

Togston Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in Togston Terrace Social Club, on Friday, 9th
January 2026

Present	Cllr Lauren Blewitt (Chair)	Cllr Carolynn Thomson (Vice Chair)	Cllr Anne Cairns
	Cllr Fiona Moore	Cllr Jennifer Robison	
			Barry Flux (Clerk)
In Attendance	No members of the public		
Absent	Cllr David Milburn	Cllr Jennifer Robison	

Agenda Item

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Jennifer Robison

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes from the meeting of 7th November 2025 were approved as a true record.

4. CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

The Clerk reported that the notice of vacancy following Anne Lisle's resignation had been properly displayed and no election had been requested.

Two applications for co-option were noted. Members noted that they wished to have time to properly consider both applications.

Resolved:

- Consideration of co-option to be deferred until the next meeting.
- Clerk to circulate both applications to councillors.
- Decision to be made at a future meeting, if required in private session.

5. CLERK'S REPORT

Payments – Full Financial Report

The Clerk presented screenshots of transactions for:

- The main account
- The savings (Christmas) account

Key points noted:

- Outstanding payments to NCC for Clerks payroll to be processed.
- Water payment was correctly taken by direct debit.
- £553 income from the Christmas event had been transferred to the savings account.
- Approximately £30 remained in cash awaiting banking.
- It was agreed to move monies for Christmas lights related payments so they came out of the saving account rather than the general account.

6. BUDGET & PRECEPT 26/27

Signed

Date:

The Clerk presented a simplified budget for 2026/27, based largely on the previous year, with minor adjustments to reflect actual costs and correct the treatment of income and expenditure. The proposed precept was £6,556, the same as the previous year. Members were satisfied that the Council's current reserves were sufficient and agreed there was no need to increase the precept. The budget and precept for 2026/27 were therefore approved.

Discussion then took place regarding allotment charges and management. Councillors expressed concern that the existing system of full, half and three-quarter plots was unnecessarily complicated and difficult to administer. There was general agreement that a simpler structure of full and half plots only would be preferable, with three-quarter plots reclassified as full plots. It was noted that demand for allotments was increasing and that a waiting list was forming. The Clerk agreed to draft letters to allotment holders explaining proposed changes and to prepare an updated map and register of allotments. Charges would remain unchanged for the current year, with adequate notice given of any future changes.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE

None received.

8. PLANNING

The Council received formal notification from Northumberland County Council regarding a Definitive Map Modification Order (No 14) 2025 BOAT No.17 affecting a byway near Togston East Farm and Togston Low Hall. Members discussed the proposal and its possible implications. The Council agreed not to object to the Order but requested that any new access from the A1068 should meet the appropriate Type C access standards to ensure road safety. The Clerk agreed to submit a representation to this effect.

Members also raised concerns about the old railway line footpath near a recently completed housing development, which had not been reinstated following construction works. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the relevant planning officer to follow this up and seek clarification on compliance with planning conditions.

9. GENERAL ITEMS

Invite to Parish Councils conference

The Clerk advised that an invitation had been received for two delegates to attend the Parish Councils Conference in Morpeth on Thursday 5 March 2026. Attendance was optional, and details would be circulated.

Any Other Business

A detailed discussion took place regarding the village Christmas tree and lights, particularly around manual handling risks, insurance cover and health and safety responsibilities. Members agreed that failed tree lights would not be replaced and that a smaller tree should be considered in future years. The Clerk agreed to review the Council's insurance policy and to make enquiries with the tree contractor regarding insurance cover for installation and removal.

Further general matters included maintenance issues such as a damaged fence post and a tree on Togston Crescent

10. ITEMS FOR THE MARCH MEETING

Items to be included on the next agenda include the co-option of a parish councillor, allotment management updates, insurance and Christmas arrangements, and planning follow-ups.

Signed

Date:

11.NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Friday, 6th March 2026 starting at 6.30pm to be held at Togston Terrace Club

DRAFT

Signed

Date: