



**DRAFT Minutes of the Parish
Council Meeting Held on
Thursday 12th March 2026 at
7.00pm. At Humshaugh Village
Hall**



PRESENT	Cllr Herbie Newell - Chair, Cllr Ian Birleson - Vice-Chair, Cllr Nicolle Croft, Cllr Francis Nohl. Cllr Antonia Azocar-Nevin (County Councillor) Clerk: Alix Pearson 2 Parishioners of Humshaugh
NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and expressed sadness that Cllr Birleson was moving out of the parish and would therefore have to resign his seat as soon as his eligibility expired. The Chair and all Councillors offer their grateful thanks for all the work that Cllr Birleson had undertaken on behalf of the people of Humshaugh. Cllr Birelson will continue to work on his ongoing projects until he resigns and will maintain his role as Chair of the Leek Club.
180	1. Apologies for Absence; Disclosure of Interests Apologies were received from Cllr Kev Dodd, Cllr Kim Hilton, Cllr Claire Robson. No councillor declared an additional interest in any item on the agenda.
181	2. Approval of Minutes The minutes were approved as a true record of the previous meeting and signed by the Chair.
182	3. Clerk's Reports Matters Arising All actions had been completed. Financial Report Q4 was not yet complete so there was no expenditure to sign off. The clerk reported the the insurance renewal for the mower had been received at £270.82. Cllrs Approved the expenditure. Balances at 12th March 2026 are: CA: £4,114 DA: £12,374 New Website The clerk reported that the changeover to the new website had been successfully completed and reminded Cllrs that the NALC website would be closed on 31st March. The new website address is humshaughparish.gov.uk . The clerk's new email address is clerk@humshaughparish.gov.uk . Notices will be placed on relevant boards within the village and also in the newsletter.
183	4. Planning 25/00052/FUL 25/00053/LBC George Hotel - demolition and replacement of pool house building. Appeal lodged - PARTIALLY UPHELD. 25/04175/LBC War Memorial, Humshaugh. Revised cleaning proposal. GRANTED. 25/04354/FUL The Cottage, Humshaugh - replacement of flat roofed extension. GRANTED 26/00134/FUL Haughton Pasture Cottage Chollerford - large extension and updating.

5. Business

a) Update on Meeting with Footpaths Officer

In pursuit of the Community Action identified in the Neighbourhood plan, Cllrs Newell, Birleson and Hilton met with Tim Fish the Footpaths Officer from NCC. Mr Fish supported a formal survey of footpaths in the parish and will share a pro-forma to assist in recording of observations. Hexham Ramblers have made extensive notes on the state of footpaths in the area and have shared their notes on Humshaugh Parish with The Chair. This information can be used when completing the survey. **It was agreed that when the weather improves a small team will plan and conduct the surveys.**

b) Neighbourhood Plan Rural Exception Site

The Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk met with a small team of rural housing experts at County Hall to discuss the provision of a small number of affordable homes in the parish, to meet a previously identified need. A full feasibility study is the next step in this process and funding is available to support this. Jo-Anne Garrick who assisted in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Chair worked to complete the extensive funding application at very short notice. The estimated cost of the full feasibility study is £18,138 of which the Parish Council needs to fund 10%. **Cllrs unanimously approved the commitment of £1,814 to this exercise.**

c) Improvements to area around old phone box.

All preparatory works and permissions have now been obtained, allowing the following proposals to be debated:

Removal of large dog waste bin; relocation of Parish noticeboard and phone box.

Levelling and resurfacing of ground and installation of bench.

A small number of parishioners had expressed views about the proposal and they were considered in the debate.

Cllrs unanimously approved the proposals above. It was agreed to install a smaller dog waste bin, similar to that at The George The old bin will be disposed of. All works to be undertaken by a groundworks/landscaping contractor. **Quotations to be sought.**

d) Update on Parish Council Projects

The Chair had previously circulated a revised project progress list which listed the three projects at a, b, & c above and also the War Memorial, the Emergency Plan and Riverwater Quality - progress on which is detailed below:

Cleaning and Repair of War Memorial.

This project is almost complete. The final action of touching up the lettering will take place soon. All Cllrs were very pleased with the impact of the work so far.

Emergency Plan

Cllrs Birleson & Croft attended a Community Resilience Forum and heard very useful presentations from a number of agencies. The table top exercise is still awaited.

Riverwater Quality

Further to the community information event hosted by Northumbrian Water, Cllr Newell was keen to engage with NW with offers of collaboration with the Parish Council. **All agreed that the Chair should write to NW.**

e) Future of The Crown Inn

It is understood that The Crown will be put up for sale imminently. All expressed their hope that a buyer is found and the the pub is able to re-open.

f) Progress of B4RN Installation

Cllr Birleson thought that current sign ups were very close to the number required.

g) County Councillor's Report

Antonia's comprehensive report appears at Appendix 1.

185	<p>6. Reports and Updates</p> <p>a) Evans Trust Cllr Newell reported that the next meeting is 20th May 2026.</p> <p>b) Humshaugh Children’s Playing Field Trust Cllr Birleson reported that the next meeting was not until 5th April..</p> <p>c) Humshaugh Community Ventures Ltd. (Village Shop) Cllr Robson was absent, but it was reported that the liquor licence is now in place.</p> <p>d) Humshaugh Net Zero Cllr Nohl reported the following: Humshaugh Community Solar Ltd and the 1MW solar farm at Lincoln Hill. It is anticipated that the agreed finance from the primary lender will become available in the near future to enable construction (including battery storage) to commence in spring 2026. Northern Powergrid Rural Stage 2 Community DSO Network Innovation Project. HNZ is the community partner with companies Ricardo and Entrust Microgrid. The project aims to investigate giving local communities more control over how they produce, use, and share electricity. Work is underway to allow communication with Low Carbon Technologies, such as heat pumps. A Community Engagement Event will take place between 10.00am and 12.00am on Saturday 21st March in Humshaugh Village Hall.</p> <p>e) Humshaugh Village Hall Committee Cllr Croft reported that there was a meeting on 18th March.</p> <p>f) Fix My Street Report Parishioner Mr Woodward once again sent a comprehensive report. Cllrs examined the items which might have been outstanding and found none in the direct control of the Parish Council.</p>
186	<p>7. Correspondence Notification of Libraries Consultation. Closes 13th April Stage 1 Community Governance Review - Public Consultation.</p>
187	<p>8. Public Forum Neither member of the public raised anything.</p>
188	<p>9. Items for Discussion at next Parish Council Meeting ?????. The meeting closed at 8.50pm</p>
189	<p>12. Date of next Parish Council Meeting Thursday 14th May 2026, Humshaugh Parish Hall. 7.00pm.</p>

Humshaugh PC report 12.03.26

1) Andy Fisher (Highways delivery area manager) has said he would do a walk around to discuss highways issues and the 'FIX MY STREET' system.

Andy is yet to confirm some dates, but I have told him I will be away from the 14th-31st of March. If you don't mind meeting Andy without me then I can suggest that. I would like to be there, if possible, though.

2) Humshaugh PC were interested in some community speed watch training. I contacted members enquiries, Neil Snowdon replied saying he has contacted the road safety Unit at Northumbria Police asking for further information, this is what he has come back to me with:

There is information on the Northumbria Police website about Community Speed Watch or by the below links I have provided;

[Community Speed Watch guidance | Northumbria Police](#)

[Community Speed Watch | Northumbria Police](#)

There is the option to 'Tell us about a Location' where a road of concern can be named, a simple form completed and the complainant can say whether they want to join the CSW Scheme or would like more information.

The completed forms are then returned to the relevant mailbox at the police.

The complaint is recorded on the Op Modero speed complaint database and forward the forms to the Neighborhood Policing Team and our Talent Acquisitions team who contact the complainant.

If it's a Parish Council I would suggest they get a couple of people from the Parish Council to complete the forms, particularly those who wish to be volunteers.

3) How much is council tax going up by. We had a full council meeting on the budget on the 18th of Feb.

The other GP councillor and I in a previous meeting objected to the new banding scheme for council tax on those that have had 100% support with paying these bills. The council wanted to make 2million pounds on savings and with their new council tax banding scheme it does make the whole process much simpler. On the other hand this new system will affect those who are less fortunate with now a smaller percentage receiving 100% help with their bills while those who previously relied on this help, now having to pay a certain increase depending on what band they fit into.

Our council tax and social care precept go to the county council. The parish precept goes to the parish council and the police and crime precept goes to the police and crime commissioner.

To calculate next year's council tax they add this year's council tax and social care precept together and increase the total by 2.99%.

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The police and crime precept will be increased by 9.45% of itself.

- 4) Buses.** Before I was councillor Nick Morphet had submitted a spreadsheet to NCC with peoples suggestions from the whole ward. I was elected to represent NCC on the local bus board which is a requirement in order to for NCC to receive it's share of £163.5m in funding through Bus Service Improvement Plan. I found out that they don't meet very often which is why I called for a meeting with two members of the Bus team at NCC. They are still working on how they can implement these suggestions made from the spreadsheet. I suggested that some more engagement work with communities might be really beneficial so the team can really know what is working and what isn't so that more money can be invested in what would really benefit communities. I would like to organise some dates and possibly host something at the mart. I am open to any suggestions. What do you think?