

# NEWBROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026

This meeting was held in the Town Hall, Cllr MW Gibson opened the meeting at 7.20 pm following the Annual Parish Assembly and an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council.

### 01-05-01 **Present**

Cllrs MW Gibson, JR Orde, HA Walton, MD Newson and KE Bell. Also Present: Clerk, R Macfarlane, County Councillor Antonia Azocar-Nevin and one member of the public.

### 01-05-02 **Election of Chairman**

Cllr KE Bell proposed Cllr HA Walton and this was seconded by Cllr MW Gibson and all agreed. At this point in the Meeting HA Walton signed the declaration of acceptance of office (LGA 1972 s83) and took the Chair.

### 01-05-03 **Apologies**

Cllr AR Smith and Cllr J Annan.

### 01-05-04 **Election of Vice-Chairman**

HA Walton proposed JR Orde, seconded by Cllr KE Bell and all agreed.

### 01-05-05 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of Newbrough PC which was held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were approved by the Council then signed by the Chairman.

### 01-05-06 **Matters Arising**

Sadly the dispute between the County Council and Karbon is still continuing. The issue is about who is responsible for clearing up litter and the disposing of it.

### 01-05-07 **Council Representatives**

**Churchyard Maintenance Committee** *MW Gibson*

**Newbrough C of E First School** *KE Bell*

**Town Hall Management Committee** *JR Orde*

**Sportsfield Association** *HA Walton*

**West Northumberland Patient Panel** *MD Newson*

**CANF** *MD Newson*

**Newbrough and Warden Angling Club** – The status of this club to be investigated.

### 01-05-08 **Public First Focus**

This item formed part of the Annual Parish Meeting.

01-05-09 **Communications**

CAN Newsletter, NCC Planning services - Notice of intention to commence preparation of the Northumberland Local Plan Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, Part 4, Regulation 19), Road Safety and Parking - Newbrough CE Primary School, Have your say on the future of Northumberland Libraries, Nalc Events letter including Annual Conference

01-05-10 **Council Insurance**

It was RESOLVED to continue insurance cover with Zurich Municipal due 1<sup>st</sup> June.

01-05-11 **Website**

The Council's website with accessibility and WCAG2.0 compliance is in transition from [www.newbrough.info](http://www.newbrough.info) to [www.newbroughparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.newbroughparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
It was agreed the Clerk works with the web-designer to assist the transition process.

01-05-12 **Audit**

**External Audit to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

Smaller Authorities External Audit Team, Forvis Mazars LLP, requirements are in line with Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (Regulations 12-16) and the Audit Commission Act of 1998.

**Internal Audit**

This has taken place with no matters arising. The process having been reviewed, the Clerk was asked to thank the Internal Auditor.

The Council received and noted the Annual Internal Audit Report.

**Accounts 2025-2026**

The Clerk/RFO has certified the accounts which are now before the Council for approval.

**Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2025/2026**

It was RESOLVED that the Council approve (in sequence) the Annual Governance Statement (Sect 1), the Accounting Statements (Sect 2), and the Certificate of Exemption.

**Explanation of Variances**

The Council will publish numerical and narrative explanations for significant variances in the accounting statements.

**Exercise of Electors' Rights** The notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors' rights must be displayed for 14 days in Parish Notice Board and the 30 Working Day Period for the Exercise of Public Rights commences on 2nd June and will end on 13<sup>th</sup> July. The Council will submit the annual return and supporting documentation presented at this meeting to Forvis Mazars LLP by 1<sup>st</sup> July. Approval of Accounts should be no later than 1<sup>st</sup> July and Publication of Audited Accounts no later than 15<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

**Limited Assurance Exemption** As the Council's gross income or expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 the Council has applied for certification of exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015. As part of a more proportionate regime, the Council must comply with the requirements of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.

## **External Auditors**

The Clerk will inform Forvis Mazars LLP about any changes in staffing or chairman and provide any relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.

## 01-05-13 **Reports**

### **Northumberland County Council**

Traffic issues at Settringstones - County Councillor Cllr Antonia Azocar-Nevin has looked into calming measures like signage for the road leading to Settringstones. (Traffic calming wouldn't be appropriate in open countryside and 'Children Playing' signs aren't permitted by the Traffic Signs Regulations). Residents putting up their own signs, would be doing so at their own risk.

Bus drop in event, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1:30-4:30 at Hexham Library.

### **Northumberland Primary Care Network meetings**

Cllr Newson -feedback to Council from my West Northumberland Primary Care Network  
Their role is expanded under the NHS 10-year plan. The slogan for GPs and pharmacies is now 'stop people going to hospital' so much more home visits etc. It may be possible to arrange an NHS roadshow in the village to spread the word.

## 01-05-14 **Review of Documents.**

The Council's Documents are published, in line with the Localism Act 2011, on the Council's website, together with other information.

**ICO Data Protection Certificate** – registration reference ZA514513

**Standing Orders & Financial Management Policy** Cllr Newson will examine these and report back to July meeting.

**The Assets Register** The current value is £15,664 (inc New bench)

## 01-05-15 **Finances**

### **Section 137 Spending Limit for 2026/27**

Section 137 Expenditure Limit 2026-2027 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have notified that the appropriate sum for Local Government Act 1972 Section 137(4)(a) for Parish, Town and Community Councils for 2026-27 is £11.60/elector. Section 137 is only available for an activity for which no other specific power exists; a council can rely on Local Government Act 1972 s137 for expenditure up to a prescribed limit for any purpose which in its opinion is in the interests of or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or of part of it, or of some of it. A separate account must be kept for s137 and specifically authorised by resolution.

Where there is an existing power, the Council must ensure that the grant meets any criteria in the relevant Act.

Limit for 2026-27 of £11.60 per elector (numbering 479) so Newbrough Parish Council limit of expenditure is therefore £5,556.40.

**Bank Accounts** 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 BMM £25,748.58 Community £1,385.16

**Payments by** S/O Part Salary SCP30, HMRC, Meeting Room Rental £30, ICO £47

**Income** Precept £6,500, (yet to be reimbursed vat £217.70)

**Payments Approved** Nalc Subscription £142.24, Council Insurance Zurich £363, S Davies Grass Cutting Inv81 £160, Expenses £35.80, IONIS Website Inv 9872 April £40.68 (inc £6.78 vat).

Internal Audit, GDF Scorer £75 (To be donated to the Teenage Cancer Fund).

01-05-16 **Clerk**

The clerk tendered his resignation.

01-05-17 **Date and Time of Next Meeting** - 7.00 pm, Wednesday 1st July 2026

The Meeting was closed at 8.40 pm.

## **NEWBROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Chairman's Annual Report May 2026**

Meetings were held as usual, in the Parish Room of Newbrough Town Hall, in May, September, November, January and March. The Council is grateful to the Town Hall Management Committee for being able to use such a splendid building, now celebrating its sesquicentennial.

There are many people to thank for their involvement with the Council and the parish, and it was good to see members of the public present at all meetings throughout the year. The Council welcomes positive and constructive contributions. Thanks to Newbrough councillors - Jen Annan, Justin R Orde, Malcolm D Newson (who in spite of being ill he still has made sure the Council's interests have been served) Hugh A Walton (who also deputised as chairman), Karen E Bell and Andy R Smith. I must thank County Councillor Cllr Antonia Azocar-Nevin whose attendance and advice has provided strong links between Parish and County. Congratulations on full attendance as well as two site meetings.

I also have to thank Steve Davies for his grass cutting; it is always done to a good standard. Thanks to P McDonald & Sons, Mrs Sandra Gibson and Keith Harrison for plants and planting, Andy Smith planting at Whitebeam, the Town Hall for War Memorial planters and the Council auditor GD Scorer.

Cllr Bell, as a school governor, has kept the Council informed on the activities of Newbrough CofE Primary School where strong links with Wark school will enhance both school's positions.

It's good to see an active Newbrough and Warden Sportsfield Association. We are grateful to Wesley Foot for his energy and enthusiasm with Newbrough Cricket Club. He has been appointed a Trustee of Sportsfield Association, and thanks to Cllr Walton for his continuing support for the club and for his regular up-dates to the Council (renewing the lease, solar panels, hedges and grass cutting).

On Remembrance Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> November, Cllr JR Orde laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish. The Service was conducted by Reverend Michael Holland, Tynedale Methodist Circuit.

During the year, sadly, Jen lost her father Gordon, and our thoughts are with her. Also former councillor John Wood passed away. He joined the Council in 2003 and also served on the Mid Tyne Community Trust and was Chairman 2008-2009. A celebration was held in the Town Hall on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

We are pleased that the "Public First Focus" item of the agenda has given an opportunity for residents in the community, not only from Newbrough Parish but also adjoining parishes, to

interact with the Council. This has resulted in providing some valuable information and feedback to the Council.

Planning Consultations - A Tree Preservation Order that requested lopping off two branches of a Laburnum and others slightly reduced to remove weight from the trunk and make safe at 2 Home Farm The Council supports the application and the County Council had "No objection".

Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for single storey extension to South East gable of Bridge House, including demolition of section of wall beneath existing window to create access into main dwelling, and replacement of existing southern canopy with porch. The Council offered no objection to the application but are concerned with parking and other highway issues. The County Council granted permission.

Northumberland National Park Association and Northumberland County Council Consultation. Solar Panel Park Land South Of Carr Hill Plantation. Further public consultation with Mespil Energy, Cllr Smith and Walton, and Clerk met Development Manager. Application was made in August 2025 and Further Assessments and Consultation, awaiting reports.

Listed Building Consent for Installation of a through roof balanced flue and the replacement of 5 existing roof windows at Ashley Cottage; Permission was granted.

As part of the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 2025-2026, the Council identified, the extension of the footpath on the south side of the Stanegate C227 road, from the "T" Junction with B6319 Butt Bank, to Newbrough CofE Primary School. The County Council has submitted three proposals.

Cllr Newson has kept council informed and up-dated with "Climate Change and Green Issues" and CANF meetings, Carbon Literacy for local authorities, and acted as the Council's representative with West Northumberland Primary Care Network. He has reported back from their virtual meetings.

The Council has supported, with grant aid, Community Action Northumberland (CAN), Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS), Tynedale Hospice at Home, Remembrance Wreath & Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, Sport Tynedale, Newbrough & Warden Sportsfield Association, Warden and Newbrough PCC and CORE Music. The Council was also able to help Newbrough Town Hall with the cost of running the Public Convenience and with purchasing the Cinema Licence.

Newbrough & Warden Sportsfield Association were approached by the school with a request to renovate the MUGA which was becoming a health and safety liability due to the wire fencing deteriorating and the tarmac breaking up. The Association had raised funds to carry-out the project. However there was a short-fall, and the Council agreed to grant £1,177 to completed the project. Thanks to the efforts of Rob Tindle this year Senior Citizens' annual outing will be going to Saltburn and Staithes on Thursday 27 August. It's good news that Andy at the Red Lion helped with the costs with funds raised through a Bingo & Sausages night and the Council will also contribute.

Following a site meeting with Highways, NWL and the Parish Council it was ascertained that the East Sidgate flooding could be caused because of too much pressure on the drainage system when it rains a lot. The surface run off from the land to the north of Sidgate will need to be examined, but the investigations into the piping below Sidgate will be looked at first to see if this issue can be rectified. Also the backing-up of drains has been reported in the area around the bottom of North Road and Red Lion Inn. A contributing factor seems to be the plastic lining inserted into the clay drains, where the joining lips restricts the drainage.

*Michael W Gibson*

6<sup>th</sup> May 2026