

# Acklington Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in Acklington Village Hall, on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Present	Cllr Sharin Ingleby (Chair)	Cllr Steve Thorpe (Vice Chair)	Cllr Alison Bell
	Cllr Sean Malone	Cllr Steve Shanks (Arrived at start of Budget and Precept 26/27 item)	
In Attendance	County Councillor Pauline Davidson	Barry Flux (Clerk)	

## Public questions / speaking

None.

## Agenda Item

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Ann McDougal and Cllr Tony Mezza

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes from the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> November 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)

Members were advised that the councillor vacancy that had arisen due to non-attendance over a six-month period was advertised and, as no election was called, it is now a casual vacancy which could be filled by co-option in line with existing Parish Council vacancies.

### CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported on the Joint Town and Parish Council Spring Conference scheduled for Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at County Hall, Morpeth. Two delegates are permitted to attend, with registration required by 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Members were invited to indicate their interest.

The full financial report was received. Balances as of 19 December 2025 were noted as £13,775.14 in the Community Account and £12,424.54 in the Instant Access Account. Expenditure under reference AC008S (Community Account, November 2025) was also noted.

The Clerk drew members' attention to the Northumberland County Council Design Code consultation and advised that councillors may respond individually. The Clerk further advised of their intention to step down from the role and confirmed agreement to remain in post until 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 to allow for an orderly handover and continuity of business.

Signed .....

Date: .....

The clerk confirmed he would be leaving the Parish Council and it was agreed that leaving at the end of February seemed an appropriate end date.

### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

Cllr Davidson provided an update on local expenditure and funding matters. She noted that £1,000 of MLIS funding had been allocated for traffic calming.. Cllr Davidson advised that the county council had confirmed a tourist sign could not be installed at the prison as the site does not qualify as a tourist attraction, although signage could be placed on prison-owned land. Cllr Davidson also relayed a police initiative encouraging residents to use online platforms for non-emergency communications rather than the 101 line

### **BUDGET & PRECEPT 2026/27**

The proposed budget for 2026/27 in the sum of £12,819 was presented, representing an increase of 13.5 per cent. It was noted that this would result in a Band D equivalent precept of approximately £40.10 per annum. A miscellaneous budget of £100 was agreed to cover minor items such as wreaths and refreshments, and the grass cutting allocation was confirmed as unchanged.

Resolved: The Budget and Precept for 2026/27 were approved unanimously.

The Clerk confirmed he would submit the formal precept request to Northumberland County Council.

### **PLANNING**

#### **APP/P2935/W/25/3375680**

#### **High Park Farm, Felton, MORPETH NE65 9EY**

Regarding the appeal at High Park Farm, Felton, the Council confirmed that its previously agreed position remains unchanged and that this was reaffirmed to the planning inspectorate. Members had agreed to defer speaking time to Thirston Parish Council.

#### **25/04171/FELTPO**

#### **Tree preservation order application - Bank House Farm Acklington Northumberland NE65 9AP**

The Tree Preservation Order application at Bank House Farm, Acklington was noted, and no objections were raised.

#### **25/04394/DISCON Chauffeurs Cottage Guyzance Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9AG**

#### **Discharge of Condition 3 (BNG) on approved 24/02790/FUL**

The discharge of condition application at Chauffeurs Cottage, Guyzance was considered, and no comments were made.

### **KEY PROJECTS**

Members received updates on key projects. No further information was available at this time regarding bus stops. With regard to bins, it was noted that Northumberland County Council require a location plan before progressing installation, and the Clerk will prepare this for review. Road safety matters, including speed cushions and road markings, remain subject to further updates from Northumberland County Council.

### **GENERAL ITEMS**

#### **Service level agreement grass cutting contract**

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Date: .....

The service level agreement for grass cutting was discussed following a meeting with Northumberland County Council. Clarification was provided on responsibilities and costs, and it was confirmed that the Council has agreed to hold prices at last year's level for the forthcoming year.

**Tree survey**

The need for a professional tree survey was discussed, and the Clerk will seek recommendations from Alnwick Town Council.

**Donation to Village Hall**

A proposal to donate £500 to the Village Hall towards the refurbishment of the toilets was considered.

Resolved: The donation was approved and the Clerk will arrange payment.

**Highways and Planning follow-up.**

Outstanding highways and planning matters will be followed up with Northumberland County Council.

**FOOTPATH WORKING PARTY UPDATE**

Cllr Malone presented the Footpath Working Group update (appendix 4) Further to this it was agreed that an annual inventory of equipment will be independently checked and signed off by a councillor not directly involved in the Working Party.

**PLAYGROUND UPDATE**

No update was received given the absence of Cllr Mezza. Members noted that progress on external funding remains dependent on resolving land ownership issues, and it was agreed that this matter will be reviewed as a future project.

**ITEMS FOR THE MARCH MEETING**

Items proposed for the March meeting include updates on the tree survey, bin location plan, playground land ownership, and clerk recruitment.

**NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

Meeting closed at 20:00

Signed .....

Date: .....