

Ravensworth Parish Council
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting Held on
Monday, 11th May 2026

1. Present

Councillors: A Ayres [Chair], J Cooke, B Hird, and A Pledge

2. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted for Carol Robinson.

3. Declarations of Interest

None were received.

4. Welcome

Councillor Ayres welcomed everyone and outlined the format of the two meetings: After approving and reviewing any matters arising from the minutes of last year's annual meeting, the purpose of the first meeting was to receive approval for the various Annual Governance and Accountability Return documents and then deal with the organisation of Ravensworth Parish Council for the coming year.

The second meeting contained reports from the Parish Council and other contributors regarding the last year's activities. This was then followed by an Open Forum when residents could speak about any matter of local interest, including putting forward any motion for all present at the meeting to vote upon, but the result of any vote would not be binding upon the Parish Council to implement.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters to be addressed.

6. Financial Report

The Chair reported that the Parish Council was required to complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return [AGAR]. The Parish Council must approve the various sections of the documents, send an appropriate section of the AGAR to the Government's external auditor and then publish the whole of the completed AGAR.

The Parish Council was also obliged to evidence that all of the correct steps had been taken in the required order, and record this in the Minutes of the meeting. All the documents referred to under Item 6 have been reviewed by all the councillors and the internal auditor before the meeting.

6.1. The cash book for the financial year ending 31st March 2026 showed our precept of £5,400 was supplemented by £239.30 from NYC for our cutting of visibility splays, reclaimed VAT of £1,189.18, £465.06 from the Village Hall funds to cover maintenance costs and £10 worth of bank interest.

Our major expenditure included £815.96 for erecting barriers alongside The Green on the West side of the Village Hall and £706.47 for insurance. The Parish Council account had a final balance of £14,657.93. This was £4,586.04 more than at the end of the previous financial year, mainly due to the late arrival of NYC's 2025 seasonal grass cutting bill - £1,735.34 and the previously noted reclaimed VAT.

6.2 Since neither our total income nor expenditure for the financial year exceeded £25,000 we will certify ourselves exempt from review by the external auditor. The completed Certificate of Exemption will be displayed, along with all the other AGAR related documents, on the Parish Council noticeboard, and will also be published on the Website: /parish-council

6.3. The Annual Internal Audit Report for 2025/26 required by AGAR was noted.

6.4. The Parish Council approved the 2025/26 Annual Government Statement for the year's AGAR.

6.5. The Parish Council approved the 2025/26 Accounting Statements for that year's AGAR.

6.6. The Parish Council undertook to comply with the AGAR publication requirements which include publishing the documents noted in 6.2-6.5 using the previously identified website for the period Wednesday, 3rd June to Tuesday, 14th July 2026.

7. Elections

Councillor Ayres was elected as Chair for the coming year.

It was noted that there was a full complement of 5 councillors.

8. Dates of Future Parish Council Meetings

The following dates were proposed and agreed:

Ordinary meetings on Mondays: 14th September, 2026, 16th November 2026, 8th February 2027 12th April 2027.

Annual Meeting: 10th May 2027.

The meeting closed at 7.08 pm

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1. Report on the Year's Activities

The Chair reported as follows:

Having prevented Open Reach erecting four 9m telegraph poles on The Green, other less intrusive means have been exploited to allow residents access to full fibre broadband. The key to preventing work being conducted was that the originally gifted land, which constitutes The Green, was officially registered as a Village Green. However, investigation revealed that ownership of The Green by RPC was not listed with the Land Registry and, after taking advice, this has been sought and will hopefully soon be resolved.

The tracks leading on and off and around The Green have been repaired. The allowed method of repair is that suitable for a cart track not a highway. Consequently, the assigned speed limit for vehicles travelling on the tracks is 5 mph. Higher speeds, particularly for heavier vehicles, will cause the erosion of the surface, producing ruts and potholes. The entries and exits of the tracks to and from the highway are especially susceptible to damage when drivers turn sharply or take them at speed. It is in the interests of us all to ensure that all vehicles are driven appropriately and we hope that everyone will assist in making visitors and delivery drivers aware and therefore compliant.

The Parish Council has taken a step towards preventing vehicles unnecessarily encroaching onto The Green by installing some barriers on the edge of the track outside the Chapel and Village Hall.

The Parish Council expressed its thanks to the North Yorkshire Council Grounds Maintenance Team who, despite numerous problems with staffing and equipment, has looked after the grass over the past year and kept the visibility splays clear in and around the village.

Whilst there have been fewer complaints about dog fouling on and around The Green, the Parish Council noted that there are still problems

in other parts of the village, despite the signage and advice provided. The Parish Council asks that residents are more proactive in dealing with irresponsible dog owners.

Highways and Traffic in the Village

The road signage has done well to survive vehicles and weather. RPC continues to seek a 20 mph limit through the village and is pleased to note that North Yorkshire Council is now committed to siting new speed cameras to endorse speed restrictions.

Attendance at a RPC meeting last September by our PCSO provided the opportunity to voice our concerns about road issues in and around the village. We are grateful to find as a result of his visit, that appropriate advice was provided by the Police on the Community Messenger Service about the importance of driving large vehicles safely are carefully through the village.

RPC welcomes the planned and now funded A66 developments, trusting that there will be an early resolution of the dangers and disturbance residents regularly face.

2. Other Matters

RPC remains grateful to Ken Bell for the work he does in updating and maintaining the village website – www.ravensworthvillage.com. This provides much valuable local information for both residents and visitors and includes a Parish Council section which enables the essential display of minutes of meetings, along with governance and financial documents.

3. Village Hall Report

Councillor Robinson had produced a written report as follows:

- The AGM had been held on 15th January 2026. Debbie Mayne was welcomed to the group as a new member.
- A grant application of £10,000 from Yor4 assisted in the provision of a disability access door that has been positively appraised by residents and users of the Hall.

- The financial position of the Hall has been in balance, with regular hires and fund-raising activities by the Committee [e.g. Italian evenings, soup and deserts, pies and peas quiz night].
- The Hall has been PAT tested and has had fire and boiler checks.
- The shed/lean-to outbuilding has had repairs to its leaking roof.
- Radiator covers in the kitchen and porch have been removed to improve heating efficiency.
- Hire rates have not increased for several years; locally we remain extremely competitive but this is under close review, having regard to the present fuel crisis.
- Without the help of our team, many of the activities [hence funding to maintain the Hall] simply would not happen. Many thanks to all our dedicated volunteers.
- We look forward to another year to engage with the community and welcome feedback.

4. Open Forum

4.1 Local Government Elections – it was noted that these elections would take place in May 2027, and that anybody wishing to stand as a parish councillor would have to submit an application by March 2027.

The Chair said that he did not intend to seek re-election, and that Carol Robinson had also indicated she would not be seeking re-election either.

The meeting discussed the importance of raising awareness amongst residents now, so that anybody interested in taking up a seat on the Parish Council could submit an application. The meeting noted that, even though the Parish Council currently had a full complement, others could be co-opted as non-voting members in order to gain experience in council business, prior to next year's elections.

4.2 Signatures for Cheques

Agreed: that a date be arranged whereby councillors could accompany Councillor Ayres to the bank, so that they can be added to those able to sign cheques, with any two from the 5 becoming authorised signatories.

4.3 E-mail Addresses – the meeting was reminded that it had been agreed at the previous meeting that all parish councillors would be allocated a .gov.uk email address at a total cost of £300 per annum.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.