



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held in Church Cottage, Church Lane, on Monday 9th February 2026.

Councillors present:

Cllr. Christine Howe (Chair)

Cllr. Bridget Jones

Cllr. David Irwin

Cllr. Andrew Ayre

Cllr. Andy Dunhill

Cllr. Barbara Wood

In attendance:

County Councillor Nick Oliver

Mrs Catherine Harrison – Parish Clerk

2 members of the public were present

Cllr. Howe opened the meeting at 7.25 pm.

26/16 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Lucie Armstrong.

26/17 Declaration of Interests

None.

26/18 Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2026

It was agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting were a true record and were duly signed off by Cllr. Howe (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Ayre).

26/19 Matters Arising

(i) *Minute 26/04(i) – Riding Mill Outdoor Pre-school – Use of the Spinney.*

Cllr. Oliver reported that he had convened a meeting between members of the pre-school and Liz Sinnamon, NCC Planning Department. She had advised that temporary change of use of the Spinney would not be possible for various reasons including its designation as a Local Green Space in the Neighbourhood Plan. It was therefore proposed that the Millennium Hall should be registered as the temporary site of the pre-school with the Spinney, village playground and gardens at Wentworth Grange used on an ad-hoc basis by the children. This solution would not require planning permission.

There had also been discussions about the Wentworth Grange site which had been positive. There was a considerable amount of work to do to meet all the ecology requirements and the pre-school were to appoint a local planning advisor to help them with their application.

(ii) *Minute 26/11(ii) – Play Park Fundraising.*

The Clerk confirmed that she had circulated information to the school and in the Parish News asking for people to come forward to re-start the fundraising committee. So far, there had been two volunteers and others had expressed general interest to Cllr. Wood. A meeting would therefore be held at the school one afternoon to see if more volunteers could be found. In addition, the Clerk noted that Suzanne Hart, the headteacher, had written to say that the school nominated a charity/group to fundraise for each year and they had decided to fundraise for the play park and had already held their first event. Councillors recorded their thanks to the school and its pupils for this kind thought and their help.

ACTION: BW/CLERK

26/20 County Councillor Report

Cllr. Oliver reported on the following issues:

- (i) *Local Transport Plan* – Cllr. Oliver reported that decisions on this year's LTP submissions were still awaited;
- (ii) *Cycling* – Cllr. Oliver noted that the option of continuing the cycle route from Corbridge bridge to the station was to be reviewed. He noted that the costs were high for something which was not particularly needed and he hoped that the funds could be used instead for other local cycling priorities;
- (iii) *Potholes* – Cllr. Oliver noted that the roads were in a poor condition after the icy conditions a few weeks ago followed by relentless rain. The highways team were dealing with potholes as quickly as possible, usually with a temporary repair until full repairs could be undertaken later in the year. Residents should report issues via Fix my Street;
- (iv) *County Council Budget* – Cllr. Oliver noted that the Council's budget was to be finalised this week and residents would see a rise in Council Tax of 5%;
- (v) *Northern Gas Networks* – The Clerk reported that NGN had completed work on Sandy Bank and Marchburn Lane but their reinstatement of the footpath surface was poor and there had been damage to the verge exposing the road edge in Marchburn Lane. Cllr. Oliver offered to follow this up with his contact at NGN;

ACTION: NO/CLERK

- (vi) *Station Close parking* – The Clerk reported that a resident had written to complain of cars parking in a designated turning area and Cllr. Oliver agreed to refer the issue to the highways team for advice.

ACTION: NO/CLERK

- (vii) *Right of Way after A68* – Cllr. Dunhill noted the poor surface of the footpath after crossing the A68 beside the smallholding. With the heavy rain, it was difficult to navigate because of the mud (a number of residents were known to have fallen using the path over the last few years). He encouraged the County Council to review the surface of the path. The Clerk was asked to share further details with Cllr. Oliver.

ACTION: CLERK

26/21 Parish News

Cllr. Jones reported that a meeting had been held with the Parish News editors and it was clear that they had decided that they could not continue to produce the Parish News in its current format; some of the editors had been involved with producing the magazine for over 25 years and it required many people to help deliver it, most of whom were elderly. The editors were keen that material previously published in the Parish News should be shared via the Parish Council's quarterly E-news as there was already considerable overlap. The editors provided a statement in

the latest Parish News explaining the plans and would promote how to sign up for the E-news. The editors were keen to continue providing business listings as agreements were in place. Councillors agreed that a Business Directory could be provided on the Parish Council's website provided there was a disclaimer noting that the Parish Council did not endorse any of the suppliers. There would be no charge for this service although businesses would be encouraged to make a donation to the Play Park fundraising appeal.

ACTION: CLERK

26/22 Community Champion Award

It was agreed that the Community Champion Prize should be awarded again this year. Nominations would be sought by the end of March so that a decision could be made at the April meeting and the award presented at the annual Parish Meeting in May.

ACTION: CLERK

26/23 Community Governance Consultation

It was noted that the County Council were conducting Stage 1 of the Community Governance Review. The Parish Council had already participated in the pre-consultation stage and the Clerk was asked to resubmit the Council's earlier response.

ACTION: CLERK

26/24 Cycle route proposals

As previously agreed, Cllr. Irwin had prepared four documents listing proposed cycle routes from Riding Mill which he had prepared in readiness should any funding become available. He asked for feedback and councillors were happy to endorse the four proposals. He noted that he would be attending a meeting to discuss cycling issues later in the week with Cllr. Oliver.

In the discussion, councillors again raised the difficulty of achieving a cycle route (or pedestrian route) to Corbridge along the A695 due to lack of carriageway width near Grey Court. Cllr. Dunhill outlined his ideas for how it could be achieved but it would require the agreement of local landowners and likely would only happen if there were future housing developments as an incentive. Cllr. Oliver noted that he was happy to set up a meeting with the planning department if there was a community desire to see more development as the county faced increased housing target numbers and new rules were being introduced regarding "grey belt" (Green belt sites with limited value).

ACTION: CH

26/25 Climate Change

- (a) *Apple Day* – Cllr. Jones noted that she had spoken to members of the Village Hall Trust who had liked the idea of holding an Apple Day event, as had the school. Further discussions would be held shortly.
- (b) *Dry Garden* – Cllrs. Jones and Howe reported that they had produced a scheme of work and plans for the project which had been shared with a number of contractors so that an idea of the costs could be established. Two possible sources of grants had been found, and an application would be made shortly.

26/26 Finance

(a) *Monthly Accounts*

(i) *Payments/Receipts*

The following payments were agreed (Proposed Cllr. Howe, seconded Cllr. Irwin)

Wel-medical – replacement defibrillator pads	£83.52 (inc. VAT £13.92)
T Bell Horticultural Services – grass cutting (June – October)	£860.00
DB Harkness Fencing – safety fencing Marchburn woods	£1,380.00 (inc. VAT £230.00)
Corporate Xmas Tree – replacement Christmas lights	£96.98 (inc. VAT £16.16)
Northumberland CC – reimbursement of Clerk's December salary	£1,283.03 (inc. VAT £1.75)
Forvis Mazars – Audit fees	£378.00 (inc. VAT £63.00)
Neetfleet – play park inspection/repairs/installation of traffic mirror	£450.00
Catherine Harrison – reimbursement of expenses (Mailchimp subs, Replacement bushes and shackles for swings, A4 paper)	£104.77 (inc. VAT £17.46)

Standing Orders/Direct Debits:

Nest pension – January pension contribution	£45.03
Neetfleet – monthly handyman payment	£310.00
Monthly bank charges – January	£6.00

The following receipts were noted:

None

(ii) *Budget report*

The budget report was received and approved. There were no new issues to note and spending was in line with the agreed budgets.

26/27 General Village Maintenance

- (i) *Handyman* – The Clerk reported that the handyman had completed the following tasks in January: dismantled the Christmas tree and lights and then disposed of the tree, cleared leaves and tidied the Old Playground following its use as the recycling point for Christmas trees. He had also undertaken the quarterly play park inspection, undertaken minor repairs to one of the springers and removed the seats from the junior swing for storage until repairs could be undertaken. He had also removed the existing and then installed a new traffic mirror and pole opposite Dene Terrace;
- (ii) *Safety fencing* - It was noted that the safety fencing had now been installed in Marchburn Woods above the landslip area;
- (iii) *Northern Gas Networks – works around Sandy Bank and Marchburn Lane*. See Minute 26/20(v).

26/28 Planning

Planning applications received and decisions made by Northumberland County Council:

- (i) It was reported that the following new planning applications were under consideration:
 - 25/04251/FELTPO – The Granary, 9 Riding Grange. Removal of leylandii. PC – no objection;
 - 26/00237/PRUTPO – White Court, Church Lane. Tree works. PC – no objection;
 - 26/00265/FUL – The Spinney, Church Lane. Temporary use of the area by the preschool. PC – letter of support.
- (ii) It was reported that the following planning applications had been granted permission:
 - 25/04449/FUL – The Glebe, Whiteside Bank. New playmat tennis court with perimeter fence;
 - 25/04109/LBC – 5 Hollin Hill Terrace. Roof repairs;

- 25/04356/LBC – The Old Post Office. Installation of EV charging point;
- 25/04444/FUL – West Lea, Sandy Bank. Extension to rear, front porch, cladding.

26/29 **Correspondence**

- Issue with parking in Station Close – referred to Cllr. Oliver;
- Poor state of footpath to roundabout. Comments noted. The Clerk had replied outlining the request for improvements in the Local Transport Plan;
- Comments from a holiday-let owner regarding the Council's request for a donation. Cllr. Irwin to draft a reply.

ACTION: DI

26/30 **Minor Matters**

- (i) *Annual Parish Meeting* – The Clerk reported that Mrs Stephenson had contacted Gordon Port who was involved with the Natural History Society of Northumbria and he was available to give a talk on issues facing pollinators and other insect populations and what actions we might take to mitigate the problems. This would then lead into a short presentation on the proposed Dry Garden project. Councillors thanked Mrs Stephenson for her efforts in finding a speaker.
- (ii) *Summer Fête* – The Clerk reported that the Cricket Club hoped to hold a summer fête again this year on Sunday 30th August. Plans were already in progress and councillors were happy to approve the use of the sports field for the occasion.

26/31 **Date of Future Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Monday 9th March 2026.

26/32 **Confidential Matters:** Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following items:

1. Insurance contribution to the SBRA
2. Proposed development on land opposite the Old Tavern

Meeting closed at 8.20 pm.