Featherstone Parish Council

Annual Meeting Minutes of the Parish Council and Ordinary Meeting of the Council

Wednesday 27 May 2026 at 7:30pm

Featherstone Village Hall

Present: Cllr. T. Teasdale (Vice-Chair), Cllr. A. Sharp, Cllr. A. Whitehead, Cllr. G. Patterson, William C Reay (co-optee, attending for co-option), Cllr. R Mathieson

Also Present: Jan Birks (Clerk)

13/26 Co-option of Councillor

To consider the application received for the vacant office of Parish Councillor and to agree the co-option of a candidate to fill the vacancy.

CO-OPTION TO FILL CASUAL VACANCY

The Clerk reported that an application had been received from William C Reay.

RESOLVED unanimously that William C Reay be co-opted as a member of Featherstone Parish Council.

William C Reay signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Vice Chair and took his seat on the Council.

The Clerk advised that William C Reay must complete and submit the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests to Northumberland County Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

14/26 Election of Officers

14/26.01 Election of Chair

Cllr. Elaine Wigham was proposed to remain Chair. (Cllr Wigham was not present at the meeting.) In her absence, the Vice-Chair presided over the election of Chair.

Proposed: Cllr T Teasdale Seconded: Cllr G Patterson Approved

RESOLVED that Elaine Wigham be re-elected as Chair of Featherstone Parish Council for the ensuing year.

The Clerk advised that Elaine Wigham would be required to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair at or before the next meeting.

14/26.02 Election of Vice-Chair

Cllr Tom Teasdale was proposed to remain Vice Chair.

Proposed: Cllr A Sharp Seconded: Cllr A Whitehead Approved

RESOLVED that Cllr Tom Teasdale be re-elected as Vice Chair of Featherstone Parish Council for the ensuing year.

15/26

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr E Wigham.

16/26 Appointment to Outside Bodies and Committees

16/26.01 Haltwhistle & District Joint Burial Committee – 1 member

Proposed: Cllr T Teasdale Seconded: Cllr G Patterson Approved

RESOLVED that Cllr A Whitehead be re-appointed as the Council's representative on the Haltwhistle & District Joint Burial Committee for the ensuing year.

17/26 Public Questions

None received.

18/26 Declarations of Interest

To receive: Any disclosable pecuniary interests (Section 31, Localism Act 2011; Code of Conduct paras 13–18). Any other significant interests in the public interest (Code of Conduct paras 19–20). Members are reminded to observe the Nolan principles of public life.

None.

19/26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th February 2026 were approved.

Proposed: Cllr A Sharp Seconded: Cllr A Whitehead Approved

20/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None Declared.

21/26 Payment of Insurance Renewal – Zurich Municipal

The Clerk reported that the Council's annual insurance premium to Zurich Municipal was due on 1 June 2026. To meet the deadline, payment was made before the meeting.

Invoice: 554848597 | Cheque: 100489 | Amount: £214.00

Proposed: Cllr A Whitehead Seconded: Cllr G Patterson Approved

RESOLVED that the payment of £214.00 to Zurich Municipal in respect of the annual insurance renewal be approved and ratified.

22/26 Ratification of Internal Auditor Appointment 2025/26

The Clerk reported that David Newman of X Learning Limited had been engaged as Internal Auditor for 2025/26. Provision for the internal audit and associated fee had been approved within the Council's budget and precept (Minute Ref. 70/25.02, 26 November 2025). The audit fee payable to X Learning Limited amounts to £100.00 plus VAT (£120.00 total). The Clerk noted the Council's preference to retain David Newman for future internal audits, subject to satisfactory completion of the current audit.

Proposed: Cllr A Sharp | Seconded: Cllr G Patterson | Approved

RESOLVED that the appointment of David Newman of X Learning Limited as Internal Auditor for 2025/26 be ratified, the terms of engagement approved, and the fee of £100.00 plus VAT (£120.00 total) be approved for payment upon completion of the audit and receipt of invoice. Proposed that David Newman be retained for future internal audits.

23/26 Reports on Financial Matters

Reports received, payments, receipts, bank reconciliations, and cash balanced noted and accepted.

Proposed: Cllr A Sharp | Seconded: Cllr T Teasdale | Approved

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24/26 Haltwhistle & District Joint Burial Committee

Report was given and noted.

25/26 Policy & Risk Assessment Review

The Clerk presented the following policies and risk assessments for review and adoption. Members considered each in turn.

RESOLVED that the following be approved and adopted:

25/26.01 Standing Orders

25/26.02 Freedom of Information Policy

25/26.03 Social Media & Press Policy

25/26.04 Co-option Policy

25/26.05 Financial Regulations

25/26.06 IT Email Policy

25/26.07 Risk Assessments

Proposed: Cllr A Sharp | Seconded: Cllr T Teasdale | Approved

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26/26 Correspondence

No correspondence requiring action was received.

27/26 Any Other Business (AOB)

To raise any items not on the agenda.

The Clerk reported a request received from parish resident Craig Jackson regarding the bench situated at the Hump Back Bridge, which bears a plaque recording its donation by the Trustees of the Smith (Haltwhistle and District) Trust for the Queen's Jubilee.

Mr Jackson requested that the existing plaque be removed and transferred to the Glasdon bench by the footbridge, and that a replacement plaque of the same dimensions, bearing his late father's name and a short verse, be installed on the Hump Back Bridge bench. Mr Jackson confirmed he would meet the cost of the new plaque and offered to undertake annual maintenance of all seats within the parish, including cutting back encroaching vegetation and strimming around the bases.

RESOLVED that the existing Smith Trust plaque be removed from the bench at the Hump Back Bridge and relocated to the Glasdon bench by the footbridge, and that a memorial plaque in memory of Mr Jackson's late father be installed on the bench at the Hump Back Bridge.

Proposed: Cllr A Sharp　　Seconded: Cllr A Whitehead　　Approved

Grounds meeting - Issues to follow-up

All drainage issues: Wallace Arms

Craigsbank - road sliding away

Area by Peat Gate Bank .... ditch dug away, concrete drain installed by NCC.... not tapped in, due to overflow of water creates unsafe road, and ice during winter.

Drainage & overgrown ditches in Crystal Well

Proposed site meeting coordinated with Cllr Rachel Mathieson with NCC representative to review all emergency road/ditch/flooding/overgrowth in Featherstone Parish Council.

28/26 Dates of Next Meetings

Extraordinary Meeting of the Council

Members are asked to note that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council will be held in June 2026 (date to be confirmed) to consider and approve the 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 26th August 2026 at 7.30pm – Featherstone Village Hall

Meeting adjourned: 8:55 pm

Proposed:　　**Seconded:**　　**Approved**

Dated: 26/08/26

E. Wigham