

Stocksfield Parish Council

Papers for the meeting of
the Parish Council
to be held on

Monday 10 November 2025

Additional papers and reports may be included on the website where it has been impractical to incorporate them within this document or may have been circulated separately.

This document relates only to the items to be considered during the section of the meeting which is open to the public and press.

Documents containing confidential information are not included, even though the related item may be considered during the open section of the meeting.

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 13 October 2025
at Stocksfield Community Centre**

Present: Mr T Hills (Chair), Mr K Lewins, Mr M Parker and Professor P Vickers
Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council)

Also present: Mrs A Dale (County Councillor) and a member of the public.

Apologies: Mr C Liddle and Professor L Paley

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.31pm and welcomed those present to the meeting.

25/10/105 Apologies for absence

It was AGREED to approve the absences of Mr Liddle and Prof Paley.

25/10/106 Declarations of Interest

None.

25/10/107 County Councillor update

Mrs Dale updated councillors on rubbish bins, Kates Plain Play Area, Northumberland County Council's (NCC) Local Transport Plan and the gateway for the eastern entrance to Stocksfield. The Chair thanked Mrs Dale for her update and she left the meeting.

25/10/108 Public Participation

The Chair referred to a complaint from a member of the public about the encroachment of vegetation on the narrow footpath on New Ridley Road northeast of New Ridley. The Clerk AGREED to notify NCC.

Action: Clerk

25/10/109 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025

It was AGREED (proposed Chair, seconded Mr Lewins) that the previously circulated minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025 were a true and accurate record.

25/10/110 Minutes of meeting held on 22 September 2025

It was AGREED (proposed Chair, seconded Mr Lewins) that the previously circulated minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2025 were a true and accurate record.

25/10/111 Clerk's report

Councillors received and noted the Clerk's report.

25/10/112 Matter Arising not otherwise included in the agenda

None

25/10/113 Finance

a) Payments to September

It was AGREED (proposed Prof Vickers, seconded Chair) to approve payments for September as detailed in the previously circulated schedule and the summary of payments and receipts for the month was noted.

b) Budget monitoring 2025/26

The budget monitoring report was noted.

c) Bank reconciliations to 30/09/25

The completion of the bank reconciliation to the end of September by Mr Parker was noted.

25/10/114 Planning Advisory Group

The use of delegated authorities was noted as set out in the following table.

25/03496/FUL Meadowmount 28 Meadowfield Road	Demolition of former garage; two storey side extension; forming enclosed first floor balcony; enlargement of driveway; replacement gates and boundary fence	No comment Note use of delegated powers
25/03352/FUL 4 Ayton Close	Two storey side extension and extension of rear decking	No comment Note use of delegated powers
25/03130/VARYCO Marchmont 5 Batt House Road	Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plan) on approved application on 21/02012/FUL to allow a pitched garage roof, relocation of pedestrian access door and installation of an additional window	No comment Note use of delegated powers

25/10/115 Staffing Committee meeting 1 October 2025

Councillors received and noted the

- minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 1 October
- use of delegated authorities and
- amended job description and person specification.

25/10/116 Parish Council Representatives

None

25/10/117 Grass Cutting and Litter Collection contract renewals 2026/29

It was AGREED to

- amend the tender specification in respect of grass cutting – sports fields to include the area currently referred to as the community orchard and approve the remaining specifications unamended (proposed Prof Vickers, seconded Mr Parker)
- award the contracts for ‘verges and estates grass cutting’ and ‘litter collection’ to NCC without competition on the grounds that NCC already provide services in connection with both contracts free of charge and the co-ordination of an additional contractor would not be practical and to waive paragraph 5.13 of Financial Regulations accordingly (proposed Prof Vickers, seconded Mr Lewins), and
- advertise the tenders for ‘grass cutting – sports fields’ and ‘grass cutting – play areas’ in accordance with Financial Regulations with a closing date of 9am on Monday 3 November 2025 (proposed Chair, seconded Prof Vickers).

Action: Clerk

25/10/118 Annual inspection of play areas by Royal Society of the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

Councillors considered the previously circulated reports of the play area assessments. After discussion it was AGREED to note the contents and to receive a further report from the Clerk.

Action: Clerk

25/10/119 Local Transport Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29

After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Chair, seconded Prof Vickers) that the Council's three priorities to be submitted to NCC are:

- Provision of pedestrian and cycling route on the A695 between Riding Mill and Stocksfield
- Significant subsidence of the pavement on the A695 (northside) northwest of North View Terrace, Stocksfield
- Dangerous road surface on A695 at the junction with Cade Hill Road, Stocksfield.

Action: Clerk DISCH

25/10/120 Community Governance Review Parish Pre Consultation Questionnaire

After discussion it was AGREED (proposed Chair, seconded Prof Vickers) to complete the questionnaire without identifying a need for change.

Action: Clerk DISCH

25/10/121 Tree inspection reports 2025

It was AGREED (proposed Chair, seconded Mr Parker) to appoint MWA Arboriculture to undertake the annual tree inspection subject to providing evidence of professional indemnity insurance.

Action: Clerk

25/10/122 Grant application Stocksfield Baptist Church

It was AGREED (proposed Chair, seconded Mr Parker) to award a grant of £1,000 to Stocksfield Baptist Church for the development of its community facilities subject to providing the Clerk with evidence to satisfy the conditions imposed by the Council in respect of banking arrangements.

Action: Clerk DISCH

25/10/123 Resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

It was AGREED to exclude members of the press and public in order to consider the following item due to the confidential nature of the business and to suspend the relevant paragraph of Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond 9.31pm.

25/10/124 Equal Pay Claim

Councillors discussed the report of the Staffing Committee and AGREED to delegate authority to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairs of the Parish Council and the Staffing Committee, to liaise further with the claimant.

Action: Clerk

It was further AGREED to require the Staffing Committee to examine aspects of the current Clerk recruitment process.

Action: Mr Lewins

25/10/125 Any other urgent business

None

25/10/126 Date of next meeting

Monday 10 November 2025

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 10.01pm.

Matters Arising not otherwise included in the Agenda

a) Living roof – structural survey

A quote from Red Fox Consulting Engineers has been received of £495 to undertake a structural survey and complete and Structure Appraisal Report.

The Clerk has used delegated powers in consultation with the Chair to authorise this work. Councillors are asked to note this update.

Stocksfield Parish Council
Agenda Item 7(a)

Listing of payments dated between 01/10/2025 and 31/10/2025

Date	Ref.	Account name	Supplier / customer	Paid	Auth	Net	VAT	Total
01/10/2025	DD	Telephone	EE	Y	CON	-17.98	-3.60	-21.58
03/10/2025	DD	Photocopier lease and maintenance	Grenke Leasing	Y	CON	-94.98	-19.00	-113.98
03/10/2025	Transfe	Sports field maintenance	Rickerby Ltd	Y	COU	-5,936.25	-1,187.25	-7,123.50
03/10/2025	Transfe	Employee pension	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	60.68	0.00	60.68
03/10/2025	Transfe	Salary	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	-2,037.00	0.00	-2,037.00
03/10/2025	Transfe	National Insurance	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	-243.00	0.00	-243.00
03/10/2025	Transfe	Payroll	Northumberland County Council	Y	CON	-8.75	-1.75	-10.50
03/10/2025	Transfe	Grounds Services contract	Neetfleet	Y	COU	-2,095.00	0.00	-2,095.00
03/10/2025	Transfe	BEPA maintenance	Neetfleet	Y	COU	-380.00	0.00	-380.00
03/10/2025	Transfe	Grounds Services ex contract	Neetfleet	Y	COU	-25.00	0.00	-25.00
08/10/2025	DD	Employer pension contribution	NEST Pension	Y	CON	-45.51	0.00	-45.51
08/10/2025	DD	Employee pension	NEST Pension	Y	CON	-60.68	0.00	-60.68
16/10/2025	Transfe	Sports field maintenance	Amazon	Y	CK	-49.99	-10.00	-59.99
16/10/2025		Subscriptions	Microsoft	Y	COU	-8.60	-1.72	-10.32
07/10/2025	DD	Defibrillators	British Gas Lite	Y	CON	-17.53	-0.88	-18.41
07/10/2025	DD	Defibrillators	British Gas Lite	Y	CON	-17.26	-0.86	-18.12
07/10/2025	DD	Defibrillators	British Gas Lite	Y	CON	-17.00	-0.85	-17.85
07/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	Royal British Legion Industries	Y	COU	-250.00	0.00	-250.00
07/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	Tyne Rivers Trust	Y	COU	-150.00	0.00	-150.00
07/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	Talking Tynedale	Y	COU	-50.00	0.00	-50.00
07/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	Sport Tynedale	Y	COU	-200.00	0.00	-200.00
07/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - general	Stocksfield Tuesday Club	Y	COU	-150.00	0.00	-150.00
07/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	Northumbrian Citizens Advice Bureau	Y	COU	-500.00	0.00	-500.00
08/10/2025	Transfe	Insurance	CAS Insurance	Y	COU	-1,503.42	0.00	-1,503.42
31/10/2025	DD	Bank charges	Unity Trust	Y	CON	-7.80	0.00	-7.80
31/10/2025	DD	Telephone	EE	Y	CON	-17.98	-3.60	-21.58
28/10/2025	Transfe	Grass cutting (SF)	Stocksfield Cricket Club	Y	COU	-6,961.17	-1,392.23	-8,353.40
28/10/2025	Transfe	Grants - general	Painshawfield Biodiversity Group	Y	COU	-350.00	0.00	-350.00
28/10/2025	Transfe	Photocopier lease and maintenance	A-Four Business Equipment	Y	CON	-45.00	-9.00	-54.00
27/10/2025	DD	Telephone	BT	Y	CON	-47.07	-9.41	-56.48
See next page for authorities key						-21,226.29	-2,640.15	-23,866.44

Authorities key

CON	Continuing authority of the Council
COU	Other existing authority of the Council
CK	Delegated authority of the Clerk
CKC	Delegated authority of the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair

Stocksfield Parish Council

Summary report from 1-Oct-2025 to 31-Oct-2025 (figures exclude VAT)

Payments

Employment

Salary	2,037.00
National Insurance	243.00
Employee pension	0.00
Employer pension contribution	45.51
Total Employment	2,325.51

Administration

Office rent	0.00
Meeting room hire	0.00
Telephone	83.03
Stationery	0.00
Office equipment	0.00
Photocopier lease and maintena	139.98
Photocopy and print	0.00
Audit fees	0.00
Courses and training	0.00
Subscriptions	8.60
Insurance	1,503.42
Misc Admin	0.00
Bank charges	7.80
Payroll	8.75
Clerk expenses	0.00
Councillor expenses	0.00
Total Administration	1,751.58

Environment

Estate and verge cutting	0.00
Seats	0.00
Planters	0.00
Bedding plants	0.00
Grounds Services contract	2,095.00
Grounds Services ex contract	25.00

Environment (contd)

Defibrillators	51.79
Tree inspections	0.00
Bus shelters rent and mainten	0.00
Christmas tree	0.00
Misc Environment	0.00
Litter bins	0.00
VATCS maintenance	0.00
Total Environment	2,171.79

Communications

Website	0.00
Newsletter printing	0.00
Newsletter design	0.00
Newsletter delivery	0.00
Misc comms	0.00
Total Communications	0.00

Sports Facilities

Grass cutting (SF)	6,961.17
Sports field rent	0.00
Sports field rates	0.00
Sports field initiatives	0.00
Car park loan	0.00
Sports field maintenance	5,986.24
MUGA rent	0.00
Total Sports Facilities	12,947.41

Play Facilities

Grass cutting (PF)	0.00
Play area equipment inspectic	0.00
BEPA maintenance	380.00
Kates Plain Maintenance	0.00
Kates Plain rent	0.00

Play Facilities (contd)

Footbridge	0.00
Total Play Facilities	380.00

Community Support

Remembrance Service	0.00
Burial Board	0.00
Grants - Sec 137 Parish	0.00
Grants - Sec 137 non Parish	1,150.00
Grants - general	500.00
Total Community Support	1,650.00

Contingency

Contingency	0.00
Total Contingency	0.00

Total Payments

21,226.29

Receipts

Period

Precept

Precept	0.00
Total Precept	0.00

Sports facilities

Sports field rents	0.00
MUGA rent	0.00
Total Sports facilities	0.00

Misc Receipts

VAT Repayments	10,210.41
Miscellaneous Receipts	0.00
Grounds services recharge	0.00
Bank Interest	0.00
Total Misc Receipts	0.00

Total Receipts

10,210.41

Stocksfield Parish Council

Budget Monitoring Report to
General Fund

31/10/2025

Agenda Item 7(b)

	Annual Budget	Receipts/ Payments to date	Committed future payments	Projected Balance	% spent or committed
RECEIPTS					
Precept	105016	105016			
Groundsman contract	750				
Sports Facilities	4045	583			
Misc		2817			
VAT refund		10210			
Total Receipts	109811	118627			
PAYMENTS					
Employment	26212	12017	15100	-905	103%
Administration	10108	8057	2690	-640	106%
Environment	40455	14104	19790	6561	84%
Communications	4524	2130	200	2194	52%
Sports Facilities	23830	22522	600	1000	97%
Play Facilities	14439	10227	2800	1412	90%
Community Support	6400	5150	1000	250	96%
Contingency	0	0	0	0	0
Total payments	125968	74207			

Notes:

This monitoring report differs from that previously supplied as it includes committed future payments to provide a projected balance by budget head and % spent or committed. The committed spend within the employment budget is very difficult to judge at this stage as it depends upon the date of any new appointment and the salary to which appointed. The receipts have been adjusted (compared to previous budget reports) to correct errors in the Accounting System where invoices have been input as incurred in 2025/26 yet are accounted for in the payments for 2024/25 (totaling £4171.65 across the Employment, Administration, Environment and Play Facilities budget heads).

Agenda Item 7 (c)**Draft Budget 2026/27**

The following draft budget has been prepared for the initial views of councillors. It is a work in progress. Several budget subheadings contain very approximate costs and can be predicted more accurately within the next month. Some subheadings require more work, for example the impact of machinery maintenance on the sports fields maintenance budget. Depending on the outcome of further analysis it may be prudent to establish a separate subheading in due course.

Two defibrillators are now out of warranty having first been installed in 2015. Each has a cost of around £800 however funds have been set aside within reserves for defibrillators (£5,000).

The Council must set its budget and precept so that the precept requirement can be notified to NCC by 23 January 2026.

Stocksfield Parish Council
Updated 05/11/2025

1. Employment

Clerk Salary
Employer NIC
Employer pension

2. Administration

Office Rent
Meeting room hire
Telephone
Stationery
Office Equipment
Photocopier Lease/Maint.
Photocopying charges
Audit fees
Courses and training
Subscriptions
Insurance
Bank charges
Misc admin
Payroll admin
Clerk's expenses
Councillor expenses

3. Environment

Estate and verge grass cutting
Litter bins
Seats
Planters
Bedding plants
Grounds Services contract
Grounds Services ex contract
Christmas tree
Misc Environment
Bus shelters rent and maint.
Tree inspections
Defibrillators

Budget and precept calculations 2026/27

Anticipated 2026/27		Current Budget 2025/26		Actual Spend 2024/25	
Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments
	22050		22992		20425
	2556		2580		1451
	500		640		427
0	25106	0	26212	0	22303
	1800		1800		1800
	500		400		398
	710		550		653
	50		50		0
	200		1033		33
	385		385		456
	100		100		100
	650		650		604
	500		500		36
	1200		1100		1147
	3025		3025		2326
	160		150		159
	50		50		133
	115		115		120
	50		50		124
	50		50		0
0	9545	0	10008	0	8088
	3640		3640		7986
	2340		2340		6214
	100		100		830
	0		0		0
	1000		1000		378
750	28625	750	27575	750	24720
	1000		1000		794
	380		350		330
					14
	600		600		901
	1000		1500		1560
	1000		2350		2442
750	39685	750	40455	750	46169

4. Communications

Website maintenance	500		500		956
Newsletter printing	1464		1464		1068
Newsletter design	1060		1060		780
Newsletter postage/delivery	1300		1300		600
Misc communications	200		200		0
	0	4524	0	4524	0
					3404

5. Sports Facilities

Grass cutting/herbicide	8000		7180		8114
Sports field rent	3360	1750	3374	1750	2025
Sports field rates		1300		1300	
Sports field car park loan		3645		3645	
Sports field maint. and misc.		6445		6445	
MUGA rent	674	100	671	100	1273
MUGA maintenance					
	4034	21240	4045	20420	3298
					16702

6. Play Facilities

Grass cutting	3276		3276		6738
Equipment inspection	420		414		409
BEPA maintenance	4400		9400		22678
Kate's Plain rent	100		100		100
Kate's Plain maintenance	1000		1000		865
Play Areas future fund					
Footbridge	0		0		0
	0	9196	0	14190	0
					30789

7. Community Support

Remembrance Service					25
Burial Board	2100		2100		
General (inc grants)	4300		4300		4616
	0	6400	0	6400	0
					4641

8. Contingency

Contingency	3000		0		0
	0	3000	0	0	0

Totals, Income and Expenditure

4784	118696	4795	122209	4048	132098
-------------	---------------	-------------	---------------	-------------	---------------

Balance (Precept required assuming no use of reserves)

113912	117414	128050
---------------	---------------	---------------

Reserves or other sums to offset precept

12398	12398
--------------	--------------

Precept to be levied

113912	105016	115652
---------------	---------------	---------------

Formal reserves (at 01/04/2025)

137,340	Precept % increase	8.47
----------------	---------------------------	-------------

General

82,515	Band D	85.10
---------------	---------------	--------------

Allocated

54,825	Band D % increase	8.39
---------------	--------------------------	-------------

Notes:

Receipts excludes bank interest (which accumulates as reserves)

Agenda Item 7 (d)

Invoice from Stocksfield Cricket Club for replacement tyres

The Parish Council has received an invoice from Stocksfield Cricket Club, the contract holder for the grass cutting of the sports fields. Two tyres have been damaged during routine grass cutting having been pierced by metal staples which are used to retain netting on goals. Previously other tyres and the cutting blades have been damaged by metal staples left on the grass. The contract holder states that the staples are very difficult to see despite the due care of the grass cutting operative.

Stocksfield Football Club recognise the problem and have reinforced the need for its volunteer coaches to remove the staples from the grass once the netting is moved.

The Council is asked to consider reimbursement of the contract holder's costs for the damage.

Additionally, the Council should consider taking steps to remove the possibility of such damage continuing. The Council could require any of the clubs using the sports fields to take reasonable steps to prevent such damage from occurring. One option is for the clubs to use plastic pegs or staples, thereby removing the potential of further damage, whether that use is for netting, line marking or any other purpose. Members are asked to consider what, if any, further action needs to be taken.

Agenda Item 7 (e)

Clerk's salary

The interim Clerk has been employed at a single salary column point with reimbursement for the hours worked. Although the Council did not restrict the interim Clerk's hours by resolution when approving his appointment, there is a clear indication within the minutes of the meeting of the Council that his weekly hours were likely to be fewer than twenty. It was, and remains, the Clerk's intention and wish to restrict his hours to a minimum whilst ensuring, through consultation and agreement with the Chair, that important work is prioritised. During October, the Clerk has worked 97.75 hours, which has been completed with the Chair's agreement. This figure exceeds twenty hours a week but reflects the work identified as a priority. There is currently no specific mechanism for the Clerk's varying hours to be approved before submission to the payroll administrator for payment, other than approval by the whole Council.

The Council is asked to approve the payment of 97.75 hours for October and authorise the Chair to inform the payroll administrators (Northumberland County Council (NCC)) accordingly.

Agenda Item 8

General Governance Advisory Group

The General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG) normally meets monthly between Council meetings to consider matters within its remit and thereby enable a more detailed examination before making recommendations to the Council. The membership of GGAG is the Council's Chair and three other councillors. Councillors are requested to consider appointing further members of GGAG as is appropriate.

New application(s) for note/endorsement/decision:			Agenda Item 9
Reference/ Address	Description	Parish Council recommendation – (see Planning Report for details if applicable)	NCC Decision/Date Copies of the Planning Decisions can be found on NCC website
25/03686/FUL Lint House Birches Nook	Erection of oak framed porch following removal of existing	No comment Note use of delegated powers	

Existing planning applications (for information only)			
Reference/ Address	Description	Parish Council recommendation – (see Planning Report for details if applicable)	NCC Decision/Date Copies of the Planning Decisions can be found on NCC website
Pending or recently decided application(s) for information:			
22/03027/FUL Mickley Bank Farm	Retrospective application for the erection of storage sheds – appeal to Secretary of State	No further comment made. No comment was made for original application which was refused 04/11/2022	Refusal is being appealed
24/01965/AGRGDO Land west of Kipperlynn Farm	Notification for prior approval for a general purpose storage building	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Appeal made to Secretary of State
24/02793/FUL Maple Cottage 9 Apperley Road	Extension to existing kitchen, infill of existing door and one window to North West Elevation. (Retrospective).	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
24/03053/FUL The Whinns 3 Apperley Road	Construction of a new dwelling with associated landscaping and infrastructure.	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
25/02405/FUL The Old Chapel Alexandra Terrace	A dropped kerb to give access to a new driveway/parking area.	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
25/03496/FUL Meadowmount 28 Meadowfield Road	Demolition of former garage; two storey side extension; forming enclosed first floor balcony; enlargement of driveway; replacement gates and boundary fence	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Withdrawn
25/03352/FUL 4 Ayton Close	Two storey side extension and extension of rear decking	No comment Note use of delegated powers	
25/03130/VARYCO Marchmont 5 Batt House Road	Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plan) on approved application on 21/02012/FUL to allow a pitched garage roof, relocation of pedestrian access door and installation of an additional window	No comment Note use of delegated powers	Granted 04/11/25

Staffing Committee meeting held on 28 October 2025

Councillors are requested to receive the minutes of the Staffing Committee as below and consider the recommendations contained therein.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council Staffing Committee
held on Tuesday 28 October 2025
at Stocksfield Community Centre**

Present: Mr K Lewins (Chair), Mr T Hills, Mr M Parker.
Mr N Spencer (Clerk to the Council).

Apologies: None.

Lewins opened the meeting at 3.35pm.

SC 25/10/5 Apologies for absence
None.

SC 25/10/6 Declarations of Interest
None.

It was AGREED to exclude the press and public from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to consider the following items due to the confidential nature of the business.

SC 25/10/7 Recruitment of a Clerk to the Parish Council

Members reviewed the current recruiting process and AGREED that -

- applications will close as planned on 31/10/25
- shortlisting of applicants to invite for interview will be undertaken by the three Staffing Committee members and
- the Clerk will administer the invitations for interview to shortlisted applicants in consultation with the Staffing Committee.

Members also examined the salary range, rate of progression and contract type. Members recognised that the Council has assessed the role of Clerk/RFO at Spinal Column Point (SCP) 30 and after discussion, it was AGREED to recommend to the Council that –

- a) subject to recommendation (f), any newly appointed Clerk should be appointed on a salary range with annual progression of one increment (on the anniversary of appointment), subject to satisfactory performance and a maximum Spinal Column Point (SCP) 30 (excluding any increase for a relevant qualification)
- b) the appropriate starting salary for an appointee with no previous experience as a Clerk in a town or parish council will be SCP 27 so that, with annual progression, they achieve SCP 30 at the end of year three, thus recognising the contribution of experience in the role towards performance
- c) for each full year of equivalent previous service as a Clerk in a comparable council to this Council, a new appointee would be awarded an additional starting increment up to the maximum of SCP 30, so that, for example, a person with two years' equivalent service in a comparable council would start on SCP 29
- d) the current arrangement to award an additional salary point for holding or the successful completion of the Certificate in Local Council Administration be retained so that the maximum salary point with such a qualification and full relevant experience is SCP 31 but also that the additional qualifications listed within section 10 of Appendix A be included as 'relevant qualifications'
- e) where a new appointee has experience as Clerk in a smaller or larger council, the Council will, in determining the starting salary, apportion such experience as is appropriate by comparing it with the equivalent service in a comparable council

- f) where a new appointee, using the above guidance, commences on SCP 30 (or SCP 31 with a relevant qualification), they will be appointed on a single salary point and the salary will be reviewed annually.

Members also discussed the existing contract of employment and it was AGREED to recommend to the Council that the contract of employment should be amended in line with the model contract published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) as outlined at Appendix A. The significant changes are that (after any probationary period) there is a requirement of a minimum period of written notice of termination of contract to be given or received by the employee of three months.

SC 25/10/8 Date of next meeting

To be determined.

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 4.35pm.

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

This document sets out your main terms and conditions of employment. It includes the written particulars required by the Employment Rights Act 1996. The National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council ("the NJC") for Local Government Services ("the Green Book") applies to your employment save as amended by this contract.

Name of Employer: **Stocksfield Parish Council** referred to as '**the Council**' '**us**' or '**we**' or '**our**'
Address of Employer: **Stocksfield Community Centre**
Mount View Terrace
Stocksfield
NE43 7HL

Name of Employee: **[Insert Name]** referred to as '**You**'
Address of Employee: **Insert Address of Employee]**
(Please advise us of any change of name and/or address in writing).

Dated: **[Insert the date when this document is given]**

Your employment with the Council is governed by the terms and conditions contained in this agreement which starts from the start date and which supersedes all other agreements whether in writing or otherwise.

This agreement incorporates the provisions contained in any correspondence from us offering you employment and our staff policies. You will comply with any rules, policies and procedures set out in the staff policies. If there is any conflict between the terms of this agreement and the provisions of our staff policies, which do not form part of your contract of employment, the terms of this agreement shall prevail. We reserve the right (to be exercised reasonably) to amend the terms of this agreement and the contents of the staff policies.

1. DATE AND DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Your employment under this contract will begin on **[insert date when these terms commence]** and will continue, subject to the remaining terms of this agreement, until terminated by either party giving the other the required notice as set out in this contract.

2. CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT

For the purposes of entitlements to annual leave, sick pay arrangements, and maternity arrangements, continuous service includes continuous previous service with any public authority to which the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government etc.) (Modification) Order 1999 applies.

Your employment under these terms will begin on **[insert start date for this contract]**. Your previous service, starting on **[insert continuous service start date]** counts towards your continuous service with the council.

3. JOB TITLE

You are employed as **Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer**.

4. DECLARATION OF OTHER EMPLOYMENT

It is a condition of this Contract of Employment that you inform the Council of any alternative employment you undertake, in order to ensure that no tax or insurance liabilities will accrue to the Council. The Council also reserves the right to require that any other employment that you undertake does not conflict with the role or standards required to be undertaken or met in the public office of the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer to the Council.

5. DUTIES

You are expected to perform all duties which may be reasonably required of you as set out in the attached job description.

The list of duties in the job description is not contractual and not to be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. The Council may, at its discretion, require you to perform additional or other duties (commensurate with the grade of your post), either instead of, or in addition to, your normal duties; and may make minor amendments to your job description. Where substantive changes are to be made this would be by agreement and after consultation with you.

The Council requires the highest standards from you in your performance at work and your general conduct and in particular you must:

- i. unless prevented by incapacity, devote the whole of your working time, attention and abilities to the business of the Council;
- ii. diligently, honestly and ethically perform such duties as may from time to time be assigned to you by the Council;
- iii. conduct your personal and professional life in a way which does not risk adversely affecting the Council's standing and reputation;
- iv. comply with all reasonable and lawful directions given to you by the Council;
- v. report your own wrongdoing and any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other employee to your Line Manager immediately on becoming aware of it.
- vii. consent to the Council monitoring and recording your use of the Council's electronic communications systems for the purpose of ensuring that the Council's rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes.

The council reserves the right to make reasonable changes to any of your terms of employment. You will be notified in writing of any change as soon as possible and in any event within one month of the change.

6. PLACE OF WORK

You will be based at the office, **Stocksfield Community Centre, Mount View Terrace, Stocksfield** which is your normal places of work and no further payments will be made in relation to your commuting to the office.

SECTION NEEDS TO BE ADDED ABOUT FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES SUCH AS HOME WORKING AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE AND THE NEED TO MONITOR ANY ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THAT EFFICIENCY IS NOT AFFECTED AND THAT THE COUNCIL DOES NOT REQUIRE A PERSON TO WORK FROM HOME.

You may be required to work elsewhere within a reasonable travelling distance either temporarily or permanently in order to perform your role properly.

During your employment with us you may be required to travel within Northumberland. You will not be required to work outside of the United Kingdom.

7. WORKING HOURS

Your normal working hours total **20 hours** per week and are normally worked from **Monday to Friday**. **Evening work is required at least once a month.**

THIS SECTION NEEDS TO BE REVIEWED AND REDRAFTED AFTER THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE IS APPOINTED AND AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM. POTENTIAL NEED TO INCLUDE THE MONITORING OF FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE THEY MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COUNCIL.

We reserve the right to amend these hours as may be reasonably required subject to consultation with you.

8.. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The first **three** months of your employment with us will be a probationary period. During the probationary period, your performance and suitability for continued employment will be monitored. We may, at our discretion, extend the probationary period and will provide you reasons for doing so.

At any time before your probationary period has been completed, either you or we may bring your employment to an end by giving one weeks' notice (unless termination without notice is appropriate). We may decide to pay you in lieu of notice.

At the end of the probationary period or soon after, your performance will be reviewed and we will write to you to tell you if your probation has been successful or not. You will remain on your probationary period until you have received this written confirmation. Once the probationary period is successfully completed, you will be confirmed in your role.

9. TRAINING

It is essential that the officers and employees of the Council maintain up-to-date knowledge of their function and duties. To this end, the Council will expect and support your necessary agreed training and development and meet all course and examination expenses and any travel and subsistence incurred on the scale set down as paid working hours. In addition, reasonable agreed time for study in paid working hours will be given.

10. PAY AND BENEFITS

Your salary is £[00,000] per annum being the current salary point [X] as set out in the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales. **[The pro-rata salary is £[00,000] p.a.]**

Subject to satisfactory performance, you will progress automatically through the range [X-30] in salary scale by annual increments until you reach the maximum salary in the range. Your first increment will be payable on the first anniversary of your appointment and thereafter annually on each anniversary of your appointment until you reach the maximum of the above range. The Council may withhold an increment if it is considered that performance fell below the level expected, following an annual appraisal, or award an additional increment for exemplary performance if it chooses to do so.

OR

Your salary is £[00,000] per annum being the current salary point [X] as set out in the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales. **[The**

pro-rata salary is £[00,000] p.a.] You have been appointed to a single salary point and your salary will be reviewed annually on the anniversary of your appointment.

In addition, one additional salary point will be added to your salary for success in obtaining or already holding any of the following relevant qualifications:

- 1. The Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)**
- 2. The Certificate in Higher Education in Community Governance – Level 4 or one of its predecessor qualifications designed specifically for the profession**
- 3. The Foundation Degree in Community Governance – Level 5 or one of its predecessor qualifications designed specifically for the profession**
- 4. BA (Hons) Degree in Community Governance – Level 6 or one of its predecessor qualifications designed specifically for the profession]**

Your salary will be payable monthly in arrears on or about the last **Thursday** of each month directly into your bank or building society. Each instalment will include payment for the calendar month in which payment is made.

Additional Hours

If you work more than your normal working hours, then subject to the Council's approval, you may take time off in lieu at a time to be agreed between you and the Council.

11. DEDUCTION OF WAGES

If you owe us money at any time, you authorise us to deduct any sums due to us from your salary including, without limitation, any over payment of salary; any advances or loans we have made to you; a day's or part day's pay for each day or part day of unauthorised absence. "Unauthorised absence" is not turning up for work unless your absence is due to genuine sickness and you have notified us as set out in this contract; leave for which prior permission has been granted; genuine reasons outside your control which are acceptable to us.

If you owe us money when you leave and your final salary payment is not enough to cover the whole amount owed, you will be required to repay the outstanding amount due to us within one month of leaving us.

12. EXPENSES

The Council will reimburse you when additional expenditure for travel, meals or overnight accommodation is necessarily and reasonably incurred in the performance of the Council's business, provided the expenditure has been authorised in advance, receipted and approved in accordance with the Council's financial regulations. You shall abide by our policies on expenses as communicated from time to time.

Mileage payments at the NJC rate in force will be paid as long as they are approved by the Council. Please see the current rates below, unless otherwise updated by an updated agreement.

Essential Users	451-999cc	1000-1199cc	1200-1450cc
Lump sum per annum	£846	£963	£1,239
Per mile first 8,500	36.9p	40.9p	50.5p
Per mile after 8,500	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p

Casual Users	451-999cc	1000-1199cc	1200-1450cc
Per mile first 8,500	46.9p	52.2p	65.0p

Per mile after 8,500	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
----------------------	-------	-------	-------

Home Working Allowance – Where you are required to work from home, we will pay a home working allowance at the tax-free value set by HMRC as in force at the time. In the event that you choose to work from home, the allowance is not payable for any such period of time.

13. HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT AND PAID LEAVE

Our holiday year runs from **1 April to 31 March** and your holiday accrues monthly. If your employment starts or ends part way through a holiday year, we will pro-rata your entitlement during that holiday year.

Full time staff are entitled to 23 days annual leave, plus bank holidays and 2 additional (statutory) days (25 days plus bank holidays). An increase of 3 days is applied following 5 years' continuous service (28 days plus bank holidays). We will pro-rata that figure where necessary so that your holiday entitlement is in proportion to your working time during the relevant holiday year.

If we need you to work on one of those bank holidays, you will be able to take your holiday on a different day.

You should usually give at least two weeks' notice when requesting annual leave and normally give notice of at least one month before taking leave of one week or more. Requests for annual leave must be made to the Council's Chair or, in their absence, the Vice Chair. The dates of your annual leave require the prior written agreement of the Council's Chair.

Annual leave must be taken at times agreed with the Council's Chair. You may carry forward up to 5 days' leave into the following leave year, subject to the approval of the Council's Chair. You may be able to carry additional days where you have been prevented from taking it in the relevant leave year because you have taken maternity, paternity, adoption, parental or shared parental leave, or if you have been on long term sick leave.

Holiday taken without our prior approval will be treated as unauthorised absence and may lead to disciplinary action.

Holiday pay is calculated on the basis of your current rate of pay. Where you work variable hours or if you receive commission payments/overtime/travelling-time allowance, then a day's pay will be calculated on the average pay in the previous 52 weeks.

You will have no entitlement to any payment in lieu of accrued but untaken holiday except when your employment ends.

If, when your employment ends, you have taken more holiday (including bank holidays) than you have accrued in that holiday year, we will deduct the equivalent amount of pay from any payments due to you. If this amount is in excess of your final pay, you will be required to repay the outstanding amount due to us within one month of the end of your employment.

If you or we have served notice to end your employment, we may require you to take any accrued but unused holiday during your notice period.

Details of all other types of paid leave that you may be entitled to including Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave, can be found in the Staff Handbook/council policies.

14. PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

You will receive an annual performance and development review.

15. ABSENCE FOR SICKNESS OR INJURY, AND SICK PAY

You must follow the procedure set out in the Council's sickness absence policy. This policy is non-contractual and may, at our discretion, be updated or amended from time to time.

If you are going to be off work because of sickness or injury you must telephone the Council's Chair or, in their absence, the Vice Chair, giving the reason for non-attendance, by your usual start time on each day of absence. If you are unable to notify personally due to the nature of the illness, someone else may make contact on your behalf. It is your responsibility to ensure we are notified. Failure to do so may result in sick pay not being paid and may result in disciplinary action.

A self-certification system operates for absences from work due to sickness or injury not exceeding seven days (including weekends and other non-working days). Immediately on your return to work you must complete and return a self-certification form.

For sickness or injury absence exceeding seven days (including weekends and other non-working holidays) you must provide us with a Fit note (from your doctor or consultant) on your return to work. However, if your absence is ongoing, you are expected to post your Fit note to us upon receipt or alternatively to send us a photograph of both sides of the Fit Note, with the original to follow.

All sickness or injury absence will be entered on your employment record.

Occupational Sick Pay

Any sickness absence taken is paid in line with our contractual sick/injury pay scheme (inclusive of SSP) which provides payment during periods of certificated sickness as follows:

- During 1st year of service 1 months full pay, and (after 4 months' service) 2 months half pay
- During 2nd year of service 2 months full pay, 2 months half pay
- During 3rd year of service 4 months full pay, 4 months half pay
- During 4th & 5th year 5 months full pay, 5 months half pay
- After 5 years' service 6 months full pay, 6 months half pay

Occupational sick pay shall be inclusive of any statutory sick pay due in accordance with applicable legislation. SSP and occupational sick pay are subject to the usual deduction for PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions etc.

16. PENSION

We will comply with our auto-enrolment duties under Part 1 of the *Pensions Act 2008*. If you are an eligible job holder, you will be automatically enrolled in the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST), our auto-enrolment scheme. The Council currently contributes the statutory minimum for an employer. Further details of the scheme are available online.

17. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you have a grievance relating to your employment, you should raise this with the Council's Chair or the Chair of the Staffing Committee (if established) in the first instance (or the Vice Chair if a grievance relates to the Council's Chair). If you are unable to resolve your grievance informally, the full grievance procedure is contained within the Council's policies. The Grievance procedure is for guidance only and does not form part of the contract of employment.

18. DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURE

Our disciplinary procedure and rules can be found within the Council's policies. If you wish to appeal against a disciplinary decision, you should set out your reasons in writing. We will tell you (usually in the disciplinary decision letter) who your appeal should be sent to, and the timeframe for doing that. The procedure is for guidance only and does not form part of the contract of employment and may be amended from time to time.

The list of rules is not to be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive and these may be added to, amended or deleted at any point. Any breach of disciplinary rules will normally result in disciplinary action.

We may impose one or more of a range of potential sanctions under our disciplinary policy. These include a warning or an extension of a warning, dismissal and, if available, a change of duties or redeployment to another role (at the same or lower level – including demotion with a reduction in salary).

19. NOTICE

During your probationary period, you are entitled to be given and required to give **one week's** notice in writing to terminate your employment for any reason. On completion of your probationary period, you are required to give **three months'** notice in writing.

Notice given by us will be **3 months** following your probationary period.

For reference, the statutory position is

- 1 month to 2 years – statutory notice is 1 week
- 2 to 12 years – statutory notice is 1 week for each full year they have worked (i.e. 5 weeks' notice after 5 years' service)
- 12 years or more – statutory notice is 12 weeks

If you have not provided the required notice in writing, we may withhold pay for notice unworked due under your contract, but not paid. Anything owed to us will be deducted from your final salary.

20. PAY IN LIEU OF NOTICE

Instead of requiring you to work your notice, we may decide to pay you in lieu of notice, bringing your employment to an end there and then.

Your payment in lieu will be made up of your net basic salary for the notice period less tax and NI contributions. Any payment in lieu will not include any payments such as any payment in respect of benefits; and any payment in respect of holiday entitlement that would have accrued during the notice period.

21. OBLIGATIONS ON TERMINATION

On termination of your contract with us, you will:

- i. Immediately return (or arrange to be collected) all property and information belonging to us in your possession or under your control, including but not limited to login details and passwords for internal databases and IT systems or externally held software, apps, databases, websites etc.
- ii. Irretrievably delete any information relating to us which is in your control outside our premises.
- iii. If requested, provide a signed statement that you have fully complied with your obligations under this clause together with such reasonable evidence of compliance that we may request.

22. WORK DURING NOTICE PERIOD / GARDEN LEAVE

We may decide to put you on Garden Leave for some or all of your notice period. Garden Leave means that you should not come into work, but you remain employed and entitled to your contractual benefits and subject to your contractual obligations (apart from the requirement to carry out work).

We will write to you at the time to confirm the rules that will apply to you during Garden Leave. This may include a rule preventing you from working elsewhere or for yourself, during your contracted hours to the Council, unless we agree to that in advance.

23. HEALTH AND SAFETY

You have a duty to ensure the health and safety of yourself and others. You must also co-operate with the Council so that it can comply with its health and safety obligations.

You will be given a copy of the Council's Health and Safety Policy.

It is important that you familiarise yourself with your responsibilities.

Breach of these requirements may result in disciplinary action being taken against you in accordance with the disciplinary procedure, which may result in your dismissal.

24. CONFIDENTIALITY

During your employment you will have access to and will use and otherwise handle 'Confidential Information' to do your job properly. By 'Confidential Information', we mean any information or matter about the business or affairs of the Council or any of its business contacts, or about any other matters which may come to your knowledge in the course of your employment, and which is not in the public domain or which is in the public domain as a result of your breach of this agreement. It may, but will not necessarily, be in a recorded format (usually hard copies or electronically).

You must not (unless in the proper course of your work and/or with our express prior authorisation or in the situations outlined in this clause) use Confidential Information, make or use copies of Confidential Information, or disclose Confidential Information to anyone or any entity. That obligation applies during your employment and after it has ended.

You must do everything reasonable to protect Confidential Information and must tell us straightaway if you know or suspect that Confidential Information has been leaked and/or is being used outside our organisation or inappropriately inside our organisation. You should not make assumptions about sharing of confidential information with other employees. If in doubt, you should consult your line manager.

All Confidential Information belongs to us, and you must return it (including copies) to us when requested during your employment or when your employment ends. You will need to confirm that you have safely and securely deleted all versions and copies. We may withhold any salary or other sum due to you until such time as all confidential information has been returned to us.

These provisions on Confidential Information do not affect your right to make a protected disclosure as defined by the *Employment Rights Act 1996* (see our Whistleblowing Policy), or your duty to disclose Confidential Information if the law or a regulatory obligation requires that.

25. DATA PROTECTION

As part of our administrative and management processes, the Council will need to collect and process personal data relating to you in accordance with data protection legislation in force at the time. Details of what we will collect and process are set out in the Data Protection Policy and our 'Employee Privacy Notice'.

You must familiarise yourself with our Data Protection Policy and comply with the Council's data protection policy when handling any personal data in the course of your employment. If you do not comply with it, we may treat that failure as a disciplinary issue and, in serious cases, gross misconduct.

26. COUNCIL PROPERTY

During your employment you will have access to, and use of, various documents, manuals, hardware and software provided for your use by the Council. These and any data or documents (including copies) produced, maintained or stored on the Council's computer systems or other electronic equipment (including mobile phones), remain the property of the Council.

You may also be given the use of other facilities owned by the council including mobile phone, laptop/desktop computer, keys, banking, social media, email and other accounts.

You must take good care of all Council property that is in your possession and/or under your control and use it for agreed and lawful purposes only. If, because of your misuse or carelessness the property is lost, stolen or damaged, we may deduct from your pay some or all of the cost of repair or a replacement.

We may, at any time during your employment, and will on termination, require you to return all Council property (including social media account details, or any computer or online passwords) to us. You must do so on your last working day or as soon as possible as agreed with the Council.

If you are placed on Garden Leave, we will usually require you to return all our property before your Garden Leave begins.

27. MATERNITY, PATERNITY, ADOPTION AND PARENTAL ARRANGEMENTS

Your entitlement to maternity/paternity/adoption/shared parental leave and pay is as set out in the relevant legislation and in the Green Book.

28. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council ("the NJC") for Local Government Services ("the Green Book") applies to your employment save as amended by this contract.

Further information regarding your employment is contained within the Council's policies. These cover policies such as Health and Safety, Equalities, the Grievance Procedure, Disciplinary Procedure and Disciplinary Rules. You must comply with the Council's policies.

29. CHANGE TO TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

This agreement sets out everything we have agreed. You and we are entering into it on the basis that no discussions we have had, representations made, previous agreements reached, or understandings we have come to are relevant to this agreement, or are to be relied on, unless they are recorded in it.

Care has been taken to prepare this agreement, and neither you nor we will have a claim for innocent or negligent misrepresentation or negligent misstatement in respect of its contents (but that doesn't exclude liability for fraud).

This contract may be altered by us in writing at any time after the date of signing and after consultation with you.

Where changes to the terms set out in this statement occur by agreement (negotiation) with you, you will be informed of these by means of a written statement of change which you will be issued within one month of the change. Changes to non-contractual policies, rules and procedures will be notified to you with one month's notice.

I have read and understood the above clauses and accept the offer of employment on these terms.

SIGNED

DATE

.....
for and on behalf of Stocksfield Parish Council

I accept the terms and conditions of my employment as set out above.

SIGNED

DATE

.....
Employee

Sports Field User Group (SFUG) meeting held on 14 October 2025

Councillors are asked to note the notes of the above meeting as below:

STOCKSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

NOTES FROM THE Sports Field User Group (SFUG) and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) Committee

Tuesday 14th October from 7:30pm

Attendees: Chris Liddle (Parish Council), Kevin Lewins (Parish Council), Anne Dale (County Council), Chris Catnach (Cricket Club), Gordon MacArthur (Cricket Club), Chris Russell (Rugby Club)

7:30PM: SFUG

1. Welcome and Introductions.

2. Apologies

3. Notes of last meeting held on 1st April 2025

No comments

4. User reports and season review:

a) Stocksfield Cricket Club

13 teams – 5 men, 1 women, 2 girls, 5 mixed junior teams – 150+ members

1st team reached a cup final, all teams done well

b) Stocksfield Football Club

15 junior teams including 3 girls' teams, 200+ junior members

c) Prudhoe and Stocksfield Rugby Club

Touch rugby every week for over 14 years olds, well attended

No team entered into a league but the club are playing friendly games across the 25/26 season with the aim to re-enter a league in future

5. Matters arising – not otherwise on the agenda.

a. Removal of tree, roots and shoots on Western field

- *Shoots removed*

- *Tree roots still present, work needed to dig them out*

b. Current state of pitches, areas of concern

c. Maintenance of pitches and fields:

- *Full field management plan – CL and KL to develop in line with the Football Foundation grant*

- *Football pitches to be moved to fit around cricket and rugby pitches (KL)*

a. *9 aside pitch to be moved West off the cricket outfield*

b. *5 aside pitches on rugby field to be moved East off the cricket outfield*

c. *5 aside pitches on West field to be moved West for goalmouth maintenance*

- *West field 5 aside pitch needs repair on goalmouths (CL, KL to review)*

d. FF grant

- *Requirements and tendering to commence shortly for football pitches*

- *Cricket club may look to hire equipment from PC for their pitch groundwork*

e. Pitch planning and mapping onto field site – cross club engagement

CL and KL to create a cross field site and annual development plan

f. Development opportunities (new multi-use)

No update

a. Usage of facilities/toilets

- *Football club currently paying Cricket club for Sunday morning access to toilets. Because of insurance a staff member has to be present at £13 per hour*
- *CC to review insurance to explore options that would allow access to the toilets for the football club without full opening of the bar*
- *Football club to provide details of fixtures to CC to allow earlier planning of staffing*

b. Potholes in car park

PC to review holes in main car park

c. Cars on sports fields

No issues reported after CC messaged teams and visitors

7. Any other business.

8. Date of next meeting

Spring 2026

Following on: MUGA

1. Introductions other than at 1. above.
2. Apologies.
3. Notes of last meeting held on 1st April 2025 (included at item 3. above).
4. Matters arising
 - a. New floodlights
 - *New lights are required after electrical review. £7.6k LED lights sourced.*
 - *Purchase agreed and deposit to be paid ASAP, and order placed*
 - b. Pitch repair/maintenance – future planning
 - *Due a clean and brush, waiting for building work to be completed to avoid dust and debris*
 - *Discussion about when we should replace the MUGA surface. CL to investigate with FA, and similar, to explore recommended approach. If replacement required CC to review cost with replacement companies*
5. Honorary Secretary's report.
 - *Lighting repaired on multiple occasions*
 - *One net has been replaced*
 - *Evidence of attempted break in through removal of bolts in fencing*
6. Honorary Treasurer's report.
 - *£57k in account*
 - *No outstanding bills*
 - *£13k turnover*
7. Any other business.
8. Date of next meeting
As above

Agenda Item12

Parish Council representatives

To receive verbal updates where appropriate.

Play Area Inspections

At its last meeting members examined the annual reports from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and agree to receive a further report from the Clerk. This report is an interim update on the current position.

The Clerk and the Grounds Services Contractor (GSC) (who had not previously seen either report) have reviewed the reports. Some of the work identified within the RoSPA reports has already been undertaken by the GSC through his weekly inspections of equipment. None of the faults are identified as urgent, although some require a prioritised response. The GSC's assessment, with which I concur, is that none of the play equipment is remotely near its end of life. Parts remain available for all and there is always the option of manufacturing bespoke pieces. This has been done successfully on previous occasions.

Branch End Play Area

Kompan two toddler bay swing

This equipment requires both cradles to be replaced. The cradles are supplied complete with replacement chains at a cost of £582.80 plus fitting by the GSC.

Cliff rider

Although not assessed in the RoSPA report, the matting around the new Cliff Rider has been damaged at the edges by grass cutting. The suppliers state that a warning was provided about the risk of damage to the surface by grass cutters due to the slope and they do not accept any responsibility for the damage. They have quoted supply and repair costs at £524. The Clerk has liaised with the GSC and has agreed repairs which will be monitored over the winter.

Wet pour

The condition of the wet pour surface remains poor. The original installation appears substandard and the depth of both surfaces varies considerably. The surface naturally contracts and separates from the edges resulting in continual work to keep the surface safe. The extremely dry weather in 2025 has caused additional shrinkage which demanded further remedial work. Unfortunately, no repairs have been carried out during the year and it will be challenging to complete them over the winter as repairs require dry weather. Despite this, it is important that every opportunity is taken to make repairs when possible. The wet pour materials are expensive and have previously been purchased in bulk (with pallet delivery). There have been no purchases of material over the last few years. The cost of 25 x 25kg bags of top surface and 6 x 25kg tubs of resin binder is in the region of £1596 excluding delivery. The GSC's labour is not included but has previously been authorised using delegated powers.

It is recommended that the Council

- approves the purchase and replacement of parts for the Kompan two bay toddler swing
- notes the use of delegated powers to repair the matting at the Cliff Rider and
- approves the purchase of replacement wet pour raw materials and the ongoing repairs by the GSC.

Kates Plain

Seating

There are six benches within Kates Plain, three are located within the toddler area and three at the southern end of the play area adjacent to the southern fenceline. Two of the benches in the toddler area were damaged, one quite extensively. All six benches appear to have been in place since the area was first opened and enquiries reveal they were made as part of a project by a local youth club many years ago. Whilst the benches have not previously caused concern, the RoSPA report has identified a new risk relating to the gap between the slats on each bench and the associated risk of entrapment. The benches appear to have been set lower to the ground than current benches – perhaps in the belief that they would be used exclusively by young children. A legitimate question is whether six benches are needed and, in view of their condition, it may be that the benches need to be replaced with a product from an established manufacturer, thereby removing the entrapment issues.

The Clerk has used delegated powers to arrange for the seriously damaged bench in the toddler area to be removed and for some of its parts to be used to repair the other damaged bench. In due course councillors may conclude that all the benches need to be removed and replaced with alternative benches but fewer in number.

A similar exercise would be appropriate for litter bins at both play areas.

It is recommended that the Council notes the delegated powers used and agrees to receive a further report from the Clerk.

Agenda Item 14

East Tynedale Town and Parish Councils' Forum (also known as East Tynedale Forum)

The minutes of the most recent meeting of the Forum have been circulated separately but the below is a report from the Vice Chair of Ovingham Parish Council which is self-explanatory. The Council is asked to consider its position and a response.

East Tynedale Parish and Town Council Forum

Introduction

I believe the Forum was established in 2009 by Adrian Hinchcliffe who, for a number of years, was the Chairperson. He was followed as Chairperson by Tom Martin who sadly passed away in 2021. The January 2022 meeting had the election of a Chairperson on the agenda but nobody put their name forward. Since that time meetings have been chaired by attendees on a rolling basis which includes myself.

In early October, our secretary Monica Anderton tendered her resignation which means we currently have nobody filling the two positions.

It fell to me to advise member councils of this situation, and a meeting of the consortium was duly held on Tuesday the 28th of October. Eight out of twelve member councils attended.

Meeting on 28 October 2025

Attached you will find the minutes of this meeting which I hope are self-explanatory. All member councils spoke and raised a number of issues but obviously the two key matters were whether the Forum in its current form remains relevant and whether there were volunteers to take on the two key roles. There were no volunteers from those present.

It was recognised that the role of Chairperson requires someone who would be willing to re-invigorate the Forum, is proactive and a good communicator.

When asked "if a chair can be found should the Forum continue" all councils voted to continue **IF** a suitable chair comes forward.

Since not all councils were in attendance it was felt that a decision to disband the Forum should not be taken without advising those who were not present.

Action

It was agreed that **all** parish/town clerks (For Attention of Chair) to be sent the minutes with this message asking them to consider if they can put forward a proposed Chairperson for the Forum and if not state that they cannot find a willing person.

A reply is needed from all 12 member councils by 15th December 2025.

Further action will depend on the responses received

Agenda Item 15

Public consultation – View School Reorganisation in the wider Prudhoe area

A public consultation has commenced involving proposals which affect local schools including Broomley First School. Full details can be found using the following link – <https://cheviotschoolsconsultation.com/>

The Council is asked to consider the consultation and determine whether it wishes to respond and, if so, how.

Agenda Item 16

Office Broadband/Phone

The Council's current telephone and broadband provider is BT with a monthly cost of £47. The Council has been informed that the disconnection of copper within telephone exchanges is imminent and they cannot guarantee continuation of the existing phone line beyond the end of December 2025. They offer a business essentials package which would mimic the current arrangements in terms of service. The monthly fee is £32.95 with a one-off fee of £65 for a digital telephone.

The office alarm currently connects via telephone to a keyholder and it is not known if the system will work using a digital service. There has been insufficient time to examine alternative options before publication of the papers for the meeting and the Council is asked what action it wishes to take (assuming an office telephone remains essential).

Agenda Item 17

Computer equipment

The Parish Council's laptop is old and operates on Windows 10. It cannot be upgraded to Windows 11 using its current hardware. In order to address the obvious security issues now that Windows 10 is not supported, it is recommended that a new laptop is purchased. The changes in the office IT setup has made remote working much easier but the functionality of the current laptop and its vulnerability negate those improvements.

The Council's IT support is provided locally by PCs at Home who installed and maintain the new desktop system. A new DELL 16 laptop with a suitable specification currently retails at £482.50 (exc VAT) and would cost £140 to set up, to be compatible with the desktop. Any new laptop would benefit from the current maintenance arrangements.

The Council is asked to consider the purchase and setup of a new laptop as described, noting that it will probably require expenditure on the Clerk's personal credit card as the cost exceeds the maximum limit of the Council's credit card (£500).

Parish Council Meeting Calendar for 2025/26 for information

Parish Council: (current)

(All commence at 7.30pm in the Richardson Room)

Monday 8 December 2025

Monday 12 January 2026

Monday 9 February 2026

Monday 9 March 2026

Monday 13 April 2026

Monday 11 May 2026 (annual meeting)

Advisory Group Meetings:

General Governance Advisory Group (GGAG)

All Parish Councillors, whether or not members of the Advisory Group are welcome to attend GGAG meetings

(Meetings are held via Teams)

Monday 24 November 2025

Monday 15 December 2025

Monday 26 January 2026

Monday 23 February 2026

Monday 23 March 2026

Rights of Way & Environment Advisory Group (RoWEAG)

TBA

Communications Advisory Group

TBA

Sports Fields User Group (SFUG)

TBA