

# Acklington Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in Acklington Village Hall, on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Present	Cllr Sharin Ingleby (Chair)	Cllr Steve Thorpe (Vice Chair)	Cllr Alison Bell
	Cllr Sean Malone	Cllr Ann McDougal	Cllr Tony Mezza
	Cllr Steve Shanks		
In Attendance	County Councillor Pauline Davidson	Barry Flux (Clerk)	1 Member of the public

## Public questions / speaking

During the public speaking section, a resident raised concerns regarding the recurring references to speeding in the Parish Council minutes from January to September 2025.

## Agenda Item

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes from the meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 were approved as a true record. No matters arising were raised due to be items already being on the agenda.

### CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR(S)

It was agreed to keep the advertisement open due to lack of applications.

### CLERK'S REPORT

#### Remembrance Commemorations

The Clerk confirmed that wreaths for Remembrance Sunday had been distributed.

#### Payments – Full Financial Report

Financial reports with references AC006S, AC007S, AC006/71, were presented to the meeting. It was also noted that the Community Account held £16,887.09 in funds and the Instant Access Account held £12,412.09

A brief discussion took place regarding reserves and the possible transfer of funds between accounts. Members agreed this should be considered alongside the forthcoming budget discussions.

#### Budget Discussion

The Clerk outlined the draft budget figures for 2026–27, noting a correction on the draft document where the heading should read “2026–27” instead of “2025–26.” Expenditure is projected to rise from £11,094.40 to approximately £14,318.40, representing a significant increase. Members were asked to consider whether this increase could be managed within existing reserves or whether adjustments to spending or precept levels might be required.

Signed .....

Date: .....

A general discussion followed regarding expenditure. The Clerk recommended that a private working meeting be held in December to review figures in more detail ahead of final budget approval in January.

### **Banking Change of Address**

The Clerk reported that the change of address had been discussed privately. It was agreed that correspondence should be directed to the Chairs address. The Chair confirmed agreement with this arrangement.

### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

Cllr. Davidson reported ongoing discussions about GP provision Health and Wellbeing Committee Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

On traffic calming, she confirmed she had offered funding for speed cushions, but Highways advised additional lighting was required. The County now proposes contributing £5,000 towards the overall scheme, which will include markings and lighting. Formal consultation will be carried out by Northumberland County Council, and the Parish Council may also host a local display for residents. Concerns over lighting levels were discussed, noting differing views on safety and light pollution. Examples from nearby chicanes showed mixed outcomes, and members agreed wider consultation would help guide decisions.

Additional white lining and junction markings remain on the Highways priority list, though other works, including cattle crossings are being prioritised.

Bus stop improvements remain with NECA, with a decision expected in December and potential works beginning in January. Plans include hardstanding and a permanent bus stop post. NECA also expects to add three further X18 services to Berwick by spring. Concerns about X20 route changes affecting access to GP surgeries will be raised with transport officers.

Members also noted the lack of printed timetables at Acklington bus stops; Cllr. Davidson will ask the County Council to reinstate them. She confirmed councillor surgeries have been arranged in Acklington, Warkworth and Amble, with details to be publicised locally.

### **PLANNING**

Reference was made to application 25/03015/MAST – B6345 Acklington, Northumberland NE65 9BN, which had already been determined by Northumberland County Council. The Chair explained that the application had been classed as permitted development, meaning the County Council had limited grounds for refusal. It was noted that although a procedural error had been identified during the decision process, planning officers had confirmed that even if the process had been correctly followed, an objection based on siting or appearance would have been unlikely to succeed at appeal.

Members expressed disappointment regarding the outcome and the level of public consultation, with some residents feeling that communication from the planning authority had been unclear. The Parish Council reiterated that it holds no decision-making powers in the planning process and acts only as a consultee. Members agreed that while the Parish Council can provide comments and representations, it cannot overturn or prevent applications where permission is granted under permitted development rights. It was noted that some residents were considering writing to the Member of Parliament and possibly seeking a judicial review of the decision. The Parish Council confirmed that it would be willing

Signed .....

Date: .....

to provide factual clarification or a supporting statement if requested but that it has no statutory authority to challenge the decision itself.

The Council also agreed that, while concerns about transparency and community awareness had been raised by some members of the public, all relevant agendas and minutes are routinely published on the Parish Council's website and noticeboards, and summaries are regularly submitted for publication in the Pelican newsletter. Members felt that the Council continues to take reasonable steps to keep residents informed about local matters.

The following additional planning applications and decisions:

25/03379/VARYCO – Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) on approved application 24/01983/VARYCO to record design changes following storm damage at Barnhill Farm, Guyzance, NE65 9AG – Registered. – **No objection from Acklington Parish Council**

25/03337/MISC – Installation of 2 x 9m light telegraph poles (REO\_V9024) – In the footpath at 5 and 8 St Omer Road, Acklington, NE65 9DA – Decided.

25/03338/MISC – Installation of 1 x 8m light telegraph pole (REO\_V22025) – S/O 21 Field House Close, Acklington, NE65 9PE – Decided.

25/03075/FUL – Proposed replacement windows and doors at Shunting House, Acklington, NE65 9BT – Registered; **No objection from Acklington Parish Council.**

25/03074/LBC – Listed Building Consent for replacement windows and doors at Shunting House, Acklington, NE65 9BT – Registered; **No objection from Acklington Parish Council**

25/03562/MISC – Temporary Holiday Site for 4 nights (26–30 March 2026) and 5 nights (17–21 September 2026) at Land North West of Coal House Farm, North Broomhill, NE65 – Registered. - **No objection from Acklington Parish Council**

25/03497/FUL – Proposed aluminium-framed greenhouse on a sandstone base at 7 Guyzance Village, NE65 9AQ – Registered. **No objection from Acklington Parish Council**

#### **POLICY AND PROCEDURE REVIEW**

Members adopted the safeguarding policy and donations policy as outlined in Appendix 1 and 2.

#### **KEY PROJECTS**

##### **Bins**

It was reconsidered if a bin could go at the station / mart and it was agreed that this should happen.

Road Safety and Bus Stop matters were discussed during the County Councillor report so items were not revisited.

#### **GENERAL ITEMS**

##### **Coffee Morning Review**

The recent coffee morning was considered successful with good volunteer participation. Positive feedback included the availability of refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits), and inclusion of representatives such as the police and county councillor. Suggestions for improvement included wider distribution of leaflets to cover the entire parish. A general note of thanks to volunteer was recorded at the meeting

Signed .....

Date: .....

**Service Level Agreement: Grass Cutting Contract**

Discussion about grass cutting frequency and cost.

Extra cuts in March and October have cost approximately £611.09, totaling nearly £2,000 annually for all grass cutting (approx. 15–20% of annual budget). Agreement was granted to arrange a meeting with the relevant County Council Officer(s) to establish, What areas are included, frequency of cuts, costs and budget implications etc.

**Refurbishment of Bus Shelters**

Painting of interior and exterior where feasible and opportunities for community involvement (e.g., village children designing murals) were agreed.

**Tree Survey**

It was agreed to conduct a full survey of all trees on parish-owned land, including St Omer Road and playground areas. It was agreed for the Clerk to contact relevant surveyors with appropriate certification and insurance including potential contacts at Alnwick Town Council.

**Benches on Footpaths**

It was noted a new bench had been installed and additional benches ready for installation. Feedback was requested to identify suitable locations.

**Planters at White Gates**

It was agreed to create planting beds at the base of the white gates.

**Amble Town and Parish Meeting**

It was noted general discussion had taken place on police engagement, neighbourhood plans, youth facilities, and road issues.

**Community Governance Review**

Councillors agreed to submit the survey as outlined in appendix 3.

**FOOTPATH WORKING PARTY UPDATE**

Cllr Malone presented the Footpath Working Group update (appendix 4)

**PLAYGROUND UPDATE**

Cllr Mezza updated regards some remedial work. The clerk informed councillors about progress with the funding application and would be writing to the Community Fund in respect of land ownership issues raised by them.

**ITEMS FOR THE JANUARY MEETING**

Cllr Thorpe requested an update of previous matters raised with Northumberland County Council planning department.

**NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Meeting closed at 22:00

Signed .....

Date: .....