DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 17th September 2026 at 7:30pm. At Wall Village Hall.	
PRESENT	Cllrs: Mark Wood: Chair, Elisa Wyrley-Birch: Vice Chair, Joshua Boulton-Baker, John Lamb, Jane Michie. County Councillor Antonia Azocar-Nevin. Clerk: Alix Pearson.

NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
2793	**1. Apologies for absence and Declaration of interests** The Chair welcomed all present after the long summer break. Apologies were received from Andrew Gillespie, There were no declarations of interest.
2794	**2. Approval of Minutes** The minutes were approved as true record of the previous meeting and signed.
2795	**3. Clerk's Reports** **Financial Report** The clerk presented the expenditure for Q1 which was approved and signed off by the Chair. The Clerk also presented a the current bank reconciliation to support decision making at agenda item 7. The figure to date in the current account is **£13512.03** **No be noted -** the NJC Pay Award relevant to the clerk has been agreed and a 3.3% uplift would be applied to the clerk's salary.
2796	**4. Review and Accept ROSPA Play Safety Annual Inspection Report 2026.** This agenda item was hampered by the summary inspection findings report not being available to Cllrs in advance, so the findings were presented verbally. The full report appears on the PC Website as a news item here The inspector reported 10 items for attention, of which 8 were low risk and 2 were medium. Cllrs reviewed all recommendations and agreed the following actions Check the timber seats on the toddler and junior swings. *Note:The seats appear to be made of plastic.* Untangle the chains on the basket swing.*Note: The chains appears to be not tangled*. Consider affixing bird deterrents on the cross bar of junior and toddler swings. Additionally, the report recommended timber protection for the picnic table and the bench seat. These are both due for replacement see minute 2799.
2797	**5. Review of Planning Applications** **26/0243/VARYCO** Land NE of Quarry House Agricultural Workers Dwelling. Removal of additional residency condition - REFUSED **26/02677/FUL** & **LBC** Codlaw Dene - Various Improvements and alterations. **26/02449/FUL** Barn on New Lane. Proposed changes to external materials. **26/02896/FUL** Camping & Caravan Club 5 van site. **26/02809/FUL** Codlaw Dene - Agricultural Workers Dwelling. The Parish Council is not a Planning Authority and all the above were noted. The two solar farm applications had not yet been decided**.**
2798	**6. County Councillors Report** Antonia's report appears at appendix 1. Of particular interest to Cllrs was the news that the long requested improvements to New Lane would commence shortly. Additionally, Antonia had spoken to Highways regarding gathering data from the speed sign and it was **agreed** that the Clerk would forward the operations manual to Cllr Boulton-Baker for review.

Confirmed as a true record of Meeting: Original Signed

2799	**7. Chair's Maintenance Report** Permission had been received for the tree works required at the bottom of Old Lane and to the Coronation Beech and a tree surgeon engaged. Unfortunately, the tree surgeon, on preparing his estimate based this on the wrong Beech tree. The beech tree for which the estimate was prepared is on the back green at the edge near the bins. This tree does need pruning so it was **AGREED** that the estimate should stand and the work be carried out. However, there is no permission in place for this work, so it was **AGREED** that the tree surgeon should complete the S211 notification. The surgeon will now prepare a new estimate for the Coronation Beech. We already have an estimate from JR Harding as a comparison. **Action Cllr Wood**. The Parish Council had been offered, at no charge, a large recycled plastic picnic table for the children's playground area. This offer is very welcome. Cllr Lamb or contractor Alan Dryden will collect the item and fix it down at their earliest convenience. There are still unspent funds from the Wildflower grant, intended for the purchase of a bench. It was **AGREED** that a bench to match the picnic table would be ordered. Cllr lamb reported that the plastic farm waste was sent to a firm in Carlisle and would enquire whether they could supply a bench, in the first instance. **Action - Clerk & Cllr Lamb.** One of the Oak trees planted on the green to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles lll and Queen Camilla was failing**.** The Chair will investigate options for replacing this tree with a young tree of similar proportions. **Action Cllr Wood** It was reported that the broadband provider B4RN would no longer pursue the project to install full fibre broadband in Wall. This update was received *Dear neighbour,* *Thank you for registering your interest in B4RN's full-fibre broadband service. We're grateful that you wanted to support the project in your area.* *We're writing with an important update. Unfortunately, the planned B4RN project in your area will not be going ahead.* *This has been a difficult decision. B4RN relies on the Project Gigabit Voucher Scheme to help fund new projects, and the scheme closes in March 2028. Although that may still seem some way off, there is no longer enough time to plan and build the network in your area before the deadline.* *After careful consideration, we've had to close several of the areas we had hoped to reach. Sadly, your area is one of them.* *We understand this will be disappointing news, and we're genuinely sorry that we can't bring the service to your area as we had hoped.* *At the moment, we do not have any further information about when full-fibre broadband may become available in your area. We understand that Building Digital UK is considering options for communities in a similar position, and we'll share any relevant updates if and when we receive them.* *Thanks again for your interest and understanding.* *Kind regards* *B4RN* Councillors were extremely disappointed in this outcome, particularly as all Cllrs and many residents had support B4RN as they developed their plans for the project. It was **agreed** that **Cllr Wood & The Clerk** would write a letter to B4RN to express our disappointment. Our County Councillor kindly undertook to raise this issue with the iNorthumberland team to begin investigation of alternative provision.
2800	**8. Review of Fix My Street Posts** Cllr Wyrley-Birch had monitored all posts, and found no items being the direct responsibility of the Parish Council.

2801	**9. Village Hall Report** Cllr Wood reported key points from the Trustees meeting which had taken place on 16th September. Hall bookings were stable with more than 90% of bookings coming from villagers, at the lower rental price of £20 per 3 hour session. The NCEL project appeared to have stalled awaiting new funds and the system for Wall Village Hall would now not be installed until 2027. This was a financial challenge as the hall's electricity contract is due for renewal in December 2026. This will be at a much higher price, compounded by the trust not wishing to enter into a long contract because of the panel installation. Hall trustees were valiantly trying to balance long and short term expenditure and rental costs. As the majority of bookings come from within the parish, it is possible that the Trust may ask the Parish Council for a small grant to help get them over the energy difficulty. Trustees had also agreed to look into the costs and benefits of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The project to acquire additional land at the rear of the Village Hall is ongoing and will be pursued now that the Vicarage had at last been sold.
	Date of next meeting **Thursday 19th November 2026 at 7.30pm.** The meeting ended at 9.25pm

Appendix 1

Wall PC report

1. **Someone to show residents how to access the data from speed signs.** I got a reply from Paul Armstrong saying that he has reached out to Swarco about the data collection feature on the speed sign. It is possible to add this feature on to your existing speed sign if it doesn't already have it. They are going to send a quote through next week but obviously the Parish Council would need to pay for this.
   I wasn't aware of some speeding signs not having the software so I have asked for him to clarify which speeding signs you can get the data from and why the council asked for this data from certain PC if they didn't already have the software built in.
   He has since also said:

If any other of the Parish's have any issues they'd be best off contacting Swarco directly with the ref number of the sign (sticker on the back) but when the signs were ordered originally they should have paperwork to see if the data collection feature was included or not.

Today I learnt that after about 10 years, these speed signs start to become faulty and it is a lot more cost effective to replace them entirely, which I find frustrating. However, if in the future they do need replacing, the software for checking speeding data should already be fitted.

2. **The glamping site:** I got in contact with Alex Campbell again and her update is as follows:
   When I drive past the site (which is fairly regularly), I always take a moment to check that no new works have taken place. Fortunately, the land is now quite overgrown and cannot be used for access, which is positive.
   If anyone does notice any activity on site, I would be grateful if they could let me know so that I can confirm whether it requires planning permission or needs to cease, particularly given the site's status as a scheduled monument.
3. ***Agricultural building:*** Alex Campbell has also confirmed the status of the Agricultural site:
   The original planning application was for the building to be used for hay storage (24/01727/AGRGDO), and I have been advised by the landowner that this remains the case

4. **Plaque for money used on gents toilets:** I contacted Sarah Hudson from the Memberd allowance team on getting a plaque to say that I put money towards the refurbishment, but she said that this was only if you wanted to.
5. **Brunton Bank/New lane works:** These works have been confirmed by Andy Fisher saying the following:
   We have booked a road closure for the end of September
   During this closure we will do drainage, patching and kerbing works,
   We also plan to have work's on Brunton bank above New Lane to locate and clear any gullies and alleviate some of the water that runs down the bank and into New lane.
   As discussed during our site visit we intend putting a channel drain Kerb system where the concrete spill way is and reinstate the fence.

6. **Library consultation.** On the 27th of July I attended the communities and place oversight and scrutiny meeting that I sit on. We discussed the proposed changes that will be put forward to cabinet in September. What I focused on asking about:

    - **Local needs assessment.** In the report it draws that this project will need to be reviewed by a local needs assessment which when asked about to see the results, they responded saying: that this has been on going since around 2020 and is still on going. Before any major decisions are made final, the **LNA** will be reviewed.
    - **Adapting and maintaining.** The team at NCC were very aware of how younger generations are becoming increasingly reliant on digital systems however they do recognise that we still have lots of people that rely on physical systems and that libraries offer a safe space for communities.
      Through the consultation people mentioned how the library should be open for longer on a Saturday and so the council have decided to have it open for 5 hours.
    - **The mobile library.** The council received multiple concerns regarding the suggested 6 week schedule and have now said that this will operate on a 4 weekly basis. The one mobile library will accommodate the whole of Northumberland. I did question this and asked about the ware and tear of one van for the whole county and what should happen in the case of the ML being out of service. Their response was that they would make sure the ML would have routinely services to make sure they caught anything asap. They also said they would need a contingency in place incase it was out of service for a longer period of time. I would like to make sure this is in place and acceptable for cabinet agrees to anything. Finally, NCC looked at areas where the ML was not being used at all and the length of time it would stay in an area. This will be to focus the ML in higher demand areas. I did ask which areas will be affected but at this moment in time, this and the routes are still being looked at.

Here you can view the agenda and the Libraries consultation report followed by the presentation under agenda item 5.
https://northumberland.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=144&MId=4430