

CARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council website: <https://carhamparish.org>

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 11th May 2026 In St Cuthbert's Church Carham at 6.41p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman P Feerick (until Min 709), M De Fusco (from Min 710)
Parish Councillors J McGregor, M De Fusco & D Wells
County Councillor M Mather
Clerk I Hunter
3 Members of public

Min 707- Election of Chairman for 2026/27- Parish Councillor P Feerick proposed & Parish Councillor J McGregor seconded Parish Councillor M De Fusco as Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was agreed. Parish Councillor M De Fusco accepted the position and signed the Declaration of Acceptance form.

Min 708- Election of Vice-Chairman for 2026/27- Parish Councillors agreed to defer any nominations for Vice-Chairman until the July meeting.

Min 709- Chairman's Annual Report 2025/26 Parish Councillors noted the former Chairman's Annual Report for 2025/26 which had been read out at the Annual Parish Assembly earlier. A copy of the Annual Report is attached to these minutes.

Parish Councillor P Feerick resigned from Carham Parish Council and left the meeting at that point.

Min 710- Apologies for Absence: Parish Councillor J Chubb.
Parish Councillors noted the resignations of Parish Councillors P Feerick & V Poland. The Clerk agreed to organise the vacancy notices.

Min 711- Declaration of Interest: Parish Councillors J McGregor & D Wells declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Agenda item No 18- Play Area as Trustees of Wark on Tweed Charity.

Min 712- Request for Dispensation

- (i) To receive from members who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any items on the agenda an application for dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to enable members to participate in discussions and voting.
- (ii) To consider requests for dispensation.

Min 713- Minutes of the Meeting: The previously circulated Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th March 2026 were agreed as a true record, the Chairman signed a hard copy.

Matters arising from the minutes if not already on the agenda- None

Min 714- Parish Council Policies

- Parish Councillors undertook the annual review & agreed to adopt the previously circulated Parish Council's Standing Orders.

- Parish Councillors undertook the annual review & agreed to adopt the previously circulated Parish Council's Complaints Procedure
- Parish Councillors agreed to adopt the previously circulated Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- Parish Councillors agreed to adopt the previously circulated Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme, complete with guide to information provided by the Parish Council.
- Parish Councillors considered and agreed to adopt the previously circulated Risk Assessment. The Chairman signed a hard copy.

Min 715- County Councillor report- County Councillor M Mather provided the following updates:

Police update- The Police have agreed that the Wooler Police Constable & car can return to starting and ending shifts in Wooler.

The trial to have one Police Inspector covering Berwick & Alnwick area is being stopped due to the current Inspector not being able to fully support all Police Officers within the 2 areas.

Bus Service- The 34& 34A Bus Service is successful, however, the bus service was unable to access Wark today or tomorrow, due to the roadworks, however, as of Wednesday the buses have permission to drive through the road closure.

Community Governance Review- The parish meetings for the 7 dormant parishes within the Wooler ward commence on 18th May.

Fuel & Council Tax support- Northumberland County Council are still offering the government fuel support funding for people who are in need, therefore if anyone is struggling, please ask them to contact Northumberland County Council directly. Also, if anyone is struggling to pay their Council Tax, please advise them to contact Northumberland County Council directly.

Local Plan-Northumberland County Council are having to review the Local Plan, as the Government has advised us, we must deliver 34,000 new houses across Northumberland, which is the equivalent to the size of Berwick, Morpeth, Blyth or Haltwhistle. Green belt land has been devalued and is now grey belt. There is a call for sites ongoing, which is looking for areas where there can be housing or industrial development, the preference is for areas where there is sustainable transport, but there may be new housing in all communities, however, it has to be remembered that the rural areas need to use cars for access.

Min 716- Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2025/26

- Parish Councillors reviewed the revised Asset Register and confirmed it was up to date.
- Parish Councillors considered and agreed that no actions had been raised from the report of the internal auditor.
- Parish Councillors completed & approved the Annual Governance Statement.
- Parish Councillors approved the draft annual accounts for 2025/26.
- Parish Councillors approved the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances.
- Parish Councillors considered and agreed and the previously circulated Earmarked Reserves Statement.
- Parish Councillors agreed the Chairman & Clerk sign the Certification of Exemption ahead of submission.
- Parish Councillors agreed to give a vote of thanks to the Internal Auditor.

Min 717- Annual Insurance Premium- Parish Councillors agreed the payment of £333.00 to Zurich Municipal for the 2026/27 Annual Insurance Premium.

Min 718- Room hire

- Parish Councillors considered the email from St Cuthbert's Church Carham in relation to an annual room hire fee of £185 for Parish Council meetings.
- Parish Councillors agreed to accept the annual fee of £185 per year on condition it is fixed for 3 years.

Min 719- Financial Statement- as at 31st March 2026

- Current Account £ 319.07
- Instant Access Savings A/c £3004.24

Min 720- Receipts-

- Northumberland CC £ 1500.00 ½ Annual precept
- Bank of Scotland £ 2.30 Instant Access Savings A/c- Interest

Min 721- Transfer

- Instant Access Savings A/c to Current A/c £1000.00

Min 722- Accounts for Payment

- ICO £ 47.00 Annual Data Protection fee D/D
- Bank of Scotland £ 8.50 Monthly service charge x 2 (paid)
- E I Hunter £ 179.47 Salary 21.5 hours @ £13.91 per hour
- HMRC £ 119.60 PAYE
- Zurich Municipal £ 333.00 Annual Insurance premium
- V Poland £ 62.40 Annual Website fees

Parish Councillors agreed former Parish Councillor V Poland can authorise payments until the bank signatory list is updated.

Min 723- Play Area- Parish Councillor J McGregor advised the meeting that Wark on Tweed Charity will erect a hall & update the play park in Wark. The planning application had been lodged, and the Charity is currently preparing the supporting reports. The charity will commence fundraising once the minded to approve consent is received for the planning application. Parish Councillors were unable to consider this agenda item as the Parish Council did not have a quorum.

Min 724- Defibrillator- Parish Councillor J McGregor advised the meeting that there had been a meeting in Cornhill Hall, and the group plans to install more defibrillators within the parish. The 2nd defibrillator for wark village will be installed shortly. He concluded by saying the group will continue to fundraise during the summer to allow additional defibrillators to be purchased.

Min 725- Parish Council noticeboard- Parish Councillor D Wells advised the meeting that the repair's to the noticeboard is in hand.

Min 726- Public Right of Ways- Parish Councillors noted that there are no updates from The Planning Inspectorate on the appeal for Public Footpath No 37

Min 727- Correspondence

- **North-East War Memorial Project-** Email- Request for a donation. Parish Councillors agreed not to donate.
- **NCC-** Email- Notice of intention to commence preparation of the Northumberland Local Plan. This was covered under the County Councillor's report.
- **Citizens Advice-** Email- Request for a donation. Parish Councillors agreed not to donate.
- **NCC-**Email- Request for Love Northumberland nominations by 17th May.

Min 728- Parish Council meeting dates for 2026/27- Parish Councillors agreed the previously circulated Parish Council meeting dates for 2026/27.

Any Other Business.

Min 729- Commemorative trees- The Clerk advised the meeting that former Parish Councillor V Poland had advised her that the Parish Council had intended purchasing a plaque to be placed next to the trees planted as part of the Queen's green canopy in 2022. Parish Councillor J McGregor agreed to speak to former Parish Councillor V Poland and report back to the July meeting.

Min 730- Community Police Report- Parish Councillors noted the following report.

Since the last meeting on 9th March there has been a very low level of crime reported within the Carham parish. Some of this crime will only affect those specifically involved so should not have a wider community impact. It is worthy of note that there has been a report of theft of heating oil from a nearby residential property. This is pertinent given most local dwellings rely on heating oil and the recent surge in prices may influence this offence. As such could residents be reminded to keep their oil tanks secure and to report any suspicious persons or vehicles.

From a wider perspective beyond Carham, there has been a theft of two quad bikes from rural locations. These bikes have since been recovered and an arrest made with the investigation on going. Once again can we ensure that all our property and outbuildings are kept secure and that we report any suspicious incidents.

There have been no reports of anti-social behaviour.

Date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be on 13th July 2026 at 6.30p.m.
in St Cuthbert's Church Carham

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Parish Councillors passed the following resolution:

The Council may be recommended to pass a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following business on the basis that public discussion may prejudice the Council's position and/or staffing issues may be discussed.

All member of the public left the meeting at this point

Chairman_____

Ch's Initials_____