



Minutes of Meeting 23 February 2026 held in the All Hallows Church, Henshaw

Present: Cllrs J. Oliver (Chair), Cllr V. Gibson, D. Finlayson, K. Baron, A. Saunders, L. Welsh, S. Armstrong, County Cllr A. Sharp, M. A. Smith (Clerk).

1. Introduction and Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence All present.

3. Declarations of Interest Cllrs Oliver and Finlayson (Village Hall funding).

4. Public Questions None received.

5. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 26 January 2026 were read and approved.

6. General Amenities

6.1 Footpaths. The footpath from Benton House to Starbucks, which is regularly muddy and waterlogged, is hopefully going to be tarmacked by the County Council in the near future.

6.2 Seating. A donation has been offered for a new bench to be sited in Redburn Park. Clerk to continue with arrangements and a suitable location.

6.3 Street Lighting. Nothing to report.

6.4 Verge Maintenance. The 2026 programme will start at the end of March.

6.5 Litter bins. There are no litter bins on the section between Redburn Park and Broadacres. Clerk to check costs of a new metal bin to be sited near to Springfield Terrace.

6.6 Dog Bag Dispensers. The dispensers will be refilled as soon as possible. There is an additional dispenser which is to be placed near to Bardon Mill Village Green.

7. Village Greens

7.1 Henshaw Village Green. The Chair and Clerk have met on site to look at the potential patch repairs and were arranging for estimates and options and would report back as soon as possible.

7.2 Towhouse Village Green. Correspondence has been received regarding the siting of an oil store next to one of the properties on the green. Following discussion, it was agreed that whilst the Council cannot grant formal approval (as the land is legally classed as Village Green) it was the case that this oil store had been there for many years and is not a matter the Council would consider an actionable offence.

7.3 Bardon Mill Village Green. Approval was granted at the November meeting to site a small wooden case/cabinet on the Bardon Mill Village Hall opposite the Village Tearoom which would be filled with books for people to borrow and share etc. Clerk to follow this up to check on progress.

8. Planning Applications and Issues

8.1 No planning matters were raised.

8.2 No applications have been received in January.

9. Transport and Highway Matters

9.1 A69. Nothing to report.

9.2 Bardon Mill Station Road Access. Network and Northern Rail are still looking for the availability of funding and would hopefully come to a (positive) decision soon.

9.3 Road Maintenance and Potholes. A number of potholes have been reported on 'Fix My Street' and Cllr Sharp took a note of these to see if he could get the repairs actioned.

9.4 Wellbank, Henshaw. The road needs resurfacing as surface water flows away from the drains and down onto the A69 junction. Clerk to raise this with the County Council again.

10. Redburn Park

10.1 General Maintenance. This has now been completed until after the winter with a list of repairs and improvements to be drawn up in the Spring.

10.2 Monthly Inspections. The reports continue to be circulated to Members with any recommended work undertaken. The Clerk is looking at taking a training course on routine inspections.

10.3 Unauthorised Use and Encroachment onto Western Edge of Woodland. The area had been cleared following this being raised at the last meeting. Clerk is obtaining definitive plans for the Land Registry to check the extent of the Parish Council ownership.

11. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

11.1 Lease to Village Hall Project Group. Clerk is awaiting legal advice from Solicitors to progress the change to the lease arrangements.

11.2 A request has been received from the Committee to see if the Council could offer any additional financial assistance. Cllr Finlayson advised that grant funding had been obtained for a replacement floor but when works began it was found that there are significant defects under the old floor which will cost approximately £15,000 to rectify. As the funding would not cover this additional work/cost the Committee were seeking funding from any possible sources as the hall would remain closed meaning a loss of income and further financial difficulties. The Council had already given a contribution of £1000 in 2025/26 towards the replacement floor as part of its annual grant to the hall. Cllrs Oliver and Finlayson left the room (as they had declared an interest). Cllr Gibson took the chair, and the remaining Members considered that as the Village Hall was a valuable asset and a huge benefit to the community that additional funding from the Parish Council was justified. It was agreed that £2000 would be given which would be £1000 brought forward from 2026/27 and £1000 from the Capital Schemes fund.

11.3 Cllrs Oliver and Finlayson returned to the meeting and there was no further update on activities etc as this had been covered in 11.2.

12. Northumberland National Park

12.1 An update was given on general matters by Cllrs Gibson and Saunders. It was raised that dogs are now allowed in the Sill (other than the display areas) and this should be advertised more widely to attract additional visitors.

13. Henshaw School

13.1 No matters to report.

14. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters

14.1 A report was presented by the Clerk with funds held as at 23 February being £24,889.20.

14.2 Expenditure and Income to approve/note:

- Society of Local Council Clerks (Training) £102.00
- Great North Air Ambulance (Monthly Donation) £10.00. *Pre-approved and accounted for.*
- HSBC (Estimated Bank Charges) £10.00. *Already accounted for.*
- Northern Powergrid (Wayleave Payment) £21.91 (Income)
- Bowes Leek Club (Donation to Play Park) £150 (Income).

Estimated balance following above transactions is **£24,938.11** of which £7,438.11 is operating funds and £17,500 is ringfenced for the Capital Programme.

14.3 Capital Programme. No update as estimates awaited to consider projects.

15. Northumberland County Council Update

15.1 Cllr Sharp had provided updates throughout the meeting but advised that the Bardon Mill Playing Fields Association had met recently and reported that funding had been raised for a new mower and the pavilion and changed rooms have been redecorated.

16. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting

16.1 Update by Clerk. Information and updates had been sent to Members by email.

16.2 Annual Parish Meeting. The Clerk advised that an Annual Parish Meeting was to be arranged between 1 March and 1 June. This was not a Council Meeting but an opportunity to meet with other local groups and residents. Clerk to arrange accordingly.

16.3 Website and Email Account. Arrangements are progressing for the new website and .gov email.

16.4 Town and Parish Conference will take on 5 March with the Chair and Clerk to attend.

16.5 Community Governance Review. The County Council were undertaking this review which was out to public consultation which ends of 30 April.

16.6 SLCC Training Event. The Clerk is to attend training on 11 March.

16.7 Northumberland County Council Environment and Transport Key Projects and Programme. Details had been circulated by the Clerk on this matter which detailed the County Council's works and priorities for the forthcoming year.

17. Items to be included on the next Agenda. Nothing raised.

18. Date and time of next meeting. This will be on Monday 23 March 2026.

Approved and signed at the meeting held on 23 March 2026.....