

## HEDLEYHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 March 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, East Hedleyhope

#### Present

**Chair:** Sarah Woodroffe (SW)

**Cllrs:** Pete Ayling (PA), Judith Patrick (JP), Sarah Stuart (SS), Deb Warde (DW)

**Officer:** Gillian Bell (Clerk)

#### 1. **Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs Tony Reeve and Jean Thorburn

#### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

None to declare.

#### 3. **Public Participation**

No members of the public present.

#### 4. **County Councillor's Report**

No report received.

#### **PCSO briefing**

No report received.

#### 6. **Minutes and recommendations therein agreed from previous meeting on 17 February 2026**

Proposed by PA, seconded by SS.

#### 7. **Budget update**

*Balance as of 24 March 2026:*

Income: £13943.59

Expenditure: £15595.57

*Earmarked project expenditure:*

Seat repair and installation: £1000

Windfarm Community Fund (seating project): £1803

The bank reconciliation for February 2026 had been circulated.

#### 8. **Risk Assessment and IT Policy**

It was agreed to approve the risk assessment as there were no amendments. As part of the new audit requirements, all parish councils are required to have an IT policy covering email use, data protection responsibilities, websites, device usage and cybersecurity best

practices. Following discussion, it was agreed to adopt the IT policy and the Clerk would add this to the website.

9. **Matters relating to the village hall, village green and nature reserve**

*Upgrading the kitchen*

The Clerk had received two quotes for fitting the new kitchen: one for £3750 and the second for £3800. One of the fitters was also interested in quoting for the kitchen units and had visited the village hall to take measurements. Overall, the new kitchen units, appliances, flooring and fitting would cost around £9000 and the National Lottery Awards for All had been suggested as a possible source of funding. SW agreed to look into the application process.

*Windfarm Community Fund projects - update*

The work to fit a timer to the festoon lights and move the external light on the village hall had been completed. Makepeace Landscapes were still to arrange a date for the paving outside the hall. DW reported that JT had offered to print the photos to be put up in the village hall and it was agreed that the Parish Council would reimburse her costs. It had been suggested that some of the photos should be reproduced in a larger format and it was agreed that up to six frames could be purchased at a maximum cost of £30.

*New Windfarm Community Fund application – furniture for the village hall and step repair*

The Tow Law windfarm community fund should be open again for applications from April or May. DCBS had offered to repair the village hall step but had asked the Parish Council to purchase the materials required, which would cost around £60. This was agreed and DW would order the materials.

*S106 play area project - update*

DCC had agreed to the revised work on the play area and the Clerk was waiting for confirmation of a date from Makepeace Landscapes.

*Seat restoration*

The Clerk had contacted a company in Durham who would be willing to carry out the restoration work on the two seats. The owner had requested some further photos before providing an estimate. DW asked about the proposed sites for the seats, which were on land owned by DCC, and whether permission had been obtained. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact DCC to check.

10. **Update on West View tree and wind-damaged trees in the village**

A DCC Tree Officer had made a site visit and had reported that the tree on West View was a rowan and was in a satisfactory condition, although some issues with bark damage were thought to be caused by root compaction and salt damage from the salt bin. It was considered that the tree was stable and it was recommended to monitor it by observing its leaf/crown condition over the summer. The Clerk would let TR know the outcome of the visit and ask him to report back to the residents who had raised the issue. SS suggested that the salt bin could be moved outside her house if there was sufficient space.

The Tree Officer had also reported the damaged tree opposite the Old Chapel Garage and the fallen trees over the track that led up to Stanley Hall Farm to DCC Highways who would now send a letter to the landowner asking them to take action. In addition, a number

of ash trees opposite the bus turnaround were reported as having ash dieback and DCC would remove these.

## 11. Planning Applications Received

DM/26/00533/FPA *The installation of a substation and associated infrastructure to support the repowering of Hedley Hope Wind Farm. - Wind Farm At High Hedleyhope Farm High Hedleyhope Farm Road East Hedleyhope DL13 4PR*

DM/26/00484/FPA *The installation of two overrun areas on land adjacent to Hedleyhill Lane to facilitate the repowering of Hedley Hope 1 and Tow Law Wind Farm. - Land To The South East Of Bells House Farm Bells House Farm Road Cornsay DH7 9EG*

Both applications were from Clean Earth for infrastructure that was essential to the proposed repowering of the Hedley Hope I and Tow Law windfarms with seven 150 m turbines. This original application had not yet been decided. The Parish Council remained opposed to the development and following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would draft and submit objections to the two new applications.

## 12. Future Projects

No further projects were raised.

## 13. Members' reports

None to report.

## 14. Clerk's report

### **Financial**

*Payments made in February and March 2026:*

Lloyds	£ 4.25	Service charge
G Bell	£ 461.28	February salary & IT costs
Forvis Mazars	£ 300.00	External audit fee 2024/25
20i	£ 12.00	Website hosting – March 2026
Amazon	£ 23.20	Printer cartridge
NTRT Electrical	£ 240.00	Timer for festoon lights/move external light
Octopus Energy	£ 100.79	Village hall electricity charges: Feb 2026
TalkMobile	£ 6.95	Village hall WiFi
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 1148.45</b>	

*Payments received:*

Cuppa 'n' Cake	£ 20.00	Village hall hire
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 20.00</b>	

*Petty cash float: £1.88*

- Details of the local issues discussed at the last meeting had been forwarded to Cllr Matt Burnard.
- A surveyor from the Property Management team had been in contact regarding a site visit to the meadow to check on the fencing work but no update had been received.
- A new battery would soon be needed for the defibrillator and the cost would be around £200. DW suggested asking for assistance with the funding and it was agreed that the

Clerk would contact the ward councillors to ask if they would be willing to do this from their grants.

15. **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Signed

Cllr Sarah Woodroffe  
Chair  
28 April 2026