

PRESTON-UNDER-SCAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29 September 2025

Present: Councillor Councillors Amsden, Fletcher, Higham, Knights and Sayers
Clerk: Linda Stevens

16. Apologies for absence: Unitary Councillor Sedgwick

17. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20 May 2025

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 20 May 2025 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

18. To declare Councillors' interests in items on the agenda: None

19. North Yorkshire Council Emergency and Resilience Team

Jason Wainwright, Emergency Planning Officer with North Yorkshire Council's Resilience and Emergencies Team, attended the meeting to explain his role and that of his team, particularly with regard to Community Resilience, which his team were prioritising this year. He outlined some of the events (such as weather bombs, loss of power, loss of water etc) that could create emergency incidents in rural communities and talked about the resources that those communities may need to be able to access in the event of such emergencies – such as a generator, sand bags, walkie talkies, and a satellite enabled phone or hub – some of which some villages in the Dales had put in place. He referred to possible sources of funding for some of this kit (examples being the North Yorkshire Council Locality Grant scheme and the Northern Powergrid Foundation) and would be happy to assist the Parish Council with researching options and prices for appropriate equipment.

Jason agreed to revisit the current Village Resilience Plan and to assess what emergency kit his team may be able to provide to the village. Councillor Higham would follow this up with Jason.

Resolved:

To thank Jason for attending the meeting and to accept his offer to look at what Emergency Resources his team may be able to provide to the village from their current stock.

20. Action taken since the last Parish Council meeting on 20 May 2025

Grass Cutting - Light Lane and Cemetery Extension – the decisions made by the Parish Council at its last meeting had been implemented. This had resulted in a saving of £10 per cut in the cost of cutting the grass in the Cemetery Extension. Councillors discussed the benefits of having the whole of the Cemetery Extension and the whole of the Light Lane verge mown as part of the final cut only of the current season. The partial mowing of the Cemetery Extension and of the Light Lane verge would resume from the start of the next season.

Resolved:

That the Clerk request that the whole of the Cemetery Extension and the whole of the Light Lane Verge be mown as part of the final cut only of the current season on the basis that the partial mowing of the Cemetery Extension and of the verge along Light Lane would resume next season.

Grit Bin in the Village Centre – North Yorkshire Council had agreed to replace the grit bin which was damaged by their Refuse Collection Vehicle.

Winter Gritting Request – the Parish Council's request that North Yorkshire Council grit the road along the west end of the village had been unsuccessful.

Locality Grant – North Yorkshire Council had authorised the payment of a grant of £400 from Councillor Sedgwick's Locality Budget towards the cost of implementing measures to improve Biodiversity in the area of the Cemetery Extension. The grant would need to be spent within 12 months.

Moor Road update – in relation to the marking up of the route of the old lead flue where it passes under Moor Road, North Yorkshire Council had confirmed that the Structures Team were currently looking at a scheme. The proposed scheme was currently under development, and more details would be provided in due course. It was noted that further marking up had been carried out in the vicinity of the barn and that this appeared to relate to the location of the old underpass.

BT Payphone – the Parish Council had been advised that BT have decided not to remove the Village Payphone.

21. Finance and Banking

Resolved:

(1) To note that the opening balances as at 1 September 2025 were as follows:

- **Current Account: £5621.59**
- **Savings Account: £2330.49**

(2) To note the payments authorised by the Clerk under her delegated authority or which were contractually required to be made since the meeting of the Parish Council on 20 May 2025, as set out in Appendix A to these minutes.

(3) To approve the first quarter financial review for 2025/26 as submitted by the Clerk

22. Village Maintenance – there were no issues arising

23. Wensley Quarry Planning Application – update

Councillor Sayers reported that since the last Parish Council meeting, the Village Residents Group had spent many, many hours researching the application, Tarmac's current permission, their operating practices and the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) monitoring of those practices.

The Group had:

- provided evidence to the LPA Enforcement Team of seven apparently ongoing breaches of Tarmac's current permission, which the LPA had consistently failed to enforce
- highlighted to the LPA all of the inaccuracies in Tarmac's current application
- challenged the LPA Environmental Team to enforce the conditions of the Environmental Permit which Tarmac also needed in order to operate

All of this had been raised with North Yorkshire Council Officers at increasingly higher levels of seniority, culminating in a meeting with Unitary Councillor Sedgwick, the Corporate Director of Community Development, the Head of Enforcement and a Senior Minerals Officer following the article which had appeared in the Darlington and Stockton Times. No representatives of the group had been permitted to attend that meeting. Following the meeting the Group had made strong representations to North Yorkshire Council that Tarmac's current application was invalid because they had not conducted any public consultation prior to the application and had not therefore included a consultation report with their application, both of which were required under the North Yorkshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement which had come into effect before Tarmac commenced pre-applications with the Council. Following that Tarmac had withdrawn their application and had written to the Parish Council to advise that they were in the process of carrying out further technical work and reviewing the concerns raised by the local community and statutory consultees so that they can be addressed in a revised application. Tarmac had invited Parish Councillors to meet with the Tarmac team to discuss the feedback received in respect of the application, the steps which the Company were taking, and how they could improve relationships moving forward. The company hoped

this would provide an opportunity for open and constructive discussion before they sought to engage with the community more broadly. This would include a pre-submission consultation event.

Councillors discussed the Parish Council's representation at any meeting, the purpose of which it was agreed that Tarmac needed to clarify. It was considered that, in addition to Councillors, it would be beneficial to include David Brooks in the meeting given his previous role as Chairman of the Parish Council for a number of years and his dealings with, and knowledge of, quarry issues.

The Clerk drew to Councillors attention an email she had received requesting that a public thank you be extended to David Brooks, Councillor Sayers and others who had contributed large amounts of time to reach this stage.

Resolved:

(1) That the Clerk request Tarmac:

- to clarify the purpose and objectives of the proposed meeting
- to agree to include David Brooks in the meeting for the reasons stated above

(2) That Councillors Amsden, Sayers, Fletcher and Knights, and the Clerk, attend the meeting with Tarmac

(3) That the Clerk arrange a pre-meeting for all attendees, to include David Brooks.

(4) That the Council place on record its thanks to David Brooks, Councillor Sayers and others in the Residents Group for all their work on this matter.

24. Cemetery – update

Councillor Higham reported that the first draft of a new Cemetery Policy had been forwarded to the Clerk for review and that she was in the process of drafting a memorial inspection sheet and guide to carrying out an inspection. Once the policy had been agreed, she would start the inspection process.

25. Biodiversity

Councillor Knights reported on evidence of Slow Worms in the area. It was hoped to very shortly be able to tidy up the current Biodiversity webpages, providing links to other documents and photographs. He also proposed to start a wildlife diary on the website. Councillor Knights was hopeful that it would still be possible to carry out an exploratory examination of the Wensleydale Railway Wildlife Corridor with a member of the Wensleydale Railway Team who had completed the necessary Health and Safety training.

26. Council Policies and Procedures

Councillors considered a number of updated and new polices which the Parish Council was required by law to have in place.

Resolved:

To approve the following updated or new policies (as indicated):

Complaints Procedure - updated

Data Audit – updated

IT Policy – new

Subject Access Request Policy and Procedure – new

Publication Scheme – new

27. Planning Applications

New Applications: None Notified

Upcoming Applications: None notified

Update on Previous Applications:

ZD25/00087/LBC - listed building consent to replace the existing roof stone slates and flashing to the 20th century outshut to the Manor House Preston Under Scar (*consent refused*)

NY/2025/0024/ENV Variation of condition No's 1 & 5 of Planning Permission C1/12/00765/CM for Wensley Quarry to allow for working of permitted mineral within Phases 4, 5 and 6 and continuation of mineral extraction and restoration (*application withdrawn*)

28. Date and agenda items for the next meeting

Resolved:

That the next Meeting of the Parish Council be held in late November/early December 2025 and that the Clerk consult Councillors on a suitable date.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

CHAIRMAN

