with most being able to use it. Kirsten is meeting with NCC IT team in the week commencing 15th June to complete the handover for the new website. The new website will host all of the compliance documents as it meets all the accessibility requirements. The existing website will continue as an archive.
- 5.9 Rural Crime Network: David has shared some draft rules which all felt were appropriate. Rules will include a bullet point notifying users that material may be shared with the police as needed. David has created a whatsapp group where admins can approve members. It is anticipated the number of admins will grow over time. The group will be formed gradually over the summer months with just residents of the Shire and monitored for effectiveness. If it is working as anticipated, residents beyond the Shire can be invited to join through the update to the Parish Magazine in September.
6. Public participation: None
7. Matters for Discussion with the Unitary Councillor: Apologies received from Cllr Horncastle.
8. Correspondence
- 8.1 Community Governance Review (Membership Allocation). We are currently 10 councillors with a quorate of 4. If we reduced the councillor number, the quorate would drop. All felt this was not an issue and the numbers should stay as they are. We are still seeking to recruit the remaining two councillor positions.

8.2 Local Transport Plan response – no action required.

9. Finance –

9.1 Monthly Update – no action required.

10. Planning Applications

11. Highways, Footpaths and BOATS – verges have been cut but only to White Hall. Kirsten to follow up to check they are returning to complete the cut.

12. Reports:

12.1 Wetlands - no new update

12.2 Hall – no new update

12.3 School – no new update

12.4 Dukesfield Arches – no new update

12.5 Sportsfield / Play Area - no new update

13. A.O.B.

13.1 Declaration of Interests - A new section 32A of the Localism Act 2011 – the default is Councillor addresses will no longer be publicly shared in Register of Interests, unless the councillor requests it to be.

Meeting closed at 20:56

Date of next meeting: Thursday 9th July.